

**PENDING BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL**  
**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT**  
**MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023**

**Order of Business**  
**7:00 PM**

**I. Convene—Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Chair Lori Consalvo convened the regular business meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:00 PM. Laurie Peterson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members Present:** Mesdames Buchanan, Clark, Consalvo, Lauria, Martinez, Peterson, St. Lawrence, Tyrrell, and Messr. White

**Also Present:** Steven LePage, Superintendent of Schools  
David Levenduski, Assistant Superintendent  
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations  
Valiantsin Kasabrukhou, Student Representative

**Absent:** Isabella Grasso, Student Representative

**Late Arrivals:** None

**Early Departures:** None

**Returns:** None

**II. SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

A) PCS All-Star Coaches: None

B) **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN:**

Valendictorian: Spencer Michalek

Salutatorian: Matthew Kuzynco

C) **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TOP % OF THE CLASS OF 2023:**

Alison Wisz, Joshua Smith, Megan Gray, Lily Feyerabend, Nora Couture, Seth Lizon, Daniel Talarico, Leah Raucci, Michael Ouellette, Nolan Wargo, Ethan Brachle, Natalie Basile, Anneli St. Lawrence, Michelle Gryczewski and Dale Neyra

D) **SCHOLAR ATHLETES OF THE YEAR:** Nora Couture and Michael Ouellette

E) **CABE STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS:**

Middle School of Plainville: Joseph Chase and Hayden Cooney

Plainville High School: Spencer Michalek and Isabella Grasso

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A) A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHAHAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF APRIL 17, 2023 AS PRESENTED. A MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REBECCA MARTINEZ. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.

B) A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2023 AS

**PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

**C) A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 28, 2023 AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

**D) A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 1, 2023 (POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE) AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

**E) A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 2, 2023 AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

#### **IV. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT**

Valiantsin spoke about the following:

► The honor students at Plainville High School have officially entered testing season, although many events have been happening with regard to sports, fundraisers, and the community. A majority of the focus has been concentrated on AP tests.

► Seniors have begun preparing for end-of-the-year activities such as the canoeing trip and the Senior Picnic.

► The Juniors and Seniors are also preparing for the Junior and Senior Prom, with ticket sales concluding last week.

► Seniors are also starting to prepare for graduation with events and the school day count is getting progressively shorter.

► Looking back, the first National Honor Society meeting was held on May 3 in the morning. The meeting consisted mainly of elections and students running for offices, all of whom made speeches to classmates. He is personally running for Treasurer, and we'll see how that works out next Wednesday.

► The Senior Citizen's Prom was held very successfully and was administered by Mr. LePage, Mrs. Barbagallo, members of the Plainville Rotary Club, as well as Junior and Senior class officers.

► AP testing began last week and has been held in both the large gym and Counseling Suite for any people taking AP's independently.

► The Boys' and Girls' track team competed against Bristol Central last Tuesday with the girls' winning their meet and the boys' coming very close. Some PHS long distance records are very close to being broken.

► The second National Honor Society meeting for the Class of 2024 is going to be held in the morning, on May 10, at which time the National Honor Society officers' election results are going to be announced.

► AP tests are concluding very soon with the last of them being taken last week. Tomorrow the AP language and competition test will be administered in the large gym, which is the most popular of them all.

► SAT retakes will take place on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. There isn't a large group of students signed up but he will participate in the retake.

► The PHS Band and Choir Concert will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM.

► The Proms will take place at the Aqua Turf on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ticket sales finished last week and table seating selection has begun today.

- ▶ The Class of 2024 is also holding a Car Wash fundraiser in the Plainville High School bus loop on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>.
- ▶ Graduation is set to take place on June 12<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM on Alumni Field if everything goes as planned.

V. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

**John Kisluk, 63 Forestville Avenue**

Mr. Kisluk stated that parents have been attending Town Council meetings, which has brought him here today. He stated that some people are very rude, some act as though they are kindergarteners themselves. He stated that one person used foul language, stating that the Council was stupid and ignorant. He stated that he hopes the Board of Education isn't condoning this behavior as it is disrespecting the elected officials of our town.

Regarding the renovate like new project, he stated that the State owes Plainville \$3M for Wheeler School. The school has been in operation for over two years since the renovation. He stated that the State program has problems. There have been investigations by the FBI and the State with inappropriate things happening. With that in mind, he asked why the Board would want to go under another contract with the State under these kinds of conditions. They don't honor their contracts and are not paying us. He stated that the Town of Plainville can use that \$3M for its budget. He asked everyone to think twice about the renovate like new project.

Mr. Kisluk stated that parents are also talking about safety at the middle school. He stated that the town has a building official and a Health and Safety Sanitation Department, and the elevator is regulated by the State Department. He stated that none of these officials are going to allow the students to be in unsafe conditions. Parents are over exaggerating things. They're just getting everyone all riled up for nothing.

