

Board of Education

Ellington, Connecticut

December 16, 2020

A regular meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday December 16, 2020, via Google virtual conference.

Present were: Mr. Blanchette, Purcaro and Young; Ms. Dzen, Picard-Wambolt, Nord, Kupferschmid, Underwood, Mullin and Dr. Scott Nicol, Superintendent of Schools.

Administration present were: Mr. John Collins, Director of Technology; Mr. Brian Hendrickson, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations and Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Services.

Also in attendance: Ms. Jennifer Brown, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Human Resources Coordinator; Mr. Ray Clark, Lead Custodian, Ellington High School; Mr. Solomon Leonard, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Specialist; Ms Hope DeBour, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA); Mr. John Guidry, Principal, Ellington High School; Ms. Melissa Scarbrough, World Language Teacher, Ellington High School; and Ayushman Choudury, Appointed Board of Education Student Representative.

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Ms. Dzen, Vice Chairperson.

Pledge of Allegiance

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Ms. Dzen stated to forego the report due to the later arrival of Mr. Michael Purcuro, Chairperson of the Board.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Recognition of Ellington Public Schools' Custodial & Maintenance Staff

Dr. Nicol introduced Mr. Greenleaf to present this month's recognitions. Mr. Greenleaf began by recognizing the hard work that the district's custodial staff has been doing

since the COVID pandemic began in March 2020. With the new protocols in place of sanitizing and disinfecting throughout the summer so students could return in the fall. The enormity of what the custodial staff has done; from sanitizing desk shields on a daily basis plus cleaning and disinfecting each of the schools. Mr. Greenleaf recognized and thanked Mr. Ray Clark, Lead Custodian at Ellington High School; Mr. Brian Chickosky, Head Custodian, Ellington Middle School; Mr. Dale Wilson, Head Custodian, Windermere Elementary School; Mr. Neil Ducharme, Lead Custodian, Center School; and Jeff Schiavetti, Head Custodian, Crystal Lake School including all other additional custodial staff. Mr. Greenleaf additionally thanked Mrs. Barbara Kelliher, Administrative Assistant to the Facilities team for her support.

Mr. Ray Clark spoke on behalf of his team at Ellington High School and appreciated the recognition and support.

Dr. Nicol also wanted to thank all custodial staff for their efforts and hard work to the impending snow removal.

Ms. Kupferschimd also wanted to acknowledge the custodial staff for their hard work year round.

CITIZENS AND STAFF FORUM

No one addressed the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the November 18, 2020 Regular BOE Meeting minutes.
2. Approval of the December 9, 2020 Special BOE Meeting minutes.
3. Approval of the employment of Adam Smith, as a full-time maintenance worker, effective November 24, 2020.

Ms. Dzen asked if anyone wished to remove any item from the Consent Agenda. Ms. Dzen announced that hearing none, the Consent Agenda is accepted as written.

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Special Reports

Presentation on Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) Specialist/Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) Positions - Dr. LaPorte, Ms. DeBour, & Mr. Solomon

Dr. LaPorte began by reviewing what was presented to the board last year in the hiring of the positions of the Social & Emotional Learning Specialist (SEL) and Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). These positions were presented to the Board by the request of teachers to support students with social, emotional and behavioral needs. Dr. LaPorte reviewed the process of developing the job descriptions for both the SEL and BCBA positions as well as what Mr. Solomon and Ms. DeBour have contributed to these new positions, which has been positively received.

Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard began their presentation by introducing themselves as the Social Emotional Learning Team for Ellington Public Schools. Ms. DeBour explained her role as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst for the district. These roles include support and collaboration with teachers/staff in assisting concerns with an individual student, concerns with classroom routine, or concerns with a students program. Ms DeBour stated that personally she and her son have experienced amazing support by educators and she wants to continue to learn, share her knowledge with the goal of helping families in the EPS district.

Mr. Leonard introduced himself as the Social & Emotional Learning Specialist, formally trained as a social worker. Mr. Leonard explained his role included consulting and collaborating with teachers/staff on student concerns, providing counseling/social skills instruction to students through small groups or individual instruction in SRBI short term, and providing support to a whole class by running SEL lessons as needed with classroom teachers.

