ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION

PLACE: Ansonia High School, Media Center, via Zoom **DATE:** 20 October 2021 TIME: 6:30 p.m.
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: Mr. Chris Phipps, President

I. 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 LEBERGE	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president	X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA		X	
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X	
TOTAL		2	0

Chargers Champions Recognition Program

Acting Superintendent, Steve Bergin, turned the meeting over to Ms. Sara Crooks to present this month's award. Mrs. Crooks told the Board, the program is to recognize staff and students for their dedication, leadership and innovation. She said she is very honored, and excited for the recipient this evening. Mrs. Crooks said Nurse Monica Skakacz is an incredible nurse and stepped up even more so, once COVID hit. She said Nurse Monica has been working closely with administration and staff to put policies in place, attended all meetings and continues to make sure we follow all of the health guidelines. Mrs. Crooks said Nurse Monica goes above and beyond every day and there isn't enough to be said about the behind the scenes work that takes place at all hours of the day and night. She said everyone was in agreement and very excited to present this award to Nurse Monica.
Nurse Monica Skakacz thanked the Board, and said she greatly appreciates the recognition.
Mrs. Crooks said Ansonia is very lucky to have all of the nurses in the district.
Mr. Chris Phipps said he can also speak for Superintendent DiBacco how amazing Nurse Monica handled the pandemic.

II. Public Session

There was no one from the public who wished to speak.

III. Action items, consideration of approving the following items

A. Ansonia Board of Education meeting minutes dated September 8, 2021 (regular), and September 22, 2021 (special).

MOTION: To accept the meeting minutes dated September 8, 2021 (regular), and September 22, 2021 (special).

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

B. Certified Appointments
1. Kimberly Fulton/ESL Teacher/Prendergast.
2. Alexia McClammy/Social Worker/Ansonia High School.

Discussion: Mr. Bshara said he would like to express to the administration today, the concern on some of the salaries of new employees and how they came about. He said nothing against any teacher, but to bring in a new hire on step fourteen, doesn't compare to a teacher who has been here for a number of years. He said based on the fact that we haven't given steps out in so long, a teacher who has been her for ten years will be making less. Mr. Bshara said he would like to propose that the Board take a look at the process and develop something that makes sense with the contract grid. He said to have people coming in with less time shouldn't all be this way. Mr. Bshara said he would like to have a discussion to understand the process.
Ms. Adams said she agrees, a conversation can be had to review the process. She said one position is an ESL teacher, who holds a very different certification. She said the bi-lingual certification requires a waiver signature. She said the growing population will require someone with this background. Ms. Adams said again, she does agree to sit down and discuss the process further.
Mr. Bshara said he isn't interested in having the current staff leave because they see inequities coming into the district. He said the Board wants to keep our people here.
Mr. Phipps asked if there were only two applicants for the Social Worker position. Mr. Keating said there were more than two candidates. Mr. Keating said originally, the position was going to be filled with an outside company. He said the position is a two year grant that is not funded within the district. Mr. Keating said this candidate agreed to take the two-year position. He said he thought the position being supervised within district will be much more productive.

MOTION: To approve certified appointments
Ms. Kimberly Fulton, ESL Teacher, Prendergast
Ms. Alexia McClammy, Social Worker, Ansonia High School.

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

IV. Informational Items.

A. Special Education Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Keating, Special Education Director, reviewed his report. He pointed out since July, over 45 students receiving special education services have come into the district. He said there has been a healthy decrease of students being exited from receiving services. He said the district is increasing Interventions and using grant money for the Special Education Department to invest in student services. He said outplaced students number has remained the same. He said this includes students coming into the district that are outplaced.
Mr. Bob Lisi said 84 students have enrolled since September 2021. He said this is a very large number.
Mr. Phipps asked how long before new special education students are assessed when coming in the district. Mr. Keating said three months is the timeline that students are tested, observed, and decided about continued services.

B. Technology Report

Mr. Vincent Pastore review his report. He said the department is in the process of rolling out a required user authentication throughout the district. He said our cyber security insurance company is requiring the entire district to implement the added protection.
He said there is now an Ansonia Public Schools App. He said right now it basically looks like the website. Mr. Pastore said in the near future it will have much more information.

C. School Business Administrator Financials

Mr. Rick Belden reviewed his report. He gave details regarding several items including; projections on the current budget, health insurance timeline, the approximate seven-month available reserve funds, and a briefing regarding the finalizing of purchase orders in all departments. Mr. Belden said there are now six propane buses on the road, and by the fiscal year, all buses should be propane. He said propane pricing has been negotiated with Santa Fuel, the same company used by Seymour and Prospect districts.
Mr. Bshara asked if the Special Education Excess cost will be more or less this year. Mr. Belden said he has not done the numbers as of yet, but he will show the breakdown to have a better understanding and present as soon as possible.
Mr. Bshara asked if there will be a savings when buses switch to propane. Mr. Belden said, yes, there will be a savings using propane.
Mr. Bshara told the Board, Mr. Belden has been working with Kim at city hall and things seem to be going well.
Mr. Bshara asked if the budget will be worked on soon. Mr. Belden said he will be working with a third party auditor, and working on the budget as soon as possible.
There were no questions.

