

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLACE: meeting held via Zoom **DATE:** 12 January 2022 **TIME:** 6:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order by: Mr. Rich Bshara, President

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call – Mr. Rich Bshara called a quorum

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

Mr. Bshara asked everyone to pause for a moment of silence for former AHS custodian, Paul Wojciechowski who recently passed. He thanked Mr. Wojciechowski for his service, and offered condolences to his family.

Chargers Champions Recognition Program

Mr. Bshara told the Board this segment will be postponed for in-person meeting.

II. Public Session

There were no comments.

III. Action items, consideration of approving the following items

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated December 8, 2021 (organizational) and December 8, 2021 (regular).

MOTION: To accept the meeting minutes dated December 8, 2021 (organizational) and December 8, 2021 (regular).

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI				X
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE	1	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTAL		6	0	1

B. Certified appointment, Chelsea Rodriguez, School Counselor, Ansonia High School.

Superintendent DiBacco told the Board, Ms. Rodriguez will be replacing the Guidance Counselor who recently left the district. He said she comes in with SEL experience and they are happy to have her on board.

MOTION: To accept certified appointment of Chelsea Rodriguez, School Counselor, Ansonia High School.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	2	X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	1	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	

C. Request for a transfer of funds to Capital Improvements, Ansonia High School.

Discussion: Mr. Rick Belden said there is an on-going project at the high school. He said the project has run over cost and the Finance Department is proposing to utilize savings from health insurance. He said the project is being handled by legal to recoup some of the costs. Mr. Bshara asked if this is the Maintenance garage project that the city has funded the bulk of. Mr. Belden said it is the project. Mr. Bshara asked if there will be enough in health insurance funds. Mr. Belden said there is more than enough to make the transfer. Mr. Bshara thanked Mr. Belden and said is happy to see this to be part of the budgetary process.

MOTION: To accept request for a transfer of \$133,534.70 into Capital Improvements line item, Ansonia High School.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	1	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	

D. 2022 Revised Schedule of Ansonia Board of Education Meetings.

Mr. Bshara said this was revised based on the conversation at last month's regular meeting. He said it incorporates a second monthly meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month. He told the Board it will be listed as a meeting, to be used for committee meetings or any other necessary meetings. He said if the Board does not need the meeting; it can easily be canceled. Mr. Bshara said he likes that there will be a set date if need be.

MOTION: To accept the revised 2022 Schedule of Ansonia Board of Education Meetings.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	1	X		
TOTAL		7	0	

Mr. Bshara asked to have this new schedule posted to the website.

IV. Informational Items.

A. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Mr. Steve Bergin said he wanted to share a few highlights from his report. Mr. Bergin reminded the Board after one day of school from winter vacation, it was decided to close the district for four days. He said this was discussed before going out for winter break. Mr. Bergin said discussions with Superintendent DiBacco, Naugatuck Valley Health, The Department of Education lead to the decision. He said after that first day back, they saw the attendance had severely declined for students, as well as staff. He said the bus company was very short staffed, and unable to complete all routes. He said Nurse Monica's input has been phenomenal. Mr. Bergin said it was determined with the days off, the district could come back full staffed and able to transport the students. He told the Board that coming back showed a significant improvement in attendance. He told the Board he would send the data that was pulled today. He told the Board they have shifted to five-day quarantine period, after the Special Board Meeting to approve. He said staff and students have to have no symptoms after day five to return to school. Mr. Bergin said there is also a new form within the district for tracking positive cases and exposure. He said there are home testing kits provided for staff and students which is also helping. Mr. Bergin said Prendergast has been selected to work with Colombia University Teacher College to partner a new unit in grades 3 and 5. He said it is an amazing accomplishment to be working with the university. He said to be working with the mecca of teaching, is something we should all be proud of. He said the universities work is the absolute highest level, and he is very excited. Mr. Bergin said the Sikorsky Women of Engineering Program was held at the Middle School, thanks to John LaRovera. He said the first day was public speakers as well as a group trivia piece. He said the second day was a hands-on creative day, with the leaders and mentors of Sikorsky. Mr. Bergin said this systemic approach working down from the high school is such a positive vision here in Ansonia. Mr. Knapp asked if there is any way the public can be informed of these projects. He said he thinks they are great, and exactly the type of things the public needs to hear about. Mr. Bergin said we are posting a lot of this through Parent Square. He said it is also something that can be put on the website. Mr. Knapp suggested the Valley Independent, and said he loves to hear this type of news. There were no other comments

B. Special Education Report

Mr. Kevin Keating, Special Education Director, said to date there are 464 students receiving special education services. He said the ACES Programs are moving forward, and have taken off nicely. He said there is a high number of referrals coming from Pre-K. He told the Board, this is the largest area of referrals and the department is looking at intervention and teaching for these students who have been isolated.

C. Technology Report

Mr. Vincent Pastore stated there was nothing new to report.