Mr. Leonard stated that his personal experiences have impacted his own life, which can be used to help support what current Ellington School students may be going through. He commended his working relationship with Ms. Debour and appreciated her knowledge and the opportunity to work together in the Social Emotional Learning Team for Ellington Public Schools. He also acknowledged that both of their skill sets work well together in addition to what Ellington Schools already have established. Mr. Leonard thanked the Board for their trust as both he and Ms. DeBour appreciated the opportunity to work in the Ellington school district.

Ms. DeBour referenced the new teacher orientation and the Seeds of Civility that was introduced regarding the recognition that similarities exist in all people and the respect regarding any differences. As the SEL team, Ms. Debour explained that she and Mr.

Leonard applied their strengths to support one another, in addition to all students, staff, and families in the Ellington community.

Ms. DeBour continued by explaining how she and Mr. Leonard have provided support to the Ellington community. Those include being present in each building for support, constant communication amongst one another to assist in areas that may need support from one day to the next. They encourage staff and teachers to seek them out when a conversation may be needed, as they are here to support. Mr. Leonard added that they are available to help not only the students but the teachers as well.

Mr. Leonard explained the responsibility of alignment within the schools, parents and families, and the community. Building the work in the schools and connecting neighbors and citizens encountered understand that the shared space will be governed and be a culture of civility.

Ms. DeBour presented what alignment meant for the Ellington SEL team. Recognized that each school has their own identity and needs are unique and different. The SEL team organized a systematic framework which included tools and curriculum within the district for the SEI programming. Envisioned a culture that is sensitive to students and staff allowing a seamless transition amongst all schools. Although each school may have their own individualities, the SEL team seeks equity and availability of programming for social and emotional learning. Students that may learn an emotional skill and strategy at the elementary level, the same language and expectation would travel to middle and high school. A foundation is being built at the elementary school level with the goal that a student could use the skills and strategies as they move on through middle school and high school.

Mr. Leonard presented the Behavior Intervention Teams and their role within the school district. Although the behaviors may vary across the different schools, the meetings conducted and the process have been aligned. Ms. DeBour added that the SEL team help identify which students are in need of behavioral support, define those specific behavioral needs and provide strategies and interventions that will positively impact the student performance. This process is systematic across all three elementary schools to provide a seamless transition if a student may transfer from one elementary school to another. Reminding staff to utilize the processes in place i.e check with colleagues, record data on students and notify administrators prior to contacting the SEL team for additional assistance. With those first steps performed, the SEL team would have a history of the student and baseline information.

Ms. DeBour presented a request form that provided the SEL team basic information (history of student, problem or concern, specific support requested) and the specific needs of the school building (concern of more than one student, grade level concern). Teachers would have access to support within all the schools, and with completed form would present to the administrator or other designated point of contact. Mr. Leonard added that the forms allow the SEL team to be efficient in regards to addressing a behavior or emotional concern. Ms. DeBour referenced the Behavior Intervention Team forms available which included the BIT Agenda, BIT Referral, and BIT Action Plan. With the data provided, it can be determined if there was any impact by implementing the plan, any growth, enact changes by the student or classroom, and did the plan work to help the initial concern. The BIT Action Plan included how data is collected, how often data is collected, who is responsible for data collected, how will data be reported and who is responsible for follow up. Mr. Leonard stated that Ms. DeBour searches for the data, and he searches for the root of the problem or concern. Knowing and understanding the root of the problem will help explain the data and possibly help a student in need.

Ms. DeBour concluded the presentation by stating the main goal of the SEL team for the staff families of Ellington is to increase awareness, increase positive interactions and to increase global acceptance. Mr. Leonard added that based on what the Seeds of Civility states, the SEL team are planting seeds that line the behaviors and encounters that all students may have for years to come, become quality members of the Ellington community and impact the world in many ways.

Dr. LaPorte referenced the BCBA and School Counselor non-negotiable traits for these new positions discussed at the January 2020 PDEC. How these positions have evolved, Ellington Schools had BIT meetings but now the teachers have the tools and resources with the additional support of the SEL team. Dr. Laporte commended that both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard willingness to assist a student in need whether being in the classroom or home visit if necessary. Both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard have provided support to students that may not have been designated to a SRBI field, Tier Two or Tier Three qualification, in addition to developing protocols for teachers.

