

Board of Education Minutes
Special Meeting
April 13, 2022

DRAFT

A special meeting of the North Stonington Board of Education was held on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. using the hybrid format with those attending virtually via Zoom meeting platform meeting ID 884 7917 5656. Present were Mrs. Wagner, Mr. Karpinski, Ms. Welborn, Mrs. Mazzella, Dr. Towle-Weicksel, Mrs. Mastroianni (via Zoom) and Mr. Stefanowicz. Also present were Mr. Nero, Mrs. Martin, Mrs. St. Germain, Mrs. Reyes, Mr. Cillino, and Ms. Mullane. Chairperson Wagner called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Public Comment on Agenda Items with Students Speaking First – None.
4. Presentations - a. Naming of Scoreboard Shed – This will be covered at the next meeting.

b. Give Back Club Trip Review – Rebecca Schilke, teacher and club advisor, gave her club background. She wanted to give a follow-up to their trip. She thanked Mr. Nero, the Board and the administrators for their support of all the Give Back Club’s trips. They were in Augusta Maine for their last trip; they were at the Travis Mills Foundation. She gave Travis Mills’ background and explained he is a quadruple amputee who started a foundation to support amputees and their families. The club helped serve breakfast for over 300 Vietnam Veterans. She said the schedule changed and they were able to also help at a food bank. She elaborated. Zoe Mayhew, student, explained their timetable and what was involved in setting up and getting the breakfast ready. She explained the process of greeting the veterans and seating them for breakfast. Miss Mayhew said the trip was life-changing for her. Mrs. Schilke had comment. She said the sincerity our kids have and the desire to help is amazing. We have incredibly hard-working kids at Wheeler. She said people pulled her aside and complemented our students. She elaborated. Mrs. Schilke said they have an invitation to go back this summer and also for next year’s veterans’ breakfast. She thanked the Board again for the opportunity. Mrs. St. Germain complemented Miss Mayhew. Mr. Nero had comment. Mrs. Mazzella thanked Mrs. Schilke for providing these opportunities for the students and she also thanked Miss Mayhew and her classmates. Mrs. Wagner said the best part of being on the Board is these presentations.
5. Administrators’ Reports – Mrs. St. Germain said the end of the year madness is upon them. They have been celebrating our students and she listed the students. They have a lot more things coming up and a lot to be proud of. Mrs. Reyes said once graduation is approved, they will be scheduling end-of-the-year activities. She listed some of the upcoming activities. College night was held and she explained. She said recruiters have been coming in. There are a lot of opportunities for students. Mrs. Reyes said the Career Fair was held at Mohegan Sun and she explained. Spring sports have started and she listed the sports. Mrs. St. Germain said the drama production is May 6th, 7th, and 8th. She explained this is student-driven and she elaborated. The juniors are halfway through

their pipefitting course at the Westerly Education Center and she elaborated. On May 20th they will be taking some students to explore the Westerly Education Center and she elaborated. This connection with the education center helps us to foster great relationships. Mrs. Reyes said the Adventure Club is back at it and told of some of the activities they have been doing. RISE has taken two trips. The counseling department has now met with all the students regarding their schedules. Mrs. St. Germain said we have awarded the Seal of BiLiteracy to three students and had further comment. She listed the students and had further comment. Mrs. St. Germain congratulated Robbie McCarthy on being named Distinguished Alumni of the Year for Wheeler High School. She said the portal is open for nominations for next year. She said Google has really helped with the students and she explained. Questions were asked and answered about a senior trip. Mrs. Wagner thanked them. Ms. Mullane told the Board that Google Classroom has been a real help to the special education students. Our teachers and paraprofessionals are doing outstanding work with these students. Mr. Cillino said they have had “normal” things happening at their school. The Wizard of Oz was performed and he thanked Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Noonan for all of their work. He said there were so many people involved. The third grade did their presentation with Carol Glenn which consisted of three separate plays and he elaborated. They have some field trips coming up and he explained. The art show is next month as well as the band concert. He said it is especially nice to be able to do these things again. The Day of Awesomeness is tomorrow sponsored by the PTO. He thanked Dawn Goralowicz of the PTO. They are getting ready for the Smarter Balance Testing. Mr. Cillino explained the grade levels and the schedules involved. It is computer-generated. The fifth graders take the NSGS science test. The Report Card Committee has been meeting and they hope to complete it over the summer to have in place for next year. The new writing program is being worked on. He thanked the paras and teachers in their buildings. Each para and teacher steps up no matter what is needed; they are dedicated to the students. Mrs. Wagner thanked them. She said she tried to share their presentation at the hearing. Board members had comment. Mrs. Wagner thanked them.

6. Administrative – a. Approval of Minutes – January 3, 2022 Special Meeting – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mrs. Mazzella, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the January 3, 2022, special meeting.