With regard to class sizes, back in 1958 in 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Linden Street School, the teacher created a class yearbook. There were 24 children in Mr. Kisluk's class. He asked, "Why can't teachers today handle 24 students in a classroom? They now have computers, back then teachers had nothing. "Why are they complaining so much about 18 students being too much?"

He concluded by stating that these are his feelings and it seems that the education system is not up to snuff. He stated that we read about test scores going down more and more. Something is wrong.

**Felicia Mandeville, 22 Ciccio Court**

Ms. Mandeville began with a note that she had taken. She stated that Mr. LePage gave a statistic of 164 students in the graduating class. She stated that she graduated in 1992 from Plainville High School and the number of students in her graduating was less than that, and there was no one thinking of closing a school (31 years ago). There was not even a thought of it.

Ms. Mandeville stated that she has degrees in Marketing, Business Education and Special Education and she also has a degree in Educational Leadership. She stated that she has been in education for twenty years and has been through two new school construction projects. As a teacher, she stated that the end result is that everyone is happy. She commented that taxes are going up whether we like it or not. We all thought we were going to get special treatment when Kohl's came to town but it didn't happen, taxes still have gone up. That is inevitable in life. She stated that she has spent the last

fourteen years in an alliance district, and twenty-four students today, is too many. She stated that she has been working in inner city where they have had thirty students in a classroom where they had children with no available seats. She stated that she now works in a school that is OSHA regulated and some of the classes at eighteen are still too big.

While pulling up statistics from the district's education site, it shows that our Special Education numbers have increased in the past 10 years. Also, our ELL numbers have increased. If you have increased numbers in these areas, you cannot have increased class sizes. Also, she also commented that our student population has decreased, but when it is only decreased by 100 students, how do you expect to move 500 children into other buildings? Again, not possible.

Ms. Mandeville stated that reality is that education is a business and if you don't have a good product or service, people are not going to come to your schools. More and more parents are choosing alternative education, they are choosing home schooling, magnet schools, trade schools and private schools. If you're not going to provide good services, they're not going to come which is step one. Step two is selling their homes and moving to another community where education and their children are valued. She stated that these are humans we're speaking about. She reminisced about first grade at Trask School, she stated that she was one of the victims of the closing of a school. In 3rd grade Trask School was closed and she had to move to Linden. It wasn't a very good experience but she remembers all of her teachers from Plainville Schools. These were important people in her life. She stated that our children are important. She reported that she had recently spoken to a neighbor and she already said she's sending her children to private school.

#### **Sixth grade student @ MSP**

She stated that she has already recognized some of the flaws in the school. Some of the Town Council members did not allow Mr. LePage to make the changes to make the school better. He is a very nice man who will be missed by many people. The next time they put forth a project like this they should give the people of Plainville a chance to vote before driving out another member of the Board. She hopes that when they hire a new Superintendent, it will be someone who's as nice and kind as Mr. LePage.

#### **Anke Behrends-Cooke, 55 Redstone Hill**

"As President of the Middle School PTC and as a Plainville resident, I urge the Town Council to not waste more time and money to do a survey to find out what we already know, that it is not possible to close and consolidate any of our Plainville schools. Why would we even want to? Felicia Mandeville had some great points with all of the facts I don't have. It would be a horrible decision for our students, teachers, staff and our Town. It is so sad that we're even here talking about this. Although it was great to see all the awards tonight and all the recognition for those amazing students, I am actually angry that I am once again missing my son's baseball game in order to come here to find out whether or not our elected representatives are doing the right thing. Our Town Council has proven to be beyond disappointing in not listening to what the community is asking of them, which is to be given the right to vote on a "renovate like new" for the Middle School of Plainville. I am hoping that you (BOE) who have been voted in, will do the best for our students and will not make that same mistake. Parents, educators and students have been attending meetings telling everyone exactly what they want, but the Town Council isn't listening. Shame on them! The Plainville community should be allowed to vote on what happens to the Plainville community schools. We don't need a study, what we need is a renovate like new at the middle school, to provide a safe,

comfortable environment for our students, teachers and staff to be motivated and productive and for our town, so we can receive the \$36M in grant reimbursement for the project and not pay for renovations piece meal. Prices are not going to come down and we are running out of time to allow Superintendent LePage to apply for the renovate like new grant. We still have a Superintendent who is doing an amazing job and always has the best interests of our students in mind. With the lack of support from some of the Board, and the Town Council, it has definitely contributed to him resigning. Another reason why I'm mad. This is going to hurt Plainville in so many ways. Let's not make this even worse by moving on with a pointless study. Mr. LePage who was chosen to lead the school system has done the research with his team on what is needed. We need to back him up for once and move forward to renovate like new while we still can. Thank you"

**Lily Fantozzi, 10 Tyler Farms Road**

"We moved to Plainville 10 years ago. We were looking at Southington, Berlin, and we chose Plainville because it was a small community and because it invested in its children. We even live right around the corner from the Middle School. So, it is such a pleasure walking to the schools, to Toffolon and the Middle School. It is really sad because my son is very good in school, performs very well, but he comes home and says there's spots on the ceiling and he doesn't feel good. How can we not invest in our children? They are our future. If this should pass and the schools consolidate, people like me (our family) will move out. It's really a decision that begins with our kids. Hopefully, we can put it to a vote. Thank you."

