

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLACE: Meeting held via Zoom **DATE:** 13 January 2021 **TIME:** 6:30 p.m.
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: Chris Phipps, President

1. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. **Roll Call** – Mr. Phipps called a quorum

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

2. Public Session

Ms. Gina Diaz, 24 Shesby Road. Ms. Diaz asked what the virtual student plan will look like. Mr. Phipps thanked her for her question, and said it will be answered during this meeting.

Mr. Frouge, 17 Caroline Street, Mr. Frouge said he wanted to come on in full support of returning to hybrid learning. He said he wants to thank the teachers for their efforts. He also said his family supports staying in school, while using as many safety precautions as possible. He said he thinks it is very important for the young students to stay in school.

Mr. Frouge said for his young students to sit at the computer in the home for six hours each day is a struggle. Mr. Phipps thanked him.

Ms. Ellison, 13 Schumacher Drive, asked what the classrooms will look like when they return to session full time. She asked if there will be social distancing in place. Mr. Phipps thanked her for her time.

Ms. Fasciano, 16 Michael Street, said she would also like to second what the previous speaker was asking. She said she is very nervous about schools going back in full time. She said she knows the classroom sizes are not very large and she has concerns about the students being all together.

There were no other comments from the public, the session was closed.

Mr. Phipps thanked everyone for their participation and suggested participants stay for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Action items, consideration of approving the following items

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated December 9, 2020 (Regular).

MOTION: To accept the meeting minutes
dated December 9, 2020 (Regular).

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

B. Report and Recommendation from the Policy Committee regarding revised Policy 4118.231/4218.231, Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco. New Policy 6141.3291/Regulation 6141.3292. Instruction – One to One Device Program.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps asked Ms. DiGiorgi to speak regarding the meeting. Ms. DiGiorgi said there were two policies that were worked on. She said there was an addition to Policy number 4118.231/4218.231. She said the addition was regarding CBD, or marijuana product-based items. Ms. DiGiorgi also said there was a new policy that was added regarding one to one devices. She said this policy is very comprehensive regarding student devices and equipment.

She asked Ms. Rebecca Adams, Director, Human Resource and Human Relations to elaborate on this new policy that the committee added. Ms. Adams thanked Ms. DiGiorgi and said the first policy will comply with the new Federal regulation and briefed the Board.

MOTION: To accept the revised
Policy 4118.231/4218.231, Personnel –
Certified/Non-Certified Alcohol, Drugs
and Tobacco regarding CBD products,
as recommended by Federal regulation.

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

Discussion: Ms. Adams said this is a brand-new Policy regarding student devices. She said it is about the rights, and responsibilities and necessary care for their device and equipment. She said she is working with Mr. Pastore on a handbook that will outline the specifics. Ms. Adams said this will allow families and students to know what is expected. She said each Board member has the policy in front of them.

MOTION: To accept new
Policy 6141.3291/Regulation
6141.3292. Instruction – One to One Device Program

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

C. Report and Recommendation(s) from Personnel Committee

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said there was a meeting Monday night. He said there were a few discussions; one of them was the move of sixth grade students from the elementary schools to the Middle School. He said along with that will also be the move of Pre-K students from the Middle School over to Mead School and Prendergast School. Mr. Phipps said the discussion of the new Director of the Foods Department also took place at the Personnel Committee Meeting. He told the Board that Superintendent DiBacco, Assistant Superintendent Bergin, and Ms. Adams will put together a hiring committee for the interview process. He said this will be taking place as soon as next week. Mr. Phipps said there were also some staff requests. He said the Technology Department is very understaffed and is in great need at this time. He said there is also the need for clerical support. Mr. Phipps said Central Office, as well as the Middle School need additional clerical support, but this will go first before the Budget Committee for discussion. Ms. DiGiorgi said the Personnel Committee has always been a committee of the whole Board and asked when it changed. Mr. Phipps told Ms. DiGiorgi that this was done last May, at the recommendation of Attorney Dorsey. He reminded Ms. DiGiorgi that Attorney Dorsey told the Board having a committee of the whole would be a regular Board meeting. Ms. DiGiorgi said she did not realize that happened.

