

Board of Education Minutes
August 26, 2020
Special Meeting

DRAFT

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. in the North Stonington Education Center Media Center and via ZOOM meeting platform meeting ID 810 3141 2515. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mr. McCord, Mrs. Mastroianni (via ZOOM), Dr. Potemri (6:32 p.m. via ZOOM), and Mr. Mendolia. Also present were Mr. Nero and Mrs. Martin. Mrs. Costa, Mrs. Wilkison, Mrs. St. Germain, and Mrs. Reyes participated via ZOOM. Chairperson Wagner called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Administrators' Reports – Mrs. Wilkison said they have been feverishly getting ready for the start of school. The office was just moved this week. They are working on getting the children in safely. The signage is in and she explained. She had a lot of people to thank-Mrs. Gonzalez has been here all summer trying to get ready for the move as well as working on who is doing distance learning, etc.; Jim Palmer and Guy Boucher who have done more than anyone could expect; Gabe Bryant has been amazing doing what he can do with tech as well as Greg Pont.; and Larry Murphy and the other custodians that have been coming over to help. She thanked the nurses, Astrid Williams and Jessica Kessler, for preparing their teachers in the health and safety procedures and answering questions during their meetings. Mrs. Wilkison said they have had professional development and she reviewed what they have gone over. The Growth Mindset was amazing and she explained. She thanked Deanna Scanapieco, Terry Gabriel, April Christensen, and Kim Haggerty. Courtney Caswell and Carly Barozi did a workshop on Google Classroom with more instruction on that tomorrow. She said many teachers said that was the best professional development they have attended. Part of the planning is to be teaching in-person as well as remote at the same time. She said there will be more obstacles doing it this way. She thanked all the teachers in the district. Mrs. Wilkison said they have 10 children doing homeschool and 62 doing distance learning. She said they are doing their very best. Mrs. Wilkison said they are looking forward to it and just trying to do our best. Mrs. Wagner thanked her and said they appreciate all the hard work. Mrs. St. Germain wanted to echo and reiterate what Mrs. Wilkison said about thanking people; everyone is stepping up and helping. She said they are doing the same professional development as the elementary school. She also commented on the Growth Mindset. She said they are working hard to support their staff; it is going to be a humongous learning curve for everyone. Mrs. St. Germain is thankful for the time with the kids. She said teachers at the elementary school and her building have really listened to the survey results. She elaborated on the Google Classroom professional development. She thanked the Board for the extended days for professional development. She spoke of how the staff is using Google. She said the pulse of the staff has been outstanding. She is grateful for the shortened days next week so the

teachers can continue to learn. Mrs. St. Germain said they have a group of about 10 students that came in to record videos for the students. She is grateful to all the leaders that helped pull this together. They have 31 students on the full distance learning. She said we might be exhausted and tired but they can't wait to see the students. Mrs. Costa gave an update on preschool. They had two zoom meetings with parents. She said orientation is Monday and Tuesday and they will start on Thursday. Her staff has been working very hard. Mr. Karpinski asked if we had any Preston students coming in and Mr. Nero said none this year. He also asked about distance learning students and extra-curricular activities and if we do have them would they would be allowed to participate. Ms. Welborn said Bacon is trying virtual clubs and wanted to pass along that information. Mrs. St. Germain said they are taking it slow and see where it all takes us. She said they are dealing with sports right now and she elaborated. Mr. McCord asked about recess and physical education. Mrs. Wilkison said each grade level will go out on their own unless it was a group using the Pre-K playground. Each grade would be playing in their own area. Megan Perkins is working on equipment so each group would have their own. She elaborated. She explained the kids would be getting a lot of instruction on how to be healthy and safe. Mrs. St. Germain said there is no department that has been the most flexible than physical education given the past few years. Mr. McCord asked about fall sports. Mrs. St. Germain said as of Wednesday, August 26th, they are having sports. She elaborated and explained that is the plan until they are told something differently. Further questions were asked and answered regarding sports. Mrs. St. Germain said we have the PixaLot cameras but it is all going to be about where the numbers are and the CIAC guidelines. Mr. Mendolia wanted to commend everyone for putting it all together. He commented that we work so great as a team down to Mr. Boucher and Mr. Bryant and we get it done to start on time and not push back. Dr. Potemri thanked everyone for all the work they have been doing. She really appreciates it. Mrs. Mastroianni echoed what Dr. Potemri said and thanked everyone for the incredible job. Mrs. Wagner said they have been doing a great job and school is the place to be for the students.

