



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
Tuesday, December 29, 2020, 6:00 P.M.  
355 Migeon Ave – Remote Meeting**

**Minutes**

1. Call to Order: 6:04 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Eucalitto (Remote), Mr. Corey (Remote), Ms. DePretis (Remote), Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Todor (Remote), Ms. Fappiano (Remote), Ms. Richardson (Remote), Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Ferguson, Mr. Arum, Ms. Schulte, Ms. Herold, Ms. Klimaszewski
3. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
4. School/Community Service/Public Participation:  
Jason LaFreniere – He wished everyone happy holidays. He thanked the board and superintendent for the 10 days in person after Thanksgiving break. He said it was very important. Mr. Lafreniere asked for an update on teachers scheduling their Covid-19 vaccine.
5. Executive Session on TEA Negotiation Possible Contract Proposal:  
Ms. Hoehne made a motion to enter Executive Session on TEA negotiation on possible contract proposal inviting in Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Schulte, Mr. Arum, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor. Ms. Richardson will not participate and will recuse herself. The Board Clerk and was present via zoom.  
The board entered Executive Session at 6:07 P.M.  
The board returned to Open Session at 7:07 P.M.
6. Information Sharing Session:
  - A. Superintendent's Report: Welcome back to in-person and hybrid learning! Spirit week inspired our students and faculty. Attendance was up this week. Contact tracing is continuing. There has been no transmission within the schools that has impacted our students. All school personnel are in the 1B schedule for the Covid-19 vaccine. Ms. Lubomski has provided the vaccine updates to the staff and Board as she receives them.
    1. Office of Teaching and Learning Update: Ms. Ferguson reported that the work continues on all aspects of the learning grid. This month's focus is Embedded Formative Assessment. THS Curriculum Inventory is complete. A "Novel Preview Team" has been established with the task of reading/previewing and integrating new titles as options for instruction. Performance Matters will be working with a core team of district staff identified as trainers. These

people will train all certified staff during the February PD. The winter student assessment window is January 11 – February 12. In Technology, we upgraded THS infrastructure backbone to redundant 20 GB/s speed, eliminating loops and inefficiencies. We are no longer relying on wired access in the classrooms as we are now 100% wireless.

2.Special Education Update: Ms. Klimaszewski reported that our overall special education numbers have decreased by 11. We are holding steady with our prevalence rate. Our CT SDE Rate APR students outplaced is 11.65% and the state average is 13.5%. There have been 19 students that have exited from special education this year.

- B. Monthly Financials: We are still in the black. The tuition cost we were waiting for has now been included in our numbers.
- C. COVID-19 Expenses: The district received a \$574,515.74 wire transfer today. Approximately \$30,000 more is anticipated.
- D. Calendar 2020-2021: Ms. Lubomski reported that staff needs those early release Wednesdays to plan and collaborate on the modes of instruction. Originally, the plan was to gauge the benefit of having shortened Wednesdays until January. They are working out well. The teachers are benefiting greatly from this time. It is very productive. We are asking the Board to continue the early release Wednesday until the end of the 2021 school year.
- E. Calendar 2021-2022: This is when we normally present next year's calendar. Ms. Fappiano asked about Veteran's Day feedback. Ms. Lubomski stated that the feedback was very positive. The students learned more about the facts of the holiday by being in school on Veteran's Day.
- F. New Course Proposal - Hist 1300: Western Traditions Before 1500: This was vetted through the School Improvement Committee and was positively received. Students will receive UCONN credit.
- G. Capital Plan
  - 1.Facilities: Added to the plan - Torrington replacing 1,500 ft of curbing in parking lot at a cost of \$260,000.
  - 2.Technology: Added providing MacBooks to grades 7-12. The total for the year 2021-2022 would be \$763,780.00. The Chromebook has a maximum life capacity of 5 years. The MacBook has a 7-8-year life

span, and they are less susceptible to viruses. Ms. Richardson suggested starting the MacBook's at 9<sup>th</sup> grade, because it is a good incentive to keep the students in districts and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are too young to be responsible for a very expensive computer. The Chair would rather have the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades have exposure to MacBook's during this age. The Chair and Ms. Richardson stated that the teachers will need MacBooks and training on their use as well if their students are using MacBooks. The Board would like the plan to be adjusted to include staff MacBooks every year. The Board discussed pros and cons about the MacBooks. Overall, the average consensus is positive to provide MacBooks to students grades 7-12 and 7-12 staff.

