



Board of Education Regular Meeting

Monday, October 4, 2021 7:00 PM

Board Meeting Room
Administrative Offices
137 B Glenwood Road
Clinton, CT 06413

Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM.

Catherine Staunton: Present
Christopher Passante: Present
Erica Gelven: Present
Jason Adler: Present
Kimberly Russo: Present
Michael Hornyak: Present
Peter Nye: Present

Attendance Update Taken at 8:10 PM.

Christopher Passante: Absent

Attendance Update Taken at 8:22 PM.

Christopher Passante: Present

1. Opening Exercises

A. Roll call

Also in attendance were Superintendent Maryann O'Donnell, Assistant Superintendent Marco Famiglietti, and Business Manager Carolyn Dickey.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

All stood for the pledge. A moment of silence was observed for the passing of Joel School teacher John (Jack) Reynolds.

2. Public participation/recognition

Carol Walter inquired about the "just cause" definition in the teacher's contract and encouraged the Board to discuss amongst themselves the process, policies, and procedures related to just cause and suspension to ensure a fair process.

Jennifer Caprio and Valerie Nye expressed dissatisfaction with the handling of the lighting failure at the football game on September 24 as well as overall preparation of the fields and facilities for games. They asked that staff responsibilities be clarified, and more attention be given, to ensure pride is evident in our athletic program and facilities.

Heather Moore noted that the Nature's Classroom field trip at Eliot is being planned to include 6th and 7th grade students and requested consideration for the 8th grade students who will not have the opportunity to participate.

3.Minutes - Approval - Regular Meeting of September 20, 2021

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 20, 2021. Carried with a motion by Michael Hornyak and a second by Peter Nye.

Catherine Staunton: Yea
Christopher Passante: Yea
Erica Gelven: Yea
Jason Adler: Yea
Kimberly Russo: Yea
Michael Hornyak: Yea
Peter Nye: Yea
Yea: 7, Nay: 0

4.Communications

M. Hornyak noted a letter of appreciation from The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries for efforts made by the district over the past two years to ensure children in Clinton continue to receive meals.

5.Report of Student Representatives

No report.

6.Administrative Reports

A.Administrators, Program Directors and Teachers

1.General Update

B.Assistant Superintendent's Report

1.Curriculum Implementation Update

M. Famiglietti reviewed the curriculum and implementation work continuing in the district. He stated that due to the difficulty in obtaining substitute teachers to allow classroom teachers to work on curriculum during the school year, he would be recommending the continuation of summer curriculum work which has been successfully utilized over the past 3 years. M. Famiglietti shared that the *Right to Read* legislation will require specific literacy programs based on the science of reading to be utilized by all public school districts beginning with the 2023-24 school year. He praised all staff members for their outstanding care of students during the week's tragedy.

2.General Update

C.Business Manager's Report

1.Bills Payable

There were no questions regarding bills payable.

2.General Update

C. Dickey reported on Food Service budget trending and experiences this year. She praised Food Services Director Jon Siciliano for his foresight and for adapting so well to changing needs and challenges during the pandemic, especially while being short-staffed. Revenue is up and students seem pleased with menu items. J. Siciliano is working on building up a food reserves menu in case shortages due to availability and delivery issues occur.

Questions followed regarding the need to encourage families to apply for free/reduced meal assistance, which could help with scholarships and other benefits. C. Dickey indicated that the lunch model for free/reduced meals has changed via Husky which might factor into the solution. M. O'Donnell indicated that the guidance department has worked with J. Siciliano to keep communications open for waivers and to also have qualifying families complete the free/reduced meal applications.

7.Superintendent's Report

A.Enrollment Update

M. O'Donnell updated the Board on PK-12 enrollment as of October 1, the date the State uses for enrollment snapshots. District enrollment is only one student shy of enrollment projections. Enrollment numbers for Clinton students attending other public schools (i.e., charter, magnet, agricultural science, and technical schools) and special education placements were provided as well.

While the cost of special education placements are about \$23K less than the budgeted projections, transportation costs are about \$22K higher than anticipated.

M. O'Donnell shared interdistrict magnet school participation and the special education STRIVE program was discussed. She also reviewed for the Board how the state keeps the cost to the district down for high tuition special education placements through the Excess Cost Grant. M. O'Donnell answered questions about student success and outcome measures related to those programs and also discussed district programs that have been developed to provide appropriate services to special education students in district.

B.COVID-19 Update

The Superintendent provided an update on the impact of COVID-19 on the district schools, the effectiveness of mitigation strategies, and the current status and implications of the Governor's Executive Order 14 which extends previous Executive Orders regarding masks (13A) and vaccination requirements(13G) through February 15, 2022. There have been ten COVID cases in two weeks which were very directly connected to non-school influences. The mitigation strategies of mask-wearing and vaccines continue to be effective. The district is meeting all state COVID-19 mandates.

C.Update on Peters Field Lights

The Superintendent gave an overview of the controls, operation, and oversights of the Peters Complex field lights. After the light failure on September 24, which was caused by a blown fuse, she met with all stakeholders was held to review protocols and discuss areas for improvement related to scheduling, programming, checkpoints, and responses.

P. Nye expressed concern that the incident on September 24th was symptomatic of larger issues. M. O'Donnell described the excellent collaborative relationships with Parks & Recreation, DPW, and the Clinton Police Department, and noted that hundreds of activities and games take place without incident. She stated that she will communicate with the appropriate individuals regarding new concerns raised about facilities.

D. General Update

M. O'Donnell thanked M&J Bus Company for the stellar transportation work being done despite operating short-handed.

The Town Council recently held a budget workshop and M. O'Donnell will be meeting with Town Manager Karl Kilduff to debrief and discuss parameters for the 2022-23 budgeting process.

P. Nye followed up regarding the 'just cause' comment brought up earlier in the meeting and M. O'Donnell confirmed that there are policies that guide decisions. J. Adler added that there are a lot of state guidelines and policies in place as well.

E. Gelven thanked M. O'Donnell for her diligence and leadership.

8. Reports of Board of Education Subcommittees and Special Committees

Minutes from the Policy Subcommittee meeting were attached to the Board packet and the Instruction Subcommittee met earlier in the day.

The Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee will meet on October 5. The Policy Subcommittee will next meet on October 18. The Wellness Subcommittee will meet on October 25. Board members were encouraged to reach out to subcommittee chairs if they had questions on any issues.

A. General Updates

9. First Draft of 2022-2023 District Calendar

The Board was given a draft 2022-23 school year calendar for review. Per Board policy, the Board is required to adopt a calendar in December. The idea of a full week for February break was discussed.

10. First Reading of Policies

The Board had a first reading of several policies that were previously reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee.

A.#1002 Green Cleaning Products

B.#1240 Volunteers

C.#1250 Visitors and Observers in Schools

D.#1330 Use of School Facilities

E.#1332 Possession of Deadly Weapons or Firearms

F.#2200 Retention of Electronic Records and Information

G.#3200 Purchasing

H.#4304 Employees and Section 504/ADA

I.#4306 Employee Use of the District Computer Systems

11. Personnel Information

A personnel update was provided to the Board by the Superintendent.

12. Adjournment

To adjourn at 8:28 PM. Carried with a motion by Catherine Staunton and a second by Jason Adler.

Catherine Staunton: Yea

Christopher Passante: Yea

Erica Gelven: Yea

Jason Adler: Yea

Kimberly Russo: Yea

Michael Hornyak: Yea

Peter Nye: Yea

Yea: 7, Nay: 0

Michael Hornyak, Board Secretary

Allison Friday, Board Recorder