5. Old Business – a. Technology Update – Mr. Bryant said laptops are prepped and ready to go. Chromebooks are back-ordered and they are looking at mid to late October. Questions were asked and answered. The laptops will be given out on Thursday and Friday. There was discussion. They will see after the deployment where the numbers stand. There was further comment and questions. Questions were asked about businesses donating laptops. There was discussion. Mr. Bryant said he is always talking to our rep. Dr. Potemri said she has some extra laptops she may be willing to donate if Mr. Bryant finds out a family needs multiple devices. Dr. Potemri said she has about 10 she can donate that are new in the box.

6. New Business – a. North Stonington Elementary School Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – The ceremony is Sunday at 3:00 p.m. Dr. Potemri said it is in-person with a tent and chairs that are socially distanced apart. There are also areas people can stand and distance. They will also stream it live. Dr. Potemri said they feel it's important to give it recognition. Mr. Nero asked if Dr. Potemri had time to go over the logistics on Friday. Mr. Nero double-checked on the closeout of the program. Dr. Potemri explained the state needs to go through the change orders and elaborated. She will keep everyone in the loop. Mr. Nero said it is with the State now. He said we met last Friday

and will meet again this Friday. He said Downes and the architect are working with the state to get it done. There was discussion.

b. Release of Space to Town – Mr. Nero passed information out to the Board. Mr. Nero said over a period of time the property at 298 will be turned over to the town. Mr. Nero explained the section to be turned over. Mrs. Wagner asked about the high school building and Mr. Nero had comment. Mr. Urgo had comment. He said with COVID and the elementary not being moved out sooner everyone is getting their bearings about how to properly bring the building back over to the Town; this is the immediate way by statute in order for them to entertain a lease. Mr. Nero explained the resolution. Mrs. Wagner read the resolution: Pursuant to CGS Section 10-239, the Board of Education hereby moved to permit the Town of North Stonington to lease a portion of the former middle school, shown on Exhibit “A” attached, for nonprofit educational purposes. This resolution excludes the three areas used for district technology. Mr. Karpinski made that motion that was seconded by Ms. Welborn. Questions were asked and answered. Mrs. Wagner said it is really exciting that someone is already interested in the space. She spoke of the unexpected PCB issue at the elementary school and how we have clean buildings now. The motion passed unanimously.

7. School Re-Opening Task Force Update – Mrs. Wagner wanted this on the agenda to touch on the opening and she felt we did that with the administrators’ reports. The hybrid plan is in place and distance learning is in place. While we are working out the kinks on the hybrid, we need to think of what a full opening will look like. She said if we are in the same place 4-5 weeks from now we would need to look at full reopening. Mrs. Wagner said students need to be in school.

8. Student Success - The committee will meet before the next meeting.

9. Community Relations – Mrs. Mastroianni said with all the COVID business we haven’t had a chance to meet but we should meet soon. Mrs. Wagner said the web site has a lot of great information on it. She wondered if there was going to be a parent Google tutorial and she was told yes.

10. Facilities and Finance – Mrs. Wagner asked Mrs. Martin to give an update on the grants. Mrs. Martin said we are getting \$37,473 from the CARES act. The non-public amount for the grant is \$2,058.96; our amount is \$35,414. Recently we heard that we are receiving \$50, 254 out of the \$296,548 of Coronavirus Relief Funds we applied for. Mrs. Martin said this did not include a personnel package. She said this doesn’t include technology because of our free and reduced price numbers and said this is basically for the PPE. Questions were asked and answered about other districts. Mr. Nero had comment. Mrs. Martin answered further questions. She explained that we will be serving lunches to those that qualify and those that want to buy lunch. Further questions were asked and answered. Mr. Nero answered questions about per diem staffing. Mrs. Martin answered further questions on free and reduced price lunches. Mrs. Martin said there is \$128,565.55 for the non-lapsing account after the last check run. She answered questions. On a motion from Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted

unanimously to accept the June 2020, Financial Statements. On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. McCord, the Board voted unanimously to accept the July 2020, Financial Statements.

11. Policy – There was discussion. Ms. Welborn made a motion that was seconded by Mr. McCord to accept the revisions to Policy 5114. Mr. Nero read the change to the policy due to legislation. He had comment. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Public Comment –None.

13. Proposed for Executive Session – On a motion by Mr. McCord, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:24 p.m. for the Purpose of Contract Negotiations. Mrs. Mastroianni left the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:11p.m.

14. Memorandum of Agreement with NSEA – Ms. Welborn made a motion that was seconded by Mr. McCord to accept the Memorandum of Agreement between the North Stonington Board of Education and the North Stonington Education Association. Questions were asked and answered. The motion passed unanimously.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Mendolia, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education