ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLACE: Meeting held at Mead School Cafeteria, 75 Ford Street, Ansonia, CT 06401
DATE: 10 April 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	6	1	0

Chargers Champions Recognition Program

Mrs. Crooks congratulated Mr. George Mitchell on his recent retirement as Vice President of Operations at Sikorsky. She said Mr. Mitchell is a resident of the community and has been instrumental with the pathway that has been established between the school district and Sikorsky. She said the relationship began in 2018 and has grown since. Mrs. Crooks told the Board about the paid internship program for high school students, the Women in Engineering Program, and a week-long internship for teachers to gain knowledge at Sikorsky regarding the details of the business. She said we have Mr. Mitchell to thank for all of the opportunities.

Superintendent DiBacco said when he arrived in Ansonia he wanted to strengthen the career pathways. He said Mr. Mitchell was eager to help our students from day one and continues to do so. He said Mr. Mitchell recently agreed to be chair of our first Ansonia Business Council. Superintendent DiBacco said he appreciates the enormous support from Mr. Mitchell and his family. He said he is looking forward to have Mr. Mitchell share skillsets and mentor our students regarding today's business world. Superintendent DiBacco thanked Mr. Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell told the Board he was in the very first class at Mead School. He said he grew up in the area and has fond memories. Mr. Mitchell told Superintendent DiBacco he appreciates the partnership and looks forward to the future.

Mrs. Crooks called up Athletic Director, Tom Brockett. He said the high school cheerleaders went back to back with the state title in March. He told the Board, the team pulled it out and won the state championship for the second year, and also went on to win a New England Regional Championship, for the first time ever. He gave credit to their coach, Jennifer DeGennaro.

Mrs. Crooks introduced the team with coach Jen DeGennaro, and presented them with the Charger Champions recognition.

The Board congratulated the team for all their accomplishments.

CAS Distinguished Friend of Education Award

Ms. Beth Smith from CAS in CT Association of Schools Committee greeted the Board. She spoke about the history of the prestigious award that is geared to individuals or establishments that help in the education field. She said it is the greatest award given by the association to entities that are not directly involved in the public education system. Ms. Smith said this popular award is the highest recognition presented by

CAS and that fact alone speaks volumes about the Ansonia Nature Center. Ms. Smith said she has worked in the valley for years and knows the impact the Nature Center brings to the local community.

She presented the award on behalf of CAS to Dan and Allison, as well as the entire staff at the Ansonia Nature Center.

Prendergast School Principal Liz Nimons told the Board, Ranger Dan has been working at the Nature Center since 2015. She said he is also a parent at Prendergast School. Mrs. Nimons gave some background on Ranger Dan and the amazing things he has been doing at the Nature Center. She said he lives in town and also very involved in the community. She said it was easy for her to nominate the Nature Center for their long-time involvement in the school district and the many enrichment programs that they continue to offer.

Mr. Dan Bosques thanked Mrs. Nimons and said the entire staff at the Nature Center is to be commended. He said Ally has worked at the Center for 25 years and does amazing things. He said they wouldn't be able to operate and reach the thousands of people a year without the staff. Mr. Bosques said it is really humbling to engage and teach the students of Ansonia in the way that they do. He said it is an amazing honor to be nominated for the award. He thanked everyone on behalf of Allison who was not able to attend.

Mr. Bshara thanked Mrs. Nimons for the nomination.

II. Public Session

Nancy Aromando, 55 Highland Terr. greeted the Board, saying she had a couple of questions for the athletic program. She said her daughter is running track right now for Ansonia in Derby. She said there are no buses and she has to pay for an Uber for her daughter to get to practice each day. Ms. Aromando asked what she has to do to get her student a bus to practice. She told the Board she feels as a taxpayer she should be able to get a bus. Mr. Bshara said he will get her name and number to administration to answer the question. He said he is not sure if there is a resolution but he will have someone get in touch with her. Ms. Aromando said the fact she pays every day is unfortunate when they have a bus that takes the kids to Nolan Field for our athletes. She said she isn't sure why they can't just continue the route to Derby. Mr. Bshara took her information. Ms. Aromando also said her daughter really loves track but Ansonia doesn't have a uniform for the kids. She said other kids come from other towns and have all kinds of gear and our athletes don't. She said she is willing to pay for it. Mr. Bshara asked if her daughter represents Ansonia, she said yes.

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

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated March 13, 2024

MOTION: To accept meeting minutes dated March 13, 2024.

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

B. Pine Trust use request

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said Karen Phipps puts this together each year for the district. He said the funds support things such as Project Lead the Way, The Advanced Manufacturing Program, The Sikorsky Stem Challenge, and several Tech courses. He said there are many things the Pine Trust funds and details are listed in the presented packet.

MOTION: To accept the use of the Pine Trust Grant as presented.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	2	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

C. Ed Specs for AHS partial roof replacement project.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said in Mr. Evans absence, he would request the Board to accept the Ed Specifications regarding the Roof Project for the High School. He said the details are noted in the packet.

MOTION: To accept the Ed Specs for AHS partial roof replacement project.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

D. End-of-Year Early Dismissal Days.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco told the Board the last day of school is usually an early dismissal. He said he is asking the Friday before also be an early dismissal. Superintendent DiBacco said this will help with high school graduation preparation, but also be good for the other schools.

