

EASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
April 19, 2022 Regular Meeting  
Minutes

*Filed subject to approval.*

Present: DeJesus, Parker, Stinson, Wible (attended remotely via Zoom)  
Administration: McKinnon, Pierson Ugol, Scrofani, Clapp, Del Conte, Fox Santora  
Others: None

Mr. Stinson called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move that the minutes of the February 8, 2022 regular meeting be accepted as submitted. Approved by unanimous consent.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Superintendent: Dr. McKinnon reviewed the new budget process which was redesigned into cost centers and how it is connected to creating a strategic plan for the district. The work has started on developing a Strategic Plan for ER9 Schools. (His presentation is posted on the Easton Board Website.) Dr. McKinnon started the Strategic Planning process by meeting with teacher and support staff groups in each of the five ER9 schools. On May 12 from 6:30-8:30 pm a discussion will be held with all interested parents/board members at Joel Barlow High School. A communication will be sent out concerning this session and its purpose. Future focus groups will be identified consisting of Board members, community members, parents and students to review the district's vision, identify priorities and set goals for students.

Samuel Staples Elementary School: Mrs. Fox Santora updated the Board on current and anticipated enrollment for 2022-2023 for the elementary school. Administration is aware of potentially 91 kindergartners for next year. Sixty-four kindergarten registration packets have been returned so far.

Mrs. Fox Santora also reported on the school climate focus of teaching elementary students to be a good sport and shared various activities planned for Go Green Week celebrating Earth Day.

Helen Keller Middle School: Dr. Clapp reported on various activities planned for the final nine weeks of this school year. Thirteen extracurricular activities are running this spring, including two new ones: Drama Club and indoor soccer. The Parent Teacher Organization will be improving staff lounges and renewing outside gardens. HKMS strongly supported *Mikey's Way* this past month and raised \$7,200 for this worthy cause which helps children cope with cancer and is named after a former student, Michael Friedman. Dr. Clapp also reported on staff absences and a shortage of substitutes.

Special Services: Jennifer Del Conte reported there has been an increase in PPTs this year compared to last year and believes it has to do with the pandemic. There was also discussion about preschool and its maximum capacity in Easton.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Stephanie Pierson Ugol gave an update regarding the annual school climate surveys. Climate surveys are mandated by the CT State Department of Education and support anti-bullying by providing an opportunity for students, staff, and parents to share information about their experiences in the schools. The administration will use the information to support a safe and positive school climate. The district will continue to use an external consultant to review and analyze survey data.

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. Superintendent's Recommendation for Non-Renewal: Dr. McKinnon explained that Joyce Tilghman was hired as a one-year, long-term substitute special education teacher for the 2021-2022. He is recommending that her one-year contract not be renewed for 2022-2023 due to a reduction in force.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education determine that the contract of employment for Joyce Tilghman be non-renewed effective July 1, 2022 due to reduction in force. DeJesus, Wible. Approved. Unanimous.**

B. Board of Education Revisions to Budget: The Easton Board of Finance requested that the Board of Education reduce its 2022-2023 proposed budget by \$89,201, bringing the total budget to \$17,960,142. Dr. McKinnon shared several suggested reductions to get to the final number, including allotting funds for the proposed new teacher hires to Masters, Step 3 instead of the proposed Masters, Step 6. Mr. Parker suggested that the Board consider paying the second and the third installments of the Voluntary Early Retirement Plan out of unexpended funds from the current year's budget. One of these installment payments for six individuals is currently in the proposed 2022-2023 budget. Mrs. Cram, the Human Resources Manager, will review the VERIP agreement and contact the six retirees included in the agreement to see if they have any objection to receiving their payments early and will report back to the Board.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the final budget for the 2022-2023 school year budget at \$17,960,142. Parker, DeJesus. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEI Committee: Mrs. Wible reported that Dr. Glass gave a deeper analysis of the climate survey results, really looking at marginalized groups as best he could. Dr. Glass noted that we have very few students who fall into marginalized categories which makes it difficult to draw significant results. Dr. Pierson Ugol and Dr. McKinnon shared with the committee that it was important to look at all data and to ensure that all students have an experience where they feel safe, seen and included in the school environment. The next meeting will be in June.

Food Services Committee: Mr. Parker reported that two companies have expressed interest in working with ER9 to provide food for our students in the upcoming year. Each company will be submitting a formal response to the district RFP no later than May 4, 2022 at 2:00 pm. The committee will meet on May 18 with the interested vendors for a Q&A session and then decide which company offers the best program for our children. The committee will bring a recommendation on which company to hire to the joint meeting of the Easton, Redding & Region 9 Boards of Education on May 24.

Insurance Committee: Mr. Parker reported that the committee, which is comprised of both Town of Easton personnel as well as representatives of the Easton Board of Education, listened to presentations on liability and Workers Compensation insurance from the current provider, CIRMA, and Travelers. After 25 years with CIRMA, the committee voted to make a change and work with Travelers at a \$112,000 savings per year.

Joint Policy Committee: Mr. Stinson reported that a joint Policy Committee made up of members of the Easton, Redding & Region 9 Boards of Education tackled a review of district policies over the past two years. Many policies had not been updated since 1997. Many of the suggested policies reviewed were provided by CAFE. The committee recommended that moving forward the districts use model policies prepared by Shipman & Goodwin. Mr. Stinson shared a document of draft policies that he asked the Board members to review for first reading at the next meeting.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

None.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move to adjourn the meeting. Parker, DeJesus. Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Parker, Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Vicki Cram.