Mr. Hendrickson thanked both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard for their outstanding work and the non-negotiables discussed at the January PDEC meeting facilitated by Mr. Hendrickson included administrators and approximately fifteen to sixteen teachers who all collaborated together in developing those requirements for the new positions.

Ms. Dzen commented that the presentation was fantastic and appreciate the due diligence and compassion that both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard have.

Ms. Mullin also thanked Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard for the work they have put in and seeing the positions successfully develop at this point.

Ms. Dzen questioned the alignment of the SEL team, and how the strategies are communicated to the middle school and potentially the high school. Ms. DeBour responded by stating that every Friday an email is sent to EPS which combines all school psychologists in the district which includes behavior or classroom management tips or health and safety tips. By starting at the elementary level and building that foundation of skills and strategies could be carried with the student in middle and high school.

Mr. Leonard also added that although the SEL team is not currently present in the middle or high school, the students worked with will be at some point. Therefore, the building blocks introduced at the elementary level (i.e principles developed in grades K-2, in grades 3-6) provide context for a conversation if the student required SEL support.

Dr. LaPorte stated that although the SEL team primarily assists students at the elementary level, Mr. Leonard was invited to the high school during the Signs of Suicide lessons (SOS) this fall and met the counselors at both the high school and middle school. Dr. LaPorte reported that although the SEL learning is currently based at the elementary level, the tools and strategies (i.e Ruler, Gizmo) will build up from the elementary level and continue to grow over the next couple of years. Mr. Henrickson followed up stating that another alignment strategy is to introduce Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard to middle school and high school PDEC teams.

Mr. Purcaro echoed the comments of Ms. Dzen regarding the passion for the work both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard provided. Mr. Purcaro asked both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard, in line with an agenda item to be presented by Dr. Nicol, what their role as BCBA's for the Ellington School district in moving forward on addressing diversity and inclusion. Ms. DeBour responded that she recently attended a seminar with a cohort of BCBA's within the State of Connecticut. The main topics discussed were how to support schools relating to diversity and equity, by way of research to familiarize the history of BCBA. Ms. DeBour continued that by working alongside with Mr. Leonard, based on his counseling conversations with a student, she could provide activities and lessons for the classroom to support both teachers and students.

Mr. Leonard added that both he and Ms. DeBour are part of the Equity Council in which they are able to have conversations with other professionals in the state on specific topics in regards to diversity.

Dr. LaPorte stated that both Ms. DeBour and Mr. Leonard are part of the Equity Leadership Team through CREC. The purpose of both being part of the equity team is to enable Ellington Public Schools to understand the needs of the diverse population in Ellington, as well as continue to promote and value all the differences and program successfully for all students.

Italy/Greece Trip Spring 2021 - Ms. Scarbrough & Mr. Guidry

Mr. Guidry greeted the Board and introduced Ms. Scarbrough, Ellington High School World Language Teacher, who teaches French and also created and proposed EHS Arabic Curriculum last school year. Mr. Guidry commended Ms. Scarbrough for her initiative and creativity to World Language at Ellington High School.

Ms. Scarbrough stated in late 2019 she had proposed to the Board the Italy/Greece Trip for 2021 for Ellington High School after the success of the Paris/Madrid trip. Unfortunately, with the pandemic, travel has become more complicated. Ms. Scarbrough stated that she has been in contact with Explorica, the State Department and stakeholders and developed a parent survey to determine each families preferences regarding cancellation/postponement of the trip. Based upon parent and survey data received, Ellington High School proposed postponing the Italy/Greece trip until April of 2022.

Explorica has determined in writing that there would be no change in cost for the families participating in this trip, and by extending the trip out one calendar year will not increase overall payments. Cancellation is an option for families, as well as transferring the entire trip (i.e. EHS Seniors) to a younger sibling that would be at the high school at that time. If transferring the trip is not a feasible option within a family, then Ms. Scarbrough asked for logistical support from the central office in which the trip transfer could be from a student from one family to another student in a different family to avoid any cancellation fees from Explorica. For families who choose to postpone for the student originally attending Italy/Greece trip, Explorica ensured that those families will incur no additional cost for the postponement of trip in 2022 and families will have an additional twelve (12) months to complete payment.