February 9, 2022 – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mrs. Mazzella, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the February 9, 2022, meeting as amended to change Ms. Welborn’s vote to abstaining from the mask vote.

February 23, 2022 – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mrs. Mazzella, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the February 23, 2022, meeting.

March 2, 2022, Special Meeting – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mrs. Mazzella, the Board voted six in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the March 2, 2022, special meeting. Mr. Stefanowicz abstained.

March 9, 2022 – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mrs. Mazzella, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the March 9, 2022, meeting.

March 21, 2022 Special Meeting – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz, the Board voted six in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the March 21, 2022, special meeting. Mrs. Mazzella abstained.

March 23, 2022 – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz, the Board voted six in favor and one abstention to accept the minutes of the March 23, 2022, meeting. Mrs. Mazzella abstained.

March 30, 2022, Special Meeting – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz, the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the March 30, 2022, special meeting.

b. Correspondence – Mr. Nero said we received a resignation from Austin Menta and he explained. He will be leaving April 29th. A student teacher will be filling in until the end of the year. Mr. Nero read a letter from Linda Coats retiring from her position as kindergarten teacher. Mr. Nero read a letter from Michael Noonan retiring from his position as music teacher at the elementary school. Mr. Nero had further comment.

c. Personnel - Mr. Nero said we have posted the kindergarten position and it has been filled internally. He explained how the internal “shuffle” works sometimes. Board members had comment. Mr. Nero had further comment. Mrs. Wagner commended Mr. Noonan and Mrs. Coats and wished them well in their next venture.

7. Reports - a. Superintendent – Mr. Nero explained the incident that happened today; we sheltered in place. He said this is one instance where Face Book and social media really helped us out because parents were aware it was not something happening within our buildings. He elaborated and explained the situation. Mr. Nero said the North Stonington Education Foundation’s NoSto Unleashed was a sold-out event. It was a wonderful evening. He said Robbie McCarthy was honored as the Distinguished Alumni and he elaborated. He said tomorrow is the PTO’s Day of Awesomeness. The Teacher Evaluation Committee met yesterday and a survey will be going out to the staff. They are looking to do a couple of days of professional development on this after school is out. Mr. Nero said they met with two vendors today regarding the fence and he elaborated. Unfortunately they couldn’t meet with the second vendor today due to the shelter in place. Two policies will be sent to Ms. Welborn. The first is on Narcan and he elaborated. He explained what happened in another Connecticut district. The second is a policy on advanced placement courses and he explained. He said this policy is going through legal right now at CABE and he explained. Questions were asked and answered regarding AP courses. Mrs. St. Germain had comment. Mrs. Martin said the parents can reach out if they qualify for free and reduced lunch in order to get relief from the testing fees. There is also the Clark Fund and she explained.

b. BOE Chairperson – Mrs. Wagner said we are in budget season and we are getting ready to look at the secretaries’ contract. The posting has gone out for the administrative assistant position.

c. Committee Chairs – Mrs. Mazzella said she attended the restorative practices workshop. She explained what she took away from the day and gave examples. She had further comment. Questions were asked and answered. Mrs. St. Germain had comment and explanation. Mr. Stefanowicz attended the elementary session. He

explained what he got out of the presentation and gave some examples. He had further comment. It was a positive experience and he was glad he attended. Mrs. Wagner thanked them for attending.

d. LEARN Board of Directors – None. Mr. Mendolia has tried to attend when he is available.

8. Old Business – a. 2022-2023 Proposed Education Budget – Mrs. Wagner said the Board of Finance is meeting at 7:00 p.m. She doesn't anticipate any changes. She spoke to Paul Simonds and said they are comfortable with the budget. She said we are moving in the right direction with backstop installation.

1. 9. New Business – a. Healthy Foods Certification – Mrs. Wagner said we do this every year. Mrs. Martin has further explanation. Ms. Welborn made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Karpinski the Board voted unanimously that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, that the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

On a motion by Ms. Welborn, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously that the board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food sales.

On a motion by Ms. Welborn, seconded by Mr. Karpinski, the Board voted unanimously that the board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the beverage sale.

b. Graduation Date – Mr. Nero said barring anything else, the last day of school is June 10th and will be graduation as well. There was discussion. On a motion by Dr. Towle-Weicksel, seconded by Ms. Welborn, the Board voted unanimously to set the graduation date as June 10th.

10. Calendar – There is a workshop on April 30th at 8:00 a.m. and a meeting on April 27th. Committees will get together in May. There was discussion.

11. Public Comment – None.

12. Proposed for Executive Session – a. Discussion of Business Manager Position – On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Mr. Stefanowicz, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 6:47 p.m. and to invite Mrs. Martin into such session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:04 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Karpinski, seconded by Dr. Towle-Weicksel, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta T. McCarthy, Secretary to
The Board of Education