



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
355 Migeon Ave – Remote Meeting**

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 6:04 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Corey (Remote), Ms. DePretis, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Mr. Eucalitto, Ms. Todor (Remote), Ms. Fappiano, Ms. Richardson, Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Fergusson, Mr. Arum, Ms. Schulte, Mr. Barlow, Ms. Herold, Ms. Klimaszewski
3. Approval of Agenda: Ms. DePretis made a motion to amend the agenda to add information session L and action item J for 2 fundraiser second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
4. School/Community Service/Public Participation:
There were no e-mails sent to the chair.
Jason Lafreniere spoke and let the board know that he will be here for any clarification/information for the Washington D.C. trip if needed.
5. Executive Session Regarding the Retirement Incentive Proposal:
Mr. Eucalitto made the motion to go into executive session regarding the retirement incentive proposal inviting in Ms. Schulte, Ms. Lubomski, Mr. Arum, Ms. Herold, and the board clerk, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.

The board entered executive session at 6:07 P.M.

The board returned to open session at P.M. 6:43 P.M

6. Information Sharing Session:
 - A. Superintendent's Report: Ms. Lubomski reported that the feedback on the professional development day was outstanding, very interactive and thoughtful discussions. Some of the topics were grading, addressing learning gaps, and 504 guidelines. She stated how proud she was of all staff for having respectful and courageous conversations.
 1. Office of Teaching and Learning Update: Ms. Fergusson reiterated the PD day success. Curriculum Development is continuing. Humanities 6-12 is nearing completion. Plans are being finalized regarding the learning gaps resulting from the pandemic. Staff has been surveyed to determine availability to provide these extended day and year interventions. Additionally, due to snow days, the STAR winter student assessment window has been extended until February 26th.

Technology: Torrington will be featured in the state-wide webinar on technology driven professional development for staff and parents during the time of COVID. Ms. Herold reported the installation of the outdoor access point at THS has been completed. She has been in contact with the state to complete this project. Ms. Herold has also collaborated with the Director of Facilities to complete the THS gym digital sign board.

2.Special Education Update: Ms. Klimaszewski stated that we had a minor increase in our special education enrollment. We outplaced one of our own students. Our district outplacement percentage is 10.88% compared to the state average of 13.5%. So far, 29 students have tested out of special education this year. Since the start of school this year, 30 children have moved into Torrington with an IEP for in-district programming and 30 children have moved out of Torrington with an IEP for in-district programming. It is unusual to have the same number of students move in and out, but that is where we are at currently.

3.Diversity and Equity Committee: Ms. Schulte stated that the meeting was highly successful, including many courageous conversations. The State holds BOE responsible for developing a plan for the recruitment and retention of Minority Teachers. One of the action steps was to form a Diversity and Equity Committee. The committee includes 15 teachers, 10 support staff, 9 administrators, 10 community members who are all diverse in nature in the following ways: position, level, gender, race, and ethnicity. The future goals of the committee are: developing committee goals, crafting a district diversity, equity, and inclusion statement, planning multi-cultural events, professional development for staff, PR/communication, technology access, and community/partnerships. The feedback from the meeting was overwhelmingly positive.

The board discussed the committee and future direction. The chair decided to have a special meeting to discuss committees as a whole further on Monday, February 1st, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.

B. Superintendent's Proposed Budget 2021-2022: The board is only receiving the budget tonight. The goal is to meet

student needs and education requirements while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Ms. Lubomski reviewed enrollment, master schedules, student needs, staffing, increased graduation requirements, Covid-19 impacts, and learning gaps. The Superintendent proposed a budget of \$78,143,126 which reflects a 2.1% increase over last year's adopted budget.

Budget Priorities

1. Staff Increases – 5.6 Staff Positions: \$318,182
2. Non-Staff Increases: Infrastructure, repairs and maintenance, professional service, books, periodicals and library media supplies, disposal service, special education instructional, dues and fees.
Total Percentage Increase: 2.0% contractual
Obligations + 0.097% non-contractual= 2.1% increase.

