

PENDING BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020
Plainville High School Cafeteria
Plainville, Connecticut

7:00 p.m.

Regular Business Meeting of the Plainville Board of Education, PHS Cafeteria

I. CONVENE: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Becky Tyrrell called the regular business meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:00 PM. Nicole Palmieri led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Mesdames Hardy, Palmieri, Peterson, St. Lawrence, Tyrrell, Wells, Messrs. Davenport and White

Also Present: Steven LePage, Superintendent of Schools
David Levenduski, Assistant Superintendent
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations
Allie Chambrello, Student Liaison

Absent: Becky Martinez

Late Arrivals: None

Early Departures: Allie Chambrello, 7:30 PM

Returns: None

II. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

Everyday Hero Presentation: Todd Helming, MSP Music Teacher

Student Essay Recognition: Richard Incognito, Grade 4 Wheeler School

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF JANUARY 13, 2020 AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NICOLE PALMIERI. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

B) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 13, 2020 AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NICOLE PALMIERI. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

C) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 21, 2020 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NICOLE PALMIERI. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

- D) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 23, 2020 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NICOLE PALMIERI. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- E) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 27, 2020 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY NICOLE PALMIERI. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

IV. CITIZEN COMMENTS

John Kisluk, 65 Forestville Avenue

Mr. Kisluk thanked Board Members Deborah Hardy and Laurie Peterson for asking the Board to take another look at the budget prior to final approval, as he feels more reductions can be made. He stated that the Superintendent has his job to do and the BOE has theirs. He reported that a few years back he had requested, under FOI, a list of every Board employee and their salaries and feels that the list should be reviewed again. He feels there are too many positions. He then spoke about a former Board Chair who asked him to be removed from a Building Committee a few years back. That never happened and the committee saved over \$1 million that included a playscape which became a part of the original budget. In addition, he stated that it is a disgrace if the Board cuts sports, as sports should be a part of a student's education. He reiterated that the Board should be looking at the list of positions/salaries for reductions. He stated that he is willing to speak to any Board Member on where to make further reductions.

Ben Gediman, 5 Dickman Road

Mr. Gediman stated that he attended two of the three budget meetings last month and commended Mr. LePage, Mr. Levenduski and Mr. Adlerstein for presenting such a financially responsible budget. He commented that it was a shame that Mr. Kisluk made some statements, wouldn't give any answers then left the meeting. He stated that at one of the last budget meetings, a Board Member who was in favor of reducing the budget had no answer as to where the reduction should come and refused to answer when questioned. He stated that as an elected official, it is that person's duty to find where to reduce and should have given an answer. Mr. Gediman stated that the budget will more than likely be cut again by the Town Council and the town will be back to where it was last year. He stated that the Grand List was just published and revenues are up in the Town of Plainville. He stated that this budget probably won't raise taxes any more than \$20, and it covers everything for the students. He asked, "If there is an idea as to how to reduce the budget further let's hear it, if not, don't just cut and run."

A) RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS

No Response to Citizen's Comments

V. COUNCIL LIAISON

Mrs. Pugliese could not attend this evening's meeting but asked Mr. LePage to report that John Myska has been appointed as temporary Fire Marshal replacing Larry Sutherland who recently retired. The Town Council has posted the position and will soon be interviewing new candidates for the position.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A) Middle School of Plainville Strategic Update

Mr. LePage introduced Mr. Matthew Guarino, Middle School Principal, who gave a full comprehensive report on the state of the Middle School. Mr. Guarino began with photos of various happenings at the Middle School. He then reviewed the district's vision statement and discussed discipline data i.e., referrals, as well as a matrix showing a drop in referrals over the last thirteen years (1,849 in 2005-06 to 280 in 2018-19). In-school suspensions have dropped from 233 students in 2005-06 to 68 in 2018-19, a slight increase from last year. Out of School suspensions have dropped from 119 in 2005-06 to one in 2018-19. Mr. Guarino stated that there are many factors that are attributed to an increase in referrals and suspensions, one being more crowded busses with no adult supervision and the other, decreases in staff.

