



North Canaan Board of Education

MEETING MINUTES

90 Pease Street, North Canaan, CT 06018 www.nceschool.org

*The North Canaan Board of Education met at
6:30 pm on Tuesday, June 8, 2021, virtually through Zoom.*

A virtual meeting was held using Zoom: Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

Others present: Dr. Alicia M. Roy, Principal; Lisa Carter, Superintendent; Dr. Scott Fellows and Jill Pace, Assistant Superintendents.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm. by Mrs. Drislane.

II. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Dodge made a motion to approve the minutes for May 11, 2021, Regular Meeting, as written. Mrs. Cahill seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

III. Public Comment: None

IV. Teacher Placements and Openings for 2021-2022

Dr. Roy presented the teacher placements for the 2021-2022 school year and reported that there is a posting for a .67 Music teacher which may be hard to fill due to being a part time position. The Board inquired as to why we need two music teachers. Dr. Roy explained that we need two teachers due to Band and Chorus and we are the only school in the district that doesn't have two at the moment.

V. Communications: None

VI. Region I Report - Mr. Bartram, North Canaan Representative

Mr. Bartram was unable to attend the North Canaan Board meeting, Ms. Carter summarized as follows:

- The 2022 fall coaches were approved
- The non-resident AgEd student request by Carter Lotz was approved. The family will pay his tuition for the 2021-2022 school year, with the Town of Sheffield picking up the cost the following year.
- The HR Generalist Position Contract for Michelle Curtis was approved.
- The proposed cooperative between the plan to join a football cooperative with Region 1, Gilbert and Region 7 was approved, as long as the finances and transportation worked out as planned.

VII. All Boards Chair Report

Mrs. Drislane reported that at the May 26th ABC Board meeting it was approved to bring Superintendent Carter's self-performance evaluation for 2020-2021 to each of the local Boards of Education at their June meetings for their response.

VIII. Data presentation

Ms. Carter gave a slide show presentation of the Data collected by Region 1 for the year. Some of the points that were discussed are listed below:

- There were National, Connecticut and Region 1 trends presented for in-person, hybrid and remote learning.
- The Distant Learning trends dropped. Ms. Carter thanked Dr. Roy for doing an excellent job in bringing so many North Canaan students back to in-person learning.
- Student achievement measured with Fast Bridges, ELA, Grades and Social Emotional Screening.
- Principals and staff are addressing students' needs for additional support. One of which is with the summer programming and tutoring being offered.

Ms. Carter concluded her presentation reporting that while Covid did have an impact on learning, Region 1 students for the most part are performing at grade level.

Dr. Roy added that Bridges was piloted this year and will be in all classrooms next year. Dr. Roy stated that almost all cases went up in growth. The 7th & 8th grade assessment data was largely due to Covid fatigue. The 1st Assessment was better and when they got to the 2nd Assessment it was harder for the students to focus and keep testing.

IX. ARP/ESSER Grant and Reopening presentation

ARP/ESSER Grant

Dr. Roy spoke about the ARP/ESSER Grant and listed some needs for North Canaan Elementary School. The Grant is for \$380,000 of which \$76,000 is for learning recovery, \$100,000 will be used for ventilation and the remaining will be for some of the items listed below:

- Finish air ventilation project
- Change the former art room to a data room
- Academic renewal and student enrichment
- Purchase more instruments to get the band program started again (families would not have to rent them)
- Install a kiln for more hands-on project work
- Enhance the makerspace area in the library media center
- Purchase individual heart monitors for students to learn about their target heart rate
- Add air conditioning to multiple classrooms throughout the school

Reopening presentation was given by Lisa Carter.

Ms. Carter reported that the CSDE Guidelines as of May 2021 states that the Guiding Principles will be:

Safeguarding the health and safety of students and staff.

- All students will return to school full time starting in the fall.
- Continuation of the 2020-2021 COVID-19 mitigation practices.
- Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities that are emerging from this historic disruption.
- Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators, and staff.
- Considering the challenges to the social emotional well-being, and the mental health needs of our students.

To remain safe, all staff and students will:

- Wear masks or face coverings*
- Social distance
- 3-6 feet - 6 feet wherever possible
- Wash hands frequently
- *face shields or alternatives with a doctor's note

X. Policies (1st reading)

There was a first reading of Policies 0523 Equity and Diversity; 6141.21 Religion in the Public Schools; 6162.6 Copyright Law Compliance; 6164.11 Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco; 6164.12 Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; 6171.2 Preschool Special Education; 6172 Alternative Education Programs; 6172.3 Parent Instruction of Children at Home; 6177 Use of Commercially Produced Video Recording; 6180 Evaluation of the Instructional Program; 6181 Evaluation of the Special Education Program. The Board will have a second reading with action to vote on the policies at the September 14, 2021, Board of Education meeting.