Staff Reductions:

1. Certified Staff Reductions: .2 French + 5
Retirements = \$210,500
2. Other Reductions: \$265,055

General Budget Elementary:

1. Provides a Behavioral Program at Torrington
2. Maintains Behavioral Supports
3. Maintains Intervention Support
4. Maintains WINN Block, K-5: targeted enrichment or support time

General Budget Secondary:

1. Provides enough courses to meet new graduation requirements of 25 credits
2. Offers New Course Options to meet Graduation Requirements
3. Provides Targeted Acceleration & Academic Support: 6-12
4. Expands In-house Alternative Regular and Sped Programming

General Budget Districtwide Includes:

1. No staff or course section reductions
2. Continued intervention supports
3. Curriculum Revision, K-12
4. Upgrades in infrastructure and cyber security
5. Time and Attendance Management System
6. Professional Learning and Evaluation Management System
7. Staffing & Budgeting System

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on March 24, 2021.

- C. ESSER II Funds/Cares Act II: Ms. Lubomski presented how the money would be allocated. The document is fluid and flexible.
- D. Monthly Financials: The monthly financials were vetted through the Budget committee.
- E. COVID-19 Expenses: We received the second and third payment and we have one more payment to receive from the state.
- F. Budget Timeline: Budget committee will meet March 3rd at 6:30 P.M. next week. The remainder of the meetings will be scheduled next week.
- G. CSG Contract: Mr. Arum stated that the city council approved the contract unanimously with one abstention.
- H. 2020-2021 Washington, DC Trip: Some parents have reached out to the school regarding uncertainty about Covid-19. Everyone who travels must receive a negative PCR Covid-19 test. Students will be 4 to a room. Upon return, what will be the requirements be regarding quarantine? Mr. Lafreniere provided more information to the board. The chair stated that although she is always in support of this trip, the board has to be concerned about the ripple effects of incidents at the Capital this year. The board decided that based on safety concerns for students and staff, the Washington D.C. trip would be canceled for this year. The further financial aspect will be discussed in the Budget Committee and at the site with the administration.

Mr. Maniccia made a motion to extend the board meeting to 9:30 P.M., second by Ms. DePretis. Mr. Kissko and Mr. Eucalitto are opposed. Everyone else in favor. Motion approved. Meeting extended to 9:30 P.M.

- I. Board Goals: Table
- J. Snow Days: We went through our first 5 snow days. The chair stated that we should go back to making the decision based on the circumstances of the day on what happens on the snow day, whether the ultimate outcome is a snow day or a distance learning day. Ms. Richardson stated that we should state that we will go to remote days unless there are extenuating circumstances, like a power outage. Ms. Lubomski agreed with Ms. Richardson. Ms. Lubomski will be deciding whether there is a snow, delay or remote day, depending on the weather and safety concerns that specific day and time as has been the case pre-COVID.

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- K. CIAC Update: Spring sports will happen. They will begin March 27th. Currently there will be no spectators, but that may change.
- L. Fundraisers: Ms. Ferguson presented two fundraisers for the boards' approval to benefit 5th grade end of the year activities at Forbes and Southwest.

Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to extend the board meeting to 9:35 P.M., second by Mr. Maniccia. Mr. Kissko opposed. Everyone else in favor. Motion approved. Meeting extended to 9:35 P.M.

7. Committee Reports:

Committee reports were not reported on due to the time extension. The board members e-mailed their liaison reports to be attached at the end of the minutes. Please see page 7-9.

8. Action Items:

- A. Receive the Superintendent's Proposed 2021-2022 Budget – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to receive the Superintendent's proposed 2021-2022 budget and move it to the Budget committee, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- B. Possible Approval of Retirement Incentive Proposal – Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the retirement incentive proposal, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
- C. 2020-2021 Washington, DC Trip – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 Washington, DC trip, second by Mr. Eucalitto. No one in favor. All the board members opposed the motion. Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to cancel the 2020-2021 Washington, DC trip, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
- D. Monthly Financials – Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to approve the monthly financials, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
- E. CSG Contract as Approved by City Council, February 16, 2021 – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the CSG Contract as approved by City Council, February 16, 2021, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- F. ~~Board Representation of 2 Members – Diversity & Equity Committee~~ – Tabled.
- G. BOE Regular Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2021 – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
- H. Committee Meeting Minutes – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.

1. School Improvement – January 6, 2021

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on March 24, 2021.

