



Board of Education Regular Meeting

May 3, 2021 7:00 PM
via Zoom Teleconference

Attendance Taken at: 7:00 PM

Present Board Members

Erica Gelven, Chairperson

Michael Hornyak, Secretary

Jason Adler

Peter Nye – left at 7:10 PM, returned at 7:15 PM

Christopher Passante – arrived at 7:03 PM

Kimberly Russo

Catherine Staunton

1. Opening Exercises

1.A. Roll call

Discussion: Also in attendance were Superintendent Maryann O'Donnell, Assistant Superintendent Marco Famiglietti, Business Manager Carolyn Dickey, and student representative Jessica Flanagan. Presenters included Food Services Director Jon Siciliano and Morgan Principal Keri Hagness.

1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

Discussion: All recited the pledge.

2. Public participation/recognition

Discussion: None.

3. Minutes – Approval – Regular Meeting of April 5, 2021

Motion Passed: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 5, 2021, passed with a motion by Jason Adler and a second by Kimberly Russo.

6 Yeas – 0 Nays – 1 Abstention

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Abstain
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

4. Communications

Discussion: None

5. Report of Student Representatives

Discussion: The student representative shared each school's events and successes with the Board. At Morgan, Advanced Placement testing has started and will continue next week. All juniors will be taking the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standard Test) on May 20th. Junior and senior prom plans were announced. Teacher Appreciation Week is in full swing with students at Morgan recognizing the efforts of teachers. First place in the Cupcake Wars was taken by Nashaly Idrovo and Jahayra Lopez with their "Crab Kingdom Clash" creations.

At Eliot, Principal Linda Tucker has announced her retirement. The school initiated a Mental Health Awareness Week ending on May 2 and Smarter Balanced testing will take place May 5 and 6.

M. Hornyak noted that two Morgan seniors, Alexandra Wolf and Owen O'Donnell, were recipients of CIAC's Scholar-Athlete Award and featured on Fox61 on May 2.

Administrative Reports

6.A. Administrators, Program Directors and Teachers

6.A.1. Food Service Update

Discussion: J. Siciliano provided an overview of his department including its financial trending. Participation in the breakfast program has doubled since last year and lunch numbers have increased as well. School lunch reimbursable meal funds have helped keep the program in the black. Grab and Go meals support over 30 families and the USDA has announced free meals will continue through June 2022. He suggested consideration for staffing and wage increases in order to meet minimum wage requirements and remain competitive with other districts. Discussion continued with Board members about how to maintain the success of the breakfast program. Both M. O'Donnell and the Board commended J. Siciliano on his positive approach towards solving problems, serving the varied needs in our community, and his ability to reassess and adjust to shifting priorities.

6.A.2. NEASC Update

Discussion: K. Hagness provided an update on the NEASC decennial accreditation visit which was rescheduled to October 2021. K. Hagness reviewed the process which involves an internal audit, collaborative conferences, and the actual visit in the fall. M. Famiglietti reported on the curriculum renewal portion of the process. When the NEASC committee arrives, it will conduct class and community focus groups, review student work, listen to panel presentations and then produce an evaluation of Morgan's strengths and areas for improvement. Discussion followed regarding the Board's involvement during the process.

6.A.3. General Update

Discussion: No discussion.

6.B. Assistant Superintendent's Report

6.B.1. General Update

Discussion: M. Famiglietti noted that Smarter Balanced testing has begun at Joel. Eliot will start on May 5. Elements of the advanced manufacturing initiative will be featured on "What's Right with Schools" on WTNH. The last professional development day for staff is May 13. The focus for teachers will be Acceleration of Learning. The Summer Opportunities initiative has gained

interest from at least 30 families. Once the availability of teachers and support for recreation and transportation has been established, brochures will be made available and shared with the Board.

6.C. Business Manager's Report

6.C.1. Bills Payable

Discussion: No discussion.

6.C.2. Excess Cost Grant Update

Discussion: Due to a change in the number of special needs students, the grant revenue to the district dropped from \$438K to \$407K. The difference will be returned to the State.

6.C.3. General Update

Discussion: End-of-year processes continue to wind down and the process of converting to the new fiscal year is ongoing. An RFP for work on the Eliot roof will be published.

