



Stratford Board of Education

STRATFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION – OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: April 27, 2020

Meeting Location: Virtual Meeting

Google Meets

Stratford CT

Minutes Transcribed By: Teresa Lycoudes/

Secretary to the Board of Education

1 ATTENDANCE

Name	Title	Location	Present
Allison DelBene	Board Chair		Y
Amy Wiltsie	Board Vice Chair		Y
Vinny Faggella	Board Secretary		Y
Andrea Corcoran	Board Member		Y
Janice Cupee	Board Member		Y
Bob DeLorenzo	Board Member		Y
Karen Rodia	Board Member		Y
Dr. Janet Robinson	Superintendent	Central Office	Y
Ed Molloy	Interim, Chief Operating Officer	Central Office	Y
Linda Gejda	Asst. Superintendent	Central Office	Y
Teresa Lycoudes	Recorder / Board Secretary	Central Office	Y
Lou Spetrino	Videographer		Y

2 MEETING LOCATION

- Please visit the website at www.stratfordk12.org to see the information regarding the meeting.

Virtual Meeting via Google Meets

3 MEETING START

Meeting Scheduled to Start: 7:15 PM

Actual Start Time: 7:20 PM

4 AGENDA –

- **Opening Remarks by Chair –** The Board Chair (*Allison DelBene*) **opened the April 27, 2020 Board of Education regular scheduled monthly meeting** (held virtually via Google Meets) at 7:20 PM. A Quorum was confirmed. Mrs. DelBene briefly discussed some rules regarding the virtual meeting such as the “raised hand” feature; Board member identification before speaking, etc. It was also announced the meeting was “live streamed” over social media, as well, giving the public the opportunity to see and hear the meeting live.

- **Student Representatives Report** – There were no Student Representative reports at the virtual meeting.

Public Participation – There were no public speakers due to the virtual meeting. The public had been informed earlier (posted on district website) to send in their issues and/or questions for the Board members and Administration. The questions will be reviewed and answered in a timely manner..

1. **Supt. Robinson’s Executive Report** –Dr. Robinson gave the Superintendent’s Executive Report which included the following items:
 1. *Historic first virtual meeting of the Stratford Board of Education.*
 2. *Proud of Staff for moving forward with distance learning and operations.*
 3. *COVID-19: Phone calls with the State Commissioner of Education regarding May 20th date. There has been no concrete word beyond that date.*
 4. *Difficulties students are facing especially the students transitioning from Grade 6 to Middle School and the Grade 8 Middle School students transitioning into High School.*
 5. *Graduation 2020 - Virtual Graduation. The Town is displaying banners throughout Town honoring this year’s graduating class.*
 6. *CARES Act - Addressing funding for schools. There is no arrival date information, but approximately 80% of Title I funds are expected.*
 7. *Virtual Meetings via Zoom and Google Meets - meeting weekly with Town Emergency Staff, State Department of Education, Superintendents, Elementary and Secondary Principals, etc.*
- **Questions for Dr. Robinson - Board Members** - Questions included but were not limited to the following:
 1. School participation rates - what more can be done to support the students who are not engaged or participating in distance learning?
 2. What is the expected “Return to School” date?
 3. What type of assessments are being done to evaluate and assess the students regarding their distance learning?

Dr. Robinson reported about distance learning. The Board members were provided information regarding school percentage rates. She reported that kudos is warranted for the Information Technology Department for the work they have been doing and continue to do. She said chromebooks and technical support have been provided to the families, and the support needed for the chromebooks continues.

Dr. Robinson reported there is no concrete information as to a date expected for return to school; however committees are being formed to help with re-entry on district and regional levels. Stratford’s region is Fairfield County. The region will develop a Task

Force to address re-entry and the district will develop a Re-entry Committee to address return to school. She said everything that can be done will be done to raise the comfort level for students returning. She reminded the Board members that when students do return, it will more than likely be a great change as they will be returning to new teachers, in some cases a new school, etc. There will definitely be a transitional period.

Dr. Robinson reported that distance learning is coming together quite well. The teachers are using their creativity and are collaborating on projects, as well. She said there are some embedded assessments in the learning and the district is following the guidance of the Commissioner's office.

- **Interim Chief Operating Officer's Report** - Mrs. Nicholson (Finance Director) reported on the financials.
 1. ***Increases in special education costs. There have been a number of students placed recently by DCF that has presented drastically raised costs for special education.***
 2. ***Decrease in dental claims due to COVID-19. People are not visiting dentists during these uncertain times.***
 3. ***Change in Insurance (Health/Medical) for district staff from ConnectiCare to Anthem.***
 4. ***Student Helpers - no student helpers with schools being closed.***
 5. ***Custodial overtime is down.***
 6. ***Retirements - there are several retirements for this school year***

COVID-19 has allowed the budget to be back on track with the closing of schools and savings in areas such as what is mentioned above, utilities, supplies, etc.