**Zachary Santini, 43 Hollyberry Lane**

Mr. Santini is a former Plainville High School student. "Most of you already knew my grandmother Betty Boukus. When I look at this situation going on, whether it is a thing of money, or just the Town Council not agreeing, or not willing to put it through to referendum, something I notice is the field project that my grandmother helped start. Whether it was a money problem or not, she was out there busting her behind every day trying to get these kids something that they knew they deserved. Honestly, I'm kind of ashamed that this renovation is getting denied constantly. The building is in the same condition as when I used to go there. That was 10+ years ago. That is sad! Realistically, these kids are the future. They deserve the best. I work in the Technology Department now, we try to provide them the best every day so they can continue to learn and at least have some type of bright future with their technology. But, I don't understand how these kids can be learning in these classrooms. I hope that all of you work as hard as my grandmother once did, to provide these kids the education they deserve."

**RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS—No Responses**

**VI. COUNCIL LIAISON—**

Mrs. Pugliese congratulated and praised the students who were presented with awards this evening. She also spoke about the following topics:

- ▶ Middle School of Plainville Update
- ▶ Tomasso Nature Park/Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Update
- ▶ Robertson Airport Projects Update
- ▶ Honor Heights Sewer Extension Project Bid
- ▶ Camp Street Development Project Update

Mrs. Pugliese stated that the Town Council hopes to have a joint meeting with the Board of Education one day next week with regard to the Middle School project.



For further information on any of these topics, please go to the Town's website at [www.plainvillect.com](http://www.plainvillect.com).

## **VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **A. District Highlights**

► Mr. LePage thanked everyone for coming out to vote. He stated that there was a strong show of support of the budgets, both on the Town side and Board of Education. He stated that the budget was hard work and created through scrutiny and consideration of taxpayer dollars. He stated that great things will still be able to come to fruition in the future (next year) thanks to the vote passing. Thank you!

► The Senior Citizen Prom is something that Mr. LePage has been involved with since he was Principal. He stated that it's a lot of fun. Some of the people in attendance are in their 90's. There were 30-35 students helping out including Student Leaders and members of Student Council. They were so professional and he stated that he was very proud of them and thanked them for the giving of their time. He said this event bridges the generational divide.

► Mr. LePage stated that as everyone knows, Mental Health is a crisis everywhere including the schools. It is a difficult time for everyone. He stated that May is Mental Health Awareness month, so the Plainville Coalition for Positive Youth Development and the Connecticut Mental Health Association have partnered to host a Mental Health Forum on Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> in the Plainville High School Learning Commons at 6:30 PM. An online survey went out with a sign-up sheet and there is also a virtual opportunity to attend if you cannot be present. It will also be recorded and placed on the district website. This will be an ongoing series and will continue next fall as well. He thanked Lynn Davis, Director of Community Services and Sneha L'Heureux, Director of Youth Services who have been instrumental in the creation of this forum.

► Mr. LePage acknowledged Teachers, Nurses and Principals and all school employees. He thanked all staff throughout the district for their service and dedication to the Plainville school system. He stated that an ice cream social will be planned for late May/early June for all staff.

### **B. Discussion: Cafeteria Meal Prices**

► Mr. LePage called upon Mr. Adlerstein to discuss the cafeteria meal prices. Mr. Adlerstein stated that there's a lot up in the air with regard to school meals and whether the legislature passes *School Meals for All* next year. Regardless, we are going to have to increase our meal prices. If there are paid meals in Plainville next year we will need to increase prices. We haven't done so in a long time and we are behind what it takes to break even and keep the operation sustaining. We are behind what other districts charge for meals and today we want to give the Board a heads-up. In June we will be proposing an increase to the Board of Education. We would not do an outrageous amount all at once, we would probably phase it in.

Mr. Adlerstein gave a shout out to Ashley Carl, Food Service Director and Mr. LePage, for taking a leadership role on the State level, i.e., *Free Meals for All* and shining some light on the issue and what it means beyond financially. There could be stigma involved and Steve and Ashley have done a terrific job including a number of students as well, they had a great experience of going to the Capitol building and advocating their minds. They have all done a great job.

Mr. LePage also praised Mr. Adlerstein for his behind the scenes work in making this possible.

Mr. LePage stated that we'll make some more decisive announcements in June once we know what the State budget looks like.

