



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, October 25, 2017, 6:30PM
50 Major Besse Drive**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:32PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Present: Fiona Cappabianca; Joanne Brogis; Ellen G. Hoehne; Bill Knight; Armand Maniccia; Wendy Pataky; Jessica Richardson; Kenneth P. Traub 6:58PM); Daniel Thibault; Peter Vegaro

Administration: David Bascetta, Director of Facilities; Denise L. Clemons, Superintendent; Le'Tanya Lawrence, Director of Student Services; Susan M. Lubomski, Assistant Superintendent; Steven Manley, IT Director

Absent: None

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY SESSION

Jason Lafreniere spoke. He wanted to say thank you to the members of the Board of Education that are not returning after the elections and current board member running for re-election. He thanked the board for their dedication and service to the public school and the students.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Knight made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor.

INFORMATION SHARING SESSION

A. Faculty Recognition: The following staff members were presented with certificates by Ms. Clemons and the Chair for various outstanding reasons.

- Wendy Alfano – Vogel Wetmore
- Sandy Mangan – Torrington
- Julia Michaelis – Torrington
- Jennifer Borelli – Forbes
- Philippa Howe-Ivain – Forbes
- Barbara Oles – Forbes
- Diana Steck – Forbes
- Marina Putnam – Forbes
- Lisa Owens – Forbs

B. Student Recognition: The following students were presented with certificates by Ms. Clemons and the Chair for various outstanding reasons.

- Jazlyn Serrano – grade 1, Forbes
- Safoora Sayed – grade 2, Forbes
- Stephanie Dorado Salazar – grade 3, Forbes
- Antonio Polanco – grade 4, Forbes
- Jaslene Torres – grade 5, Forbes

C. Superintendent’s Report

Ms. Clemons reported that another recognition comes from the Torrington Area Parkinson’s Support Group and they wanted to recognize our educational leaders for the Walk in the Wood Parkinson fundraiser that was held in September. TMS has reopened their nature trail. Ms. Clemons stated that they have been working hard getting ready for the upcoming budget news.

D. Executive Session – Interim Principal Torrington Middle School

The Chair entertained the motion to enter into executive session inviting in Ms. Clemons. Mr. Knight made the motion, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor. The board entered into executive session at 6:44PM. The board returned to open session at 6:55PM.

E. Student Council Representative Report

Unable to attend.

F. Project Closing – The ADA exterior site work project at the Torrington High School has reached its substantial completion phase. The Building Committee of State Project #143-0071CV is asking The Torrington Board of Education to close the project at this time.

Mr. Bascetta reiterated that the project has reached its substantial completion phase and the board should close the project at this time.

G. Delta T

Delta T is only approved to use for filling special ed program para-educators, Kelly Services is used to fill all others. The staff was reminded of this information. Ms. Clemons reported that she is looking to raise the sub rates for our district since we pay the lowest out of all the other surrounding districts. Dr. Brogis stated that we need to do something because if we cannot fill all of the positions then the school cannot run.

H. Food Service

The chair reported that before prices change, the board and central office should be notified. Ms. Clemons also stated that the new prices should be on the district website so that everyone has been informed of the change. This was an issue this year because Ed-Advance did not inform central office of the price increase.

I. Data Review for Special Education

Ms. Lawrence presented a PowerPoint Special Education data review. In order to tackle this task, the Special Education Department of the Torrington Public Schools will need to explore the different models and structure used by other districts. These are the following data based conclusions:

- Torrington is one of at least 14 school districts in the State of CT with rising prevalence rates for students with disabilities.
- Torrington is understaffed with one less clerical staff and one less administrator compared to other districts.
- Torrington is one of at least 13 school district in CT facing a consistent decline in

student enrollment.

Torrington has 51% of English language learners also identified as special education students.

There was a parent in the audience that thanked central office and the board for all that they have done to ensure his daughter who has autism can thrive in an education system. More information will come.

J. AP Testing

Ms. Lubomski and Mr. Skarzynski presented information on AP testing. The policy states that AP exams are encouraged but not required. There was much discussion in reference to how many AP and/or UConn courses did a student take and if they took the AP test. A lot of students are not aware that they can take the AP test, if they do not like their score they have two options: 1) Retake the AP test or 2) Request that the score be left off of their transcript. Mr. Traub brought up the fact that the AP tests were offered during SAT's last year and the students chose to take the SATs because that is the test that will get them into college.

This topic was moved to School Improvement Committee.

K. Contract Agreement – Torrington Area Health District and the BOE

Ms. Clemons reported that we were asked to enter into this agreement to utilize TMS and THS as an area of preparedness if there is an emergency. If there are drills, they will be done when school is not in session.

L. Microsoft Renewal

Mr. Manley reported that if we renew the Microsoft contract right now for 3 years we will lock in the price for those 3 years. There is no way to renegotiate the price.

M. Enrollment Review

The chair reported that this was on the agenda for information purposes only for people to start thinking about the limited room we have and the cuts that will have to be made if the state takes away our budget.

