

Board of Education

Ellington, Connecticut

August 26, 2020

A regular meeting of the Ellington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at the Ellington High School Library Media Center, 37 Maple Street, Ellington, CT.

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

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. Sara Varga, Teacher, Windermere School, Ms. Michelle Bashaw, Teacher, Center School, Ms. Jennifer Brown, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/Human Resources Coordinator and Ms. Rebecca Rieder, Human Resources Consultant.

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Mr. Purcaro, Chairperson.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Mr. Purcaro opened his report with an update on the plan, we will be moving forward with the hybrid plan. He thanks all individuals for their tireless efforts and hard work to put this plan together.

The Board Chair wished all leaving and retiring the district the best of luck and provided a warm welcome to all new staff.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Dan Spada - Technology Integration Specialist

Mr. Brian Hendrickson introduced Mr. Dan Spada who has been selected as one of sixteen U.S. educators to participate in the Google Innovator Program. Ellington Public

Schools is so proud of this recognition and the hard work he provides daily for our students.

Food Service Emergency Feeding Program

Mr. Brian Greenleaf recognized the Food Service workers for their outstanding work and dedication during the pandemic with the Emergency Feeding Program serving Ellington residents in need. In total 14,000 meals were made and distributed from March 13, 2020, through the end of last week. Mr. Greenleaf wanted to acknowledge the following staff members Sue Trotter, Nancy Lothar, Donna Hamm, Kristine Powers, Dixie Prouty, Fran Durgan, Nwal Sara, Andrea Sofianos, Chrstine DeBarge, and Barbara Morales.

CITIZENS AND STAFF FORUM

No one addressed the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Purcaro asked if anyone wished to remove any item from the Consent Agenda. Consent Agenda items one through thirteen were adopted.

1. Approval of the minutes from the July 20, 2020 Special Meeting.
2. Approval of the minutes from the July 22, 2020 Regular Meeting.
3. Approval of the minutes from the August 11, 2020 Special Meeting.
4. Approval of the minutes from the August 12, 2020 Special Meeting.
5. Approval of the minutes from the August 13, 2020 Special Meeting.
6. Acceptance of the resignation/medical retirement of Daryl Basch as a Teacher at Ellington Middle School, effective October 24, 2018.
7. Acceptance of the resignation of Jonathan Boutin as a Grade 3 Teacher at Center School, effective August 12, 2020.
8. Acceptance of the resignation of Elizabeth Trudeau as a part-time Administrative Assistant at Food Service, effective August 14, 2020.

9. Acceptance of the resignation of Lauren Czerwinski as a part-time Special Education Aide at Center School, effective August 17, 2020.
10. Acceptance of the resignation of Erin Zumbo as a part-time Kindergarten Aide at Center School, effective August 19, 2020.
11. Approval of the employment of Francesco Cefalu as a Custodian at Ellington High School, effective August 24, 2020.
12. Approval of the employment of Hope DeBour as a Board Certified Behavioral Analyst, effective August 31, 2020.
13. Approval of the employment of Julia Canova as an Art Teacher at Ellington High School, effective August 31, 2020.

A motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

1st. J. Dzen

2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

REPORT AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Special Reports

District Improvement Reopening September/October 2020

Mr. Hendrickson referred to a document that outlines the District Improvement Planning that also includes the Board Workshop schedule to continue to collaborate on the planning.

Ms. Underwood asked for clarification on the CREC program for professional development. Mr. Hendrickson stated that they will be working to identify school staff to roll out the work at the school level and that the program will continue.

EPS Staff Child Care

Ms. Bashaw, Ms. James and Ms. Varga updated the Board on their efforts to provide day care support for returning teachers and staff members. After surveying staff to gauge the level of need and interest and reached out to the YMCA for partnership on this endeavor.

Regular Committee Reports

Communications

Committee Chair Mullin reported that the committee did not meet last month, but the newest video in the series of Behind the Scenes was just created as well as a plan for future videos to roll out.

Policy

No meeting was held.

Curriculum

No meeting was held.

Finance

Committee Chair Nord reported that the Finance Committee discussed increasing the salaries of substitute teachers to be more competitive with surrounding towns. The outcome of the discussion, for the board to vote on tonight, was to increase the rate for a non-certified substitute from \$90.00 to \$115.00, for a certified teacher from \$98.00 to \$125.00 and to include a rate for certified and retired from the Ellington Public Schools and increase from \$98.00 to \$135.00.

The next item discussed was Covid-19 related expenses and any additional money we would be receiving from the State of Connecticut to offset these expenses. The committee wanted teachers to have what they need to ensure a safe school opening and an exceptional learning experience both in the classroom and remotely. To that end, we encourage teachers, either individually or collectively, to have an open dialogue with their building administrator. We also encourage administrators to collaborate with teachers. So, Operations and district administrators can find ways to accommodate their needs.

Operations

No meeting was held.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent's Reports

Board of Education Retreat (Equity & Race)

Dr. Nicol mentioned the half day retreat, and thanked the Board Members for attending, it meant a lot to the administrative team. The most powerful part was the story telling aspect. It can be used in a wide variety of groups and stakeholders, it is great because everyone has a story. I learned a lot about my colleagues that I see all the time, that I

have never known before, it is a powerful activity. This is important work that we will continue to do in the district, we will do great work with this.

Directors' Reports

Human Resource Recommendations

Mr. Greenleaf, Ms. Reider, and Ms. Brown presented on the creation of the position Coordinator of Human Resources. Ms. Rieder has been working as a Human Resources Consultant for Ellington Public Schools during the month of August. Her expertise has provided support and leadership during this transitional month as we head into the new school year. The team presented on recommendations for staffing model, systems and processes in the district to ensure long-term success with Human Resources within Ellington Public Schools.

An integral piece to building Human Resources capacity is to enhance our current staffing model by creating the position of Human Resources Coordinator. The position of HR Coordinator would model after a similar position that already exists in the district, the Coordinator of Accounting. The position would centralize the Human Resources work in the district and provide main support to the Superintendent and/or their designee as well as working closely with administration. There is a sense of urgency for the position has increased during the pandemic as well as the growing need for support with Title IX.

The Board asked for a job description at a future meeting for review, the team will present on the job description at a later date.

Monthly Financial Update

Mr. Greenleaf provided an update on the monthly financial report. The current balance on the budget of \$39,576,214 is \$1,140,588.45. This includes both current expenditures and encumbrances. This financial update includes all payroll through June 30, 2020, and additional accounts payable through August 21, 2020. We are currently waiting on the May unemployment bill, but otherwise this budget is closed. We currently anticipate an additional \$225K to be returned to the town.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

NONE

A motion was made to add as action item #2 that the Board of Education approve the Substitute Pay Rate.

1st. M. Young

2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

1st. M. Young

2nd. K. Picard-Wambolt

VOTE: Unanimous. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kris Picard-Wambolt

Secretary