

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

DATE: 21 February 2024 **TIME:** 6:30 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

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MR. RICH BSHARA, president	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	X		
TOTAL	7	0	0

II. Public Session

There were no comments from the public.

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

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated December 13, 2023 (Organizational), December 13, 2023 (Regular).

MOTION: To accept the meeting minutes dated October 11, 2023 (regular).

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

B. Ansonia Public Schools 2024-2025 School Calendar.

Discussion: There was discussion regarding the possibility of adjusting the calendar if the Primary Election date interferes with the school day. Everyone agreed it will be discussed when the time comes.

MOTION: To accept the Ansonia Public Schools 2024-2025 School Calendar

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

C. Correspondence from Shawn Venson regarding Mr. Marvin H. Franks

Discussion: Mr. Bshara asked if everyone read the submitted letter by Shawn Venson regarding naming the Middle School gymnasium in honor of Mr. Marvin Franks. He said the Board of Aldermen have agreed to this recommendation upon the approval of the Board of Ed. Ms. LaBerge asked if this would carry over to the new Middle School gymnasium. Mr. Bshara said he believes this is only for the current Middle School gymnasium. Mr. Bshara asked for a letter to be sent to the Board of Aldermen regarding the approval from the Board of Ed.

MOTION: To approve the recommendation from Shawn Venson regarding naming of the current Middle School gymnasium after Mr. Marvin H. Franks.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	1	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	2	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

IV. Informational Items.

A. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Bergin greeted the Board and discussed the on-going Vision of a Graduate Program. He said all members of the team gave input and effort to support the evidence of what the goal for the project is. Mr. Bergin said the areas were identified and a process to reach our goals have begun. He said he believes it is a very attainable outcome and he is excited as well as proud of the team. He said a professional development day took place recently and it was a very successful for the staff. Mr. Bergin talked about the high school and their ACES International Program. He discussed the relationship that has been established with China, as well as beginning relationships with other countries. Mr. Bergin told the Board the CAPSS Award recipient Fahmida Chowdury actually lead the China Project.

There were no questions.

B. Special Education Director's Report

Discussion: Ms. Stephanie Savo was not in attendance. Superintendent DiBacco said Ms. Savo went home sick, he reviewed the Special Education Director's Report. He talked about the incoming Special Ed students, an update on the Talented and Gifted Program, and several other updates regarding the Special Education Department.

C. Technology Report.

Mr. Vin Pastore was not in attendance; the Board quickly reviewed the report, noting updates happening within the IT Department. There were no questions.

D. School Business Administrator Financials

1. 2023-2024 Year-to-Date

2. Grants and Other Income

Mr. Chuck Carey was not in attendance. Mr. Bshara told the Board there were several transfers throughout the month to assist with keeping the budget in balance. Mr. Bshara asked to vote on the budget transfers that were listed.

Mr. Bshara said there is an approximate \$50,000 deficit showing right now so there was a spending freeze put in place throughout the district. Ms. Voroschak asked about the rollover account. Mr. Bshara said that account will most likely not come into play for the current budget. Mr. Phipps asked how next year's budget is looking. Mr. Bshara said numbers from the city have not come in yet. He said once the Board has a clearer idea from the city, they will be able to move forward on the Board of Ed's side.

MOTION: To approve the budget transfers as presented.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	1	X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

E. Food Service Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Benham gave his report, he reviewed the report that was presented to the Board. He said the department is in really good shape. Mr. Benham told the Board about some new equipment that will be delivered to the high school as well as the cafeteria refresh happening at Prendergast over April break. There were no questions.

F. Athletic Director's Report.

Mrs. Tammy Adames gave the Board an update regarding the latest athletic stats for cheer and basketball. She told the Board that a new Step Team has been put together and they are doing well.

Mr. Bshara asked the Board to email Mr. Brockett with any questions.