Ms. Nord inquired about the number of seniors who were to participate in this Italy/Greece trip in which Ms. Scarbrough replied seven (7) out of forty-five (45).

In working with an Explorica agent, Ms. Scarbrough indicated that if a senior who had cancelled but who's spot was utilized by another student, the senior student's cancellation fees would be applied to the other student taking the open place for the trip.

Ms. Picard-Wambolt questioned if Ms. Scarbrough anticipated to fill all the spots and if not would that impact the students that are going. Ms. Scarbrough stated there are still interested students wanting to participate, and that she has been promised that if rosters are reopened in order to switch out the students.

Mr. Purcaro proposed a question to Mr. Greenleaf and/or Dr. Nicol if Ellington Public Schools offers international travel insurance through the current carrier (CIRMA) for students and proctors. Mr. Greenleaf replied yes, that insurance was provided from the current carrier and Explorica for families.

Regular Board Committee Reports

Communications

Committee Chair Mullin reported that in reviewing the legislative letter presented via email by Dr. Nicol reflected some of the changes requested by the Board. Dr. Nicol presented the CREC Teacher of Color Residency Program (TRP) in which Ellington is one of three other school districts (along with Bristol and Southington school districts) that have residents currently in the program this year. Windermere has a TRP currently that was approved by the Board and has been paid through a grant. Dr. Nicol continued to state that the legislation and recommendation to the State of Connecticut is that the TRP program is a great program that can have tangible results on an annual basis. Approximately fifteen (15) teachers placed in the program throughout the districts mentioned are expected to complete the program and then be fully employed. The goal is to expand to sixty (60) teachers annually and run in others RESCS (i.e CREC, ACES, CES in Fairfield county, LEARN, East CON, EDA, ED Advance). What the Ellington Board of Education is asking the State of Connecticut is to invest eighty percent (80%) of the cost to run this program on an annual basis and expand it throughout the state. If the state is going to invest in this program, there should be a very clear return on investment for accountability of the program. There are close to twenty (20) other districts throughout the state of Connecticut that have given letters of interest to continue the program next year. Dr. Nicol met with the BLAC Leaders and Administrators Consortium and presented them with a similar legislative letter as well as CAPSS with additional interest by Don Harris of CAFE.

Dr. Nicol stated that with the approval of the legislative letter proposed would raise Ellington's profile as a leader in diversity from a suburban town. Much internal work has been done within the schools in the topics of diversity and race. However there is external work to be done as well. Once the letter is approved by the Board, Dr. Nicol will engage Ellington Equality where student representative Ayushman was a guest panelist at a recent event. Dr. Nicol continued that he would ask Ellington Equality for their support in lobbying this and calling legislators to explain the importance of this legislative program. Dr. Nicol would also contact the town of Ellington Ad Hoc Committee's Liaison Melissa Haberan, Director of Special Services for her support; Scott Raiola who is a school counselor and Ellington Resident, and Trudie Roberts, former Principal of Center School, current chair of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. Purcaro expressed his support of this legislative letter, but needed clarification on EDA and EASTCONN roles and how specifically monetarily, programmatically they would support this program. Additionally, Mr. Purcuro inquired to Dr. Nicol mentioned funding already in his recommendations in the legislative letter and would the residency program be subsidized with funding from existing and potential donors. Dr. Nicol responded that EdAdvance and EASTCONN are smaller organizations that wanted to be part of the program but not large enough to run their own sites. Dr. Nicol is coordinating with a former superintendent, Dave Irwin, who has been hired on behalf of both EdAdvance and EASTCONN to represent them in the process of lobbying for the program. Funding for the current teacher this year has been paid for entirely by the State Department of Education from a grant.

Ms. Nord asked Dr. Nicol if he had been in contact with State Representative Jamie Foster whom she believed would be interested in the program. Dr. Nicol responded that there are some key legislators on the education committee that he is currently working with State Senator Doug McCrory, who works with Windsor, Bloomfield and Hartford CREC and State Representative Bobby Sanchez from New Britain. Will also lobby Governor Lamont and his budget development as there are line items for teachers of color recruitment and development.

