

# ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

**PLACE:** meeting held at Mead School Cafeteria, 75 Ford Street **DATE:** 8 June 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. 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 LABERGE           | X       |        |      |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           | X       |        |      |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       | X       |        |      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | 6       | 1      | 0    |

Mr. Bshara asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence for the passing of former employee, Frank Henry. He said Mr. Henry was a dedicated custodian who worked for many years in the school district.

## Recognition

### Ansonia's 2023 Teacher of the Year, Kelly Balanca

Mrs. Sara Crooks introduced Ms. Kelly Balanca. She told the Board, Kelly has been teaching in Ansonia for eight years. Mrs. Crooks said she has been in the sixth grade at Mead School and this is her first-year teaching sixth grade at the Middle School. She told the Board, Kelly has an amazing rapport with faculty, students, and parents. She said her co-workers speak on the exceptional job Kelly does as a team player. Mrs. Crooks presented Ms. Balanca with a token of appreciation, and the Board congratulated her on her accomplishments. Superintendent DiBacco said Ms. Balanca is a very kind, humble teacher who is truly loved by all. He congratulated Ms. Balanca. Ms. Balanca thanked Mrs. Crooks, she thanked her co-workers, and family for their support. She thanked the Board and said she looks forward to many years in Ansonia.

## Chargers Champions Recognition Program

### Students PCT Pathway Recognition

Mrs. Crooks honored the first ever group of Ansonia High School students to complete the PCT pathway through Ansonia High School and Griffin Hospital. The four seniors were honored with stoles and pins to wear at graduation. Mrs. Crooks also recognized the staff who were instrumental in putting this pathway together. She said the idea started 5 years ago and was spearheaded by Dr. DiBacco. He and Mrs. Crooks initially met with Griffin. She told the Board, Mr. Giansanti came in and made the pathway what it is today. Mr. Giansanti created a master schedule that would allow the students to finish their AHS requirements in January of their senior year, and begin the PCT course at Griffin. Mrs. Crooks told the Board, Mr. Giansanti worked closely with Ms. Chin and Ms. Cruz, making sure the student's needs were met along the way. Mrs. Crooks stressed, this is not an easy pathway to complete and the students exceeded all expectations. She also said, all four are graduating in the top ten of their class. The students honored are: Louis Gripper, Haylee Johnson, Kiley Geoghan and Kendall Evans.

## II. Public Session

There were no comments.

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

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated April 27, 2022 (regular), May 11, 2022 (regular), May 25, 2022 (regular).

**MOTION:** To accept the meeting minutes dated April 27, 2022 (regular), May 11, 2022 (regular), May 25, 2022 (regular).

|                            | MOTION | YES | NO | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|----|---------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |        | X   |    |         |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       | 2      | X   |    |         |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |        |     |    |         |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           | 1      | X   |    |         |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |        | X   |    |         |

|                      |  |   |   |   |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK |  | X |   |   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         |  | 6 | 0 | 0 |

## B. Certified Appointments

### 1. Michele Keefe, Art, Ansonia Middle School.

Superintendent DiBacco told the Board, Ms. Keefe will be a great addition to the Middle School. He said her interview rose to the top and he is very excited to welcome Ms. Keefe.

**MOTION: To accept certified appointment of Michele Keefe, Art, Ansonia Middle School.**

|                            | MOTION | YES | NO | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|----|---------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |        | X   |    |         |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |        |     |    |         |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            | 1      | X   |    |         |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           |        | X   |    |         |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       | 2      | X   |    |         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |        | 6   | 0  | 0       |

### 2. Briana Vizcaino, Grade 5, Mead School.

Superintendent DiBacco told the Board, Ms. Vizcaino is coming to us from California. He said she will be relocating to Orange, CT. Superintendent DiBacco said she was an excellent interview and her lesson via Zoom was great.

**MOTION: To accept certified appointment of Briana Vizcaino, Grade 5, Mead School.**

|                            | MOTION | YES | NO | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|----|---------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |        | X   |    |         |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |        |     |    |         |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            | 1      | X   |    |         |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           |        | X   |    |         |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       | 2      | X   |    |         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |        | 6   | 0  | 0       |

### 3. Kirstyn Masiello, SRBI Literacy Specialist, Prendergast School.

Superintendent DiBacco said this candidate came highly recommended from several colleagues. He said her interview was very, very good and he is sure Ms. Masiello will be a great asset to Prendergast School.