2. Budget Committee – January 13, 2021

3. Facilities and Technology Committee – January 13, 2021

- I. Consent Agenda: Appointments, Retirements & Resignations – Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to approve the consent agenda, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
- J. Fundraisers: Ms. Fappiano made a motion to approve the two fundraisers in a bundle, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- 9. Comments for the Good of the Order: (Paraphrased.)
 - A. Nikki – “Thank you for all the hard work on the budget.”
 - B. Sue D – “I echo that, thank you for the budget the work is incredible.”
 - C. Armand – “Keep up the good work.”
 - D. Sue L. – “Thank you to everyone.”
- 10. Items for Upcoming Agenda
 - A. Budget
 - B. Monthly Financials
- 11. Future Meetings:
 - Monday, March 1, 2021 (TBD)***
 - 6:00 p.m. – BOE Special Meeting
 - Wednesday, March 3, 2021 (at Migeon)***
 - 6:00 p.m. – Facilities/Technology Committee
 - 7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee
 - Thursday, March 4, 2021 (Torrington School)***
 - 5:30 p.m. – Building Committee
 - Wednesday, March 10, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)***
 - 6:00 p.m. – School Improvement Committee
 - 7:00 p.m. – Policy Committee
 - Wednesday, March 24, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)***
 - 6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting
- 12. Adjournment: Ms. DePretis made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:36 P.M.

Liaison Reports

- **Jessica Richardson's Liaison Report on THS School Governance Liaison Report:**
 - THS School Governance met on Feb 1st and received updates on a variety of topics.
 - Honoring Black History Month, which the admin really hopes to emphasize year-round. Just a few of the things that have been done so far: there was a student-created advisory lesson related to black history month, and we also had a student who shared at an Our Culture is Beautiful event. THS Science club has been recognizing conservationists of color and had a zoom talk with Tykee James of the national Audubon Society which was enjoyed by all who attended.
 - Student council is revving up their fundraising and looking toward what kinds of events they will be able to have in the spring. Seniors are ordering caps and gowns.
 - National Honor Society is under new leadership and will be having an event at the end of Feb.
 - New Library media specialist Theresa Hartling spruced up the website and has provided some PD for staff.
 - NEASC report was submitted, the next thing that will have to be done is the 2 year report.
 - Winter athletics are starting up - swim, cheer, basketball, indoor track.
 - Just wrapped up STAR testing, each student did 20 min reading and 20 min of math. Administration is hopeful the results will be useful to teachers because it will give them some solid data on individual students and can help them pinpoint student need in the future.
 - Admin is working on priority goals for the school, has a draft document so far.
 - Staff is stressed but is working hard. Students are struggling with isolation. Home visits are still happening and are trying to connect families with support. The administration feels that the school is becoming a little more lively, and on the day of the meeting they had had their highest number of students in attendance so far.
- **Nikki Fappiano's Liaison Report on Vogel-Wetmore School:**
 - Tuesday was the 100th day of school. Our staff and students dressed as 100 year-olds. We shared 100 things that we love about our school. We did 100 exercises (10 sets of 10). The exercises were a great way to get moving and also practice some math skills.
 - Our students are just completing our mid-year assessments. All students are assessed on their skills in reading and math and some are assessed in English proficiency. The data from these assessments are analyzed and discussed during grade-level meetings in teams and by individuals including administrators and coaches. We use this data to continually improve our instruction.
 - During our professional development, grade-level meetings, and staff meetings we have been working on writing better and better learning targets. We are also working hard to unpack them for our students in each and every lesson. The goal of this work is to help our students to better monitor their own learning from moment to moment. Teachers will guide them and support them, but when students have specific goals and know how to measure them they are more likely to find success and feel pride in their work.
 - Next week is going to be Read Across America week. It will be a fun way to encourage students to read more. Each day will have a theme that connects a fun spirit day and books that match the theme. For example, one day will be polka-dot day. On this day we will encourage students and staff to wear polka-dots to school. We will also read books like The Dot and Put Me in the Zoo. Each evening Monday - Thursday we will have a different reader Zoom a bedtime story for our students.
- **John Kisisko's Liaison Report on EdAdvance:**

EdAdvance has been able to continue modified versions of most of our operations. Heat Start and Early Head Start have the same problems as the public schools. As Assistant Superintendent

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Fergusson reported at the meeting on February 24th, all or almost all of our districts are participating in COVID information and strategy sessions on a regular basis. EdAdvance has been able to maintain financial stability over the past year, with some minor restructuring of personnel and programs.