Dr. Young stated that his colleagues in teacher preparation through the state universities do not necessarily support alternate routes of certification of teachers and inquired if Dr. Nicol has been in contact with them. Dr. Nicol responded that the alternate certification had a higher threshold than the current ARC program by the State Department of Education in terms of preparation. He has contacted Diana Roberge Wenzel who was a former commissioner and currently works at the teacher preparation program at St. Joseph University. She would be interested in learning how universities can be an extension of this alternate route of certification to ensure retention of

teachers. Dr. Nicol concluded that the program he is endorsing really allows teachers of color to teach in the suburbs.

Ms. Underwood asked Dr. Nicol to explain the requirements for who would want to apply for this program currently. Dr. Nicol responded that the educational requirements are aligned with state requirements and approved by the State Department of Education (i.e grade point average, specific requirements on different testing necessary, pass Praxis).

Committee Chair Mullin concluded her report by stating that the discussion of a communication plan is forthcoming and are still in talks about the next behind the scene videos.

Operations

No update at this time.

Curriculum

Committee Chair Young reported an action item that the Curriculum Committee reviewed thirteen (13) new course proposals from the high school, as compared to the eleven (11) courses proposed in 2019. Some of those thirteen (13) new course proposals include: Arabic II, Astronomy, Creative Writing Courses, Introduction to Cinema Studies, Military Preparedness, Woodworking and Visual Creative Writing. The Curriculum Committee voted in favor of moving all thirteen forward.

In addition to the thirteen new course proposals there was an older Board of Education Policy 6146, which asked the Board to offer Personal Finance as a graduation requirement. The Curriculum Committee was asked to consider reinstating that requirement for 2025 and beyond. Ms. Dzen and Ms. Kupferschmid and the Curriculum Committee moved and approved unanimously to consider the reinstatement and would be discussed in the policy report by Policy Committee Chair Picard-Wambolt.

Mr. Henrickson added that language options reflect student feedback coming from the elementary school level up to high school level with learning a second language and learning math.

Dr. Young reported that the Curriculum Committee endorsed the removal of Shakespeare and Creative Writing as full courses however elements of reading Shakespeare are in some of the new courses, especially creative writing and fan fiction

courses. Rather than having a course that only focused on one topic, those removed courses have somewhat been broken down and split amongst the new courses generated by students and faculty. Dr. Young continued his report by explaining that the Curriculum Committee also endorsed the English teachers at the high school to semesterize all of their English courses so that more of the unique topics and would allow students and Mr. Guidry to assemble blocks for students in shorter courses and still meet all academic requirements for the year. Dr. Young explained how these new courses would be communicated to parents and students by way of short videos from the proponents of these courses, faculty that created the proposals to show their passion for a particular course.

Student Representative Mr. Choudhury asked Dr. Young if the proposal to semesterised courses include the required freshman and sophomore English courses or just elective English courses in which Dr. Young reposed it included all of those English courses. Mr. Guidry clarified by stating that not in the next year, but at some point would like to take both freshman and sophomore English courses, making sure everyone is teaching the same thing during semester one and semester two to allow students flexibility to move their schedule around. Ms. Picard-Wambolt echoed Mr. Giuidry's statement that this is another step toward true personalized learning for Ellington Public School students.

Finance

No update at this time.

Policy

Committee Chair Picard-Wambolt reported that the first agenda item discussed was the revised Bylaw 9321, Time, Place and Notification of Meetings which read the Board of Education meeting would be held at seven o'clock at the Board of Education Building. The language of the bylaw has been revised to state that the Board of Education meetings will be held between five and seven o'clock and meet at a town or BOE building, allowing for various scenarios. The bylaw reads that meetings would have a duration of three (3) hours and if a meeting required more time, the Board would have to vote on extending the meeting over the three hour mark. The original Bylaw 9321 referenced a brainstorming meeting which would meet on the first Wednesday of September, which was approved for removal in the revision by the Policy Committee. Second bylaw revision was for Bylaw 9326, Minutes and Taping which would be discussed at the January meeting. The focus would be to streamline meeting minutes and making it more efficient and simpler to post in addition to giving more information

and easier access to information. Video meetings would have time stamps on them for agenda topics; meeting minutes would basically be the agenda, including all completed motions written out as required by state law, agenda items would be expanded and have a time stamp available. Also suggested that the minutes look similar to the bulletins that BOE members received before each meeting and have links to supplemental information. The concern of how the bylaw currently reads, is that an audio or video must be held onto for a minimum of three months, so this would be discussed in more detail in the January meeting.