Other discussion took place around the bus contract with Durham Transportation and Coaches for spring sports. Dr. Robinson said the district is following state guidelines outlined in Executive Order 7R, existing contracts, and legal advice.

The Board expressed concern for payments to services not being received at this point in time due to closures from COVID-19.

Dr. Robinson informed the group that everyone on contract has to be kept on payroll. She said the district is not paying for substitutes, tutors, etc.

The Board members raised questions in other areas including but not limited to the following:

1. Energy savings - lights being left on, technology left on, etc. Is everything that can be done being done?
2. Outside contractors. Is the District paying for services not being received that could be cut out?
3. Residency- Are residency issues being followed up on?

4. Flood Pool Servicing and Expenses - What is the breakdown of expenses incurred regarding the Flood pool.
5. Expenses due to COVID-19 - What expenses have been incurred due to COVID-19?

Dr. Robinson said because of the closures, the savings incurred is helping with bringing the year end budget numbers on mark.

Mrs. Nichols said she does not expect a surplus. Mrs. Nicholson informed the group that other areas under review include:

1. Fire insurance with the Town of Stratford-the expense appears to be high.
2. School Resource Officers- not in the schools since March 13th.
3. Trumbull Vo-Ag tuition costs.This is an annual expense.
4. Graduation Expenses - addressing what can be done for this year's graduation students.

Board Chair Allison DeBene announced the agenda would be taken out of order and the next topic would be a brief discussion on the proposed budget for 2020-2021.

A brief discussion took place regarding some cuts that have already been put in place and some additional proposed cuts to get the percentage down to 2.75% which is the amount the Town is going to appropriate for the district. The Board members stated there would have to be additional finance meetings to reach a decision for proposed cuts. Dr. Robinson said she believed the deadline for the Town to commit is somewhere around May 12th.

Questions from the Board members included:

1. How are special education costs being addressed for 2020-2021?
2. What is the breakdown for the amount allocated to conferences, etc.
3. Summary of the expenses surrounding the Flood pool

The Finance Committee will meet virtually at a future date to be determined.

Consent Agenda

1. **Approval of Meeting Minutes** (*Reference BOE Policy #9326*)
 - February 24, 2020 (regular meeting)
 - February 27, 2020 (special meeting)
2. **Personnel Assignments Document (March and April)**
3. **Budget Transfers** in the amount of \$7500 or above. - There were none.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS.CORCORAN / SECONDED BY MRS. WILTSIE TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 24, 2020 (REGULAR MEETING) A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN:

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	NO VOTE
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0 - Mr. Faggella was not included in the vote due to technical difficulties.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA; SECONDED BY MRS. CORCORAN TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 27, 2020 (SPECIAL MEETING) A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN:

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	NO VOTE
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0 - Mr. Faggella was not included in the vote due to technical difficulties.

The Personnel Assignment document for March and April 2020 was voted on separately. Dr. Robinson informed the group that Kathleen Lozinak has rescinded her retirement.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. WILTSIE; SECONDED BY MR. DELORENZO TO ACCEPT THE PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT DOCUMENT FOR MARCH AND APRIL 2020. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	NO VOTE
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	NO
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 5-1 - Mr. Faggella was not included in the vote due to technical difficulties.

Mrs. Wiltsie stated that Vittoria Pillow should be spelled "Victoria". Dr. Robinson said it would be given to HR for review and any necessary adjustment.

Items for Action

- ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS:
 - Appointment of Chief Operating Officer, Pamela Mangini - Board Chair, Allison DelBene announced this item would be tabled to a special meeting pending further information requested by Board members.

1. Request for contract.

- Appointment of Elementary Principal at Johnson House, Kathy McNeill
A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE BY MS. CUPEE;
SECONDED BY MRS. CORCORAN. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	NO VOTE
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 6-0 - Mr. Faggella was not included in the vote due to technical difficulties.

- Contract: Milone & MacBroom - District Analysis (enrollment projection, etc.) as put forth by the School Plant Planning Committee with a favorable Recommendation.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. WILTSIE / SECONDED BY MRS. CORCORAN TO ACCEPT THE CONTRACT FOR MILONE & MACBROOM. DISCUSSION AROSE. DECIDING THAT MORE INFORMATION IS NEEDED, ANOTHER MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA TO TABLE THE ITEM; SECONDED BY MR. VAGGELLA. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN AND MOTION CARRIED 7:0 UNANIMOUSLY.

