

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, August 29, 2024
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson
Mary Kortmann, Secretary
Joseph Cleary
Emma Eaton
Courtney Rossignol
Christina Williams

Board Members Absent:

Eugene Marchand

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools

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

J. Beausoleil noted that for transportation parents can contact the transportation coordinator with any issues or appeals, the transportation subcommittee will then meet to discuss any issues.

There were no citizen comments.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone reported that the kids are back to school and doing well. Professional development has been occurring.

IV.A. Recognition: CHS Graduates Kai Mitchell (Pole Vault) and Anaka Eaton (Shot Put) – 2024 CHS Track and Field Made State Team

Dr. Petrone introduced both students, and Principal Blake said some nice words about the students. He noted that both students were also CABE award winners.

J. Beausoleil stated she is very proud of their accomplishments, and thanked them both for representing Coventry so well.

IV.B. Recognition Coventry 2025 Teacher of the Year – Jessica Harris

Dr. Petrone introduced Jessica. Ms. Harris is the reading consultant.

A video presentation in honor of Ms. Harris was shown. Mr. Blake spoke about Ms. Harris accomplishments and her wonderful rapport with students.

J. Beausoleil stated she served on the selection committee and was amazed at the talent in Coventry. She was impressed with Ms. Harris' positive relationship with students.

E. Eaton stated Ms. Harris' relationship with students speaks volumes of the trust that they have in her.

IV.C. Recognition: Staff Presenter – Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal – National Conference on School Leadership

Ms. DeRagon presented at the National Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals. Ms. DeRagon reviewed what she showcased at the conference. She highlighted student ownership initiatives that Coventry is employing and the vision of the graduate at the elementary level.

IV.D. Information: Opening of the 2024-2025 School Year

Dr. Petrone presented a video that was shown at Convocation. There were many student presenters and performers at Convocation.

V. VOTE: Consent Agenda

V.A. Approve the CNH 2025 Field Experience to Pennsylvania and Washington DC

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: E. Eaton

Result: Motion carries unanimously

VI. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil reported that many events are happening. New teacher orientation was completed, and meet and greet was well received. Open houses are coming up. CABE still has finance webinars available. There is a webinar on cell phone guidance. The State BOE is giving school districts time to build a policy.

C. Rossignol asked if there would be a follow-up on the snow day survey. Dr. Petrone stated that it will be shared at an upcoming meeting.

VII. Communications

There were none.

VIII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VIII.A. Approve Minutes of Special Meeting of June 27, 2024

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 27, 2024

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries with one abstention by C. Williams

VIII.B. Approve Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 27, 2024, as amended

MOTION: To approve the minutes of June 27, 2024

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: J. Cleary

J. Beausoleil asked to amend 10.A. Fiscal report, first sentence to '2% law is effective' for this fiscal year.

Result: Motion carries, with one abstention by C. Williams

VIII.C. Approve Minutes of the Special Meeting of July 18, 2024

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries, with two abstentions by C. Williams and C. Rossignol

IX. New Business

IX.A. Information: Annual Curriculum Update – M. Mullaly

Ms. Mullaly gave a presentation on the annual curriculum update, which is available on the district's website via the BoardBook portal. Wit & Wisdom is an integrated approach that will be this year's focus. Components include language comprehension, word recognition, knowledge-building foundation skills, and practice and skilled reading. This program will include intensive professional development. The new social studies standards were reviewed. Math, computing, dual enrollment, and personal finance updates were reviewed. Play-based learning reviewed. Legislative impacts and CSDE initiatives explained. The next steps in teaching and learning reviewed.

Ms. Mullaly relayed that Mr. Blake stated for the 22-23 school year, Coventry was the top 11th district in the state for percentage of students earning three college credits or more by the end of their junior year.

J. Beausoleil was excited to hear about the 17 dual enrollment opportunities available.

M. Kortmann inquired about the Wit and Wisdom program using grade-level reading for the whole year. She asked what happens if students are beyond the grade level. Ms. Mullaly stated there will be plenty of enrichment opportunities. She noted that the program is very rigorous. Socratic seminar explained.

Dr. Petrone stated there was extensive research on this program, as well as site visits. The committee felt that Wit and Wisdom was the leader. The other program did not have as much rigor.

J. Cleary stated that being 11th in the state is impressive. Dr. Petrone will send out a summary of test results and ranking. J. Cleary likes that we are working with other colleges.

J. Cleary asked if we are using what the state is asking us to use for social studies curriculum, or are we writing our own. M. Mullaly stated we are writing our own.

C. Williams asked that with the curriculum adjustment made last year with state assessments not starting until 2nd grade, what data are we using to align how effective curriculum is without having to wait two more years. Ms. Mullaly stated that they look at

the assessment calendar and use other grade-aligned or appropriate assessments. She stated that they identified that they could do a better job in fluency. They gave a core fluency assessment in grades k-3 three times during the year. They are also focusing on professional development with sprints.

X. Report of Board Members

X.A. Information: Transportation Committee Report, Meeting of August 20, 2024

J. Beausoleil reported that the committee reviewed the list Christian maintains for change or appeals in response to the bus routes that were published. They observed that there were a number of kindergarten stops that were missed. The stops were clarified at the meeting and put back in as driveway pickups. Reviewed the list of walkers. Clarified that the Lake Area service needed to be restored. They will put service back to the nearest bus stop. Each appeal was reviewed based on the definition in the policy. The committee came up with recommendations on which appeal to grant or deny. The route that had Coventry Kids was not updated as previously requested, that route was identified as needing tweaks before the first day of school.

Yesterday did not go as well as should have. She thanked Dr. Petrone for working with parents and DATTCO to get corrective actions in place.

Dr. Petrone sent an email at the end of the day to parents. He also spoke to RJ at DATTCO. DATTCO was very responsive and is reviewing our expectations with drivers.

Today went better. Addressed the most immediate safety issues. More appeals are coming in, which will be reviewed by the committee on 9/12/24.

DATTCO has put monitors on some buses today. They have reviewed the video and audio on buses for behavior issues.

The committee will review issues that DATTCO should be resolving by the 9/12 meeting.

Dr. Petrone stated we are not at the point of using the app to track buses yet. Once we are in a good place, the app will be implemented as this will be a good product for parents to track their kids.

X.B. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of August 29, 2024

M. Kortmann reported there isn't much information to report due to July 30th data. We do know that we have two special education kids that we budgeted for that are not here, and 5 that we didn't budget for that are here. This will have an impact on the budget.

J. Beausoleil stated Bill Hoff, who is the interim finance director, is working his way through reports and data. He will overlap with the new hire Charmaine for a few weeks. Charmaine starts on September 30.

J. Cleary asked when we find out about the number of special education students.

Dr. Petrone stated that the challenge is that the number is very fluid. Changes can happen midyear. Another challenge is outplaced students, and there is a process you have to follow.

XI. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries unanimously

Respectfully Submitted:

Tricia Dean
Board Clerk

Approved: September 12, 2024