

WILLINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

March 8, 2022

Virtual Meeting: Zoom

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://willingtonct.zoom.us/j/89170811706?pwd=ZHpwdlp6bkltS0lzek1TQ1dCeElOdz09>

Zoom recorded

Members Present

Michelle Doucette Cunningham - Chair

Herb Arico- Secretary

Ann Grosjean- Vice Chair

Tracey Anderson

Donna Cook

Briana Ross

Laura Rodriguez

(members all present remotely through Zoom)

Also Present

Superintendent of Schools, Phil Stevens

Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Erin Conley and Literacy Coach Kristen Stevens

Members of the public

1. Call to order

Chair Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Cunningham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Present to speak

Mike Makuch, Clover Springs, Drive, wanted to discuss the Covid protocol and was hoping to relieve the mask madadate. He stated that he supported the board and believed they would do the right thing.

Michelle Christensen, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, expressed her disappointment in the Chairperson, Miss Cunningham and how she treated other board members at the February 8, 2022 meeting. She was also disappointed that an emergency meeting was not held regarding the mask mandate. She also stated she was in favor of masks being optional.

Melissa Abercrombie, 238 Tolland Turnpike, stated that she supported an end to the mask mandate.

Jim Bulick, Laurel Drive, explained how he attended the selectmen's meeting on Monday, March 7, 2022 and the town decided to make masks optional. They believed it should be a personal choice. He suggested the Board of Education follow the town.

Arthur Christenson, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, wanted to know why the mask topic was even being discussed. When it was first mandated there was no discussion. Parents did not have a choice then and had to follow the mandate. He felt the only fair and reasonable decision was to have families decide if their child should wear a mask or not.

Sarah Reis, Pinecrest Road, stated she thought masks should be optional and everyone needed to respect each other's choices.

Jamie Koprek was discouraged that there was not an emergency meeting regarding masks. She stated she would like the mask mandate lifted. She also thanked Superintendent Stevens for the letter sent home for families to see the information before the meeting tonight

Amy Sherzai, Timber Lane, wanted to give a different view regarding the mask mandate. She felt it was discouraging how upset parents were that there was not an emergency meeting. There was no emergency. As a pediatric nurse she sees everyday that Covid is still very much out there and affecting people. She stated she would like to see masks still be mandated until the end of the school year.

Samantha Sperry, Luchon Road, stated she believed masks should be a choice.

Peter Latincsics, 97 Trask Road, stated he attended the board of selectmen's meeting on Monday, March 7, 2022 where they decided masks would be optional. He urged the board of education to adopt the same rule.

Peter Tanaka, 125 Mason Road, stated he disagreed with saying that there was no harm in wearing masks. He believed two way communication is important and was being lost with children wearing masks.

4. Chairman's report

None.

5. Communications

- a. Received emails from; Judie Threatt, Melissa J. Palumbo, Julie Marshall, Michelle Christensen, Jamie Koprek, Amanda Doughty, Sarah Reis, Donna Dupuis, Sara Geary, We the People, Tia and Tim Kollars, Kiley Fults, Brandon Priola, Arthur Christensen and Joseph Cala

Chairperson Cunningham thanked everyone for their emails. They do appreciate them and they do read them.

6. Superintendent report

a. March is Board Member appreciation month

Superintendent Stevens thanked the board for all their hard work and dedication to support their students and staff. He stated they are all unpaid volunteers and tasked with making decisions in the best interest of their school community. He also shared that they had a small token of appreciation for each of the Board members to thank them for their service.

b. Future Assessment Data Meeting

Superintendent Stevens discussed that they are starting to gather information for a future special meeting that he believed would be operated as a workshop. The meeting would include the following information: Smarter Balanced (SBAC) data, iReady data, attendance data, and student population data such as special education and free/reduced lunch numbers. They would connect the data to the Board of Education goals. Superintendent Stevens stated he hoped this would take place at some point in April as it would take time to pull all of the information together into one presentation. A member proposed 4/20, but the School Building Committee meets that night.

c. 2021-2022 update

Superintendent Steven discussed that this past weekend was the Eastern Regionals music festival.