Mr. Guarino then discussed student discipline analysis:

--23% of students received an office referral (which is down 2% from the previous year). The goal is 20% or less.

--<5% of students received 2 or more office referrals which is holding steady and at goal. These students may require further intervention.

--33% of students receiving office referrals had an IEP or 504 plan (<20% of the student population and is down 7%). The goal is 20% or less. Male students received 75% of office referrals.

--Bus referrals continue as the number one source of referrals. Bus referrals account for 40% of office referrals.

The following has been done regarding discipline data analysis:

--Invited Anti-defamation League back (school assembly on disrespectful behavior, Ally Club)

--Adapted PBIS lessons presented to whole school

--Invited SRO Martins (assemblies on sexual harassment and Internet use)

--Reviewing leveled discipline procedures with faculty

--Adjusted cell phone policy (in alignment with Plainville High School)

--Social/Emotional Learning work: RULER Training, Mindfulness Training

--Added faculty to cafeteria during lunch waves (2 grades)

--MSP has also instituted positive office referrals

Each year, Mr. Guarino tries to remind his staff that the middle school is part of a team that takes a child from kindergarten through graduation. He stated that the Middle School does not exist in isolation. He stated that it is the job of his teachers to take those students from where they are as they leave elementary school and to work together to pass them on, ready to be successful at Plainville High School. Along the way, one of the most important goals is to add to the number of students who are performing at or above goal (the goals that are set for academic performance).

Mr. Guarino then discussed increased results of SBAC testing in Math as students placed at or above goal in grades 5 through 8 which has shown significant improvements (21% in 2018 and 22% in 2019) in the last two cohorts. He stated that he is excited and pleased at the new educational decisions made which contributed to these increases. He had expressed concerns in the past over the reduction of instructional hours in ELA going from 90 minutes to 56 minutes per day in grades 6 and 7 and to 45 minutes in grade 8 due to a loss in faculty. ELA students showed a slight increase of 2% in 2018 but last year's cohort decreased by 5%. Mr. Guarino said that he was very grateful to the Board for the inclusion of a new English/Language Arts teacher proposed in the 2020-2021 Budget as it will make a big difference.

In conclusion, Mr. Guarino discussed goals for the Middle School, looking to the future, the need for repairs within the facility and a collage of photos of students participating in sports, robotics, music programs, and giving service to others. Discussion ensued.

Mr. LePage thanked Mr. Guarino for the great things going on at the Middle School. He stated that Mr. Guarino is a paternal figure to all of his students and no one cares more about those students than Mr. Guarino.

B) Technology Update—No Report

This report will be made at the March meeting as Mr. Ross could not attend this evening's meeting due to illness.

C) Wheeler Student Count Plan Update

Mr. LePage stated that he and Mr. Batchelder have been working diligently to get some answers from the State to confirm the exact number of students needed to receive full reimbursement for the Wheeler renovation project. Mr. LePage stated that former Superintendent, Dr. Maureen Brummett, was required to provide a plan that would increase student population by 45 students at Wheeler School in order to receive the full renovation reimbursement amount. That said, Mr. LePage has spoken to people at the State to get clear guidance as to what is needed. He stated that in order to gain the additional 45 students (350 overall), he and his staff have discussed the review of residency locations close to Wheeler, moving three pre-k sections from other schools to Wheeler, as well as instituting a selective voluntary option for parents to allow siblings of students going to pre-k at Wheeler to also attend school at Wheeler. The overall goal is to bring three pre-k classes to Wheeler but will reassess at the end of the school year.

D) Wheeler Open House: Wednesday, March 4th 6:00-7:30 PM

An Open House is scheduled for the newly renovated Wheeler School on March 4th from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Speakers will open the gathering beginning at 6:30 PM. Fifth grade students will be stationed around the school. Guests are encouraged to tour the building. A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will also take place and refreshments will be served. All are invited to attend.