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

D. Enrollment

Mr. Phipps reviewed the report, there were no questions.

E. Youth and Family Outreach –

Mr. Bob Lisi presented his report. He said there continues to be minor bus problems, including an ongoing issue with All-Star failing to notify parents regarding late buses. Mr. Lisi said on the other hand, he is feeling positive with All-Star and the hiring of new employees. He said Ansonia is doing better than most, and will continue to move forward.

F. Facilities Director's Report

Mr. Bob Evans said he wanted to thank the administration at the Middle School and the High School for keeping the social media vandalism challenge to a minimum at the schools. He said there was a small amount of vandalism, but not as much as other districts. He said projects continue to move forward. He said the maintenance garage project is moving along, preventative maintenance continues, work orders are being filled, new desk shipment, as well as many other projects continue to happen throughout the district. Ms. DiGiorgi asked what kind of vandalism was taking place. Mr. Evans said toilet paper dispensers, paper towel dispensers, and other bathroom equipment damage.
There were no questions.

G. Director of Equity and Communications Report.

Dr. Reese Morales reviewed his report with the Board, he said they celebrated National Hispanic Heritage month through October 15, including a door decorating contest. Dr. Morales said there was a 65% increase using social media platform to reach out to our families. He said on September 25th Ansonia Public Schools joined efforts with Griffin Hospital Cancer Care Center to raise money.
There were no questions.

H. Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations Report.

Mr. Phipps asked Ms. Adams to speak further on the discussion regarding the placement of a Hearing Officer for Expulsions position.
Ms. Adams told the Board, the current policy allows at least three members of the Board to sit on the expulsion hearing panel, or to appoint a Hearing Officer to be utilized when necessary. She said most districts do this with attorneys to apply the law, take the testimony, and look over recommendations wherever they fall. Ms. Adams said this person would be utilized for the tight timeline required to be completed. She said in the event a hearing team cannot be put together, the Hearing Officer can step in.
Mr. Phipps asked if this person will only appear when the Board cannot get a committee for a hearing. Ms. Adams said yes, it will be done on a case by case basis. She said there are several attorneys recommended by the state for this position.
Mr. Phipps asked if there was an approximate cost. Ms. Adams said rates will vary.
Mr. Bshara said the Board thought it was a good idea a few years ago and he would like to see something in writing before moving forward. Ms. Adams agreed.

Ms. Adams said most of what she has been working on this month will be discussed in Executive Session. She said there is 100% compliance regarding the governor's vaccination requirement, and she is very proud of the staff.

I. Acting Superintendent's Report

Mr. Steve Bergin, acting Superintendent, said he is very pleased with the staff and their efforts with the required vaccination compliance. He said all staff have been very cooperative. Mr. Bergin said the district is so very fortunate to have Nurse Monica on board. He said her efforts are tireless, she is a leader to other groups as well as Ansonia. Mr. Bergin told the Board Nurse Monica has been educating the entire district and ensuring the safety for us all. He congratulated her on receiving the Chargers Champions Recognition Program.
He told the Board about the Makerspace areas for students located in each building. Mr. Bergin said there is an afterschool program running from fall into winter. He said this is just the beginning to support STEM for our students and the district will hopefully be bringing much more into the schools at some point next year. Mr. Bergin told the Board the most important message he wanted to get out is the appreciation for the staff. He said this is an extremely challenging time for teachers, having to reintegrate and socialize students with their peers. He said educators are being asked to do much more than ever, and he has so much respect for what is being accomplished. He said the administrators also have the difficult job to work with staff as well as students, ensuring neither get burnout. Mr. Bergin said he cannot be more proud of the entire district, he thanked the Board for their support and said the fruits of our labor will be seen as we move forward.
Mr. Bshara asked if there was a plan with students receiving the vaccine. Mr. Bergin said there will be something similar to the staff vaccine clinic made available for students. He said Griffin Hospital has been wonderful to work with regarding the clinics.

J. Additional; Administration or Board of Education

Mr. Phipps said he wanted to mention there will be a very good football game tomorrow night against Seymour. He said both teams are undefeated and it should be a great game to watch.

V. Executive Session re: Expulsion

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session regarding Expulsion(s) at 7:05 p.m.

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

To return to regular meeting.

Motion regarding Executive Session

MOTION: To expel the student, for whom an expulsion hearing was held this evening, through the end of the 2021-2022 school year. However, the expulsion will be suspended, and the student will be allowed to return to school on November 29, 2021, as long as the student remains in good academic standing, has no unexcused absences, completes all required coursework, and completes social emotional health and conflict resolution sessions, at no cost to the student, to establish conditions for a safe and successful return to school. The student will be on probation until the end of the 2021-2022 school year. If the student commits a suspendable or expellable offense during that time, the expulsion will be reinstated.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN

MR. RICH BSHARA		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	1	X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK				
TOTAL		6	0	

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson

Recording Secretary

Date: 10/24/2021