



PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE

27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

REGULAR MEETING
PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
33 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CT 06786

WEDNESDAY, November 8, 2023

7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Showers, Ms. Tilton, Mr. Foote,
Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani, Mr. Perugino and Mr. Zbuska

Absent: Mrs. Kulesa

Also Present: Mr. Falcone, Superintendent; Mrs. Melillo, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Mozak-Pezza,
Director of Curriculum & Instruction and Mr. Tencza, Business Manager

1. Call to Order & Pledge to the Flag

Mr. Seaman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Showers,
second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meetings of the Plymouth
Board of Education on October 12, 2023 and October 25, 2023. Motion Mr. Showers,
second Mr. Foote, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

4. Presentation – Harry S. Fisher Elementary School – Ms. Suffridge, Principal and Ms. Putnam, STEM

Harry S. Fisher Elementary School presented on the importance and benefits of STEM (Science,
Technology, Engineering and Math) including skills and activities that students are learning and
participating in to better prepare our students for the jobs of the future. A video presented showed
students working on different activities that they have been participating in during their Science,
Engineering Design Process and Coding Units.

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5. **Student Representatives**

Jacob Darrell

Reported on the following:

- * Spirit Week – October 16 – October 20
- * Homecoming – November 3
- * Sports – Notable Players Christopher Goth – 6th in the State
Marcus Dunn – 1st in the State
- * Polling students to determine what improvements can be made within the school to allow for a positive environment

Kristian Kwoczala – Absent

Mark Lussier

Reported on the following:

- * November 3rd – 33 Terryville High School students and 7 Thomaston High School students attended the first Unified Buddies event of the 2023 – 2024 school year
- * Girls' Soccer – qualified for State's – their first game - 4 – 1
4 – 3 win over Housatonic
- * Girls' Volleyball – qualified for State's for the first time in quite a while

6. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

None

7. **Superintendent's Update**

* Thank You went out to the entire administrative team, faculty and staff for going above and beyond for our students in helping to create positive memories and build a stronger school community.

* October, National Fire Prevention Month – Throughout the month volunteers from the Terryville Fire Department visited Plymouth Center and Harry S. Fisher Elementary Schools to teach the children how to prevent and respond to fires if they occur. Thank You to the Terryville Fire Department for their continued partnership and support of our students and schools.

* Vision Screenings – At the end of October, members of the Lion's Club went to Plymouth Center and Harry S. Fisher Elementary Schools to complete Vision Screenings of our students. Thank You to the following Lions: Marty Sandshaw, Gerry Bourbonniere, Tom Walsh, Kevin Lafland, Phyllis Sandshaw, Steven Daigle, Devon Austin and Ryan Fitzpatrick..In total, the group completed 513 vision screenings and made 46 vision referrals at our elementary schools.

* Budget Time – Work has begun with our Administrative Team on the 2024 – 2025 budget. From now and through the new year work will be done on finalizing the budget.

(a) Time Line

- o At the January Board of Education Meeting, Mr. Falcone and Mr. Tencza will present the proposed budget to the Board.
- o If needed, Budget Workshops will be held throughout January and February to answer questions and make appropriate adjustments.
- o February Board of Education Meeting.
Final Budget Review
Board of Education will vote on Budget adoption.
- o In Mid-March, presentation of the Board adopted Budget to the Town of Plymouth Board of Finance.
- o Next step following Mid-March presentation will be the Budget presentation to the Town Council.

* Retreat

* A Board of Education Retreat has been scheduled prior to the January 10, 2024 Board of Education Meeting.

* Attorney Richard Mills of the Law Firm of Shipman & Goodwin will be providing training on items related to the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education. Mr. Falcone has discussed topics with Attorney Mills, however, if there is any specific topic a Board Member would like Attorney Mills to cover, Mr. Falcone asked to please let him know.

* Winter Is Upon Us

As colder weather slowly approaches, Mr. Falcone will be making weather related phone calls. Parents and students will be notified about school delayed openings and school closures around 5:30 a.m. Also along with phone calls, text messages, and emails, parents may also find weather related information on the local television networks and on the district website.

* Thanksgiving Break

As a reminder, the school district will be closed on Wednesday, November 22, 2023 – Friday, November 24, 2023. School will resume on Monday, November 27, 2023.

8. New Business

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the reappoint of Kelly Boggio to represent Terryville on the Agricultural Education Advisory Committee for a full three-year term. Motion Mrs. Lucian, second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve an out-of-state field trip to Virginia Beach, Virginia from April 7 – April 10, 2024 for 9 – 12 grade students in Band and Chorus at Terryville High School. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

Mr. Falcone – Correction as to the date of the field trip. It was incorrectly started on the submission form. The date should have been April 4 – April 7, 2024.

MOTION: To entertain a motion to approve the Revised Memorandum of Understanding for the School Resource Officer as presented. Motion Mr. Foote, second Mr. Showers, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

9. Board Member/Committee Reports

- A. Finance/Operations – Mr. Tencza updated the Board on the status of the Food Service Program. Also, he informed the Board of a change of staff in the business office. Rebecca Sowa, Payroll/Benefits Coordinator has left for a position in another district. However, her replacement is Emily Hults who is doing a great job and has adjusted quickly to her position as Payroll/Benefits Coordinator.

Mr. Perugino – Questioned the Special Education salary

Mr. Tencza – There was a need to hire an additional Special Education Teacher at Harry S. Fisher Elementary School.

Mr. Perugino – On the last page of the Accounts-by-Facilities Report, the remaining budget balance is 17.64%. Glad the amount of \$14,400,000 was encumbered. The balance shows a total of \$4,613,000 for the rest of the year. Do you anticipate that in February or March you will need to freeze the budget?