XI. Action Items

A-K. Policies

Mr. Ellington made a motion to recommend to the full Board the approval of policies 4213.6 Remote Work/Telecommuting/Telework; 6141 Curriculum Design/Development; 6141.311 Limited English Proficiency Program (English Learners); 6141.312 Migrant Students; 6141.322 Computers: Websites/Pages; 6141.326 Electronic Resources; 6144.1 Exemption From Instruction; 6145.8 School Activity Funds; 6146.2 Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations (Statewide Summative Assessments); 6152 Grouping Policy; and 6159.1 Teacher Aides/Paraprofessionals. Mr. Ellington asked that the 4213.6 Remote Work/Telecommuting/Telework policy be replaced with the new version from Ms. Carter. Ms. Carter said she would send it to us. Mrs. Dodge Seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

L. Increase to Student Lunch Price 2021-2022

Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the increase of the student lunch price to \$2.90 (an increase of \$.10) beginning in the 2021-2022 school year to be in compliance with the federal requirement as calculated through the paid lunch equity tool. Dr. Roy stated that every year we are required to add 10 cents to get to the State minimum. There should be approximately 2 more years before we reach the State minimum that is required. Mrs. Cahill seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

M. Hiring of a counselor

Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the hiring of Andrea Ragnow as a counselor for the 2021-2022 school year at a sixth year step 5 with a salary rate of \$56,216. Mr. Ellington seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

N. Wellness Policy Triennial Review

Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the publishing of the Wellness Policy Triennial Review and to support implementation of the recommendations. Dr. Roy reported the overall comprehensive score is 88 out of 100. The Wellness Committee has made great progress in adhering to the Wellness Policy, which is in compliance with state and USDA expectations. The strength score is 73, which signifies that some of our practices could be improved. Dr. Roy presented these recommendations for improvement or areas to note for continued success:

- A standards-based nutrition education curriculum should promote student wellness in all grades, integrating nutrition throughout lessons in all content areas as appropriate.
- Food-based celebrations during the school day (birthday and holiday parties) should strive to meet Smart Snacks nutrition standards. Food should also not be used as a reward for good student behavior.
- Physical activity should continue to be used as a reward, never as a punishment, and physical activity breaks should continue during the school day.
- Purchase local foods for the school meals program.
- Continued adherence to the District Wellness Policy (6142.101) must be maintained.

Mr. Devino inquired if these were optional or requirements. Dr. Roy answered that in order to get better marks which are needed, we have to choose some of the recommendations for improvement. The Board discussed options and noted that food-based celebrations during the school day for birthdays and holiday parties, in their opinion, were very important to the students. The Board asked if we could say “encouraged” when promoting Smart Snacks instead of eliminating choices. Mrs. Cahill noted that there were parents online that would like to be heard regarding that matter. Mrs. Drislane opened the Board meeting for public comment for 5-7 minutes regarding food choices. Three different parents took turns telling the Board how important it is for their children and others to have a food-based celebration during the school day. They all agreed that children look forward to it and it may be all they get at times for their birthday. All three parents were in agreement that it should be the parents choice and the wording “encourage” would be better. Some said they would be happy to send in a healthy alternative but not to eliminate the celebration or the choice. After the Board heard from the public and discussed further, all were in agreement that food-based celebrations during the school day should remain in effect with encouraging parents to choose healthy alternatives to the cupcakes and sugar snacks that are normally sent in. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

XII. Administrative Reports (A copy is available through the links on the June agenda.)

Principal’s Report: Dr. Roy provided a brief overview of her monthly report. Some of the items she reported are listed below:

- Graduation will be held outside on the field Wednesday, June 16th at 6:30 PM (rain date Friday, June 18th.)

- Although students were not able to stay overnight at a Nature’s Classroom location, they were able to come to us. The weather was beautiful and the 5th and 6th grade students enjoyed every minute.

Assistant Superintendent’s Report: (A copy is available through the links on the June agenda.) Mrs. Pace and Dr. Fellows both provided an overview of their monthly report. Some of the items they reported are listed below:

- We continue to work our way through the hiring of new staff, scheduling initial interviews and teaching interviews for all candidates.
- We have hired Rebecca Gaschel-Clark and Eve Davis to serve as on-site administrators, with Jill and Scott available during the day. We have commitments from about 70 students and Jill is in the process of working with Rebecca and Eve to move forward with our terrific summer learning program.
- Xello is the program that we are using to replace Naviance to allow our students in Grades 6-12 to create and maintain a Student Success Plan (SSP) that is portable and can follow the student to the High School. Xello will be used at Lee H. Kellogg, Cornwall, Kent, Salisbury, and Sharon with students in Grade 6-8; at North Canaan Elementary School with students in Grades K-8; and at HVRHS with students in Grades 9-12. Xello has the capability to submit college applications and to track post high school data.

Superintendent’s Report: (A copy is available through the links on the June agenda.)

- We continued to experience relatively low incidents of COVID-19 cases this month. We also understand that many families are ensuring that their children, ages 12+, are receiving the vaccination.
- We continue to make progress with the Central Office reorganization. The candidate for the HR Generalist position will be presented for approval at the June Region 1 BOE meeting along with revised position descriptions for the Central Office support staff.
- We are working on the completion of the ARP/ESSER Grant III grant. This funding comes with a series of parameters that must be completed throughout the summer

XIII. Public Comment: None

XIV. Executive Session for the Purpose of Reviewing the Principal’s Contract

Mrs. Drislane invited Ms. Carter into the Executive Session.

The Board came back at 9:12 to the original board meeting. Mr. Ellington recommended to the full Board the approval of the principal’s contract as discussed in executive session. Mrs. Cahill seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

XV. Executive Session for the Purpose of Reviewing the Superintendent’s Self-Assessment of 2020-2021

Mrs. Drislane invited Dr. Roy and Ms. Carter into the Executive Session.

The Board came back to the original board meeting at 9:30pm.

Mrs. Drislane, along with the Board, thanked Ms. Carter, Mrs. Pace and Mr. Fellows for the work they have done this past year and added how grateful and appreciative everyone is at how great they all work together as a team.

XVI. Adjournment

Mrs. Drislane made a motion to adjourn at 9:35 pm. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: 6-yes Becky Cahill, Matt Devino, Amy Dodge, Erin Drislane, Michael Ellington, and Sarah Visconti.

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Rooney

Approved: September 14, 2021