### **C. MSP Building Status and Consideration**

Mr. LePage will give a re-cap on the Middle School building status and will also provide new information on the topic. He stated that it was a unanimous approval of the Board on June 6, 2022, to move forward with a renovate like new application, which means they had no intentions or thoughts of closing a school. The plan of the Capital Projects Building Committee was also to unanimously approve the renovation application. When it went to the Town Council, it was defeated. He stated that we are now trying to figure out the path forward. There have been three options considered:

- 1) To submit the renovate like new application by June 30, 2023 (time is running short on this option)
- 2) Maintenance Plan option (it would cost approximately \$5M more in the long run)
- 3) The Town Council raised the idea of closing the middle school which has caused major concern throughout the town. The town would do a study to determine if there is a way to consolidate, i.e., closing MSP.

Mr. LePage stated that what was added to tonight's agenda was basically to confirm what was already decided by the Board, that they support the renovate like new application. It was basically a vote to determine the direction they would like to go from this point forward and to see if anything has changed from their perspective. He will share what he has, and the Board will decide from there.

As Councilwoman Pugliese said, regarding responsibilities and authorities, a Council member asked who had the authority to close, or consolidate the schools. This question was also raised by members of the Board of Education. With that said, Mr. LePage contacted Atty. Tom Mooney, of Shipman and Goodwin LLC, who wrote the Connecticut Law Book regarding education. Atty. Mooney was concerned about giving his opinion due to a conflict of interest because he works with the Town regarding Police pensions. So, another Attorney from his firm will give an opinion. At their last meeting, the Town Council also signed a waiver to waive the conflict of interest. The answer read as follows:

*Whether to continue to operate the Middle School is a decision vested by statute solely in the Board of Education because property dedicated to use for school purposes is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. The Town Council retains significant authority through the budget process, and the Board of Education may not apply for a school building project grant without the approval of the Town Council (which is the legislative body of the Town). However, the Town Council does not have control over the Middle school such that it could close the Middle School over the objection of the Board of Education.*

Historical Planning: The configuration of schools in Plainville was decided by the community as part of a long-range planning process in 2003-2004, guided by hired professionals. The middle school renovation is the last in the long-range planning process. There was also community consensus to maintain the current configuration of schools for the foreseeable future.

We have been on the path toward a Middle School renovate like new project for many years. This plan was communicated to and supported by the State several years ago. We have deferred capital investment into the building and instead have patched and repaired major building systems past their expected life. Had we not deferred the maintenance, we would be in a position to delay the project, but that is not the case.

Building Space: By Connecticut space standards, the middle school space requirement is ~46% greater from that needed for elementary, and the high school requires another ~12% on top of that, due to certain needs in instructional programs, i.e., STEM and STEAM labs, culinary arts rooms, wood shop, MSPN News, robotics labs and an auditorium for MSP. All of these specialized areas need more space. Plainville High School includes six science labs, counseling rooms, technology shop, robotics lab and culinary arts space. Different age levels have different space needs in order to meet the instructional programs. Currently, the middle school has 546 students and Linden has 390.

Building Utilization: There are no empty classrooms in the district. Each school is different, in large part designed with consideration to how it would be used. Our building space is used efficiently and effectively. While we currently are short on space in some important areas, we continually adjust offices and other spaces to accommodate the changes needed. The information below was developed with the Principals in preparation for tonight's meeting.

Linden: There are no unused rooms. Some offices were recently relocated to make space for program needs. The building houses the PFRN/Adult Education Program, and accommodates additional resources for children with more significant special needs through two major specialized programs that require significant space considerations (while significantly reducing outplacement costs).

Toffolon: Every classroom is in use, and there is a shortage of rooms. Meetings are often held in the hallway outside of the office. Space is a limiting factor in the location of certain programs at Linden noted above.

Wheeler: There is a shortage of rooms. As with Toffolon, space is a limiting factor in the location of certain programs such as those housed at Linden, noted above.

Linden has unique uses that are different from the other buildings which explains the additional square footage. Due to space limitations, Toffolon and Wheeler cannot accommodate these unique needs.

District Enrollment: While the enrollment appears to be flat at the neighborhood of 2,300 students, we have numerous students added to and disenrolled throughout the year as rental properties turn over, etc. Student transiency results in challenges that differentiates us from some of our neighboring districts. From September through April, we have enrolled 305 students including preschool and kindergarten, and disenrolled 73 students, all while overall enrollment remains steady.

Enrollment Projection: When the Wheeler Project was being prepared, in order to submit the application, an accurate enrollment projection needed to be done. In the past, Dr. Peter Prowda was always hired, as he was the go-to for these types of enrollment studies/projects. His last projections were completed for 2015 through 2022. However, the projection was done internally as it was subsequently determined that we would



prepare the projections ourselves to meet the State timeline and not hold up construction at Wheeler.

At this time, we would recommend a more current study to prepare for the middle school. As a side note, student population is a factor on the reimbursement rate. Plainville's reimbursement rate for the MSP project would be 65.71%

Mr. LePage then discussed the \$10M project proposed in February, 2023 as an alternative to the renovate like new project. After the building being oversized for the student population and the district not getting the space waiver which was applied for twice, we would net approximately 60.45 cents on the dollar for reimbursement costs on the MSP project. Approximately 60 cents on every dollar. There's a bonus at the end, based on Open Choice participation for the percentage of students attending that school at the time the project is accepted. It could likely get back to 65%. We would likely do the most critical items that are past their life expectancy. Mr. LePage did have a call into the State, with the Town Manager present, and three members of the State's Administrative Services. The town would qualify for replacing the MSP roof, replace the elevator, and removing the underground oil tank at the MSP. The secure vestibule at the middle school would need to be applied for through a priority project grant, which would include the same timeline as the renovate like new project.