D. School Business Administrator Financials

Mr. Rick Belden, School Business Administrator, said his report is documented through December 31. He said he continues to work with staff at City Hall. He said the budget information will be made available to the Board soon. He said he made some room for more details on his report, to show where funds are being spent. He said they are expecting \$542,000 fund positive by year end. He said the accounts will continue to be monitored. He told the Board there will also be a positive by year end for health insurance.

Mr. Bshara said he likes the new expanded budgetary reporting. He said it looks like \$650,000 for Excess, and is the number on the low side. Mr. Belden said the first report was filed for this grant. He said he works with the Special Education Department to determine what the reimbursement will be. Mr. Belden said when the second report is filed in February, there will be a better idea of the reimbursement. He said then in March, when the final report is submitted, the number should be much clearer. He said the number in this report is conservative, but a lot of activity can occur.

Mr. Phipps asked when the 2022-2023 budget can be shared. Mr. Belden said they have been dealing with other things, such as the audit and some HR issues. He said once these are handled, it will be presented.

1. 2020-2021 Year-to-Date
2. Athletics
3. Food Service
4. Grants and other income
5. Audit Task List

E. Food Services Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Benham, Food Service Director, said he is still working with Rick Belden and the city to get access to Quick Books. He said his report is not reflecting the true balance, because funds are not updating without the access. He said the USDA has increased the reimbursable rate by \$.25 per student. He said this is an enormous increase and will be an approximately \$8,000 increase per month. He said food was served last week to about 100 families while school was out. He said there are three pending grants for equipment, a chiller, and farm to school grant. He continued with the rest of his report.

Mr. Bshara asked if they are still moving on getting the system on to the Infinite Visions. Mr. Benham confirmed they are working on this.

F. Enrollment

Mr. Lisi reviewed this report.

G. Youth and Family Outreach –

Mr. Bob Lisi presented his report. He said there was nothing really drastic from last month. He said turkey dinners were provided to twenty families for the holiday. Mr. Lisi also said Shop with a Cop was a success over the holidays, and 15 families were given \$350 each. Mr. Lisi said these two programs are two great events our district offers.

Mr. Bergin said Mr. Lisi is an amazing resource for tracking student attendance and he deserves thanks for all the work he puts in.

Mr. Bshara also thanked Mr. Lisi for his help with attendance, as well as all bus related issues.

H. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Bob Evans was not at the meeting; his report was enclosed.

There were no other questions.

I. Director of Equity and Communications Report.

Dr. Reese Morales, Director of Equality and Communications, reported about the happenings throughout the district. He said there were three days of successful vaccination clinics, he thanked Mr. Ryan Thomas, who donated 10,000 surgical masks to the district. Mr. Bshara asked to express the Board's thanks for that kind gesture from Mr. Thomas.

Mr. Morales told the Board about several other events including a cozy pajama collection at Mead School, and a Pearl Harbor celebration which Superintendent DiBacco attended.

J. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent DiBacco greeted the Board. He said he wanted to address how wonderful the high school staff reacted to the December 13th evacuation. He said he has never seen such collaboration with the Police Department, the teachers, administration, and parents during the incident. He said he was in constant contact with Officer Barry and Chief Wayne Williams. He said they did a thorough investigation, and ensured all students and staff were safe. Superintendent DiBacco said he also wanted to share that Mr. Lisi, Mr. Bergin, and he went to the armory when it reopened after the renovation gifted by Griffin Hospital. He said it is just one more excellent partnership with the hospital. Superintendent DiBacco said thanks also goes out to Mr. Bergin, Dr. Morales, and Nurse Monica, who met with him consistently over the holiday break to monitor staff and students. He said there was several Zoom meetings to make sure students would be returning as safe as possible. He told the Board he gives everyone credit for attempting to open after the break. He thanked the Board for allowing them to make the decision to take the time that was needed for people to get well and staff the building. He thanked the community for their support. Superintendent DiBacco said he was able to use the time to put in place necessary plans to have everyone return healthy. He said the data shows the time was essential and he appreciates the support. He told the Board the decision was not an easy one. He said he received messages from other Superintendents who would have loved to receive the same decision our Board made. Superintendent DiBacco said he is happy to be back full time. He said there are several amazing things going on in the district, and he is excited to move forward.

Mr. Bshara said he agrees, the decision to close after the break was the best. He thanked Superintendent DiBacco for making the decisions. He thanked everyone involved and gave credit to all staff.

K. Additional; Administration or Board of Education.

Ms. DiGiorgi asked if the committee members were made. Mr. Bshara said he will send that out to Board members.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6), to consider the Superintendent's recommendations for expulsions.

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 7:50 regarding Expulsions.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	2	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	

To return to regular meeting

VI. ACTION on Expulsion recommendations discussed in Executive Session.

MOTION: To accept recommendations by Superintendent DiBacco regarding Expulsions.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	1	X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS	2	X		
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA, president		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MR. DAVID KNAPP	1	X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS		X		

MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		7	0	

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 1/15/2022