Students from approximately 40 schools auditioned and were chosen to perform. Hall School had 6 choral students selected to the 70 person choir. They had a rehearsal on Friday night and all day Saturday, and the experience culminated in a live performance at Enfield High School that night. Congratulations to their student representatives: Ava Bray, Cadence Coombs, Iris Fahey, Max Gounaris, Luke Langevin, and Shanna Pham. He thanked Mr. Phillips for working to facilitate this exciting opportunity for our students.

d. Enrollment Study Completed by Peter Prowda

Superintendent Stevens had shared the enrollment study projections with the Board members at the end of January. Dr. Peter Prowda, who completed the study, did a presentation to the School Building Committee during their January meeting and it is available on Youtube. He stated that If any Board members had questions, please feel free to reach out to him individually.

H. Arico asked if this study projects for five years?

Superintendent Stevens explained it projects ten years and the highest is in the next few years.

H. Arico asked if the school building committee was using this information and if it could project 5 or 10 years.

Superintendent Stevens shared his screen with the projected information. He explained that they look at the highest number in 8 years to figure out what their enrollment numbers could be.

e. Enrollment update

Superintendent Stevens stated that Center School had 209 students and Hall School had 185 students, which included outplacements. They currently have a total of 394 students.

He also explained they would be monitoring the number of incoming kindergarten students. They were currently expecting 32 students as of today, which is actually higher than normal for this time of the school year.

f. Staffing

Superintendent Stevens discussed some staff movement. They received a letter of resignation from HMS language arts teacher Jen Edgerton, who has been with the district for 12 years. She will be finishing the school year and then will start her new position in a town closer to her home. They also received a retirement letter from CES secretary Joan Cordier, who will be retiring on May 1. Superintendent Stevens explained that Joan had been in the district for 32 years. They also received a letter of resignation from paraprofessional Mary Bryant who took a position closer to home. They also hired Brittany Stickles as a paraprofessional. They wished all the folks leaving a successful future.

g. CES Insurance Claim

Superintendent Stevens discussed how they continue to make progress on the repairs from the CES flood from the pipe burst. They picked out new carpet and tile colors and the materials are on order. Once the materials have been shipped to the installer, they will schedule the installation, which will occur mostly on the weekends. The hallway asbestos abatement project would also be completed over April vacation. They will be placing a large order to replace furniture and materials for the preschool room later this week. Superintendent Stevens stated that he would have a total cost to the district at the end of the project but anticipated it would be around \$20,000 after the abatement and deductibles.

H. Arico asked if insurance was covering all the expenses? Also was there any mold found?

Superintendent Stevens explained there was no mold found and the insurance was covering anything that was wet.

h. Professional Development

Superintendent Stevens provided a brief update on professional development. The February 18 and March 4

professional development consisted of a variety of offerings including using i-Ready reports to develop intervention groups, utilizing the i-Ready Teacher Toolbox to support students, project-based learning, unit planning, LETRS, and physical management training required for their school crisis teams. The admin team also participated in an additional iReady training for a deeper dive into reports. He stated this time has been critical to support teacher development to improve student outcomes.

7. Financial Report

a. March financial report

Attachment #1

Superintendent Stevens highlighted the major changes to the programs.

Program 1: ordered supplies and laptops

Program 2: winter sports transportation encumbered; ordered supplies

Program 3: received excess cost payment

Program 4: owed a diesel reimbursement from Region 19, homeless transportation

Also, the ARPA committee is considering accepting the air conditioning project for the HMS band room using ARPA funds.

Also, the Board of Finance will be discussing all the budgets at their meeting on Thursday night.

D. Cook asked for clarification on the homelessness transportation. She stated that if a student that was originally a Willington resident then becomes homeless then finds temporary housing in Tolland that we (Willington) would still need to provide transportation to that student. Was this correct?

Superintendent Stevens explained that was correct but the towns would split the cost of transportation. In her example Tolland and Willington would split the costs to transport that student to and from school.

H. Arico reiterated what D. Cook had stated but also added that they had to provide transportation no matter what town the student had found housing in. He also stated this might not always be a bus. It could be a taxi or van.

Superintendent Stevens stated that H. Arico was correct. They would always find the best way to transport a student. He also stated this is required but it is also the right thing to do.