MSP Pressing Needs: Mr. Adlerstein stated that our internal professionals Mike Smith and Steve Busel went through the detailed cost estimate of 210 lines. They went through the estimate line by line and categorized the items that need to be done right away or as soon as possible and what could be delayed. Upon calculating it was determined that it would cost more to do piece meal projects as opposed to renovate like new. It would achieve approximately 73.2% of the overall renovate like new project instead of 100% and would cost more. At the end of the maintenance plan you would have an old building compared to renovate like new, where the building would look new and updated.

Overall, there would be an approximately \$5M difference to do the piece meal approach (maintenance plan). Local cost for renovate like new would be \$24,399,621 and the maintenance plan would be \$29,264,103.

Mr. LePage also discussed Local and State funding for the two options as well as Misconceptions and Realities of the project.

Mr. LePage then requested that the Board make a motion to direct the Superintendent to convey that the Board has reviewed the MSP situation and, given the low likelihood of a consolidation or reconfiguration of schools, affirms its earlier decision to proceed to an application with the State for an MSP renovate like new project and an MSP renovate like new referendum.

Mr. LePage mentioned that a joint meeting between the Town Council and Board will be held on Monday, May 15 at 6 PM in Council Chambers.

Board Discussion ensued with regard to student population, possible outcomes of the study, delay of the big-ticket items in order to renovate, Is there an actual date that the cost estimate would need to be completed in order to send in the application?, Board issues and new motions, several State Statutes stating responsibility of closing a school is that the of the Board, the Board reaffirm their decision made on June 6, 2022 to move forward with a renovate like new project and to move process forward as soon as possible, procedural questions/understanding regarding reaffirming of an action taken,

taking a stand publicly to make a clear, concise, unified action on where to go next to move the project forward, the concerns of parents, where the Board stands.

Point of Order from Mr. White:

- 1) Make it known that the decision to close a building is that of the Board of Education, as affirmed by more than one State Statute and;
  - 2) It is not feasible to consider closing a school;
  - 3) Reaffirm and give the Superintendent the Board's authority to re-apply to the State of Connecticut for renovate like new status of the Middle School of Plainville project.
- This would be placed under New Business.

**D. Acknowledgement of School Nurses' Day—May 10, 2023**

Mr. LePage wished all nurses a Happy Nurse's Day on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Acknowledgement of Teacher Appreciation Week—May 8-12, 2023**

Mr. LePage wished all teachers a Happy Teacher Appreciation Week.

**VIII. BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. Finance and Finance Subcommittee Report—No Report**

**B. Policy Subcommittee Report**

Mrs. St. Lawrence reported that the Board met on May 1<sup>st</sup> and discussed the Student Dress Code policy and Regulation, as well as the Community Relations Public Complaints Policy and Regulation No. 1312. The subcommittee also reviewed some of CAGE's newest policy updates. Also, changes will be made to the Dress Code policy and it will be brought back to the Board for final approval in June. The Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials Form can be found under the Consent agenda.

**C. Curriculum Subcommittee Report—No Report**

Their next meeting will be in June.

**D. Outreach Subcommittee Report—No Report**

**E. PAC Liaison--Plainville High School Report—No Report**

Mr. White reported that the next meeting of the PAC will be on Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM in the PHS Learning Commons

**F. PTO Liaison--Toffolon Elementary School Report—No Report**

**G. PTO Liaison--Linden Street Elementary School Report**

Mrs. Clark reported on the following:

- ▶ Linden had a successful Scholastic Book Fair
- ▶ Mrs. Clark stated that everyone is celebrating Teacher Appreciation week with many activities.
- ▶ She gave a shout out to Nicole Michaud, Linden's PTO President, who does an amazing job and goes above and beyond. She's a wonderful volunteer.
- ▶ Linden students are looking forward to Field Day and Graduation

**H. PTC Liaison--Middle School of Plainville Report**

Mrs. St. Lawrence reported on the following:

- ▶ The PTC finished up their Spiritwear fundraiser.

- ▶ The PTC will be doing breakfast for all MSP teachers tomorrow, with snacks on Thursday.
- ▶ The MSP is in the middle of their Flower Power fundraiser. The deadline is May 15th
- ▶ The next PTC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9 at 7 PM

**I. PTO Liaison--Wheeler Elementary School Report**

Mrs. Buchanan reported on the following:

- ▶ In the Wheeler Flash written by Mr. Batchelder, there was a section that discussed chronic absenteeism. Mr. Batchelder is focusing on absenteeism, which has been a constant challenge since the pandemic. Mrs. Buchanan recommends that parents take a look at the information if they get a chance. She has also tried to log into many of the State webinars regarding this topic and found that the State did an excellent presentation on chronic absenteeism as well. This is something Mrs. Buchanan feels that the community should get a handle on and support school leaders.
- ▶ Wheeler has done an amazing job with Spirit Day.
- ▶ The June 2 PTO meeting is going to be an end-of-the-year family celebration.