H. Board Goals: Mr. Kissko presented a draft of the Board Goals:

1. Monitor the implementation of the district strategic plan and its integration into the city strategic plan once that plan is developed.
2. Monitor and support the Middle School/High School Building Committee and allocate resources to the development and implementation of the "pathways" approach to the secondary curriculum.
3. Develop a plan to re-align TPS facility needs once the new building opens.
4. Oversee and support whatever is necessary to deal with the educational impact of the effects of prolonged distance learning.
5. Implement the capital plan as presented.

7. Committee Reports:

- A. Budget Committee: The committee is working on budget.
- B. Facilities & Technology Committee: The committee has made the changes and completed the Capital Plan.
- C. School Improvement Committee: The committee discussed the TAG program and distance learning. At the next meeting, they will talk about the impacts of disrupted education for our students and plans for the future.
- D. Building Committee: The committee reported that they hired the architects and construction manager. They stated that \$2.5 million dollars was already saved on fees.
- E. Grievance Hearing – The committee heard the grievance by the TEA and the grievance was denied.
- F. Liaison Reports:  
Ms. DePretis reported that Dr. Buchanan sends a morning message every day and

she interactions with the kids consistently. She stated that there is a great deal of evidence that there is collaboration going on in the building.

8. Action Items:

- A. Possible Action on TEA Negotiation Contract Proposal: Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the TEA Negotiation Contract as presented by the negotiation team, second by Mr. Maniccia. Ms. Richardson abstained. Everyone else in favor. The motion is approved.
- B. Monthly Financials: Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the monthly financials, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
- C. Calendar 2020-2021: Ms. Todor made a motion to approve the Calendar 2020-2021, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
- D. Calendar 2021-2022: Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Calendar 2020-2021, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
- E. Bylaws Revision: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the Bylaws revision, second by Mr. Corey. All in favor.
- F. New Course Proposal – Hist 1300: Western Traditions Before 1500 - Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the new course proposal, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
- G. Capital Plan:
  - 1. Facilities – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Facilities Capital Plan, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
  - 2. Technology - Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Technology Capital Plan, second by Mr. Maniccia. Ms. Richardson opposed. Everyone else in favor.
- H. Board Goals: Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Board Goals, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
- I. BOE Regular Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2020: Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Corey. All in favor.
- J. Committee Meeting Minutes: Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the minutes with the amendments, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
  - 1. Grievance Meeting – November 19, 2020
  - 2. School Improvement Committee – November 4, 2020
  - 3. Budget Committee – November 11, 2020
  - 4. Facilities and Technology Committee – November 11, 2020
  - 5. Building Committee – November 19, 2020
  - 6. Building Committee – November 24, 2020

7. Building Committee – December 3, 2020

- K. Consent Agenda: Appointments, Retirements & Resignations: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the consent agenda, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
9. Comments for the Good of the Order: (Paraphrased)
- Sue D. – “I wanted to thank Ally - the technology enhancements you’re implementing are amazing. I also want to thank Laura - the special education program is getting the attention it deserves and its commendable.”
- Laura, Kim, Ally, Ed, Sue F. – “Happy New Year!”
- Jess – “I would like to ask that we send the Building Committee agenda like the other committee agendas.”
- Cathy – “I am happy to see the calendar with the continued half days for our teachers – it is very important, so I would like to thank you for brining that forward. Happy New Year!”
- Gary – “I am glad the TEA negotiations went smoothly and Happy New Year!”
- Ellen – “Happy New Year and great work everyone.”
- John – “Thank you to everyone on both sides of the TEA negotiations. I would like to acknowledge our central office staff being here today during their time off.”
- Armand – “Thank you to everyone. The district is moving forward and Happy New Year.”
- Ed A – “Thank you for my cake - a day before my birthday! I hope everyone has a happy and healthy New Year.”
- Sue L – “Happy New Year everyone - I echo your sentiments towards the TEA negotiations. Great job team.”
- Chair – “I echo that sentiment - it was a tough time to be negotiating. Happy New Year!”
10. Items for Upcoming Agenda
- A. Budget
  - B. Covid-19 Expenses
11. Future Meetings:
- Wednesday, January 6, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)**
- 6:00 p.m. – School Improvement Committee
  - 7:00 p.m. – Policy Committee
- Wednesday, January 13, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)**
- 6:00 p.m. – Facilities/Technology Committee
  - 7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee
- Wednesday, January 27, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)**
- 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting
12. Adjournment: Mr. Kissko made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:31 P.M.