8. Committee Report

a. Policy

Superintendent Stevens discussed how the Policy committee asked that he give an update on their work from their meeting on March 3. The committee reviewed policy #3171, Unexpected Education Funds Account. The Board of Finance could approve excess funds be transferred to the non-lapsing account for the Board of Education. Superintendent Stevens identified an issue with this policy that he shared with the committee. He explained when you want to access the funds from this account, this policy requires them to forward a request to the BOF, and they can authorize up to \$20,000 in a single year. Anything over \$20,000 goes to a town meeting. State statute does not require this process. One of the areas it is extremely limiting is in the area of special education such as outplacement. They wouldn't be able to disclose specific information to the Board of Finance or at Town Meeting, and if it were voted down, they would still need to pay the special education costs. Per state statute, once the BOF approves the transfer into the non-lapsing account, the funds belong to the board of education. Lastly, taxpayers already approved these funds for educational purposes when the budget originally passed at the referendum, so going back to approve the funds for educational purposes again seems unnecessary. He recommended some adjustments to the policy to allow the Board of Education to spend the funds without returning to the Board of Finance or town meeting. The superintendent could not spend funds from this account without Board approval. He realized they had not received this policy yet, but the committee felt it was important he shared the details with them as they requested he share

this information with the Board of Finance prior to bringing the policy for review by the entire Board of Education.

H. Arico stated the max is 3% and the board of finance still has control over it. He felt this was a valuable account to have, for education uses.

Superintendent Stevens agreed and stated that anything that is educational could be used from this account.

D. Cook respectively asked that the next time the policy committee met to please discuss how the board of education will address their communications.

Superintendent Stevens reassured D. Cook that it is on the list to discuss in the future meetings.

The Curriculum committee will share their update when the Board discusses curriculum.

Superintendent Stevens explained he had been working with Scott Pellman, SBC Owners Project Manager, on programmatic space needs so they can write the educational specifications. He had been working on a draft of the ed specs and anticipated they would need a special meeting in the very near future to review them. The ed specs would help the Board describe the various learning activities, their spatial requirements, locations within the building or the site, and any special requirements that a designer would need to consider.

9. New Business

a. Approve minutes of regular meeting, February 8, 2022

Attachment #2

Ann Grosjean made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting, February 8, 2022

Herb Arico seconded the motion.

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|-----|----|---------|
| H. Arico | x | | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D.Cook | x | | |
| T. Anderson | x | | |
| A.Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriquez | x | | |

7 Yes Motion passes

b. Approve minutes of Curriculum Committee meeting, February 24, 2022

Attachment #3

Laura Rodriquez made a motion to approve the minutes from the curriculum committee meeting, February 24, 2022.

Ann Grosjean seconded the motion

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|-----|----|---------|
| H. Arico | x | | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D.Cook | | | x |
| T. Anderson | x | | |
| A.Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriquez | x | | |

6 Yes 1 Abstain Motion passes

c. English Language Arts curriculum set #1

Handout

Superintendent Stevens stated the Curriculum committee will be reviewing curriculum on a regular basis and submitting units for approval for the next two years. They have a calendar for approval and expect all ELA curricula to be approved by the end of this summer. These are the first two sets. He invited Erin Conley or Kristen Stevens to comment on this subject.

E. Conley wanted to specify the changes that they made from the first to second set, which was in the assessment.

A. Grosjean asked for E. Conley to explain each type of assessment.

E. Conley explained the difference between the assessments. Benchmark assessment is checking in on the student and how they are doing. Summative is at the end of the unit, seeing what the student learned specifically from that unit. Formative assessments are more used as information for the teacher. This is to check that the daily lessons are reaching the students effectively.

L. Rodriquez wanted to share that the committee had gone through a lot of units and wanted to start approving them but they do understand that the whole board might not have had time to go through both sets. The curriculum committee was very impressed with the ease of use for teachers. They asked for some things to be added to make it more understandable to non- teachers, such as a glossary. The committee was very impressed with the quality and amount of work that was put into this.

A. Grosjean stated that teachers had input and they would have the opportunity to teach it, respond or make changes.

Superintendent Stevens also wanted to comment that in a curriculum cycle it should never just sit on a shelf. This will be an ongoing process and teachers will recommend changes as needed.