**J. CREC Council Report—No Report**

The CREC Council annual meeting is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>.

**K. Chairperson's Report—No Report**

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS—There is no Unfinished Business this evening**

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Board Open Forum**

Foster White had a request of the Technology staff. Because they are sitting at an angle, they are having difficulty seeing the boards. Mr. White asks if they can be moved back about 2 to 3 feet?

Laurie Peterson read the following statement: The Board of Education voted on June 6, 2022 to renovate the Middle School like new. We have done our job as the Board and have turned our recommendation over to the Town Council. The Town Council is now evaluating the big picture that expands beyond our scope. I am looking forward to working with the Town Council in our future worksessions, and to continue our discussions on what's best for the entire school community, not just the middle school.

Lori Consalvo congratulated the Top 10% of the Class of 2023, as well as the Valedictorian and Salutatorian. She wished them all the best.

Rebecca Martinez congratulated PHS new Principal, Jennifer DeLorenzo, and said thank you to all the cafeteria workers. She stated that the Teachers' don't have an easy job, but they are very much appreciated. She also thanked the school nurses as well and wished them a Happy School Nurses' Day.

Foster White stated that he wanted to recognize one of the best weathermen from the MSP News who is in the audience this evening. Mr. White thanked him, as he does sometimes catch the MSP News in the morning and he loves the way the student gives the weather forecast during the announcements. He stated that he really has a good speaking voice and thank you for all your work at the MSP News

Cassandra Clark is happy the district is celebrating Teachers' Week at all of the schools. Also, Happy School Nurses' Day to those who keep us healthy.

Rebecca Buchanan reiterated that on June 6<sup>th</sup> the Board of Education voted as a Board to renovate the MSP. She stated that the Board has done their job. She then congratulated all the award winners this evening. She commented that to our Valedictorian and Salutatorian, what an incredible feat. She Congratulated the scholar athletes, the CABE Student Leadership award winners and thanked all of the teachers in the district for all they do. She stated that Eleanor Roosevelt established Teacher Appreciation Day/Week back in 1953 and to share that timeframe with school nurses is just perfect.

She stated that one of the few meetings she ever missed when she was very ill was the vote for renovate like new. This is the vote that she fully supports even though it was during her absence, which was unanimously taken on June 6, 2022. Mr. LePage had presented the information to the Board prior to the vote. She stated that she has not changed her mind in supporting the vote taken a year ago.

**B) Quarterly Special Education Cost Report (October, January, March and June) --No Report**

**C) Turf Committee Report (September and May)**

Mr. Adlerstein stated that he is working with partner organizations to do a better job with accountability for when folks are using our facilities at night. Not just outdoors but indoors as well. We are starting a check in, check out procedure where they would check in and out making sure nothing was damaged and making sure they're supervising their charges at night. This was covered at a recent community partners meeting. We are looking at space for all those folks who want to use our facilities outside of school hours as it is an ongoing issue.

**D) Possible vote regarding school closure or consolidation considerations**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO CONVEY THAT THE BOARD HAS REVIEWED THE MSP SITUATION AND GIVEN THE LOW LIKELIHOOD OF A CONSOLIDATION OR RECONFIGURATION OF SCHOOLS, AFFIRMS ITS EARLIER DECISION TO PROCEED TO AN APPLICATION WITH THE STATE FOR AN MSP RENOVATION LIKE NEW PROJECT AND AN MSP RENOVATE LIKE NEW PROJECT REFERENDUM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REBECCA MARTINEZ. THE MOTION PASSED 5 VOTES YES AND 4 ABSTENSIONS FROM LAURIE PETERSON, RACHEL BUCHANAN, ROBERTA LAURIA AND CASSANDRA CLARK.**

**Roll Call Vote**

**Lori Consalvo—yes**

**Foster White—yes**

**Rebecca Martinez—yes**

**Crystal St. Lawrence—yes**

**Becky Tyrrell—yes**

**Laurie Peterson—abstained**

**Rachel Buchanan—abstained**

**Roberta Lauria—abstained**

**Cassandra Clark--abstained**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY REBECCA MARTINEZ FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO HAVE NO FURTHER STUDY OR CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES OR CONSOLIDATIONS. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**Point of Order: Mr. White asked Chairwoman Consalvo that the motion be re-read. Discussion regarding the motion ensued.**

Rachel Buchanan: "Four members have already stated very clearly where we are currently. We are not suggesting closure and there is not an action item on or table in front of us to close or consolidate a school. We would need a vote. At this point, and time we have already done our piece of this work. At this point, the Town Council is doing their work. You're asking me, if the Town Council does a feasibility study, which they may or may not even do as it is being discussed on the 15<sup>th</sup>, we can have this conversation on the 15<sup>th</sup>, with the Town Council. If we were able to move forward we might be able to get it under the deadline if we choose to proceed. If the Town Council decides to move forward with a feasibility study which has been none of our suggestions to my knowledge. If they decide to move forward with that and the data came back and was presented to this Board at that point I would be happy to do what you're asking me to do, based on actual information in front of me, not on a hypothetical."

