

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, February 23, 2023
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson
Eugene Marchand, Vice-Chairperson
Mary Kortmann, Secretary
Peter DePaola
Emma Eaton
Courtney Rossignol
Christina Williams (arrived 7:08 p.m.)

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Audience: Christian Marcinczyk, CNH Assistant Principal; Cindy Wilbur, K-12 STEM Specialist; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Ross Sward, CNH Principal; CNH students Alistair Campbell and Henry Petro; Coaches Jonathan Stanizzi and Craig Jordan and members and family of the CNH Boys Basketball Team; and one observer.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

Bob Sass, 268 Long Hill Road, was present to speak about his concerns regarding the middle school and bullying behaviors.

C. Williams arrived.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone reported on various activities taking place locally, regionally, and state-wide.

IV.A. Recognition: CNH Boys Basketball Team - Northeast Middle School Athletic Conference Champions

Dr. Petrone commented on the championship game, where our boys team came out victorious. He recognized the team and Coach Stanizzi. Mr. Sward and Coach Stanizzi said

a few words commending the team. There were congratulations from the Board; the team was presented with a gift of appreciation.

IV.B. Information: Board of Education Student Representative Report

IV.C. Information: Science Olympiad

Dr. Petrone introduced Ms. Wilbur, who shared a presentation on the Science Olympiad program, which is available through the district's website. Ms. Wilbur and students Alistair Campbell and Henry Petro provided a sample demonstration of one of the categories - Bridge Building.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

V.A. Accept the Retirement of Lisa Andosca

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda as presented

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

VI. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil made note of Bus Driver Appreciation Day, which was this week. She thanked Coventry bus drivers for all of their hard work keeping our students safe.

She added that the Town Council asked for a detailed list of the 2% non-lapsing account request, which had since been sent.

She reported on the status of the search for a Town Manager.

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VIII.A. Approve Minutes of February 9, 2023

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 9, 2023

By: C. Williams

Seconded: E. Marchand

Discussion: P. DePaola asked that on page 4, 8th paragraph, the 4th sentence read, "He said there was a decline of 22 students from the 2019 budget and that this budget was a 2 million dollar increase."

Result: Motion to approve the minutes as modified passes unanimously

IX. New Business

IX.A. Information and Possible VOTE: Approve the 2023-2024 School Calendar

MOTION: To approve the 2023-2024 School Calendar

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: C. Williams

Discussion: Dr. Petrone said we align as best we can with the EASTCONN calendar. He said the draft has been vetted through the teachers' union, the parent group, and the administrative group. He reviewed various areas on the calendar.

C. Rossignol asked about the November half days and if it could be switched to a different week than the week of the election. Dr. Petrone explained the reason for keeping it all together in one week, which seemed easier for parents.

The Board discussed the December half professional development day not falling on PJ Day. M. Kortmann suggested moving the half professional development day to Friday, December 1. There was consensus to adjust that.

C. Rossignol talked about the last day of school landing on a Monday. Dr. Petrone said, no matter what day of the week that is, the attendance is not as bad as you think it might be.

Result: Motion to approve the calendar as modified passes unanimously.

IX.B. Discussion and Possible VOTE: Joint Letter with Town Council - Education Funding in the State Budget

J. Beausoleil talked about sending a joint letter with the Town Council to the State regarding education funding in the State budget. The Board discussed various options related to the letter. C. Williams said there is part of the related bill that she did not like as it gives room to not protect our taxpayers. She said, depending on how the letter is written, she would support holding harmless the ECS reimbursement. Dr. Petrone said, mostly, towns are looking for a flat reimbursement amount. J. Beausoleil said she could work with the Town Council Chair to be sure the letter addresses the funding and not the other programs.

MOTION: To support the joint letter with the Town Council

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: E. Marchand

Result: Motion passes unanimously

X. Report of Board Members

X.A. Information: Policy Committee Report, Meeting of February 22, 2023

X.A.1. Discussion and Possible VOTE

X.A.1.a. NEW 5127.1 Improve Completion Rates of FAFSA

E. Eaton explained this was being brought back to the Board, as there were no changes made at the Policy Committee meeting. C. Williams said she does not believe there should be a policy. She suggested removing one sentence, "Each year, the Superintendent or designee will report to the Board the FAFSA completion rate for Coventry High School." E. Marchand expressed his concern that this suggestion was not received for the Committee to review. C. Williams reiterated that she does not want the policy at all and she said she does not believe in instituting the metric. E. Eaton said having a policy in place is state law. E. Eaton added that the Policy Committee discussed other benefits to having the policy in place.

MOTION: To approve new Policy #5127.1 Improve Completion Rates of FAFSA as is

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: E. Eaton

Discussion: C. Rossignol said she would be voting yes now, because it states it is not required by students.

Result: Motion passes (5-2) P. DePaola and C. Williams against

X.A.2. Discussion: Review of Policies (To be warned for a vote)

X.A.2.a. 5141.21 Administration of Medications in School

Dr. Petrone reviewed the information received from the attorney regarding the term "Administration of Medication." E. Eaton added that there are additional edits that have been added since the Board last saw this draft. She reviewed those edits.

P. DePaola reviewed page 11, item C and was worried about what device the district would have to purchase to monitor levels. Dr. Petrone said we will use a district device that we already have (iPad, etc.) to monitor the levels electronically through the appropriate software.

P. DePaola talked about the language (pg 9) where medication would be administered rectally, and he is worried about the risk and the district's liability. Dr. Petrone talked about situations where this would be appropriate, especially for medically fragile students, and he noted the staff members are heavily trained and they are not alone with the student.

P. DePaola talked about medication error reports and suggested the form be identified by risk factor.

There was consensus for this to move forward for a vote.

X.A.2.b. 9111.2 Code of Conduct for Board Members

E. Eaton noted that additional alternations were made at the Policy Committee meeting.

P. DePaola noted his concerns with the policy and that it opens a window for interpretation and he believes it goes against his constitutional rights, it is over the line, and there is way too much weight on conduct and behaviors.

C. Rossignol said she did share these concerns with the Policy Committee.

C. Williams said most, if not all, discipline could happen without the policy and, as such, the policy is not needed. J. Beausoleil said it is a good reminder to members. E Eaton said the language mirrors what is expected of employees; it sets the bar.

J. Beausoleil said the policy will move forward for a vote.

XI. Possible VOTE: Executive Session [Personnel Matter and Superintendent's Evaluation]

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussions related to a personnel matter and the superintendent's evaluation with the Superintendent present at 8:48 p.m.

By: P. DePaola

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XII. Open Session

