

Board of Education
March 8, 2022 – Regular Meeting
via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice Chair Mary Tomasi, Donna Antonacci, Margo Gignac, Rosemary Gignac, Jessica Morozowich, Christopher Rivers.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Jeffrey Burt, Bacon Academy Principal Matt Peel, BA Vice Principal Amy Begue, Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara, Jack Jackter Intermediate School Principal Elise Butson, William J. Johnston Middle School Principal Chris Bennett, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Kathleen Perry, Director of Teaching and Learning Charles Hewes, Director of Human Resources Shannon Ramsby, Director of Technology Darren Smith, Director of Education Operations Mario Hurtado, Chief Financial Officer M. Cosgrove.

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 Call to Order

Chair Alex Oliphant called this Regular Meeting to order at 6:02 pm with a roll call to establish a quorum.

2. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

No additions or changes were requested.

3. RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The month of March is Connecticut Board of Education Member Appreciation Month. Videos were made and viewed of students saying thank you to the Board members as follows:

CBOE Appreciation Video from WJJS Chamber Choir
CBOE Appreciation Video from JJIS Bands
CBOE Appreciation Video from VES Students

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jessica Trusz thanked the Board members for all their hard work and supports setting the date for graduation at this time.

Lynne McCune thanked the Board members and also spoke in favor of setting a date for graduation this early in the year.

Marycia Malloy spoke in favor of the trip to the All State Music Festival in Hartford

Lynne Goodwin spoke in support of the upcoming All State Music Festival.

Kristi Kardys also spoke in favor of the All State Music Festival as a great honor for the students.

5. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

5.1 2022-2023 Budget Presentation

Superintendent Burt presented the school budget for 2022-2023. The full schedule of budget meetings is on both the town and school websites. There will be budget workshops each Tuesday in March at 6:00 pm by Zoom. The public may submit questions at budget@colchesterct.gov and each one will be answered. There is also a *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ) section on the website.

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The proposed 2022-2023 budget of \$42,191,251 is an increase of \$364,196 over the current budget, or a 0.87% increase. The Goals of this budget are to Sustain, Maintain, Strengthen, and Balance.

Board of Finance M. Egan noted the effort put in over the years for the self-insured insurance plan has paid off.

5.2 Pandemic Update

Superintendent Burt said the mask mandate has been lifted. No issues have been reported, students and staff make their own choice about wearing a mask. One week has gone by without masks and no cases were reported today..

5.3 Communications

No communications were received.

6. POLICIES/REGULATIONS FOR FIRST READING

6.1 6113P Released Time

6.2. 6173P Homebound Instruction

6.3 5141.21P Administration of Medication

6.4 9221B Filling of Vacancies

As these are first readings, no action was taken.

7. PRIORITY DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Update on Underground Storage Tank and Oil Spill at Bacon Academy

The tank passed a pressure test and with some maintenance it may be possible to receive a ten year extension to replace the tank. Superintendent Burt met with DEEP and the insurance company. The houses in the area have been contacted and no issues have been reported with their well water.

7.2 Day Tank Replacement for Bacon Academy

The safety valves have failed on the generator and the 75 gallon day tank feeding the generator needs to be replaced at a proposed estimate of \$28,995.

Motion by: .J. Morozowich

to approve the proposal to replace the day tank at Bacon Academy.

Second by: M. Gignac.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

7.3 2021-2022 School Calendar

Due to the oil spill Bacon Academy was closed for three days. The school calendar must be revised to make up the three days. At this time, the bus company is trying to procure drivers for the proposed make up days. This item will be addressed when bus schedule is confirmed.

7.4 Set Graduation Date for Bacon Academy

Principal Peel has contacted the school districts that set graduation dates early in the year. This has been a request of parents so relatives could make plans and it helps Grad Night planning as well. State law also allows dates to be set early. June 17 has been suggested.

Motion by: M. Gignac

to set June 17, 2022, as the date for Bacon Academy graduation.

Second by: C. Rivers
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

- 7.5 Special Education Evaluation Rates
Students from out of this district pay tuition to attend Bacon Academy but have not been paying for Special Education and 504 Evaluations rates.

Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve the proposed special education evaluation rates.
Second by: D. Antonnaci
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

- 7.6 Bacon Academy All State Music Festival Field Trip
This is the highest level competition in Connecticut that students audition for and then receive instruction and then have a public performance on the last day.

Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve the All State Music Festival Field Trip to Hartford, CT.
Second by: R. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

- 7.7 Collaborative for Colchester's Children C3
Cindy Praisner, Early Childhood Coordinator, gave an overview of C3.

8. GRANTS/OTHER FINANCIALS

- 8.1 Budget Transfers over \$5000 – (None)

- 8.2 Donation from Dominion Energy

A donation from Dominion Energy in the amount of \$12,000 has been received for the robotics program at Bacon Academy.

Motion by: M. Gignac
to accept the \$12,000 donation from Dominion Energy .
Second by: M. Tomasi.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

9. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION/ASSESSMENTS

- 9.1 Bacon Academy Program of Studies for 2022-2023

Vice Principal Amy Begue reviewed the proposed changes to the 2022-2023 Program of Studies.

Motion by: M. Gignac
to approve the 2022-2023 Program of Studies for Bacon Academy as presented.

Second by: R. Gignac.