Crystal St. Lawrence: "Today we did get data from the Superintendent that told what our schools are, knowing that our schools are full. The feasibility study is a waste of our taxpayer's money. If we know our schools, we can't close the middle school and consolidate. I understand the frustrations of the parents, I'm frustrated as a parent and I'm sad that it comes down to this, it's really sad! I've always kept quiet, but I would move out of this town if I had younger kids. I am very sad. Those schools, our kids need them, our kids need the different things like the Auditorium, etc. If we did consolidate and move kids to Linden, it would cost even more than renovate like new. It's ridiculous and it's right here on the agenda. You said it's not on the table, however, it's been talked about all over."

Foster White: "The point is the Council cannot do it by law. Only we (the Board of Education) can conduct a feasibility study."

Steven LePage: "Just for clarification, the Town can do a study if they'd like to. But the only one who could close or consolidate is the Board of Education."

Foster White: "But the decision is ours."

Rachel Buchanan: "Crystal, I'm glad that you spoke up."

Foster White moved the question: "Mrs. Martinez's vote is that we would not do that."

Rachel Buchanan: "That is my whole point, we are not proposing a feasibility study, that's all!"

Rebecca Martinez: "My point is letting the Council know that we are not going to close or consolidate our schools. So, for them to spend money on a study is ridiculous. We are advocating for our students."



Rachel Buchanan: "I hear you and I appreciate that, I have told you and other Board members that our vote was to renovate like new. I'm confused of the disconnect."

Rebecca Martinez: "You know that it is our purview to close or consolidate the schools, don't you?"

Rachel Buchanan: "It is only in our purview which is why I'm confused while we're still sitting here having this conversation when we're talking about a motion about the consideration of either consolidating or closing a school when that is not what we are doing today. We have advocated for renovate like new. This entire Board has supported that. That is what is going to happen at the May 15 worksession when we have an opportunity to come together with the Town Council. You're asking us to vote on something before we do the actual work that is laid out here in front of us."

Rebecca Martinez: I think you know more about the work than I do because I don't know about a study being done. We're under the umbrella of the State Board of Education."

Rachel Buchanan: "I don't know anything you don't know."

Point of Order Mrs. Buchanan: "I think that I have been very clear and what disheartens me is someone who is a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, with a 4<sup>th</sup> generation currently in the school system, is that this has been politicized and what really makes me sad is to see folks here who want to take 15 steps ahead instead of where we are currently within the process."

Cassandra Clark: "I just want to say (to the audience) have some patience. I want to renovate the school. We are not at that step yet. We have to slow it down, there's a worksession on the 15<sup>th</sup> and there is a process involved. I don't know why we have to change the process. This is part of why only 15% of kids nationwide know their civics. This is a misunderstanding, but the process is there and we need to trust in the process. And the Board needs to trust each other. Everyone here voted to renovate like new and I don't know why everyone has to repeat it 100 times. Because some people have an "R" after their name or a "D" after their name. We are the Board of Education, we're all working together and we should trust each other as we took the vote on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Work together in a worksession going forward."

Chair Lori Consalvo: "I am under the impression that the only thing Rebecca wants to do is have us reaffirm that we are not going to participate and pay for another survey."

Becky Tyrrell: "What we are trying to do here is put people's minds at ease because when we voted last year, no one was talking about closing or consolidating the schools. Again, a member of the Town Council proposed a closure. That proposal has caused angst in this community. Did you hear Crystal's emotion? A lot of people have that emotion and for us to be arguing about making a motion that says, We the Board of Education are not interested in consolidating or closing a school right now. If we can't do that, what are we even arguing about? What is this about? I don't understand the issue. This is about giving people a sense that they can feel a little more secure. We have the ability but for some reason that seems to be a problem. I don't understand why we would be conflicted about giving people some sense of security."

Foster White: "Again, Madam Chair, I move the question. I'm noticing people have been through a long meeting. I think we should vote on this issue right now."

Roberta Lauria: "I'm sorry, I'm the new member here and I don't know if I need to vote for this because I couldn't vote at the June 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. I don't even know what the

motion on the table is anymore. I am in full support of renovating the middle school and I've said this publicly. I am still in support of that. It is for the public so that they understand closing or consolidating. I thought it was understood on June 6, 2022?"

Chair Lori Consalvo: "No the June 6th meeting was a motion to renovate like new."

Roberta Lauria: "Do you have a timeframe for this? I am honestly confused."