**MOTION: To accept certified appointment of Kirstyn Masiello, SRBI Literacy Specialist, Prendergast School.**

|                            | MOTION | YES | NO | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|----|---------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |        | X   |    |         |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |        |     |    |         |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           | 1      | X   |    |         |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       | 2      | X   |    |         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |        | 6   | 0  | 0       |

**C. Resignation, Kevin Keating, Director of Special Services.**

Superintendent DiBacco said Mr. Keating has done very well while he was in the position of Special Services Director. He said he wishes Mr. Keating well in his next endeavor.

**MOTION: To accept the resignation of Kevin Keating, Director Special Services.**

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

**D. Curriculum**

Mr. Steve Bergin said they are looking for the approval of two curriculum programs. He thanked everyone involved.

**1. Presentation of new K-8 Math**

Mr. John LaRovera, Director of Math, spoke with the Board regarding the committee, and all involved with the program he is interested in implementing. He gave background on the free curriculum program that was used for so many years. He said beginning with a survey that proved staff was not happy with the free program. Mr. LaRovera said there is a great need for a program that our students can actually benefit from. He said there was no align or way to assess progress. He said the pandemic contributed to the decline in performance as well. He presented the steps that were taken, audit process from ACES, data obtained from local districts using successful programs, in-house audits, as well as surveys to get specific input from staff. He said the committee he put together, consisted of staff members to represent each school and every grade level. Mr. LaRovera said surveys were sent out after, to see which piloted programs were favored. He said i-Ready was the choice for all Middle School, and split down the middle for elementary. He thanked all the staff involved in this process.

Superintendent DiBacco said he asked Mr. LaRovera to imagine what they envisioned Ansonia students having. He said for the longest time, the teachers did not have much to go by. He said students deserve the best and he wants to make that happen.

Mr. LaRovera said the cost will be approximately \$45 per student.

Ms. LaBerge asked if the program will be starting next school year. She also stated she is very excited to see this replace the old program.

Mr. LaRovera confirmed, it will start next school year.

**2. Presentation of Grade 4-5 ELA Word Study Program**

Ms. Kayla Jarrin, Director ELA & Social Studies, said after collecting data it was clear grade 4 and 5 were not performing at their grade level. She said the skill sets were two to three grade levels below due to the pandemic, as well as the result of the transient population. She presented the data, explained the importance of improvement, and showed how the plan came about. She told the Board, her team and Mr. Bergin worked amazing together. Ms. Jarrin said the committee knew what would work to obtain the tools these students need to improve all skills. She said the program has all of these resources necessary for students and teachers.

Ms. LaBerge asked if this is something that will be permanent, or a temporary tool for a certain number of years.

Ms. Jarrin said she is going to say permanently, to continue the additional tools our students are lacking.

Ms. LaBerge asked if they move forward, what will future costs include.

Ms. Jarrin said, access will depend on which work and level students will be placed and the yearly subscription cost. She said she is unsure of the exact amount of the yearly subscription, and will get back with the exact amount.

Mr. Bergin said this program will build upon the current K-3 plan.

Ms. Voroschak asked what the feedback from staff was like.

Mr. Jarrin said the feedback from most teachers was very positive, compared to other programs that were tested. She mentioned the features this program has and how impactful it will be for teachers and staff.

**MOTION: To accept the new K-8 i-Ready Program, to also accept Grade 4-5 ELA Word Study Program.**

|                            | MOTION | YES | NO | ABSTAIN |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|----|---------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |        | X   |    |         |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       |        | X   |    |         |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |        |     |    |         |

|                      |   |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| MR. DAVID KNAPP      | 1 | X |   |   |
| MS. BETH LABERGE     | 2 | X |   |   |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS     |   | X |   |   |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK |   | X |   |   |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         |   | 6 | 0 | 0 |

#### **IV. Informational Items.**

##### **A. Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Steve Bergin said he wanted to thank Mrs. Sara Crooks for her outstanding job for celebrating Chargers Champions. He said he is also very excited about the new hires that will be joining the team, as well as the new programs that will impact our staff and students tremendously.

##### **B. Special Education Director's Report.**

The report was included in the packet, there were no questions.