E) District Highlights

A meeting with the State is scheduled for February 25 to discuss the proposed Middle School renovation and next steps.

A Dodgeball Tournament is scheduled for Thursday, February 13th at 6 PM in the Kegel Gym at Plainville High School. The fee to play is \$10. Proceeds will go to Project Graduation.

The Sandy Hook Promise is scheduled for February 19 at the Middle School of Plainville. There are three programs in the series which will be presented as a means of combatting these concerns which are growing in our society. They are: Hello, Say Something, and SOS (Signs of Suicide). These programs are meant to help students help one another, gain an avenue for reporting, and allow students to express themselves as to what will give them a safer outcome.

A grant from the Petit Family Foundation will bring in a NASA astronaut to speak to students on March 19th at the Middle School and will include hands-on STEM lessons. Mr. LePage stated that the district is most appreciative to Petit Family Foundation for this opportunity.

The annual Superintendent's Showcase/Multi-Cultural Fair will take place on April 27 beginning at 6 PM in the High School Auditorium. Forty-one different countries will be represented. Mr. LePage stated that Ms. Perez has put her heart and soul into this project.

Mr. LePage stated that he appreciates all Citizens' Comments and takes whatever they say to heart. If they request something that is a viable option, both he and the Board will do their best to do what they can.

Mr. Kisluk posed a couple of questions at the last Board meeting which had to do with the High School overhang and the heater for the High School pool. Mr. LePage stated that the overhang at Plainville High School will be modified with a construction company who will work closely with students from the High School's Tech Ed. department. This will bring the cost of labor down. As for the heater for the High School pool, the heater will be purchased and installed during the summer months.

F) Review of FY2019-20 Operating Budget

Mr. LePage began by thanking Mr. Adlerstein and Mr. Levenduski for their help in reducing the FY20-21 proposed budget. He then presented a PowerPoint to re-cap the FY2020-21 budget. He then showed a slide of the districts contractual obligations for FY2020-21 including the DATTCO bus contract. He noted that the Paraprofessionals/Tutors will be negotiating shortly. He then gave a summary showing line items and discussed the 2.61% proposed budget. He stated that the dollar increase is \$26,218 and the percentage increase before contractual increases is 0.07% or \$972,354 leaving the overall budget at \$39,277,677. He stated that he feels that this is a conservative budget and is mindful to the residents of Plainville. He then referenced statements from former students praising the district and also referenced a video created by Christopher St. Lawrence, a PHS senior, entitled, *Let's Hear from Our Students*. The video was made for incoming 9th graders to help them transition into the High School. Mr. LePage stated that this proposed budget is the best job he can do to meet the needs of the students of Plainville Community Schools. Mr. LePage commented that the Board will be asked to approve the proposed budget this evening under New Business.

Before Mr. LePage closed his report, Mrs. Tyrrell asked if there have been any significant issues with student vaping. Discussion ensued.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO ADD RATIFICATION OF PHS WRESTLING TEAM CIAC TOURNAMENT, KILLINGLY HIGH SCHOOL, FEBRUARY 14 AND 15, 2020 AS ITEM E1 OF THE CONSENT AGENDA. NICOLE PALMIERI SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

VII. BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Student Representative Report—No Report**
- B. Facilities/Finance Subcommittee Report—No Report**
- C. Policy Subcommittee Report—No Report**
- D. Curriculum Subcommittee Report—No Report**
- E. Outreach Subcommittee—No Report**

F. PAC Liaison--Plainville High School Report

Mr. White reported on the following:

► The PAC currently has an account balance of \$3,123.05 which includes \$525 from the Lyman Pie sale and \$22 from the High School's Homecoming Carnival (#1 foam fingers). The PAC is continuing with their raffle for reserved seating at Graduation and they will sponsor their annual butter braid fundraiser on March 2 with a delivery of butter braids on April 3.

► The next PAC meeting date will be held on March 11th at 7 PM in the PHS Learning Commons

G. PTO Liaison--Toffolon Elementary School Report—No Report

H. PTO Liaison--Linden Street Elementary School Report

Mrs. Wells reported on the following:

► The Linden PTO had a successful holiday season with their fundraisers and Holiday Store. Students got to practice generosity during the Holiday Store and to think about their loved ones during the holidays.

► The PTO is gearing up for their spring fundraisers: Yankee Candles and Lolligrams are going out for Valentine's Day.

► The annual Linden Book Fair is scheduled for April 30 and May 1

► Leprechaun Bingo is set for March 19

► Breakfast with the Easter Bunny is scheduled to be held on April 4

► Linden will be pulling a team together for Relay for Life at Norton Park which will be held on June 5 and 6. This is another way for students to practice generosity and caring in their community.

► The PTO began brainstorming ideas on how to get more parental participation in the PTO. Many of the officers will be leaving at the end of the school year as their children will be moving on. An idea of holding a supplemental meeting at 11:00 AM to include parents whose schedules would fit that time period was discussed.

Mrs. Wells stated that she admired the PTO members for thinking outside the box and for being more inclusive.

► The next Linden PTO will be held on Wednesday, February 12 at 6:00 PM in the Linden Library.

I. PTC Liaison--Middle School of Plainville Report—No Report

Ms. St. Lawrence reported on the following:

► The next PTC meeting will commence on February 11 at 7 PM in the MSP Library.

J. PTO Liaison--Wheeler Elementary School Report—No Report

Ms. Palmieri could not attend the last meeting (January 23) as it was the same night as the Board's budget session.

► The Wheeler PTO is working on their Smental fundraiser for Valentine's Day
The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 27th.

K. CREC Council Report

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the next CREC Council meeting will be held immediately following the Legislative Breakfast on February 20. She stated that all BOE members are welcome to attend.

L. Chairperson's Report

Mrs. Tyrrell reported on the following:

- She reminded everyone of the Day on the Hill festivities on March 11 at the Bushnell at 8:30 AM. She reminded everyone to call Joan if they plan to attend.
- Mrs. Tyrrell reported that she attended the NSBA's National Equity and Advocacy Symposia in Washington D.C. as part of the CAFE Delegation. They met with various senators to discuss IDEA, investing in Special Education, Technology: Homework Gap, School security and Safety, and supporting Social and Emotional Learning. He thanked both Vicki Trzcinski and Kevin Ross for their ideas/questions to ask. She stated that the symposium was very enlightening.

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the Equity Symposium was very energizing. In addition, CAFE has provided the Board with an Equity Toolkit. She stated the toolkit helps steer the Board to be more mindful of students and to work on things that the Board doesn't sometimes see.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A) Board Open Forum

Foster White congratulated Todd Helming who was recognized with the Everyday Hero Award. Mr. White stated that he worked with Todd since he was a student here at Plainville High School as a youth theater person. He also had the pleasure of singing under his direction and learned so much from him. He thanked him and stated that he is an outstanding teacher. He congratulated Mr. Helming again and commented that he was proud to call him a friend.

Mr. White also stated that he was impressed at how hard the professional staff has been working on their own to enhance the education of Plainville's students by applying for various grants to offset the budget. The total amount requested and granted includes \$14,700. He was also impressed with the donation (\$5,500) made by students to CCMC. He stated that everything added together is approximately the entire dollar amount of the Board's proposed budget. He stated that what goes on in Plainville Community Schools adds so much to our community.

Nicole Palmieri stated that she read to first graders last Wednesday at World Read Aloud Day. She stated that the children are always so happy and engaging. She said it made her day.