7. Superintendent's Report

7.A. End of Year Planning

Discussion: The Superintendent shared the school plans for the end-of-year events and the transition of grades 4, 8, and 12. All planning has followed state and local health district guidelines related to COVID-19 and mitigation strategies.

Marine Science Day for Joel 4th graders is on May 25. On June 2, the school leadership team is allowing 4th graders to visit Eliot to tour the lower academy wing. An outdoor 4th grade celebration will take place in June on the Joel fields.

For 8th graders, an outdoor picnic event on the field is being planned. Promotion and awards announcements are scheduled for June 14 on the Eliot field with a rain date of June 15th.

At Morgan, senior and junior proms, senior week, awards ceremonies, and graduation will all take place although mitigation strategies will be enforced. Events may be virtual for Senior Awards Night and yearbook signing with livestreaming for parents is scheduled.

Graduation at Morgan will be as close to traditional as possible. Families will be allowed to attend with some health restrictions in place. Information will be shared with parents of Eliot 8th graders and Morgan Seniors on May 5. The Board discussed health protocols, rain dates, cohorting, and invitations.

7.B. Middle School Principal Search

Discussion: M. O'Donnell shared information about the middle school principal search process. Board members were encouraged to participate in the selection process. Two rounds of interviews are being scheduled and a variety of community and school members will serve on the selection committee. The final candidate is expected to be presented to the Board for approval on June 7.

7.C. Remote Learning Update

Discussion: Currently, there is no mandate to provide remote learning in the 2021-22 school year. Options will be in place for certain situations where students may have to quarantine.

7.D. Review and Possible Approval of End of Year Technology Expenditure

Discussion: M. O'Donnell discussed the need to bring the district's Insight video surveillance software up to date by transitioning to Milestone software. The current software is failing and unreliable and is causing safety and security concerns. The cost to make the transition is \$18,561.24. The upgrade will ensure the Board and the police department are on the same platform which will enhance our safety and security crisis response plan.

Motion Passed: To approve the expenditure of \$18,561.24 from the 2020-21 Operating Budget passed with a motion by Peter Nye and a second by Jason Adler.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

7.E. IDEA Grant Authorization

Discussion: The grant supports the salary of several positions including school psychologists, paraeducators, a BCBA and behavior technician, and leadership stipends for special education at each school, as well as a small amount of funding supports supplies and travel reimbursements.

Motion Passed: To authorize the submission of the IDEA Grant as presented passed with a motion by Michael Hornyak and a second by Peter Nye.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

7.F. General Update

Discussion: The Superintendent indicated 83 fewer remote learning students this month as compared to March. Discussion followed regarding the decrease as well as the number of students vaccinated. COVID-19 cases in Clinton were discussed, as was the downward trend. ESSER grant funding was discussed.

8. Reports of Board of Education Subcommittees and Special Committees

8.A. General Updates

Discussion: Minutes from the April 28 Buildings & Grounds subcommittee meeting were provided to the Board. Secretary and paraeducator negotiations are ongoing.

9. Review and Possible Action re: Healthy Food Certification

Motion Passed: The following passed with motion by Jason Adler and a second by Catherine Staunton. Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. 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, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

10. Review and Possible Action re: Food & Beverage Exemptions

Discussion: None.

Motion Passed: The following passed with a motion by Catherine Staunton and a second by Kimberly Russo. The Board of Education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and 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 food and beverage 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.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

11. Personnel Information

11.A. Recall of Certified Staff

Discussion: At the April 5th meeting, Eileen Diaz was non-renewed due to a reduction in force. Due to the granting of a subsequent leave of absence, Ms. Diaz can be recalled.

Motion Passed: To recall Eileen Diaz to a teaching position for the 2021-22 school year passed with a motion by Peter Nye and a second by Kimberly Russo.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

12. Adjournment

Discussion: None.

Motion Passed: To adjourn at 8:43 p.m. passed with a motion by Peter Nye and a second by Jason Adler.

7 Yeas – 0 Nays

Erica Gelven	Yes
Michael Hornyak	Yes
Jason Adler	Yes
Peter Nye	Yes
Christopher Passante	Yes
Kimberly Russo	Yes
Catherine Staunton	Yes

Michael Hornyak, Secretary of the Board

Allison Friday, Clerk of the Board