

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Personnel Committee meeting minutes

PLACE: Meeting held via Zoom **DATE:** 11 January 2021 **TIME:** 6:30 P.M.
Meeting called to order by: Chris Phipps, chair

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call –

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MR. RICH BSHARA	X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS	X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA		X	
	2	1	

Also in attendance: Superintendent DiBacco, Assistant Superintendent Steve Bergin, Ms. Rebecca Adams, Director, Human Resources and Labor Relations.

II. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

III. Discussion Items

A. Grade 6 move to Ansonia Middle School.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said one concern from staff, is having all sixth grade teachers relocate to the Middle School. He said all sixth grade teachers will not necessarily be moving. He said the decision will be made on volunteer, by choice and also best fit for the job. Superintendent DiBacco said the Middle School continues to evolve into a much better place, and he is going to make sure it is as stellar as all buildings in the district. He said the move will be based on what is best for the schools, staff and our district. Mr. Phipps asked if there has been any pushback from the staff. Superintendent DiBacco said the only question he got was staff asking if all sixth grade staff will automatically be relocating, he said again, this is not necessarily true. He said there will be a Facilities Meeting to discuss both building layouts. Assistant Superintendent Bergin said the sixth grade teachers will be following the Middle School content structure. Mr. Phipps asked if there will be any budget impact with this move. Superintendent DiBacco said it will be pretty much an even swap. He said there is going to be an evaluation to ensure enough support staff will be there for the sixth grade. He also said there is only one secretary at the Middle School, so looking at repurposing secretaries may be a necessary idea. Superintendent DiBacco said the plan is to split Pre-K as equally as possible between Mead School and Prendergast School. He said this will not require more staff, the cost will also be the same. Mr. Phipps asked how many Pre-K students are in the district. Superintendent DiBacco said there are between 100 to 115 students regularly attending. He said due to COVID numbers are slightly down. He said this will be beginning in September 2021. Superintendent DiBacco said the move of Pre-K students at the Middle School will leave the modular open for an ACES Program. He said this will allow opportunity for students in the Mead School ACES Program to transition to the Middle School ACES Program. He also said Tim from ACES agrees this would be a wonderful situation for the ACES program. He said the space can also be a regular education setting as well.

B. Pre-K move to Mead and Prendergast.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said this item number was covered fully in the previous line item. There was no further discussion.

C. Food Service Director posting.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said he is asking what the Personnel Committee would like regarding the interview process. He said he would like to have the interview rounds take place as usual. He said he wanted to be fair to whoever would like to be a part of the process. Mr. Phipps said he feels like the right representation is on the interview process committee and he is satisfied with that. He said he respects Superintendent DiBacco's recommendation of the two round process. Mr. Bshara said he wouldn't suggest more than one Board member observing the process. He said in his opinion, having more Board members may cause a sway of the vote. Superintendent DiBacco said he wants to support the Board. Mr. Phipps said he would recommend to the full Board, to have complete faith in the process that is run by the Hiring Committee. Assistant Superintendent Bergin said the hiring requirements recommended by the state are difficult to fill. He said when the meeting with the state took place, there were several recommendations given. He said the state recommends a candidate with many qualifications geared around school district director experience. Assistant Superintendent Bergin said consultant, Christine Wallace has been amazing in assisting the department with expertise. He said she stepped up to teach the staff as well as keeping the department in compliance. He said the fines that have been accrued before that, are not minimal and time will tell what they will be from both the State of Connecticut as well as federal.

Superintendent DiBacco said Ms. Wallace is the one who pulled the department together. He said they are going to hire the best candidate possible for this important position. He also said the finance part of the Food Service Department will be moving to the Central Office by June 2021.

D. Staff requests for next year.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said he likes to regularly ask the administration of each school what will benefit move forward. He said he feels technology support is needed due to the infrastructure. He said there is one person right now helping all students with their device troubleshooting. Superintendent DiBacco said there are also 2 COVID Relief funded positions that are to support. He said the demand for this support is going to be growing in district. He also said an instructor for technology is a necessity as well.

Superintendent DiBacco said in the Central Office, the Finance and Personnel departments do not have secretarial assistance. He said clerical duties are not being done by these departments, as well as the Food Service and Facilities Departments. He said a request for a knowledgeable staff member that could assist these department heads would be extremely helpful. Mr. Phipps asked if it is possible for a secretary to serve two departments. Superintendent DiBacco said yes, that would be ideal.

Superintendent DiBacco said lastly, he is asking for a transition class between Kindergarten and first grade to give necessary support to the students that are struggling. Assistant Superintendent Bergin said the assessment of our students will be in full force when school resumes, allowing us to identify these students. He added that the transition classroom will benefit in many ways, including smaller class sizes, as well as provide opportunity to the students in need. He said this process was in place and after data will be reviewed again.

E. Staff moves/ideas.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said this item was incorporated with the previous item regarding staffing.

F. Grants position/communications director.

Discussion: Superintendent DiBacco said he would like to say that Eileen Ehman has filled this position beyond the capacity that anyone could ever ask. He said he would normally never mention names during a meeting, but it gives him great displeasure to say she will be retiring. He said it would be impossible for a new candidate to come with the knowledge as well as experience that Mrs. Ehman has. Superintendent DiBacco said she can call on any person in the city or state and they will get right back to her. He said she is key, and everyone loves dealing with her. He said moving forward, Mrs. Ehman said she will be willing to make herself available for the transition. Superintendent DiBacco said grant writers are not easily accessible or looking for jobs in a school system. He said the position is very critical but also hard to find a qualified person. He said this may lead to hire a person and assist them in the growth of the position requirements. Mr. Phipps said he agrees, Mrs. Ehman is one of the most undervalued employees in our district. He said he agrees with Superintendent DiBacco she is a great asset.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHURA		X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
Total		2		

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date 1/11/2021