Mr. Tencza – At this time, he hopes there will not be a need to freeze the budget.

B. Personnel Report – No questions

10. Public Comment (limited to 3-minutes per speaker)

Ellen Stewart – 29 Holt Street, Terryville

Summary:

- * Streaming not working
- * Acoustics (hard to hear)
- * Can recorded minutes go out to the parents?
- * Can a copy of tonight's meeting be obtained?

Roxanne Perugino – 82 Allen Street, Terryville

Summary:

- * Requesting a reply and answers with respect to a list of questions and concerns she submitted with respect to the school closing.
- * Use of the Sinking Fund – Does not think the sinking fund will cover all costs, i.e. studies to be done, construction costs, design, moving costs, etc. If a new playground is needed the cost can be up to \$25,000. What if the costs go over the amount in the sinking fund? What are the plans for paying an overage?
- * Congratulated all those who won in the election. Suggests since the school community has been torn apart, the Board has lost a lot of respect. In order to restore the respect and to alleviate some of the tension, the Board consider electing a new chairman.

Gregory DeNote

Summary:

- * Thanked all parents and everyone who attended tonight's meeting.
- * In an effort to be transparent, which is the goal of the Board, eventually Mr. Falcone would provide the reasons why or what prompted him to request that all Board Members receive training and to see what recommendations, specifically, he made for what types of training he specifically wants all of the Board to attend. How, we in the community, will be able to measure the Board's progress in their training to make sure the Board is meeting the milestones that they need to in their training.

Rebecca Allen – 17 Meghan Boulevard, Plymouth

Summary:

- * Comment – Follow-up from the informational session: Surveys going out and data being released and reports. Nothing yet. Encourages a follow-up on this, provide timelines to parents because we are all very interested.

Candace Telkey, 18 Ridge Road, Terryville

Summary:

Has expectations of the Board of Education and the Superintendent.

- * Have the children's well-being and interest at the forefront in your minds when making decisions and comments.
- * Effective communication between the Board within this town and to work together with other communities.
- * If we are not aware of what is going on, we cannot participate as taxpayers or as parents. Individuals would like to participate whenever possible.
- * It is understood that changes in meeting dates may change due to inclement weather in the winter. Would appreciate if the agenda could be publicly posted somewhere, with a worded agenda that can be accessed on FaceTime.
- * Promises were made at the informational session on October 26. Only asking that the Board make certain on these promises.

Erica Lavoie – 2 Magnolia Lane, Terryville

Summary:

Some Important Issues:

- * Transparency – regarding all financial matters, town and schools.
- * Training of staff and teachers.
- * The support given to our teachers and how much support they need versus what they are actually receiving.
- * Enough people in the schools to make sure our kids are safe not only outside of school but also making sure they are safe in the sense they are actually being provided a learning community that they are actually learning in.
- * Whether or not the district would bring back a more traditional teaching style in regards to a nuclear style type of teaching, i.e. teaching history, teaching real history.
- * As a community that is failing when it comes to enrollment in our public schools, maybe this is something that should be considered in finding a niche to actually get people to move to our community for our school system specifically.
- * Indoctrination of our children.
- * Taxes – People are struggling. However, it is realized taxes may increase. Need to offer transparency as to how much of a budget increase the people will see. Exactly where the money is going to go and give the taxpayers and parents more of a say as to whether or not it is going to be utilized properly.

11. **Board Liaisons**

Mr. Perugino

Harry S. Fisher Elementary School

No Report

Mr. Zbuska

Plymouth Center School

No Meeting

Meadow Farms Fundraiser – now through November 17.

Volunteers are needed for the school store and for a Family Fun Event which the PTA would like to host.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani

Eli Terry Jr. Middle School & Booster Club

Meeting Postponed

Wizard Game was a huge success.

No plans for fundraisers until after the holidays.

Possibly bring back the School Store,

Holiday Shop and possible plans for a Talent Show

Mrs. Kulesa

Terryville High School & EdAdvance

No Reports - Excused Absence

12. **Board Comments**

Mr. Showers

Congratulations to all who won yesterday. Happy Thanksgiving.

Ms. Tilton

Congratulations to the sports teams. Thank You to Angie for the STEM Presentation. Safe and enjoyable time with family during Thanksgiving Break.

Mr. Foote

Congratulations to everyone from yesterday.

Mrs. Lucian

Thank you to the community and public for attending the Board Meeting. Also, for those individuals who spoke at Public Comment.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani

Homecoming, amazing job. Unified Buddies – everyone enjoyed themselves. Congratulations to everyone who was re-elected. Glad to see turnout at tonight's meeting. Hoping for the same at every meeting going forward.

Mr. Perugino

STEM Program – Impressed. It was nice to see students having a nice time and learning. Would like to see a Policy Committee get together to resolve the political sign problem. This is not the responsibility of the Board or the Superintendent. Up to both political parties in town.

Mr. Zbuska

Congratulations to all. Thank you to everyone who spoke during public comment. Happy Thanksgiving.

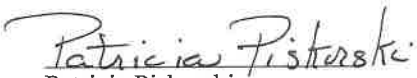
Mr. Seaman

Thank you to the majority of the public who came up and spoke. We do hear you. We have put things in place and you will be hearing updates, etc. shortly. Hopes everyone received the agenda via e-mail on Friday, which we said would be done. Hoping everyone has a good holiday season.

13. **Next Board Meeting** –The next regular meeting of the Plymouth Board of Education will be on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria at Terryville High School.

14. **Adjournment**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, all in favor, motion carries.


Patricia Piskorski
Recording Secretary
Plymouth Board of Education