E. Conley explained that was a big part of their ELA PD roll out last friday.

Chairperson Cunningham was wondering how much curriculum would they be reviewing within the next month, years or two year? And how many sets are there?

E. Conley stated specifically for ELA it is 16-18 units per set.

Chairperson Cunningham stated they would then move onto math, social studies and so on. So she felt it was fair to say this was the first of many approvals that would be happening. She thanked the curriculum committee and all involved for their hard work.

There was lengthy discussion amongst the board about some concerns throughout this curriculum, specifically the first set.

H. Arico was concerned about the teaching of some of the history that was incorporated into the ELA. He was not sure some of the material was appropriate to teach younger children. He did feel E. Conley had done a really good job, there is just so much material and this topic in particular was bothersome to him.

D. Cook also shared some concerns. First, she thought this subject, ELA curriculum, should be a separate meeting. She also commented on some of the links not working and needing a password, so she was unable to fully read those parts. She thought it was important to include parents and get their input. She felt the first part of the curriculum she did read seemed inappropriate, specifically for kindergarteners. She agreed with H. Arico about the 4th grade ELA curriculum integrating history was not done appropriately. She gave examples from the curriculum handout that was sent to them.

E. Conley explained to the board that the purpose of the units was to provide a perspective from different people/lenses. She discussed author's craft and the importance of providing different perspectives to have the students think. She also stated that it's important to integrate all the subject areas in ELA.

A. Grosjean asked Erin and Kristen if these were based on state standards? Are any of the resources or suggestions for books from the state?

E. Conley explained that the resources listed are resources that have been suggested by the Teacher's College Workshop unit and have been around and used for a long time. She then gave an example of when she was in Norwich developing a curriculum where they had kindergarteners studying birds in the school yard in an integrated unit. Their activism was to raise money and get a bird bath for the birds.

Chairperson Cunningham wondered when they listed potential readings were they just potential or all included?

E. Conley explained that where the teacher is doing the shared reading they are doing the modeling and that those are typically used, but the teachers can give feedback that they want a different option.

H. Arico stated he agreed with D. Cook where the 7th grade curriculum based on competitive sports seemed to be twisted and unfair to the students.

E. Conley restated that those resources H. Arico discussed have been in the curriculum for years. Secondly, the purpose is to show two sides of a topic as it's part of a debate unit. It is to help children think critically.

B. Ross stated that isn't it the point to use topics that children can relate to? This way they can apply these skills to what they are learning. Even when they are 4 or 5 this is important. B. Ross teaches kindergarten and understands what D. Cook was discussing how reading some of the curriculum can be overwhelming. But it is written for educators. She stated that she trusts the educators and curriculum

coordinators, that they know what is appropriate and how to modify it to reach all children no matter what their level might be.

D. Cook stated how concerned she was that these topics are already in the curriculum. She stated they know the current curriculum is not working due to their low test scores. She felt that just because it is there doesn't mean it needs to be used.

L. Rodriguez discussed her teaching background, and was able to see young children do amazing things with solving problems and engineering. She felt sometimes their expectations for children were not high enough. Children are curious, imaginative and observant. With the right tools they can do amazing things. As far as the state standards that we follow in CT they are rigorous standards and there is a lot of non fiction in the ELA standards. There is a lot of integration in this ELA curriculum of social studies and science. She supported the curriculum and felt it was appropriate.

B. Ross agreed the cross of all the subjects is project based learning. She stated that when H. Arico was discussing his concerns with the flags and she thought right away that of course the art teacher would be involved and help in guiding the students to express themselves. Also the music teacher would be involved. These topics are not just taught in one subject or one place. It is better for students and they learn better this way.

Chairperson Cunningham explained how confusing and hard this is when just looking at the ELA standards and not the whole package. She felt honestly given how many units there are it would be very difficult to understand as a whole given the size.

T. Anderson explained when she read each of these units she read them as a whole unit. When you take one piece out of the context it will not look the same. The board was asked to look at the content and read through many questions. She felt it was meeting the goals that the board wanted and stated it is research based. She stated she supports the curriculum and was very impressed with what had been presented to them.

Superintendent Stevens asked Erin or Kristen what is missing in these documents. What is different from what they did in the past with readers and writers workshop?

E. Conley spoke about "Workshop" and what is followed such as a close read procedure, which comes from LETRS. That is one piece that blends science and reading.

K. Stevens discussed LETRS and the training that the teachers are going through. Things are not being taken out, things are being added. Throughout the summer they are going to be approving the phonics and word study units.

Superintendent Stevens stated phonics is not in the curriculum yet but it will be and it is infused with scientific data of how the brain works and students learn to read.

Tracey Anderson made a motion to approve set #1 of ELA curriculum.

Ann Grosjean seconded the motion.

D. Cook wondered if everyone on the curriculum committee had a chance to read all of the resources that were attached?

Chairperson Cunningham stated that they are not expected to read every word of every book in every resource.

D. Cook wanted to know if everything in their curriculum had been read? D. Cook gave examples of

some of the items that are on the curriculum that seemed inappropriate. One specifically was there was a Saturday Night Live clip for 8th graders. She stated she did not watch the video but wanted to know if anyone from the committee had watched it.

Chairperson Cunningham stated that it is not the expectation that the curriculum committee will read every single resource over all the grades. They are hiring professionals and depending on them to help. If there are concerns she suggested people should share through email to E. Conley. Then there can be more discussions within the committee regarding it.

D. Cook was wondering if there was a way to do a search within the curriculum.

Chairperson Cunningham stated to the best of her knowledge there was not a program or way to do that. She asked the rest of the board if they knew differently. No one did.

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|-----|----|---------|
| H. Arico | | x | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D. Cook | | x | |
| T. Anderson | x | | |
| A. Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriguez | x | | |

5 Yes 2 No Motion passes

d. English Language Arts curriculum set #2

Handout

Holding off on this until the next meeting so everyone can read the handout.

D. Cook wanted to know if they could get a print out, not of all the stuff that is linked. She felt it would be easier for her rather using a computer screen.

Superintendent Stevens reassured D. Cook to just contact Brenda and she would make copies for her.

Chairperson Cunningham stated that if anyone else was interested in doing this to please put the request in writing early to Brenda so she only has to do it once. She then recommended a two minute break at 8:53pm. The meeting resumed at 8:57 p.m.

10. Old Business

a. 2022-2023 BOE budget

Handout

Superintendent Stevens emailed the updated budget with the adjustments to programs 3, 4, and 7. They decreased outplacement tuition costs and locked in fuel prices. He suggested the board vote on the budget again considering the significant changes.

Laura Rodriguez made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 board of education budget of, \$9,074,681 Ann Grosjean seconded the motion.

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|----------|----|----------|
| H. Arico | x | | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D.Cook | | | x |
| T. Anderson | x | | |
| A.Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriquez | x | | |

6 Yes, 1 Abstain Motion passes

b. Governor's Executive Orders: Draft WPS COVID Protocols Attachment #4

Superintendent Stevens started with stating that it has been a long two years and they were again proposing updated health and safety protocols. Last Board meeting he reported 80 positive COVID cases from the January to February Board meeting. Since the February meeting, they have only had 4 cases, a significant improvement. He shared the town COVID data and the new CDC measure for community COVID levels. He stated they have been making health and safety decisions based on guidance from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Eastern Highlands Health District. Local Boards of Education were provided decision-making power after February 28, and we now have guidance from those public safety agencies. He shared an updated protocol document.

Based on current guidance, school data, community data, and feedback, Superintendent Stevens recommended the protocol adjustments found in the draft document. The most significant change is making masks optional starting Wednesday, March 9. If masking becomes optional, school staff will support individual choice and will work with students to respect the decisions of other students and staff.

There were some questions from the board regarding the charts Superintendent Stevens shared.

D. Cook wanted to know what the mask rules would be for buses? She also wanted to have masks eliminated when singing. The kids are around each other all day long anyway. And if parents want their child to wear a mask it should not be the teacher's job to reinforce that.

Superintendent Stevens stated that kids do not need to wear masks on the bus. Also that it is important we all respect each other no matter what choice they make regarding the masks. He also stated that it will not be the teacher, staff or schools responsibility to make sure children whose family wants them wearing a mask, to actually wear it and wear it properly.

Chairperson Cunningham reiterated that when a child comes back from having Covid they must wear a mask from days 6-10 in school and on the bus. How will it be handled if someone is not willing to follow this rule?

Superintendent Stevens stated that if a student returns to school from having Covid and will not wear a

mask they will be sent home. They will only be reinforcing masks to those that return to school from having Covid for days 6-10.

H. Arico asked what the food service protocols were or if they were changing? Are there waves in the cafeteria and enough room?

Superintendent Stevens stated that it is staying the same. He is hoping this will change in the future.

Chairperson Cunningham asked for clarification; if an outbreak happens the superintendent decides quickly what to do. But if things are getting better the superintendent comes back to the board with new recommendations?

Superintendent Stevens stated that Chairperson Cunningham is correct. When things get better the board will vote on changes.

H. Arico stated that he was concerned about the health and safety of the students if choosing to have masks optional. Some will wear them and some will not. As part of the physical plant will they continue with the cleaning and ventilation plan?

Superintendent Stevens explained that is correct. They always clean the schools anyways but the ventilation will continue, and hopefully soon the windows can be opened.

A. Grosjean mentioned the music room at Center School is very small and didn't think the children could be 6ft apart. So keeping masks on while singing inside seems like a good idea. But once it's nice outside, maybe they can go outside and sing without masks.

Superintendent Stevens explained that once it's nice outside they encourage the classes to be outside as much as possible. Using the gymnasium is another option as they can spread 6ft apart.

H. Arico asked if visitors have to wear a mask when visiting the schools?

Superintendent Stevens stated it's the same protocol for all, anyone that is in the school.

H. Arico wanted Superintendent Stevens' opinion regarding this protocol. He asked if he felt this protocol would cover their bases unless something happens and he had to intervene?

Superintendent Stevens stated he did. But he also explained the most challenging thing about this pandemic is that there is new information all the time. So as of right now this protocol maintains the health and safety of everyone but also opens up for choice. Looking at the numbers and information given he feels this is the right choice.

H. Arico thought this protocol was well thought out and thanked Superintendent Stevens. Chairperson Cunningham asked for clarification about how and where students will get their masks if there is an outbreak. You would not expect the students to carry a mask daily?

Superintendent Stevens stated they will have disposable surgical masks available.

L. Rodriguez asked how they communicate with other families when they have an outbreak?

Superintendent Stevens explained the principal or nurse would reach out to the families. They will then determine what happens next. The school also has tests for families.

L. Rodriguez needed more clarification of what happens if they have an outbreak in the classroom who has to be masked after exposure?

Superintendent Stevens reminded them to think of days of exposure. Children will not be quarantined because of close contact anymore. So because of that they might have to wear a mask for a few days. This is just a scenario. There has to be conversations with many different people to make this determination.

L. Rodriguez felt this was an incredibly thoughtful plan and appreciated the effort that went into it.

H. Arico asked what are the nurses' roles in this protocol? Will they have to wear a mask in her office?

Superintendent Stevens stated that anyone, including the nurses have to wear a mask in the nurse's office. If they are by themselves they can choose to take their masks off. But when students or staff come in they all will wear a mask. There will be masks at the door for anyone that comes in to wear one. Superintendent Stevens reminded families to be mindful if your child is not feeling well then please keep them home. This goes for staff as well.

Chairperson Cunningham made a motion to accept the protocols as presented.

Donna Cook seconded the motion.

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|----------|----------|---------|
| H. Arico | x | | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D. Cook | x | | |
| T. Anderson | | x | |
| A. Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriguez | x | | |

6 Yes, 1 No Motion passes

Chairperson Cunningham stated that she recognized this was a hard vote and hoped to continue to move in a positive direction.

11. **Present to Speak**

Arthur Christenson, 14 Birch Meadow Lane, wanted to thank the board for making masks optional. He stated the curriculum sounded shocking and wondered if the material was appropriate. Regarding the sports debate if one side outweighs the other four to one its not a fair debate and its obvious here you

are leaning or where you want to students to lean in the debate. He also wanted to state he thought T. Anderson was very rude to D. Cook for jumping to conclusions. He felt she owed her an apology.