Mr. Phipps said the other discussion was the need to replace Mrs. Eileen Ehman’s position. Mr. Phipps said Mrs. Ehman will not be easily replaced, and he is sorry to see her retire. He said the need to add more of a communications piece with that position is also important. He said continuing to keep parents and the community informed is necessary. He said these items were discussed, and there was no action. Mr. Bshara asked if we are acting on any of this tonight. Mr. Phipps said there will be no action tonight. He said it will go before the committees to discuss further for the needs mentioned.

Mr. Bergin said the point is to include everyone involved in the process. He said ultimately it will be brought to the Board for approval first for all of the above additions.

C. Reopening Status

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said when the shutdown took place in November, it was due to staffing and not students having the virus. He said the schools could not fully staff the buildings at that time. He said right now, all staff is prepared for returning hybrid model and transition to a full return. He said the full return will be different for each school and grade levels. He said attendance varies, and this plays a large part. Superintendent DiBacco said protocols will be kept and social distancing is going to be followed. He said the surveys showed 70.2% of families wished to send their students to school. He said families should make decisions that will be good for them and what will work best for their family. Superintendent DiBacco said families are stepping up and he appreciates that.

Assistant Superintendent Bergin said when school returns and there is a better understanding of attendance, a plan can be much more clear. He said there is a great plan, but it will all rely on the number of students coming in and remaining remote. Mr. Bergin said there was not 100% participation with the survey, so in person versus remote will be finalized when school goes back in session. He said they are fully prepared either way. Mr. Bergin said the remote piece for elementary level will depend on each grade level. He said they will look at the need of a remote teacher, and the number of students who return in person. He said kindergarten will be looking at numbers and the ability to distance. He said the high school level has their distance plan with classes as well. He said they are looking at this, and all pieces that go with it. He said the numbers, following guidelines for safety, observations of social and emotional needs, and attendance will all be taken into account.

IV. Informational Items.

A. Special Education Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Keating said looking at the data, there are still under 500 students that are receiving special education services. He said registering students into the district that are receiving services prior to coming to Ansonia, is something that continues to happen. Mr. Keating said sometimes intervention programs will help these students. He thanked the staff for their hard work. Mr. Phipps thanked him for a great job.

B. Technology Report

Mr. Vinny Pastore, Director Information Systems, he told the Board there were outdoor Wi-Fi access points installed at all schools and hotspots were made available throughout the district as well. He said four schools have been upgraded at no cost to the district. Mr. Phipps thanked Mr. Pastore for a great job.

C. School Business Administrator Financials

Ms. JoAnn Cegan told the Board that her budget report has been submitted. She reviewed her report along with all expenses and encumbrances. She said there were a few accounts that show deficits due to PPE supplies. She said this will be offset by grant funding, and paid by the next meeting. She said insurance continues to do well. Ms. Cegan said the finance audit is still happening at Central Office. Mr. Phipps asked if the deficits this year will be covered like last year through Excess Cost Grant. Ms. Cegan told Mr. Phipps he is correct; these amounts will be covered by year end. Mr. Bshara asked if Ms. Cegan knew the projected amount of this return. Ms. Cegan said it is not confirmed but she thinks it should be approximately \$90,000.

There were no other questions.

D. Enrollment – Report was given, there were no questions.

E. Youth and Family Outreach Summary

Mr. Bob Lisi said it was a busy month. He said there were a number of residency issues, some attendance concerns, and special education requests. He said attendance calls are made every day for students not attending online every day, as well as students who are tardy. Mr. Lisi said he is happy to report, there are 20 families that were fed with Christmas turkey dinners through a great effort by the pupil personnel. He said 240 meals passed out daily by the Food Service Department continues. Ms. Varoschak she appreciates the daily attendance calls to parents and asked who makes all of them. Mr. Lisi said there are attendance officers in each building to make the calls.

Mr. Bergin said Mr. Lisi and his team deserve to be commended on their outreach support. He said their effort is so important and sometimes it goes unseen.

F. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Bob Evans, Facilities Director, gave his report. He said the staff has been keeping up with sanitizing of buildings and they are ready for everyone to return on January 19th. He said duct cleaning has been underway and the high school is the only job left which will probably happen during second shift. Mr. Evans said he working on the HVAC study which gives recommendations for the district's HVAC system. He said this will allow the district to meet the state's mandate regarding the virus. He said he has been working on the 2021 Alliance Grant and several projects are complete. He also said the Coe Lane access project is moving forward and it will be discussed further at the Facilities Meeting. Mr. Evans reviewed the rest of his report, there were no questions.

G. Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations Report

Ms. Rebecca Adams gave her report, thanking the Board for accepting the new and revised Policies. She said the Policy Committee has been busy and will be looking into adopting the 3000 series as well as the 7000 series in the near future. She says this will include about 25 new or revised policies, as well as some that need to be retired. She said a calendar will be handed out with dates so the changes will remain on schedule. She said as far as labor relations, she thanks the staff for reaching out directly regarding issues, as well as things they are working on. She said the staff has been excellent with whatever they are being asked to do. Ms. Adams said the Food Service position process will soon be under way, as discussed. She continued to review her report, there were no questions.

H. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent DiBacco thanked the Board. He said he knows that the updating of our curriculum, facilities and staff making changes, will allow the district to move forward. He said Mr. Giansanti and his team put together a wonderful career pathway and summary of opportunities available at the high school. He said Sacred Heart University and Quinnipiac University may be interested in some educational programs. He said there is going to be the rollout of two new system programs to give parents easier access to proper student information. He said he is happy to say the high school is one of ten schools to be chosen for the FAFSA Challenge. He said this challenge will be to see an increase in percentage of completion. Superintendent DiBacco said he would like to see Ansonia take this prize home. Superintendent DiBacco said it is important for parents to see from the Pre-K program up to high school our schools are greatly improving.

Assistant Superintendent Bergin thanked Superintendent DiBacco. He said he welcomes any questions from the Board. Mr. Bergin said the efforts done by Nurse Monica has been phenomenal. He said she has everyone's greatest health interest first. He said Ms. Adams is another perfect example of hard work and ensure safety. He said they are amazing and impeccable. He told the Board there was a survey that went out to all staff gathering information from those interested in getting the vaccine. He said the process will start next week with guidance from the state. Mr. Bergin said 90% of the staff would like to get vaccine. He said there was a great Report Card Meeting held today. He said this is regarding a new model of report card at the elementary level. He said the staff feels the format will allow teachers to truly bring a clear communication home to parents. He told the Board

the Wednesday meetings that have been held for staff have proved to be very productive. He said the professional development that has been happening is something that shows a silver lining that is shining on the district during this difficult time. He said he is so very proud to be in Ansonia with the amazing outcome on the professional level. Mr. Bergin said the positivity and uplifting that is happening is something to be commended. He said he loves this type of affection and it makes him so proud.

Mr. Phipps said he is sure he can speak for the Board on what a great job Mr. Bergin is doing along with Superintendent DiBacco. He said they are doing an incredible job. He said it means a lot to hear he is proud of his district.

Ms. Varoschak agreed with Mr. Phipps and said his efforts are definitely to be commended. She asked if the governor's challenge she said she would love to see the whole class apply to this free tool that will benefit all students. Superintendent DiBacco said he agrees and hopefully we are going to win this challenge. Ms. Varoschak asked if the partnership at the universities have any requirements. Superintendent DiBacco said right now the requirement will be for students to be in the School of Education Program.

Mr. Phipps thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged this to happen each month.

J. Additional; Administration or Board of Education

Athletics Director, Mr. Tom Brockett said the CIAC Meeting will be held tomorrow so he will have more information then. He said the basketball program will try to condition starting Tuesday taking all safety precautions. He said basketball will look different, but if they can provide them with something, it will be a win. He said starting off, there will be no spectators allowed. Mr. Phipps asked about cheerleading and Mr. Brockett said right now cheerleading is considered high risk.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 1/19/2021