- Proposed: College Algebra 2 Curriculum - As put forth by the Curriculum Committee with a favorable recommendation.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. CUPEE / SECONDED BY MRS. CORCORAN TO ACCEPT AND ADOPT THE COLLEGE 2 PROPOSED CURRICULUM. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

Allison DelBene -	YES
Amy Wiltsie -	YES
Vinny Faggella -	YES
Andrea Corcoran-	YES
Janice Cupee -	YES
Bob DeLorenzo -	YES
Karen Rodia -	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

- **Proposed: Therapeutic Services Pathway (including a .4 nurse funded by the Perkins Grant for three (3) years) - As put forth by the Curriculum Committee with a favorable recommendation.**

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA / SECONDED BY MRS. WILTSIE TO ACCEPT AND ADOPT THE PROPOSED THERAPEUTIC SERVICES PATHWAY (TO INCLUDE A .4 NURSE FUNDED BY THE PERKINS GRANT FOR THREE YEARS) A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

Allison DelBene -	YES
Amy Wiltsie -	YES
Vinny Faggella -	YES
Andrea Corcoran-	YES
Janice Cupee -	YES
Bob DeLorenzo -	YES
Karen Rodia -	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

- **Proposed: 4TH QUARTER GRADING**

Discussion took place surrounding 4th quarter grading, etc. Principals were available via telephone to talk about what the different levels (elementary, middle and high schools) are doing for 4th quarter grading. This is also in compliance with and following the guidelines of the state. The documents outlining the process will be posted to the district website.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. FAGGELLA / SECONDED BY MRS. RODIA TO ACCEPT AND ADOPT THE PROPOSED 4TH QUARTER GRADING PROCESS. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

Allison DelBene -	YES
Amy Wiltsie -	YES
Vinny Faggella -	YES
Andrea Corcoran-	YES
Janice Cupee -	YES
Bob DeLorenzo -	YES
Karen Rodia -	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

- **Proposed: Healthy Food Certification 2020-2021 – Administration**
 - **Proposed: Healthy Food Certification (To certify)** – Pursuant to Section 20-215f of the Connecticut General State Statutes, the Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under

its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the CT Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA; SECONDED BY MR. DELORENZO TO APPROVE HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	YES
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

· **Proposed: Healthy Food Certification Exemption Statement** – The Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals and debate team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA / SECONDED BY MR. DELORENZO TO APPROVE HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION FOOD EXEMPTION STATEMENT. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	YES
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

· Proposed Healthy Food Certification Beverage Exemption Statement -

The Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The “school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. Location means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MRS. RODIA / SECONDED BY MR. DELORENZO TO APPROVE HEALTHY FOOD CERTIFICATION BEVERAGE EXEMPTION STATEMENT FOR 2020-2021. A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN.

ALLISON DELBENE	YES
AMY WILTSIE	YES
VINNY FAGGELLA	YES
ANDREA CORCORAN	YES
JANICE CUPEE	YES
BOB DELORENZO	YES
KAREN RODIA	YES

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Tabled Items -

- **Scholarship Opportunities for District Student Teachers / Minority Teacher recruitment**

- **Residency Verification Report**
- **Safety Coordinator Position**

Nothing was removed from the Table at this meeting.
The Tabled Items remained the same.

▪ **Committee Reports**

- **Curriculum Committee – Mrs. Corcoran:** The Curriculum Committee met on March 10, 2020. In addition to the items for action on this agenda, the committee engaged in good conversation and discussion regarding NGSS alignment. The discussion was led by Mr. Greist and Ms. Rosenberg.
- **Chairmen’s Committee** – The Chairmen’s Committee did not meet in March or April 2020.
- **Finance Committee** - The Finance Committee met last on February 24, 2020. There were no meetings in March or April.
- **School Plant Planning - Mr. Faggella:** The School Plant Planning Committee met on March 5, 2020. Mr. Faggella requested the minutes from that meeting be sent to the Board members.

● **Good and Welfare**

- Mrs. DelBene gave kudos to the district staff during this period of Distance Learning brought about by COVID-19.
- Ms. Cupee wished success to the parents who have students in the district. She also expressed concern for the parents who are struggling.
- Mrs. Rodia gave kudos to the district staff, and expressed her concern for struggling parents/students, as well.
- Dr. Robinson gave kudos to the district nurses led by Head Nurse, Kim Velazquez. She said the nurses have been involved in this entire process in so many ways. They have donated equipment to Town Emergency Svc. and they have assisted the Town Health Department in outreach.
- Kudos was also given to Food Services for the continued distribution of meals; to Ed Molloy and the IT staff; to Custodians and Drivers.

- **Committee Appointments / Assignments** – There was nothing new to report.

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting adjourned at 10:21PM upon a motion made by Mrs. Rodia; seconded by Ms. Cupee and carried unanimously.

The next regular monthly meeting of the Stratford Board of Education is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 26, 2020**. The meeting at this time is anticipated to be a virtual meeting, once again.

A special meeting of the Stratford Board of Education will also be scheduled for a near future date; however, that date is to be determined.

Meeting recorded and minutes transcribed by:



**Teresa Lycoudes, Board Secretary &
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent**