

**MINUTES OF CHESHIRE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING
HELD IN TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2024 AT 7:30 PM**

Board Members Present: Samantha Rosenberg, Chair; Anne Harrigan, Vice Chair; Adam Grippo, Secretary; Mark Ecke; Timothy White

Board Members Absent: Anne Marie Cullinan, Anthony Perugini

Administrators Present: Jeffrey F. Solan, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools; Marlene Silano, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Mary Jocelyn-Gadd, Principal, Cheshire High School; Amy O'Brien, Principal, Doolittle School; Kristin Lopa, Assistant Principal, Doolittle School; Kevin Hanlon, K-8 Curriculum Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER – 7:30 P.M.

A. Roll for Quorum. The roll was called, and a quorum determined.

B. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Ms. Rosenberg led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Student Representatives. Malakhi Beyah and Lydia Ghaly will be student representatives for the 2024/2025 school year. Dr. Gadd introduced Lydia Ghaly, to the Board of Education. Malakhi Beyah was not able to attend this meeting. Dr. Gadd said Lydia is an outstanding student who maintains an impressive 4.46 GPA, and she is a dedicated leader, serving as captain of the Girls Cross Country team, vice president of the National Honor Society, and president of Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). Beyond leadership, Lydia is deeply involved in a variety of activities, including Honors Choir, CHS Drama, Mock Trial, and Unified Theater - if you have not had the opportunity to see Lydia on the stage, you must come to our drama productions - her talents know no bounds! Lydia's commitment to her peers shines through her mentorship in Unified Music and Unified Science. Additionally, she is incredibly kind and poised. Lydia's academic ambitions include pursuing a biology-related major with a minor in Spanish, with plans to follow a pre-med track toward becoming a doctor. Lydia's dedication, perseverance, talent, and genuine curiosity will ensure she will achieve her goals. Her work ethic, leadership, and passion make her an excellent choice to represent CHS as a Board of Education student representative.

Lydia gave her first report to the Board on recent events including sports, a student book club, and the Club and Activities Fair. Board members welcomed Lydia.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. 2024-2025 Teacher of the Year

Dr. Solan asked Doolittle Principal, Amy O'Brien to introduce Christine DiOrion, the 2024-2025 Teacher of the Year. Ms. O'Brien said Christine has been a model for both teachers and students. One of her strengths is the relationship she builds

with her students, parents and teachers. The Board congratulated Ms. DiOrio on her award.

B. 2024-2025 Paraeducator of the Year

Cheshire High School Principal, Mary Gadd said The Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year Award has been established by the CT State Department of Education and the School Paraprofessional Advisory Council to recognize the important role of the paraeducator in supporting student achievement. This award honors a paraeducator who demonstrates exceptional skill and dedication in the performance of his or her job. She introduced Cheshire's Paraeducator of the Year, Elizabeth Crawford. The Board congratulated Ms. Crawford on her award.

3. AUDIENCE

None.

4. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

A. CURRICULUM

I. Report on Meeting Held September 9, 2024.

In Ms. Cullinan's absence, Dr. Harrigan reported that at the meeting, Marlene Silano presented an overview of the Cheshire Curriculum Council (CCC) process including how that process leads to textbook adoption. Every administrator is paired with curricular teacher leaders for a content area to conduct a five-year full curriculum review. During the review, the committee considers standards, text resources, technology resources, instructional strategies, assessment, and professional development. Social Studies will begin their five-year self-study this school year for the final presentation in the spring of 2026.

Ms. Silano shared Cheshire's state testing results including the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA: grades 3-8), Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSS: grades 5, 8, and 11), and the Scholastic Aptitude Test - School Day (SAT: grade 11). The conclusions to the results indicate overall health of student performance in the district. Grades 3-8 show consistent achievement on SBA including the highlights of having 60% of students above goal in grade 6 math and having the ninth overall highest achievement in Connecticut. There has also been a consistent increase in NGSS achievement. Plans developed through the Cheshire Curriculum Council process led to improved success in ELA on the SAT. Those plans made through the curriculum review process this year give us a roadmap to success.

They discussed the status and the Right to Read Waiver and Ms. Silano shared highlights of this year's Curriculum Writing Institute. The Committee also reviewed Out-of-State Overnight Field Trips.

After the Committee report, Ms. Silano gave a presentation detailing the results of the state tests (on file). A detailed discussion ensued regarding curriculum, data and test scores.

B. FINANCE

I. Finance Report

In Mr. Masciana's absence, Dr. Solan gave the Finance Report noting that at this time, we have limited expenditures to 50% on the discretionary funds. We have not encumbered the full year of transportation or salaries. Therefore, the number looks a little bit lower than reality. We will have that number at the first business meeting in October when you will get a clearer picture of finances.

II. Medical Benefits Update

Dr. Solan reported the August claims were better than the July claims, but they still are a bit higher than our target. There is currently a 1.53 months in the reserve account.

C. OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES

None.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Board of Education Meetings Held September 5, 2024.

B. Joint Meeting of BOE & NGSBC Held September 12, 2024

MOTION by Dr. Harrigan and seconded by Mr. Ecke.

MOVED that the Cheshire Board of Education approve the Minutes from the meetings held on September 5, 2024 and the Joint Meeting with the NGSBC held on September 12, 2024.

VOTE: The Motion passed unanimously by those present.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Solan reported that the STEM robotics program is underway. Cheshire High School Science Department Chair and students are preparing for a trip to South Korea in

November. In addition, we have two guest teachers visiting from South Korea, housed at Highland School. Doolittle Best Buddies Chapter was recognized as an outstanding Best Buddies chapter nationally this summer. Regarding Right to Read, they had a very productive meeting with the State DOE. He commended Ms. Silano, Kevin Hanlon, and our Reading Specialist, Patricia Castle. Dr. Solan said he was also on a lengthy call with the Department of Administrative Services reviewing the plans for the North End School. He reported that everything went well on that call and construction should begin in December. The Superintendent said he is excited to announce that he is going to host a panel conversation about The Anxious Generation at Cheshire High School in the Thorpe Auditorium on October 29 at 7 pm. Our panelists will include Dr. Penny Leising, a clinical psychologist who teaches at Quinnipiac, Dr. Allison, Beitel a pediatrician who lives in town, Anne Marie Wintenberg, and Kristen Shanley, both former Cheshire Public Schools Teachers of the Year, and Doug Levens, the Executive Director of the Cheshire YMCA.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Chairperson's Update**

Ms. Rosenberg reported on the upcoming meetings and reminded Board members to register for the CABA Convention if they are interested in attending.

10. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Dr. Harrigan, and seconded by Mr. Grippo, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Rosenberg, Board Chair

Attest:

Carol K. Jesensky, Board of Education Clerk

Filed at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, Cheshire: 10/16/2024.