

Regular Board of Education Meeting
Virtual
January 10, 2022 7PM

1. Call to Order

Dr. Nugent, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03PM. Other Members present: Cindy Luty, Cindy Dupointe, Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Megan Gallant, and Dan Harris. Tom Turner was excused. Also present: Dr. Seitsinger; Superintendent, and Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Consent Agenda

Cindy Luty asked that the LEARN report be pulled from the consent agenda. She reviewed the following from their last meeting:

-Superintendent Neviaser from Lyme/Old Lyme presented his strategic plan which includes reaching out to tuition based students due to declining enrollment. He has also appointed a Marketing Coordinator to further promote the district.

-The RESC Alliance met with Commissioner Beth Nye, Office of Early Childhood, regarding funding to support Universal PreK.

-There is a new CT Oil Purchasing Consortium which will be rolled out to all Business Managers to purchase fuel at a reduced rate.

The consent agenda was accepted as presented.

4. Superintendent's Reports/Updates

a. Long Island Sound Calendar Contest

Four Preston students (Jaxon Wilcox, Ashley Hutchinson, Madeline Muench and Mira Velasquez) and their artwork were chosen to represent in the 2022 Long Island Sound Calendar. Schools across the state participate in this contest.

b. Dr. Seitsinger sent a letter to the Town requesting the formation of a Building Committee to start a dialogue around planning and building in the Town. Dr. Nugent asked if that letter would be reviewed at the next BOS and BOF meetings. Dr. Seitsinger stated that he would follow up.

c. Updated Re-opening Plan

Schools must update their reopening plan every 6 months. This is a requirement in order to receive funds. The biggest change is the move to screen and stay. This is a living document and will change continually. The document is posted for public review.

d. FY23 Budget Update

Dr. Seitsinger will begin meeting with members of the Leadership Team individually later this week to review budget needs.

Dr. Seitsinger also thanked Bill Merrill for his professionalism and hard work as interim Director of Finance. He stated that Cindy Varrichio has been hired as the new Director of Finance. Her first official day in district in Monday, January 31, 2022.

e. Attendance

PVMS is averaging 15% daily absences. PPMS is averaging 12.7%. In a non-pandemic year the average is 6% absences. Dr. Seitsinger thanked all faculty and staff for their hard work, dedication, and willingness to pivot as necessary to ensure that students receive all that they need. The Governor is not allowing for virtual learning at this time. Snow days are true snow days and must be made up at the end of the year. Some staff are not paid for snow days, but must wait to be paid when the day is actually made up in June.

f. Blue Water RV Park

A letter was sent expressing the district's concern for enrollment. The Park's attorney has sent an FOI Request to the district requesting past enrollment information.

5. Principal and Special Education Director Reports

Dr. Seitsinger shared Ann Perzan's report in her absence. One elementary teacher is receiving special reading training to assist students. All special education needs are currently being met for all students with needs.

Ray Bernier; Principal PVMS, stated that staffing continues to be an issue. Currently he has several college students assisting with coverage but they will all be headed back to school soon. PBIS will host the NED Show on January 28th at 9:30AM virtually. The program supports the following:

- never give up
- encourage others
- do your best

The show incorporates magic tricks and yoyos into their presentation to encourage students in the above.

Dr. Davis-Tomczuk; Principal PPMS and Director of Curriculum, explained that upon returning to school after the winter break, administrators no longer need to contact trace in the same manner as before. If a student is positive, the parents of the entire section that the student travels with throughout the day is notified. The hope is that parents will more closely monitor their children and refrain from sending them to school while they are ill. The staffing shortage affects PPMS as well. Dr. Davis-Tomczuk stated that she is blessed with a flexible staff who do whatever it takes to make things work. After school activities are being reinstated: Basketball practice tomorrow, clubs next week, Parks and Recreation activities too.

Cindy Dupointe asked if the homework club will start up soon. Mr. Bernier explained that he would consider that in the near future, after MLK Day. More things will be added little by little.

Megan Gallant asked about student test kits. Dr. Seitsinger explained that the district received some and they will be distributed to families of students who are symptomatic.

Dr. Nugent stated that he, Dr. Seitsinger, and Patrick McCormack from Uncas Health met last week. They discussed positivity rates, hospitalizations, and immunizations. The more data we have the better this can all be understood.

6. Policy Review

Dr. Seitsinger and Megan Gallant will meet soon to begin review of the 6000 series.

7. Expenditure/Projection Reports

Mr. Merrill, Interim Director of Finance stated that the district is currently on point with regard to spending. It is January and we have spent roughly 50% of the budget. He stated we are right on track.

5 Year Capital Plan: The plan was updated and reviewed. Projects are labelled 1-4 by priority. The end of the report lists highlights for future planning. Discussion followed. A final document will be presented to the Board at their February meeting.

8. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49PM. Luty/Harris. Unanimous. Motion Carries.