

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Board of Education Regular Meeting
Approved Minutes of Thursday, September 12, 2024
Administration Building Conference Room

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairperson
Eugene Marchand, Vice Chairperson
Mary Kortmann, Secretary
Emma Eaton
Courtney Rossignol
Christina Williams

Board Members Absent:

Joseph Cleary

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools

Also Present:

Lillian O'Neil, Student Board of Education Representative

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

III. Audience of Citizens

There were no citizen comments.

IV. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Petrone reported that school is back to business as usual. He met with all the administrators to get a pulse for what was going on. The Commissioner's welcome-back meeting was held on 9/10 at the CT Science Center. Last night's Open House events were well attended. The feedback from parents was positive regarding the staggering of times between schools. Working on some bus route issues, but overall things have been going much smoother.

C. Williams stated that Google Classroom offers different information from PowerSchool. She asked for parent access to Google Classroom so they can see all the classrooms for each class. Dr. Petrone stated that Ms. Drury will be at the next meeting to review parent functionality. Dr. Petrone will check to see if parents can get access to Google Classroom.

IV.A. Information: Welcome and Board of Education Student Representative Report – Lillian O’Neil

Dr. Petrone introduced Lillian O’Neil, the new student representative for the 2024-2025 school year.

Miss O’Neil shared with the Board that she is a junior and that she participates in band, and indoor and outdoor track. In her free time, she enjoys participating in 4H and horseback riding. She shared that she also teaches a religious class.

IV.B. Information: Facilities – Summer 2024 Projects Presentation – Mr. Trudelle

Mr. Trudelle gave a presentation on the 2024 summer projects, which is available on the district’s website via the BoardBook portal.

Highlights included the ADA bathroom remodel, HVAC wiring upgrade, CHS HVAC project, and the implementation of a new maintenance software.

J. Beausoleil stated that the feedback from staff on the HVAC project was positive. They were pleased with how quickly, and with care, the classrooms were put back together.

The FMX maintenance software was reviewed in detail. Every piece of equipment can be tagged in the system to include pictures, location, maintenance information, and warranty. This software also tracks building usage.

IV.C. Information: Fitness Center Presentation

Dr. Petrone gave a presentation on the fitness center project proposal, which is available on the district's website via the BoardBook portal.

During NEASC’s visit, they recommended Standard VII: Community Resources for Learning. This standard recommends ensuring adequate funding to update the physical space of the weight room to make the weight room more inviting to all students, and to implement best practices for weight room safety and sanitizing protocols. Since the 2016-2017 school year, the weight room has been on the Capital Improvement Plan.

A breakdown of cost was reviewed for equipment, cost to move the tech-ed lab, and remodel of the space. The total cost estimate is \$102,690.

J. Beausoleil stated that this was a creative way to address the needs as determined by NEASC. Especially considering there was no movement with the Capital Improvement Plan at the high cost of \$247,500.

C. Rossignol asked if it was an issue that the fitness center was so close to the woodshop finishing room, as far as ventilation was concerned. Dr. Petrone stated for woodshop they wouldn’t have more than one class in at a time. By OSHA regulations, they have proper ventilation, and the room will be insulated for sound as well. The finishing room has its own exhaust system.

C. Rossignol asked why the equipment list didn’t include any treadmills. Dr. Petrone stated that the reason relates to the number of injuries incurred on treadmills.

C. Williams inquired about rooms 55 and 56. Dr. Petrone reviewed what those rooms were used for and what is happening with them now.

C. Williams asked if this has to go back to the town to fund or if they can use the 2% fund. J. Beausoleil stated they can decide as a Board to keep this as a CIP request. Or they can decide to use one of their funds, with the knowledge that the Town Council has not been forthcoming to support or finance this project.

M. Kortmann asked about the HVAC project and if anything needs to be done differently with the room changes. Mr. Trudelle stated that they don't need to do anything differently and explained how the computers for the different rooms talk to each other.

J. Beausoleil asked if there was the option to sell off the old equipment. Dr. Petrone stated that legally they have to give the town the first option.

J. Beausoleil stated this is a very creative solution and there is now better access available.

E. Eaton inquired about the doors leading to the outside. Dr. Petrone stated the doors would stay because it allows for access to bring in large equipment.

MOTION: Add to the agenda to vote regarding funding for the fitness center

By: C. Williams

Seconded: C. Rossignol

Result: Motion carries unanimously

J. Beausoleil explained the options of going the CIP route, using the operating budget, or using revenue accounts for tuition, facilities, or 2% account.

Discussion on using the 2% account due to a surplus that would more than cover the cost.

M. Kortmann reviewed a discussion during the Building Committee meeting regarding funding this.

C. Williams addressed the rendering of the equipment vs what was listed on the itemized list of equipment and that it does not match. Dr. Petrone stated that the rendering is 'artistic' and that they will be purchasing all of the equipment listed.

MOTION: To approve up to \$105,000 from the 2% non-lapsing account to be used for the fitness center renovations

By: C. Williams

Seconded: C. Rossignol

Result: Motion carries unanimously

Dr. Petrone noted that this project cannot start until after the HVAC project is complete.

V. Report of the Chairman

J. Beausoleil reported that open houses took place. She stated that offsetting the time for the middle school and high school open house was key.

J. Beausoleil reviewed a variety of ways that members of the community can get involved to include; PTO, parent advisory group, music boosters, athletic boosters, and reading to kids. Check the website and reach out to administrators for more information. There are a few more open houses coming up. The athletic season and play season kicks off soon.

VI. Communications

There were none.

VII. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

VII.A. Approve Minutes of August 29, 2024

Edits: IX.A. Annual Curriculum Update, top of page 4, change 'use past assessments' to use other grade-aligned or appropriate assessments.

X.B. Fiscal Report, change the start date for Charmaine from 'September 3rd' to September 30th

IV.A. Recognition, Agenda topic item should say State Champions, not 'State Team'

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 29, 2024, as amended

By: C. Rossignol

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion carries with one abstention by E. Marchand

VIII. Report of Board Members

VIII.A. Information: Transportation Committee Report, Meeting of September 12, 2024

E. Marchand reported they reviewed 13 appeals by the administration. DATTCO is dealing with orientation items, the committee requested another meeting in 2 weeks to assess. He is encouraged by the resources DATTCO can draw on. They collapsed pick-ups to cut down on the time kids are on the bus. He hopes parents appreciate the fact that they look at each individual case.

E. Eaton stated that there were a few routes that were not running close to the times that were posted. They asked DATTCO to track those routes and to come back in 2 weeks and give the actual run times. They will then republish routes with the correct times.

J. Beausoleil stated they also discussed the timeline for piloting the parent software for tracking bus routes. They will pilot for one week and then it will go live for the district.

Of the 13 appeals they reviewed, 3 were approved and 10 were denied. The next level of appeals is a legal hearing.

VIII.B. Information: Fiscal Committee Report, Meeting of September 12, 2024

M. Kortmann reported that as of 8/30 the regular budget is stable, however the Special Education line is negative \$180,000. This brings the overall budget about negative \$160,000. There is not an expectation that outplacements will improve.

C. Williams asked how much of the fields will be blocked off due to the implementation of the kindergarten fencing. Dr. Petrone showed the rendering of what the fencing will look like. It will not prohibit space for food trucks for events and there will still be plenty of field space.

IX. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

By: E. Eaton

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: Motion carries unanimously

Respectfully Submitted:

Tricia Dean
Board Clerk

Approved: September 26, 2024