##### **C. Technology Report**

Mr. Vincent Pastore presented his report. He said since the pandemic, this will be the first time all devices will be collected from students. He said devices will be cleaned and serviced. There were no questions.

##### **D. School Business Administrator Financials**

Superintendent DiBacco said these numbers will be emailed.

1. 2020-2021 Year-to-Date.
2. Grants and other Income.

##### **E. Food Service Director's Report**

Mr. Kevin Benham, Food Service Director gave his report. He told the Board there are minor changes. He said the department is winding down for the summer. Mr. Benham said the high school will be used for an on-site food distribution center. He said the Food Services is expected to finish the year financially strong. He asked the Board to contact him with any questions.

Mr. Bshara thanked him and said he is doing a good job.

##### **F. Athletic Director's Report**

Mr. Tom Brockett, Athletic Director, presented his report. He told the Board; all three spring sports teams made the playoffs. He said they are really looking forward to next year, with Middle School sports returning to the district. He thanked Superintendent DiBacco and Mr. Bergin for their support.

##### **G. Enrollment**

Superintendent DiBacco reviewed the Enrollment Report.

##### **H. Youth and Family Outreach –**

Mr. Bob Lisi gave his report. There were no questions.

##### **I. Facilities Director's Report**

Mr. Bob Evans told the Board there is an upcoming training for custodians. He said his team has started to prepare for summer work and cleaning. He said his department will be hiring students for summer help from June 20<sup>th</sup> through August 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Evans said he received information on a new Department of Administrative bill to replace outdated and inefficient HVAC equipment.

There were no questions.

##### **J. Director of Equity and Communications Report.**

Dr. Reese Morales, Director of Equity and Communications, told the Board they will be holding the second Brave Conversations gathering. He said Mead School's James Chester organized "Joy for Jeilany" caravan for a terminally ill Mead School student.

There were no questions.

##### **K. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent DiBacco gave his report. He told the Board he met with Chief Wayne Williams regarding the SRO position. He said they are looking into armed guards. Superintendent DiBacco said the city is down officers right now, so hiring an officer for the schools would not be possible at this time. He said it will be a great idea to adopt the policy and move along when the opportunity becomes available. He talked about the exceptionally high mobility rate among our students. He said when students remain in Ansonia, distinguished students are created. He said out of the top ten students graduating from the high school, six were students in district from pre-K. Mr. Bshara said the Paraprofessional and Secretary contracts will be resolved very soon. He said the teacher and coaches' contracts will also be looked at. Superintendent DiBacco said we will be partnering with Quinnipiac University for a summer program offered to eighteen of our high school students.

##### **L. Additional; Administration or Board of Education.**

#### **V. Executive Session**

- A. Expulsions
- B. Negotiation/Strategy Pending Bargaining Agreements

**MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 7:51 p.m. regarding**

**Expulsions and Negotiation/ Strategy Pending Bargaining Agreements.**

|                            | <b>MOTION</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |               | X          |           |                |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       | 2             | X          |           |                |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |               |            |           |                |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            |               | X          |           |                |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           |               | X          |           |                |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |               | X          |           |                |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       | 1             | X          |           |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |               | 6          | 0         | 0              |

To return to regular meeting

**V. Action on items discussed in Executive Session.**

**MOTION:** To accept the superintendent's recommendation on all three expulsions.

|                            | <b>MOTION</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |               | X          |           |                |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       | 2             | X          |           |                |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |               |            |           |                |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            | 1             | X          |           |                |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           |               | X          |           |                |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |               | X          |           |                |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       |               | X          |           |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |               | 6          | 0         | 0              |

**V. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at. 7:58 p.m.

|                            | <b>MOTION</b> | <b>YES</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|----------------|
| MR. RICH BSHARA, president |               | X          |           |                |
| MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO       | 2             | X          |           |                |
| MS. FRAN DIGIORGI          |               |            |           |                |
| MR. DAVID KNAPP            | 1             | X          |           |                |
| MS. BETH LABERGE           |               | X          |           |                |
| MR. CHRIS PHIPPS           |               | X          |           |                |
| MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK       |               | X          |           |                |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               |               | 6          | 0         | 0              |

Respectfully submitted,

*Cassie Venson*

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 6/14/2022