N. Capital Projects

For information purposes only.

O. Field Trip – Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge MA, June 6, 2018

No report.

P. Policy Regarding Pesticide Application

Legally we need to have this policy, but for the record, we do not use pesticides.

Q. 2017/2018 Budget Discussion

If the agreement is not made soon, we will have to make cuts starting December 1, 2017. We will have to cut 1.5million dollars every month starting December 1.

R. Monthly Financials

Mr. Traub reported that the numbers look good.

S. Budget Transfer

There were no budget transfers this month.

T. Executive Session – Contract Negotiations with Local 1579

The chair entertained the motion to go into executive session inviting in Ms. Clemons. Mr. Knight made the motion, Mr. Thibault seconded. The board went into executive session at 8:14PM. The board came back into open session at 8:31PM.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Budget Committee

Mr. Traub covered everything in the meeting.

B. Grievance Committee

None.

C. Personnel Committee

Nothing to report.

D. School Improvement Committee

Ms. Richardson reported that we had our first building based meeting at TMS. We had an amazing outcome, we are hoping that having these at different schools will bring more people. Wendy gave a report at TMS which included positives and some needs for improvement. In November, we will be meeting at Each School.

E. Ed-Advance

No report. Last meeting was the regional meeting for administrators.

F. Policy Committee

Ms. Hoehne reported that they completed the Policy Regarding Pesticide Application. There was a lot of discussion in reference to the Attendance Policy and Food Service and Grading policies were also discussed.

G. Curriculum Committee

Mr. Maniccia reported that the meeting was on October 5th. It was the initial meeting so there was a lot of discussion on setting up and what is being done in the district regarding curriculum.

H. Torrington Public School Restructure Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Traub reported that they are waiting on some dates for availability and then they will meet.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Appointment of Interim Principal Torrington Middle School

Mr. Knight made the motion to appoint James Augustine as the interim principal of TMS, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor.

B. Project Closing – The ADA exterior site work project at the Torrington High School has reached its substantial completion phase. The Building Committee of State Project #143-0071CV is asking The Torrington Board of Education to close the project at this time.

Mr. Knight made the motion that The ADA exterior site work project at the Torrington High School has reached its substantial completion phase. The Building Committee of State Project #143-0071CV is asking The Torrington Board of Education to close the project at this time, seconded by Mr. Thibault. All in favor.

C. Contract Agreement – Torrington Area Health District and the BOE

Mr. Thibault made the motion to approve the contract agreement, seconded by Dr. Brogis. All in favor.

D. Microsoft Renewal

Mr. Thibault made the motion to renew the Microsoft contract, seconded by Mr. Knight. 8-Y, 1-N (Traub). Motion carries.

E. Field Trip – Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge MA, June 6, 2018

Mr. Knight made the motion to approve this field trip, seconded by Mr. Thibault. All in favor.

F. Policy Regarding Pesticide Application

Ms. Hoehne made the motion to approve the Policy Regarding Pesticide Application, seconded by Ms. Pataky. All in favor.

G. Local 1579 Contract

Mr. Thibault made the motion to approve the Local 1579 Contract, seconded by Mr. Knight. All in favor.

H. Approval of Board of Education Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2017

Dr. Brogis made the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Pataky. 1-Abstain (Thibault). Motion passes.

I. Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Monthly Financials

2. Receive Subcommittee Minutes

i. Policy Committee – September 6, 2017

ii. School Improvement Committee – September 6, 2017

iii. Budget Committee – September 13, 2017

3. Appointments & Resignations

Mr. Knight made the motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Pataky. All in favor.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mr. Vegaro – Commended various staff for all of their work during this terrible financial time.

Mr. Mannicia – Attended the Fall Festival and reported that the staff and the students did a great job.

Dr. Brogis – Thanked the Superintendent for meeting with the Mayor and the State rep. She appreciated the team effort.

Ms. Hoehne – East School celebrated their garden harvest and reported that there will be a Halloween party in the gym this Friday, October 27 from 6:00PM-8:00PM and East School is looking forward to hosting the School Improvement Committee on November 1.

Ms. Richardson – Reported that the Fall Festival was very neat and thanked the staff who volunteered their time. She also thanked the Homecoming volunteers.

Mr. Thibault – Stated that it has been a pleasure to work on the Local 1579 Contract.

The Chair – Reported that she was one of the chaperones at the Homecoming dance and overall the kids behaved very well. She encouraged everyone to reach out to their State Reps so we can get this budget across the finish line.

ITEMS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA

1. Monthly Financials
2. Part 2 Special Education

FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday, November 1, 2017 (at East School)

6:00 p.m. – School Improvement and Community Relations Committee

7:00 p.m. – Policy Committee

Wednesday, November 8, 2017 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:30 p.m. – Personnel Committee

7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee

Wednesday, November 29, 2017 (at THS)

6:30 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting (scheduled for 5th Wednesday)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thibault made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Traub seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:48PM.