MOTION: To approve the End-of-Year Early Dismissal Days.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

E. Retirement – Melissa Montini Cook, Mead School, Grande 3.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said jokingly, he does not want the Board to accept the motion. He said Mrs. Cook is an amazing teacher at Mead School and the public loves her. He said her scores have been the highest in the district and she is an incredible individual. He said she is what Ansonia is all about. Superintendent DiBacco said she cares, and at the same time has very high expectations for her classroom. He said her students live up to it and parents and students alike love it.

MOTION: To approve the retirement request from Melissa Montini Cook.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

IV. Informational Items.

A. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Bergin greeted the Board, starting off with a follow up on the visiting scholar from South Korea. He said the experience was phenomenal. Mr. Bergin said he gave the building administrators her requests and they did an amazing job hosting. He told the Board it went from meetings with administrators, meetings with teachers and students, department heads and Special Education. Mr. Bergin said during the closing meeting she requested to continue the relationship with our district. Mr. Bergin said the visit was amazing and we have raised the bar with ACES International. He said she shared that other districts did not give as much as a welcome to her colleagues when they were visiting. He said he was not surprised; this is what Ansonia is. He said he is very proud of our community and students. Mr. Bergin said we were recognized by the state regarding our curriculum. He said the work that has been done for the past five years on the new curriculum has been commended and we are being asked to implement a video to help guide other districts in their journey. He said Kayla Jarrin told him the state is impressed and we are partnering and collaborating with other districts to assist.

B. Special Education Director's Report

Ms. Stephanie Savo gave her report, she discussed the Special Education numbers and their details. She reviewed the events happening throughout the month. Ms. Savo also gave an update regarding the talented and gifted program. She said there was a meeting at the high school regarding a new Special Needs Athletic Program starting at grade Kindergarten and the department is very excited.

C**. Technology Report.**

Mr. Vin Pastore gave his report, summarizing the details of this month. He talked about last months' server rollover success and chrome book replacement.

D. School Business Administrator Financials

1. 2023-2024 Year-to-Date

2. Grants and Other Income

There was some discussion regarding the spending of grant balances, Mr. Carey said this will be resolved by December 30.

Mr. Carey said we are still trending about $50,000 over budget, but he said he is confident numbers will balance out. He said they are working on open Purchase Orders, as well as awaiting the balance of the Excess Cost Grant funds to come in.

MOTION: To approve the budget transfers as presented.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	2	X		

MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

E. Food Service Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Benham reviewed his reports as presented with Board members. He explained the numbers and reasons for line item details. He said they are running a bit behind on the Prendergast School Cafeteria Project, but it will be completed very soon. He said he will be happy to answer any questions.

F. Athletic Director's Report.

Mr. Tom Brockett said the department is really struggling with fields. He told the Board our tennis courts are not safe to play on. He said for the rest of the year, they may have to go on the road. He said hopefully the turf project goes through. Mr. Brockett said he wanted to address the team of one, parent concern from earlier. He told the Board, there are students who are allowed to compete by themselves, such as golf, swimming, or track. He said it is only for individual athlete sports teams. He said it has always been the agreement that transportation is not provided. Mr. Brockett said they have also never been asked for transportation to be provided. He said this is a new case. He explained there may be a time conflict with our school dismissal and the start of the practice, which can lead to unattended students. He said it might not be the case, but situations can occur losing the ability to participate.
Superintendent DiBacco said it has always been the past practice that transportation is not provided.
Mr. Bshara asked to schedule a Facilities Committee Meeting and an Athletic Committee Meeting to discuss further.
Mr. Brockett said every student athlete gets a uniform. He said the extra items such as track suits are not provided.
Mrs. Bshara said he does not know the issues, but he would like to get an understanding.

G. Enrollment

Mr. Bshara discussed the Enrollment report.

H. Youth Family Outreach Summary

Mr. Bob Lisi said March was a busy report regarding attendance and residence, he discussed his monthly report.

I. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Bob Evans was not present.

J. Director of Equity and Communications Report.

Dr. Reese Morales reviewed his report. He gave details of activities he attended this month including the Food Bank for homelessness, behavior incidents he assisted in, a meeting with Boys Group and BROSE at the high school, as well as others.

K. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent DiBacco said he wanted to echo the honor it was to host the visitor from South Korea. He said of all the districts they could have chosen, it was awesome to share what we are doing here in Ansonia. He said it was a great reflective moment for us to see how far we have come in the short time since we have been together. Superintendent DiBacco said everyone has been part of this process, and we should all be very proud. He said he met with the president of Southern Connecticut State University recently and was asked to join the SCSU Advisory Committee. He said this will be a great opportunity to be involved in. He said they have some state-of-the-art facilities and he is eager to be a part of this committee. Superintendent DiBacco said the recent earthquake and solar eclipse happening during school hours was a success and staff and students handled both very well. He talked about Policy updates that are being worked on, the SCASA Scholarship review, a leadership conference in Bristol, and the CORE team meeting. Superintendent DiBacco also gave praise to Ms. Bridget Calabrese and Ms. Kayla Jarrin for their involvement in the curriculum updates that will be used by colleagues.
Mr. Bshara said it is nice to see the leading that is going on within the district. He said it is a joy and the Board thanks everyone.

L. Additional; Administration or Board of Education

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				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		

MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

Return to regular meeting.

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

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

	MOTION	**YES**	**NO**	**ABSTAIN**
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LABERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

V. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

	MOTION	**YES**	**NO**	**ABSTAIN**
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO				
MS. OCASIO-GONZALEZ		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LABERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 4/22/2024