- **Cathy Todor's Liaison Report on Forbes School:**

- February at Forbes was marked by: Focus on kindness and friendship with kindness quotes in Daily announcements.
- P.E. teacher Eric Mahar created slides with Heart facts for Heart Month in Daily announcements
- Black History Month: A Black History Question of the Day was part of our daily announcements; students could find answers on a posted Periodic Table of Black History (both in-person and also virtually)
- We Incorporated biographies of African Americans in grade 4 biography unit
- Music teacher Ashlee Hyatt provided lessons on the influence of African Americans on modern music: e.g. jazz, swing, motown, funk, soul
- Members of our Forbes Race & Equity committee participated in one of the Black History Celebrations hosted by community partner Our Culture Is Beautiful
- Two of our students, Owen Miller and Stephanie Penaranda will be honored at next month's Connecticut Association of Schools Elementary Arts Celebration. This is usually an event at the Aquaturf; this year it will be a virtual event.
- Spirit Boost: We had a 4th grade vs 5th grade Color War contest on 2/12 -- grade level wearing most pink/red earned a PJ Day! Grade 4 won!
- And we had lots of snow for the children to enjoy at recess, thanks to snow-gear collection and distribution by 5th grade teacher Diane Hart!
- Upcoming in March: we'll be celebrating Music in Our Schools Month; Reading Across the School; 4th grade classes will be participating in a virtual Field Trip to New England Air Museum as part of the SOAR grant; a virtual Book Fair from March 19-29; Parent-Teacher Conferences; 2nd Marking Period Progress Reports; and hopefully uninterrupted school days!

- **Sue DePretis' Liaison Report on Southwest School:**

- Southwest students created a paper 'gratitude chain' for CHH (Ali has a photo). Each link in the chain has a personal thank you from various students and was delivered to Brian Mattiello (RVP, Hartford Health Care) to be displayed at Charlotte Hungerford.
- March is Music month in the district and SW is surveying the teachers on their musical background. They are considering putting together a slide show with trivia questions 'guess who played what instrument'.
- Week of 3/1 the 4th graders will participate in the Air Museum virtual field trip. Amanda Goodhart Parks personally assembled individual paper airplane kits for each 4th grader at SW and Forbes. Everyone is excited for next week!
- Administrators are looking to put together a community of readers campaign throughout the school to encourage individual, silent reading. Some ideas around this include pictures of teachers reading, students reading, etc.
- All entries for the Sue Grossman Walkway contest are due Friday, February 26th. Looking forward to seeing them on display!!
- Dr. B is putting together a sign language challenge for students (e.g., "learn how to sign the Pledge of Allegiance and lead the Pledge for a day").
- Feedback from PD – it was AMAZING, one of the best!
- SW and Forbes are kicking of the W.I.N.N. ("What I Need Now") program. Sounds like a great program, geared toward those children that need or want extra help or those that would like to be

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more challenged. The sister schools plan to implement the program on Wednesday afternoons, some schedule adjustments will need to be made but the teachers and administrators are dedicated to the success of this program. Looking forward to following the results on this program.

-Star Assessment scores increased from Fall to Winter – Dr. B is looking forward to seeing another increase in the Spring.

-P/T conferences scheduled 3/23-3/25.

- **Gary Eucalitto's Liaison Report on Torrington School:**

-With Covid restrictions, we modified our Valentine's Day plans. Each class made a Valentine's art project, teachers provided special virtual ways to share kind messages like padlets and slideshows. We had a kindness celebration where students participated in a virtual dance party and wore pink and red to school. Mrs. Galullo went into Mrs. Deloy's class to read a book about kindness.

-Our amazing PTO have a fun night planned for families this Friday: Virtual Bingo!

-Next week we are celebrating Read Across America week with spirit days and mystery readers as well as a virtual book fair.

-We have just met in our grade level data meetings to review winter data and plan for our WINN block (what I need now). We are really taking advantage of those weekly meetings to collaborate, review student data, and intentionally plan.

-Our EL students have begun LAS testing during this time as well.

-Teachers are growing their practice in learning targets and embedded formative assessment. We did after school walkthroughs to share ideas and find common areas of strengths and needs.

-Our leadership team has met to review and revise the school improvement plan to be aligned to the district plan and focus areas.

-We have exciting news, the Kids Marathon will still happen this year virtually. We will be looking forward to that this spring.