G. Enrollment

Superintendent DiBacco said numbers continue to show we are up enrollment wise. He said the new students coming in are from several different foreign countries, as well as students receiving special services. Superintendent DiBacco said a large percentage of students coming in are coming in from a lower DRG or equal to our district.

Mr. Bshara asked if the Board can get a consolidated report showing the increase in enrollment of students with needs. Mr. Bshara said it will be helpful to show the city where the financial need is coming from. He said it will be a useful tool for people to see what is impacting the cost to our education system.

H. Youth Family Outreach Summary

Mr. Bob Lisi presented his report. He gave the enrollment numbers and continued to confirm the discussion Superintendent DiBacco was having. He gave numbers of new students receiving special services. He said the students are coming from many foreign countries that require ELL services. He said there are students from 16 different countries that came into the district in the past few months. He said the number continues to increase and it is very difficult to provide required services. Mr. Bshara asked if this is unique to our district. Mr. Lisi said no, other districts are also getting new foreign students. Mr. Bshara asked if we can have a monthly report regarding the data that Mr. Lisi just presented. He said it will help to show the city. Ms. LaBerge asked to obtain data regarding students leaving the district and the services, if any, that were provided. She said it may help to share that information against the number of students coming in that require services. Mr. Knapp asked if the state should be aware of this data. Superintendent DiBacco said it may be something useful to try and present and possibly work with the city as well, in the future. He said low rental cost is definitely a factor when renters are looking for housing. He told the Board it is difficult many times when trying to work with landlords, and the city may be able to assist. Superintendent DiBacco says when 50% of our housing are rental properties, it adds to this problem. Ms. Ocasio-Gonzalez says our rent costs are extremely cheaper than surrounding towns and section eight properties are easily transferred to our town. Mr. Bshara thanked Mr. Lisi.

I. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Bob Evans, Facilities Director reviewed his report. He discussed the final stages of replacing a boiler at the high school, as well as plans regarding the replacement roof. He told the Board; the department is getting ready for projects during April break. Mr. Evans also talked about numerous projects his staff is currently working on, as well as the upcoming state mandated air quality evaluation that will soon be in place.

Mr. Bshara asked what the next step for the roof project will be. Mr. Evans said that project application will be moving forward.

J. Director of Equity and Communications Report.

Dr. Reese Morales gave his monthly report. He said he participated in several restorative practice circles at the Middle School regarding student conflict resolutions, staff evaluations for Mid-year, assistance in translating Spanish speaking parents and students for various reasons, as well as assisting with student alterations. He also said he began a Boys Group at the high school. Mr. Phipps said from the report presented, it looks like there are quite a few homeless students. Dr. Morales agreed and said when students go homeless, Ansonia will provide transportation to and from school, from where they are temporarily staying. He said in some cases other students will end up here due to the domestic violence residence we have in the city. Superintendent DiBacco added, the transportation for a student who is homeless is roughly \$30,000 a year. Mr. Bshara asked if this data can also be added to the report for the city.

K. Superintendent's Report

Dr. DiBacco said it was a pleasure to attend the yearly Special Needs basketball game held at the high school with Mr. Phipps. He said he attended the Legislative Breakfast with Mr. Carey to speak about unfunded mandates that are being put in place. Superintendent DiBacco said the legislature tries to put in place a one size fits all and it simply does not work for all students and districts. He also told the Board about the recent change for the age to begin Kindergarten that is being put in place by the state. He said he is going to attend a press conference regarding this decision, which he believes is put in place too abrupt. Superintendent DiBacco said in our district for example, there is a wait list for pre-K that families are counting on. He also said he has spoken to Mr. George Mitchell of Sikorsky, about being a part of the first Ansonia Public Schools Business Council Program. He said he is very excited about the global connections that may be happening in Greece, as well as Jamaica in the near future.

V. Executive Session

A. Expulsions

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session regarding Expulsions at 7:30 p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

Return to regular meeting.

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

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

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		

MR. DAVID KNAPP	2	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

VII. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	0

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 2/25/2024