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

As of February 10th there are currently 18 out-placements, plus 1 transition service, 1 support placement and 12 magnet and tech support placements totaling 32 outplaced students. The original budget for tuitions is as follows: \$1,510,000. Budgeted Excess Cost grant amount: (\$510,000). Open Choice tuition reimbursement: (\$250,000). Total revised budget for tuitions: \$750,000. Expenditures /Encumbrances to date: \$1,445,217. Expected remaining expenditures: \$106,940. Expected excess cost reimbursement: (\$552,157). Expected Choice Reimbursement: (\$250,000). Total expected expenditures: \$750,000. Forecast Surplus/Deficit: \$0.

C) Turf Committee Report (September & May)—No Report

D) Request Approval of FY2019-20 Board of Education Operating Budget

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE THE PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET OF 2.61% OR AN INCREASE OF \$998,572, TOTALING \$39,277,677 FOR FY2020-21. BRENT DAVENPORT SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. White spoke in favor of this budget with exception of contractual reductions in staff due to issues, i.e., the reduction of a Language Arts teacher at the Middle School, which caused a negative impact on scores as well as an increase in behavioral issues. He stated that this is a very restrictive bare bones budget and would be distressed if the Town Council reduces it any further. He stated that he wished the budget could be higher but will endorse the budget as presented, as the Board is charged with providing the best education they can for their students.

Ms. Palmieri stated that she took the budget book home and went line item by line item and struggled but couldn't find where to reduce. She hopes the Town Council realizes you don't have to cut a budget, just to cut it. She fully supports the budget as presented.

Mrs. Tyrrell then asked for a roll call vote to approve the FY2020-21 budget.

Mrs. Wells—yes
Mrs. St. Lawrence—yes
Ms. Peterson—no
Ms. Palmieri—yes
Mr. Davenport—yes
Mrs. Hardy—no
Mr. White—yes
Mrs. Tyrrell—yes
Mrs. Martinez—absent

THE MOTION PASSED WITH 6 YES VOTES AND 2 NO VOTES.

X. CONSENT AGENDA--Board Approval

- (A) Budget Object Summary
- (B) Food Service Report
- (C) Check Registers
- (D) Request Approval of PHS Jazz Band trips to UCONN, Storrs, CT and the University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH (Jazz Festivals) on March 13-14, 2020
- (E) Request Approval of Linden Grade 5 field trip to Sturbridge Village, Sturbridge, MA, May 1, 2020
- (EI) *RATIFICATION: PHS Wrestling Team CLAC Tournament, Killingly High School, February 14 and 15, 2020.*
- (F) HR Report (Informational Item)
- (G) Private Donation for the month of January (Informational Item)
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to MSP for Nutmeg Nominated Author \$1,000.00
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to PHS Bike Repair Program.\$ 500.00
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to Adult Continuing Education.....\$ 640.00
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to MSP True Color Program \$ 500.00
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to STEAM Program @ All Elementary Schools..... \$2,200.00
 - Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to 7th Annual Family Fest \$1,200.00

--Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust donation to Volunteer Program..... \$1,200.00
 --EXXON Mobile to Linden Street School STEAM Program..... \$ 500.00
 --Donation: Harold Johnson for PHS Ice Machine\$2,000.00
 --Community Foundation of Greater New Britain for PHS Safety Initiative
 (Grant).....\$5,000.00

All Schools Donation to CCMC:

--All Schools PJ Day for Kids donation to Connecticut Children's Medical Center
\$5,500.00

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that she was very impressed at all of the donations made to Plainville Community Schools.

Mr. White asked to set the record straight. As a member of the Elizabeth Harding Norton Trust he therefore recuses himself from voting on any and all of the educational grants.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS AMENDED. NICOLE PALMIERI SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

XI. Adjournment

A MOTION WAS MADE BY NICOLE PALMIERI TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. BRENT DAVENPORT SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED. The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Calistro
 Joan Calistro
 Recorder of Minutes

RECEIVED

FEB 18 2020

Cara Skutty
 TOWN CLERK