

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLACE: Meeting held at Mead School Cafeteria, 75 Ford Street, Ansonia, CT 06401

DATE: 15 January 2025 **TIME:** 6:35 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: Mr. Rich Bshara, President.

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call – Mr. Bshara called a quorum

Mr. Bshara asked everyone to pause for a moment of silence for the passing of Middle School teacher Rubin Little. He said Mr. Little was very well liked and respected at the Middle School and he will be greatly missed by the staff and students.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MR. RICH BSHARA, president	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	X		
MS. STEPHANIE OCASIO-GONZALEZ	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X	
MS. BETH LABERGE	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X	
TOTAL	5	2	0

CHARGERS CHAMPIONS RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Mrs. Crooks told the Board she would like to recognize Bishop Ulysses Youngblood and Dr. Leslie Youngblood. She said they are from the Abundant Life Fellowship Ministries, Inc. and great partners of Ansonia Public Schools. Mrs. Crooks said they are the founders of The Life, Health & Wellness Center, and partner with many organizations throughout the Valley to create a better life for those in our community. She said every year they provide our students with food, school supplies, and counseling. Mrs. Crooks said they partner with other community organizations throughout the year at food and toy drives along with inviting our older students to participate and earn community service hours. She said they have collaborated with Dr. Morales to host Ansonia Family University in their hall multiple times. Mrs. Crooks told the Board in addition to helping raise funds for our Emergent Leaders HBCU Trip to Atlanta and Alabama, Dr. Youngblood joined Dr. Morales and the students at Ansonia High School as a chaperone for the trip. She said they are continuously looking for ways to make positive contributions to this community and the Youngbloods are true Charger Champions of Ansonia. Superintendent DiBacco said he has been working with the Youngbloods since coming to Ansonia. He said during the pandemic they offered their place for food distribution as well as hosting numerous meeting with religious officials. Superintendent DiBacco told the Board they have been the greatest support and Ansonia will always support them.

The Board thanked the Youngbloods for their support and congratulated them.

II. Public Session

There was no one from the public who wished to address the Board.

III. Action items, consideration of approving the following items:

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated October 9, 2024 (regular).

MOTION: To accept meeting minutes dated October 9, 2024.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

B. 2025 Ansonia Board of Education Meeting Schedule.

Mr. Bshara said the Board received this schedule in their packet.

MOTION: To accept the 2025 Ansonia Board of Education Meeting Schedule.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE	2	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	1	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

C. Emergent Leaders HBCU/Civil Rights Tour Trip to Atlanta and Alabama.

Superintendent DiBacco said they are asking once again to allow the students to attend the trip with Dr. Morales.

Dr. Morales said there is a little over \$20,000 in donations so far.

MOTION: To accept the Emergent Leaders HBCU/Civil Rights Tour Trip to Atlanta and Alabama.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

D. Certified Appointments.

1. Diane Nadhazi, Special Education, Grade 7, AMS.

2. Rachel Erdos, Language Arts, Grade 8, AMS.

Superintendent DiBacco said Ms. Nadhazi lives in Seymour and happy to be moving to a local district. He said she is leaving Bridgeport and very excited to join Ansonia. Superintendent DiBacco said Ms. Erdos is also going to be a great addition to the Middle School.

MOTION: To accept Certified Appointment of Diane Nadhazi, Special Education, Grade 7, AMS.

To accept Certified Appointment of Rachel Erdos, Language Arts, Grade 8, AMS.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ	2	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	1	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

E. Prendergast Commissioner's Network Plan.

Assistant Superintendent Steve Bergin told the Board he is going to turn it over to Liz Nimons to discuss the Commissioner's Network Plan. He said they were invited to the Commissioner's Network a few months ago regarding their new Network Plan. He said he observed the team and wanted to thank all the community members, teachers, and administrators. He said this was an incredibly difficult task to take on in a very short time frame. He said in mid-October they received the results of a one-day audit that was taken. Mr. Bergin said they had to complete the entire plan in a small-time frame. He said the dedication, work and collaboration was great. He turned it over to Mrs. Nimons.

Mrs. Nimons greeted the Board, said the committee helped identify and assist in implementing the process to improve all areas of the Commissioner's Network Plan. She said they have submitted their plan and are waiting for edits and then the final submission will be in March. Mrs. Nimons said the main focus is on academic improvement. She said it will begin next year, for three years.

IV. Informational Items.

A. South Korea Research Team Presentation.

Mr. Bergin said they have collectively decided to move this presentation to February. He said the high school is in the middle of exams. He said they are excited to share their experiences in South Korea.

B. Student Representatives

Superintendent DiBacco congratulated Quintez Whittle on making the All-State Football Team.

Quintez Whittle said exams are wrapping up, the football team just won the All-State Championship, girls' and boys' basketball has begun, and there will be a talent show coming up.

The Board thanked Quintez.

