



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Wednesday, September 22, 2021, 6:00 P.M.
THS Media/Library Center
Torrington, CT 06790**

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 6:01 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Corey (Remote), Ms. DePretis, Mr. Eucalitto, Ms. Fappiano, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Richardson, Ms. Todor, Mr. Barlow, Ms. Boisvert, Ms. Fergusson, Ms. Klimaszewski, Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Schulte
3. Approval of Agenda: Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Ms. DePretis. All in favor.
4. School/Community Service/Public Participation:
Liz Patterson: Spoke about the mask policy, executive orders, and mask exemption forms.
5. Recognitions – Teachers of the Year & Paras of the Year:
Ms. Lubomski and the BOE Chair presented plaques to the 2021 school teachers and paras of the year from each site.
6. Information Sharing Session:
 - A. Superintendent's Report: We had a smooth start to the school year. It was exciting to have the students back in the buildings even with some accommodations. There has been a major influx regarding enrollment. Our enrollment numbers will be pulled on October 1st. We are looking forward to a wonderful year.
 1. Office of Teaching and Learning Update: Ms. Fergusson summarized news from the Office of Teaching and Learning. We had a successful launch of the school year regarding instruction. Teachers are working in collaborative planning in groups to plan for accelerated learning, which includes a deep dive into the scope of units of study and the identification of priority standards. The Star testing windows will be: Fall: September 13 – September 29, 2021
Winter: January 18-28, 2022
Spring: May 16-27, 2021

Ms. Herold provided the board with a technology update. She presented the technology traffic study from today vs one year ago, and there was a significant difference. Last year, we had 250 MG/s and this year, we have over 1.5 GS/s. We saw 19,377 active devices in the last 3 months. We process over 5TB of data every single day. Devices have been made available to all students grade 2 through post-secondary. The new K-1

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iPads will ship on October 10th. Student onboarding and offboarding with email and Google Workspace accounts is now automatic.

2.Special Education Update: Ms. Klimaszewski will share updates of the special education numbers after October 1st. She stated that they are beginning to analyze their STAR scores. Special education students are in the 28th percentile for K-3 reading, which is above the percentile required for inclusion in intervention. She shared with the board what they are doing to continue to improve their instruction and encourage optimal student growth.

- B. BOE Budget 2021-2022: Ms. Lubomski presented Ms. Boisvert's new forms that were shared at the Budget Committee meetings. Last year's budget ended in a surplus and that funding went back to the City.
- C. Monthly Financials: There are not a lot of expenditures in the beginning of the year. The line item listed as "donation" is the Covid expenses.
- D. Vaccine Mandate for Employees – Process: Ms. Lubomski summarized all the state required documentation regarding vaccinated and unvaccinated staff. She reviewed the following options:
 - 1.Vaccination declaration attestation form
 - 2.Test results report once a week – rapid or PCR. We will test all our unvaccinated employees at THS and TMS.
 - 3.Medical exemptions documentation must be submitted by October 12th and they would still need to test weekly.
 - 4.Religious exemption, and they would still need to test weekly.
 - 5.Not fill out any exemption forms but complete weekly testing.
 - 6.Temporary waiver form – people who have had covid, and therefore, must wait 90 days (to test or get the vaccine). This form requires a doctor's signature.

The board may need to consider hiring a nurse at some point to administer the testing.

Our staff is 89% vaccinated. We will probably need to test around 100-125 staff weekly.

Ms. Richardson thanked Central Office leadership for providing free testing for the staff. She asked why there is a 3rd category (medical/religious exemption) if they still need to test. Why couldn't they just choose to say they are going to test weekly without providing any medical information? Ms. Lubomski stated that district leaders are also asking those questions. Those hired before September 27th do have the option to simply test weekly without providing documentation on exemption status, so the district is trying to honor everyone's choices. Ms. Richardson asked what happens to a staff member who tests positive? They would have to quarantine and would have to use their sick time to quarantine. Then, they have to wait 90 days to test weekly or get vaccinated. Ms. Schulte confirmed that she was at a meeting with directors of HR and that that no district in CT is paying for those who have to quarantine. Everyone who is out on quarantine is using sick time. Vaccinated staff who test positive but are asymptomatic, don't have to quarantine.

- E. Alliance Proposal: Ms. Lubomski reported that this year we are receiving 3.9 million. We are trying to focus on the additions of programs and instructional materials, not more staff.
- F. Field Trips:

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1. Barnes Air National Guard, Westfield MA 10/1/2021: They will not go on the overnight trip. This field trip will replace that overnight trip.
2. Camp Niantic Army Base, 10/6/2021-10/8/2021: The students will no longer attend this field trip.