Ms. Picard-Wambolt concluded with the discussion of revised Policy 6146, Graduation Requirements, which specifically included Personal Finance as a requirement for the class of 2025 and thereafter, it is a half credit one semester class and is within cluster four which is career and college readiness. Also the requirements of the class of 2019 are still listed in this policy, inquired about the removal or amendment to the policy to remove class of 2019 requirements. Dr. Nicol consulted Mr. Henrickson and both felt it was in recent memory and wanted to keep it in the bylaw for at least some historical context.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Discussion and Possible Action on Superintendent Goals 2020-2021

Dr. Nicol reported to a BOE workshop where the Board came to a consensus the Superintendent goals that were presented. Dr. Nicol felt comfortable with goals presented, looking forward to working hard and being held accountable for. Areas of improvement of the Superintendent were also included.

Ms. Dzen noted that the measurement portion would be discussed more towards evaluation than goals.

Directors' Reports

Board of Education Initial Budget 2021-2022 Workshop Format - Mr. Greenleaf.

Mr. Greenleaf introduced an initial budget workshop scheduled for December 21, 2020. At the workshop, discussion would be of deepening the understanding of the budget and the budget process. The consideration of the meeting scheduled for December 21, 2020 is to either hold it virtually on the date provided, or wait until after the holiday break

and hold the meeting in person on January 6, 2021. Format and topics to be discussed were included in the presented packet to the Board (i.e reducing elementary class size, school based budgets, hybrid of the two, detailed options one, two and three). Mr. Greenleaf welcomed any questions or comments.

Mr. Blanchette, Ms. Mullen, Ms. Picard-Wambolt and Dr. Young were in favor of option three; additionally Ms. Nord, Picard-Wambolt and Underwood favored meeting virtually on December 21, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Discussion & Possible Action of Coordinator of Human Resources Position - Ms. Brown

Ms. Brown presented an updated and expanded job description of the Human Resources Position and provided a description of what the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent would look like when the roles are split. Mr. Blanchette pointed out that educational requirements for both positions with one requiring an Associate's Degree and the other requiring a Bachelor Degree had been added to the job descriptions. Ms. Nord inquired about the job description which included the requirement of a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources or related field or alternate qualifications may be found acceptable by the Superintendent. Ms. Nord was concerned that the last statement may change the qualifications and should be left as a Human Resources or related field. Ms. Nord continued by inquiring if the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools acts as a supervisor to the secretaries. Ms Brown replied that the position does not act as a supervisor but rather a leader in the central office capacity in coordinating each department in the central office.

Ms. Kupferschmid inquired if Ms. Brown would be accepting the new position or would stay in current position. Ms. Brown responded that the position would be posted and a thorough process would be held for internal and external candidates to apply.

Ms. Underwood inquired if this position would be part of the bridge for next year. Mr. Greenleaf responded that there would be communication to the Board of how the new position would be paid for within the current appropriations; either through grants or general fund budget. Ms. Underwood questioned that if this agenda item was approved at this meeting, would it be carried into next year's budget. Mr. Greenleaf confirmed that this would automatically be carried forward into next year's budget based on Dr. Nicol's explanation at the November BOE meeting.

Ms. Nord expressed her concern about the new position being included in the budget, with the budget coming out in January. There are other priorities that need to be addressed before a new position should be added to the budget.

Discussion & Possible Action on Board of Education Meetings Technology Initiative - Mr. Collins & Mr. Greenleaf.

Mr. Collins referenced the memo in the board packet and the interest of purchasing equipment to do live streaming with the ability to do more board meetings moving forward. With more virtual meetings taking place, new high quality equipment would allow the Board to remain more visible in the community, the face of Ellington Public Schools in a sustainable way. Mr. Collins started to work with multiple vendors to research what equipment is needed and acknowledged that to proceed would be an investment. Legacy Sounds were used to help live stream the November BOE meeting held at the Ellington High School Gymnasium and their knowledge, passion and dedication to help run organizations. Mr. Collins reiterated that it is a costly investment for a high quality product and recommended the portable option which has multi-purpose advantages. The portable option would be an asset to the district as it can be transported within a school and amongst all schools and administrative buildings.