C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Bergin said he just returned from China. He told the Board he was honored to be part of the delegation that went for a NEASC assessment. He said 5-12 grade students, parents, and teachers took part. Mr. Bergin said the goal was to assess the school and give recommendations for improvement. He said they also provided professional development. He said thanks to Vin Wynne, the staff were already familiar with Ansonia. He said Vin was recently there and faculty remembered and heard about him. He said the goal was to assist the district and create a relationship. Mr. Bergin said by the end of the trip, he was approached about having students come to us. He said they have a high level of interest in receiving our students and teachers, as well as sending their students and teachers to Ansonia. Mr. Bergin said there will be a two-week partnership in the future. He told the Board they have been contacted by Spain, who is showing interest in a partnership as well. Mr. Bergin said in April they have an opportunity to send students and teachers to China. He said they will start slow and hopefully watch this grow.

D. Special Education Director

Stephanie Savo greeted the Board. She gave the Special Education numbers, she said the School Store is doing a great job and Derby came to ask for some insight. She said Derby is switching to uniform.

E. Technology Report

Mr. Pastore was not present, questions can be sent to him.

F. School Business Administrator Financials

1. 2024-2025 Year-to-Date

2. Grants and Other Income

Mr. Bshara introduced the new Business Administrator, Mr. Erich Marriott. He said Erich has been getting to know business in the district and things are going great. Mr. Marriott greeted the Board, saying he is still getting his feet wet. He said looking at the first half, Special Ed is the key line item. He said last week the state came out with their estimates for reimbursement for Special Ed. Mr. Marriott said it will be significantly lower than what anyone expected. He told the Board he is in a discussion group with other districts and this has been the topic. He also said the second half will focus on taking into consideration the lower reimbursement with the high cost of tuition as well as transportation. Mr. Marriott said other than that he is looking into the grants side and will be working with Bridget.

Mr. Bshara said it was about a 70-72% reimbursement, and now it will be about 60% which is going to be a huge loss.

G. Food Service Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Benham went over his report. He said his department will be replacing some machines in a few schools as part of the spend down plan. Mr. Benham also reviewed a few projects that will be happening in the near future.

H. Athletic Director's Report.

Mr. Bshara said any questions can be directed to Mr. Brockett. The athletic report was included. Mr. Bshara said basketball has started and the football was very successful.

I. Enrollment

Mr. Bshara went over the Enrollment Report noting the increase.

J. Youth Family Outreach Summary

Mr. Lisi reviewed his report. He said there is nothing really out of the ordinary this month. He said the main point right now is that there are over 200 new registrations since the beginning of the year. Mr. Lisi said last year there were 330 for the entire year. He said the DRG for over 55% of these new students are the same or lower DRG. He said students are putting a strain on the staff trying to accommodate their needs.

K. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Evans reviewed his report. He discussed replacement of older HVAC equipment, emergency drain issue repairs at the High School and Middle School, changing over to heat for the season, a meeting to discuss the roofing project summer 2025, and many other projects the department has been working on.

L. Director of Equity and Communications Report.

Dr. Reese Morales discussed his report for the month. He said there is \$27,823.69 raised so far for the Emergent Leaders HBCU/Civil Rights Tour Trip. He told the Board he continues with expulsion meetings, assisting Spanish speaking families with educational needs, as well as helping another district with McKinney-Vento needs. Dr. Morales said this assistance regarding transportation and filling out W-9 will assure we are only responsible for 50% of the transportation.

M. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent DiBacco greeted the Board. He spoke kindly about Rubin Little, saying he took part in one of Mr. Little's classes and it was amazing to see the students interact. Superintendent DiBacco said the kids loved his classroom activities and he and Mr. Bergin took part in the fun. He told Quintez Whittle, student Board member, the work that was done to have the Woodland football game played at home was not easy. He said it was also the most exciting football game he attended in his entire life. Superintendent DiBacco said he walked on the field after the win, and Mrs. Phipps said the old Ansonia Pride was definitely felt. He talked about the huge crowd we brought to the State Championship game and how proud the city is of the team. Superintendent DiBacco said before the championship game, every player presented their jersey to a mentor who made an impact on them. He said the

player wore their other jersey and the entire staff took a picture with players. Superintendent DiBacco said it is a beautiful tradition to be a part of. He said everything great that happens in the district is taken with pride, including the football team. Superintendent DiBacco said he wanted to thank the Board for supporting the district and renewing his contract.

The Board discussed the cell phone policies through out the district with administration. Mr. Bshara asked the Board to keep them posted regarding what works. He said it would be beneficial if the State would implement a policy for the district to be able to follow.

N. Additional; Administration or Board of Education

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION regarding expulsions.

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session regarding Expulsions at 7:15p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

Return to regular meeting.

VI. Action, as needed, as a result of Executive Session.

MOTION: To accept the recommendations as presented by the Superintendent regarding expulsions.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		5	0	0

VII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:25p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP				
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				

TOTAL		5	0	0
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Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 1/18/2024