Peter Latincsics, 97 Trask Road, wanted to thank H. Arico and D. Cook for raising concern about the curriculum that you regrettably chose to approve anyway. He felt the notion that critical race theory was being infused into the school curriculum was deeply disturbing. He respectfully asked for a copy of the curriculum to be available at the library for review, as he would like to read it.

Peter Tanaka, 125 Mason Road, also agreed he would like a copy of this curriculum at the library for people to review. He thought it was important for the public to know more about the curriculum.

Kiley Fults, 321 Tolland Turnpike, wanted to know if the board of education was attending curriculum meetings. She felt these questions that were discussed tonight should be discussed at the curriculum meetings before discussing at a board of education meeting.

Katherine Kenyon, 16 Mason Road, wanted to discuss the subject of the curriculum. As a parent of two children at Center School she said that she talks with her children about perspectives and points of view. Her impression was that the curriculum professionals were trying to do the same.

Jenna Mitchell, 64 Timberlane, wanted to express her concern with all the professional development days and the impact they have with childcare. She is hoping after school programs can return for those days or new programs be implemented or have less professional development days.

12. Board Comment

A. Grosjean wanted to thank Joan the secretary at Center School, who has been with them for 32 years. She wanted to wish her a wonderful retirement. She also said goodbye to Jen and Mary. And welcome to Brittany. She also stated she liked the idea of an after school program and maybe they can reintroduce one, which would be wonderful for students everyday after school or for those early closing days.

H. Arico wanted to thank the staff, those retiring and those coming into new positions. He reiterated that 32 year is a long time to be in one position. He thanked the Superintendent for his work on the protocols and how thorough it was. He thanked the people that spoke tonight in the present to speak. He thinks it is important to hear from the people in town and it's very informative. Every board member listens and reads their letters.

B. Ross wanted to congratulate Mr. Phillips and the musicians. She believes the program and musicians are fantastic. She was happy they were able to have the opportunity to participate in the Eastern Regionals music festival and gather with people again. She wanted to encourage families and community members to respect and support each other as they go through the changes of the mask requirements. She stated it might feel a little bit odd rather than celebratory and that is okay. Together they will support one another and be respectful.

L. Rodriguez wanted to thank everyone who wrote letters, spoke up and are engaged in our community. She feels that is so important. She wanted to congratulate the choral students and Mr. Phillips on Eastern Regionals. She remembered it being such an exciting time when she was at Hall. She taught with Jen Edgerton her last four years when she was teaching both 7th and 8th grade and she wishes her well. She understands wanting to be closer to home. Also wishing Joan retirement, 32 years. She was just talking to

Joan when she went into Center School to read for "Read Across America." She had a blast and had so much fun. It was her first time in elementary school since the fall of 2019. She wished everybody well and reiterated what Briana said that it may feel very uncomfortable for some people with the changes. And as Briana said we will get through it together.

T. Anderson congratulated Joan on her retirement and Jen and the others that are leaving. She wished them all well.

D. Cook wanted to specifically thank Phil Stevens for being aware and locking the fuel prices when he did. The other thing she felt would be a really cool idea would be to have anyone that knows Joan to send her a note or card. She felt anyone that knows Joan knows what an amazing lady she is. So showering her with cards or notes and wishing her a happy retirement or a thank you would be wonderful.

Chairperson Cunningham noted that Joan's retirement date is May 1, 2022 so anyone sending notes or cards should be sure they get to Center School before May. One thing she wanted to clear up was they are not teaching critical race theory in their schools. This has been discussed and made clear at other meetings many times. They teach critical thinking, which is essential in any education system. They want the children to know how to make a decision. That is an essential skill. She wanted to thank everyone for their comments and fellow board members and for them reading so many pages of the curriculum.

13. Adjournment

Donna Cook made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:07p.m.

Laura Rodriquez seconded the motion.

| Vote: | Yes | No | Abstain |
|---------------|-----|----|---------|
| H. Arico | x | | |
| M. Cunningham | x | | |
| D.Cook | x | | |
| T. Anderson | x | | |
| A.Grosjean | x | | |
| B. Ross | x | | |
| L. Rodriquez | x | | |

Motion passes

Next regular meeting April 12, 2022

Nicole Fusco
Recording Secretary

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