Vote: Opposed: D. Antonacci
In favor: All others. Motion approved.

10. POLICIES/REGULATIONS FOR A SECOND READING

- 10.1 9271B Code of Ethics/9272B Code of Conduct

- 10.2 6141.2PR Recognition of Religious Holidays

- 10.3 6145.6P Travel and Exchange Programs

Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve Items 10.1, 10.2, and 10.3.

Second by: J. Morozowich.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

11. POLICIES RECOMMENDED FOR REMOVAL (None)

12. NON-SUBSTATIVE POLICIES (None)

13. CONSENT AGENDA

13.1 Approval of February 8, 2022 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes

13.2 Approval of February 10, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes

13.3 Approval of February 24, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes (4:00 pm)

13.4 Approval of February 24, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes (6:00 pm)

13.5 Approval of February 28, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes

13.6 Approval of March 3, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes

Motion by: M. Tomasi

to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Second by: M. Gignac.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

14. REPORTS FROM BOARD COMMITTEES

14.1 Policy – no further report.

14.2 Budget – no further report.

14.3 Personnel – M. Tomasi said there have been several medical leave requests, there are open positions available, time cards are being replaced with electronic process.

14.4 Curriculum – no further report.

14.5 Ad-Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – C. Rivers will be scheduling a meeting soon.

15. REPORTS FROM BOARD LIAISONS

1. Board of Selectmen: Donna Antonacci – attended meeting - no report.

2. Board of Finance: Margo Gignac attended preliminary budget meetings.

3. P&R Parent Commission: Rotating Members - no report due to tech issues.

4. PTO Collaborative: Margo Gignac – no report.

5. C3 Collaborative: Jessica Morozowich attended but no report.

6. Commission on Aging: Mary Tomasi – no report.

7. CORE Commission: Jessica Morozowich – no report.

8. Youth & Social Services: Rosemary Gignac – no report.

16. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION ITEMS

16.1 Board Announcements

Board of Education	March 15, 2022	6:00 PM	Virtual
Policy Committee	March 16, 2022	5:30 PM	Virtual
Budget Committee	April 7, 2022	9:00 AM	Virtual
Personnel Committee	March 1, 2022	5:30 PM	Virtual
Curriculum Committee	May 3, 2022	6:00 PM	Virtual
Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	April 20, 2022	5:00 PM	Virtual

16.2. Monthly Student Enrollment

Student Enrolment for March 2022 is 2266 students.

- 16.3. Approved Committee Meeting Minutes
 - Policy Committee Minutes 1.26.22
 - Budget Committee Minutes 2.3.22
 - Personnel Committee Minutes 12.6.21
 - Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Minutes 11.10.21
- 16.4 Monthly Budget Reports
- 16.5 Cafeteria Fund
- 16.6 Regulations (None at this time)
- 16.7 Budget Transfer Under \$5,000 – School Nurse Supplies
- 16.8 Notices of Retirement/Resignation – Katherine Powell

17. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Dubreuil commented on the budget.

Jason LaChapelle stated he found it difficult to access the zoom meeting on an iphone and also commented on increases in the budget.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 18.1 Staff Request for Leave of Absence
- 18.2 Investigation Complaints Concerning Action of the Superintendent

Motion by: M. Gignac

to go into Executive Session to discuss 18.1 and 18.2.

Second by: R. Gignac.

Vote: Unanimous to approve. Time: 8:30 pm.

Motion by: M. Gignac

to invite Superintendent Burt and Human Resources Director Shannon Ramsby into the Executive Session for the Request for Leave of Absence only.

Second by: R. Gignac.

Vote: Unanimous to approve. Time: 8:32 pm.

Chair Oliphant brought the Board out of Executive Session at 9:04 pm.

19. BOARD ACTIONS FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 19.1 Possible Action Regarding Staff Request for Leave of Absence.

Motion by: M. Tomasi

to approve the request for leave of absence.

Second by: R. Gignac.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

- 19.2. Possible Action Regarding Investigation of Complaints

Motion by: D. Antonacci

that the Board establish a committee to investigate complaints concerning actions of the Superintendent and to report back to the Board on its findings, such committee to be composed of M. Gignac and C. Rivers and further moved that the Board engage the services of Dr. Elliott Landon to advise the Board committee in its work.

Second by: J. Morozowich.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

Chair Oliphant read a statement that he stated is from the Board:

The BOE has received a formal complaint from CPS administration regarding the Superintendent. After consulting with council, the board has decided to move forward with a formal investigation regarding the complaint. Unlike other personnel issues which are confidential, matters concerning the Superintendent's performance are public. Therefore, the findings of the investigation will be shared publicly once they are completed. We are not afraid of self-reflection and improvement here at CPS and we believe in leading by example. This often means being brave enough to both bring to light and openly discuss difficult issues so we may become more stronger and more unified district. We appreciate the manner in which the CPS administration and Superintendent have approached this difficult situation and we fully anticipate cooperation on all sides as the investigation progresses. We remind the community that accusations and gossip hurt not only our district but our students as well. So we ask that this investigation be allowed to continue unhindered by both. The climate and culture of our schools is a priority to all of us and we look forward to completing this process quickly but thoroughly.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Oliphant adjourned this meeting at 9:11 pm.

Respectively submitted

Mary Jane Slade
Recording Secretary