Becky Tyrrell: "Joan can you re-read the motion."

**REBECCA MARTINEZ MADE A MOTION TO AMEND THE AFOREMENTIONED MOTION WHICH WILL NOW READ, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION WILL HAVE NO FURTHER STUDY OR CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 8 YES VOTES AND ONE ABSTENTION BY CASSANDRA CLARK.**

Roberta Laura: "I abstained from the initial vote because it was in reference to the June 6, 2022 vote which I was not a part of. I am in favor of the motion that was just made."

**E) Request Approval of Contract: CT Institute of the Blind (Oak Hill) for 09/01/23 to 08/31/24**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS TO ENTER INTO A ONE-YEAR CONTRACT WITH OAK HILL ACADEMY FOR THE USE OF SPACE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE FOR THE PERIOD 09/01/23 TO 08/31/24. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

**F) Acceptance Administrator Resignation (Superintendent)**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF STEVEN K. LEPAGE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS EFFECTIVE JUNE 30, 2023 WITH REGRET. FOSTER WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

#### **XI. CONSENT AGENDA—Board Approval**

(A) Budget Object Summary

(B) Food Service Report

(C) Check Registers

(D) Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials Form (added to Public Complaint Regulation No. 1312)

(E) HR Report (Informational Item)

(F) Private Donation for the month of April (Informational Item)

--There were no private donations made during the month of April

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.**

#### **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE**

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes

*The minutes presented within this document provide a summary of the discussion that took place at the Board of Education meeting. For the complete discussion of all agenda items, please view the video of the Board meeting on our website at [www.plainvilleschools.org](http://www.plainvilleschools.org). These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education meeting.*

**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT  
SUMMARY OF MOTIONS  
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2023**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2534. A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHAHAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF APRIL 17, 2023 AS PRESENTED. A MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REBECCA MARTINEZ. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.
2535. A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 24, 2023 AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.
2536. A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF APRIL 28, 2023 AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.
2537. A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 1, 2023 (POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE) AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.
2538. A MOTION WAS MADE BY RACHEL BUCHANAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF MAY 2, 2023 AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

2539. D) Possible vote regarding school closure or consolidation considerations

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO CONVEY THAT THE BOARD HAS REVIEWED THE MSP SITUATION AND GIVEN THE LOW LIKELIHOOD OF A CONSOLIDATION OR RECONFIGURATION OF SCHOOLS, AFFIRMS ITS EARLIER DECISION TO PROCEED TO AN APPLICATION WITH THE STATE FOR AN MSP RENOVATION LIKE NEW PROJECT AND AN MSP RENOVATE LIKE NEW PROJECT REFERENDUM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY REBECCA MARTINEZ. THE MOTION PASSED 5 VOTES YES AND 4 ABSTENSIONS FROM LAURIE PETERSON, RACHEL BUCHANAN, ROBERTA LAURIA AND CASSANDRA CLARK.

**Roll Call Vote**

Lori Consalvo—yes

Foster White—yes

Rebecca Martinez—yes

Crystal St. Lawrence—yes

Becky Tyrrell—yes  
Laurie Peterson—abstained  
Rachel Buchanan—abstained  
Robertta Lauria—abstained  
Cassandra Clark--abstained

2540. A MOTION WAS MADE BY REBECCA MARTINEZ FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO HAVE NO FURTHER STUDY OR CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES OR CONSOLIDATIONS. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE MOTION.

Point of Order: Mr. White asked Chairwoman Consalvo that the motion be re-read. Discussion regarding the motion ensued.

This motion was amended as follows:

REBECCA MARTINEZ MADE A MOTION TO AMEND THE AFOREMENTIONED MOTION WHICH WILL NOW READ, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION WILL HAVE NO FURTHER STUDY OR CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED 8 YES VOTES AND ONE ABSTENTION BY CASSANDRA CLARK.

2541. E) Request Approval of Contract: CT Institute of the Blind (Oak Hill) for 09/01/23 to 08/31/24

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO AUTHORIZE THE DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND OPERATIONS TO ENTER INTO A ONE-YEAR CONTRACT WITH OAK HILL ACADEMY FOR THE USE OF SPACE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PLAINVILLE FOR THE PERIOD 09/01/23 TO 08/31/24. BECKY TYRRELL SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.

2542. F) Acceptance Administrator Resignation (Superintendent)

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF STEVEN K. LEPAGE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS EFFECTIVE JUNE 30, 2023 WITH REGRET. FOSTER WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.

**XI. CONSENT AGENDA—Board Approval**

- (A) Budget Object Summary
- (B) Food Service Report
- (C) Check Registers
- (D) Re-Evaluation of Instructional Materials Form (added to Public Complaint Regulation No. 1312)
- (E) HR Report (Informational Item)
- (F) Private Donation for the month of April (Informational Item)
  - There were no private donations made during the month of April

2543. A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0.



**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**2544. A MOTION WAS MADE BY BECKY TYRRELL TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.**