- G. Policy Manual Updates: Ms. Schulte presented the changes. The Board must decide on the two policies that we have that Shipman doesn't have, but she is not sure where to move them to: Bilingual-Bicultural Education and Adult Education. This will be discussed at the Policy Committee. The committee voted to change the numbers.
- H. Mask Policy #2011 – Proposing a new sentence for the policy - “Masks/face coverings containing messages or images that are disruptive to the educational process are prohibited. Administration ultimately determines the inappropriate nature of the face covering.” Ms. DePretis stated she had concerns about the speaker's comments about the medical mask exemption form and the State mask requirements. Ms. Cappabianca stated that the medical mask exemption form was developed and recommended by our legal counsel and that most districts are using the same document. Ms. DePretis asked about masks breaks and if they are being practiced the same in each building. Ms. Lubomski stated that each grade level has a different approach, for example elementary students have a natural mask break at recess. The board will wait to get a legal opinion on masking procedures when the Governor's Executive Orders are set to expire. Tentative BOE Special meeting next Wednesday.
7. Committee Reports:
- A. Budget Committee – The committee discussed budget.
 - B. Facilities & Technology Committee – The committee discussed roofs and windows.
 - C. School Improvement Committee – The committee discussed summer programs, THS report on the summer school. TMS improvement plan will be discussed next meeting.
 - D. Policy Committee – The committee covered renumbering policies and the mask policy.
 - E. Building Committee – The presentation will be a part of the BOE special meeting next week.
 - F. Liaison Reports: (Paraphrased)
The board members shared their reports:
John on Ed Advance – “October 7th is the annual meeting. It will be 1 hour long and all the BOE members are welcome to come.”
Nikki on Vogel Wetmore – “They had two welcome back events; kindergarten welcome day and school wide meet and greet. The school celebrated international DOT day, interventionists are busy getting the year started, ESL has similar early success, and September 30th is the welcome back night for parents.”
Gary on Torrington – “October 7th is the drop-in principal virtual coffee hour, welcome back night is on September 30th, and picture day is October 15th.”
Cathy on Forbes – students are well into place value reviews, they're launching reading and writers workshop units, STAR testing is beginning, first fire drill was on September 7th, students were well behaved, and classes were well organized, welcome back night was on September 30th

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Sue D. on Southwest – “The school has a student gratitude dragon trophy which homerooms can earn. There is also a staff gratitude dragon as well. They already had their first spirit week.”

Jessica on THS – “Attendance rate has been over 90% so far. Parents night was a success, author visit, grade 11 had a field trip, excellent school spirit, and fall sports are on their way. Games are open to the public again.”

Ed on Government Relations – “The legislature will conceive to discuss the extension of the governor’s emergency orders. This will probably pass.”

8. Action Items:

- A. Monthly Financials – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
- B. Alliance Proposal – Mr. Eucalitto made a motion to approve the Alliance Proposal, second by Ms. DePretis. All in favor.
- C. Field Trips: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to have Camp Niantic Army Base field trip be replaced by the Barnes Air National Guard, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
 - 1. Barnes Air National Guard, Westfield MA 10/1/2021
 - 2. Camp Niantic Army Base, 10/6/2021-10/8/2021 remove this one and add barnes
- D. Policy Manual Updates – Ms. Hoehne made a motion to approve the policy manual updates, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
- E. Mask Policy #2011 – Ms. Hoehne made a motion to adopt the Mask Policy #2011, second by Mr. Eucalitto. All in favor.
- F. BOE Regular Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2021 – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.
- G. Committee Meeting Minutes: Ms. Todor made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
 - 1. Budget – August 4, 2021
 - 2. Facilities and Technology – August 4, 2021
 - 3. Building – August 19, 2021
 - 4. Policy – June 2, 2021
 - 5. School Improvement – August 11, 2021
- H. Consent Agenda: Appointments, Retirements & Resignations – Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the consent agenda, second by Ms. Fappiano. All in favor.

9. Items for Upcoming Agenda:

- A. Monthly Financials
- B. Meeting Minutes to Attach Packet Information > SIC
- C. Building Committee Structure > SIC
- D. Continued Guidelines
- E. Timekeeper System Update
- F. 2022/2023 Budget

10. Comments for the Good of the Order (paraphrased)

Gary – “Nice to be back.”

Sue – “Thank you everyone for all the information you provided.”

Jessica – “Thank you to administration for all of the work you’ve put in for free testing for our staff.”

Armand and Ellen – “Thank you everyone.”

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John – “I am happy with how our meetings are going vs how the board meetings are being blown up around the State. October 20th up for reelection cast the form.”

Sue L – “Thank you to the Board and I agree with John. It is much appreciated that we can talk to each other civilly.”

11. Future Meetings:

Wednesday, September 29, 2021 (THS.)

6:00 – BOE Special Meeting

Wednesday, October 6, 2021 (Torrington)

6:00 p.m. – School Improvement Committee

7:00 p.m. – Policy Committee

Wednesday, October 13, 2021 (at Migeon Ave.)

6:00 p.m. - Facilities/Technology Committee

7:00 p.m. - Budget Committee

Wednesday, 27, 2021 (THS)

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 8:28 P.M.