Mr. Greenleaf stated that not only would our schools benefit from the new technology, it could a collaboration and shared service with the town of Ellington. Mr. Greenleaf stated that there are funds that are available for this possible purchase due to some one-time savings in the choice grant due to the decrease in tuition costs for Choice students this year attributed to Covid. Mr. Greenleaf felt that either option could be purchased however the portable option has more flexibility in the district.

Ms. Mullin on behalf of the Communications Committee supports this purchase and proposed collaboration with the Town of Ellington to share cost. Mr. Greenleaf felt that was a reasonable request to communicate that to the town.

Dr. Young inquired if the new equipment would also be able to support individuals who are remote for a meeting and Mr. Collins stated yes.

Monthly Financial Report - Mr. Greenleaf

Mr. Greenleaf reported that there is a healthy balance within the general fund budget including all encumbrances and pre-encumbrances with a couple of items to cover due to Covid. He is still identifying places where to pull extra monies to cover those expenses. Mr. Greenleaf commented that the audit from 2019-2020 has been posted online and thanked his team for their hard work.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Purcaro reported the upcoming CABA seminars that will be available on January 12, 2021, and January 14, 2021, and will provide links to board members.

Ms Nord reported as Mr. Purcaro was nominated as Vice Chairman to the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance spent \$126,000 for the town costs related to the purchase of sections one and three at Oakridge Farm, about fifty one (51) acres that will permanently be farmland.

Move to add as action #9 the first read of revised Policy 9321 - A Time, Place and Notification of Meetings.

1st. M. Young 2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

Move to add action item #10 the first read of received Policy 6146 - Graduation Requirements.

1st. M. Young 2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Move that the Board of Education accept, with regret and best wishes, the retirement request of Keith Tautkus, Teacher at Ellington High School, effective June 30, 2021.

1st. L. Nord 2nd. M. Kupferschmid

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

2. Move that the Board of Education accept, with regret and best wishes, the retirement request of Mary (Katie) Gelsomino, Teacher at Center School, effective June 30, 2021.

1st. M. Purcaro 2nd. M. Kupferschmid

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

3. Move that the Board, per the recommendation of the Curriculum Committee, approve the academic course proposals for inclusion in the Ellington High School Program of Studies for the 2021-2022 school year.

1st. M. Young 2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

4. Move that the Board approve the Coordinator of Human Resource position; with the requirement that Board notification that funding identified prior to Board's approval.

1st. K. Picard-Wambolt 2nd. M. Purcaro

VOTE: Ayes: Blanchette, Mullin, Picard-Wambolt, Purcaro, Underwood, Young.

Abstained: Nord. The motion passed.

5. Move that the Board approve the Ellington Board of Education meetings technology solution and portable technology option.

1st. J. Mullin 2nd. M. Young

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

6. Move that the Board, per recommendations of the Communications Committee, approve of the Ellington Board of Education Legislative Platform 2021.

1st. J. Mullin 2nd. M. Purcuro

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

7. Move that the Board, per recommendation of EHS Principal John Guidry, approve the postponement of the Italy/Greece Trip planned for the Spring of 2021.

1st. L. Nord 2nd. M. Underwood

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

8. Move that the Board, per recommendations of the Superintendent, approve the Superintendent's Goals for the 2020-2021 school year.

1st. M. Young

2nd. G. Blanchette

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

9. Move, that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee, the Board of Education holds a first vote to adopt the Ellington Public Schools revised Bylaw 9321 - Time, Place and Notification of Meetings as presented.

1st K. Picard-Wambolt

2nd. L. Nord

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

10. Move, that upon the recommendation of the Policy Committee, the Board of Education holds a first vote to adopt the Ellington Public Schools revised Policy 6146 - Graduation Requirements as presented.

1st K. Picard-Wambolt

2nd. L. Nord

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

NONE

CORRESPONDENCE/ROUNDTABLE

Ms. Nord brought to the board's attention that surrounding town school districts have extended their remote learning beyond January 4, 2021. Dr. Nicol responded that both the DPH and local health district are not recommending students return to school in person later than originally scheduled at this time.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m.

1st. J. Mullin

2nd. K. Picard -Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

DRAFT

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Picard-Wambolt
Secretary