



**COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Colchester, CT**

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**Tuesday, October 24, 2023**

**6:00 PM**

**The Commons (Black Box Theater)**  
**William J. Johnston Middle School**  
**360 Norwich Avenue, Colchester**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice Chair Mary Tomasi, Secretary Margo Gignac, Donna Antonacci, Rosemary Gignac, Michelle Millington, Christopher Rivers

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:** Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Jessica L. Kuckel, Principal of Colchester Elementary School Judy O'Meara, Assistant Principal of Colchester Elementary School Meghan Amado

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Business Director Rachel Linkkila, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk Heather Petit, Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson

**1. MEETING OPENING**

**1.1 Call to Order**

Chair Alexander Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

**1.2 Roll Call**

Chair Alexander Oliphant conducted a roll call of the Board.

**1.3 Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

**2.1 Colchester Elementary School Stars of Honor**

Principal of Colchester Elementary School (CES) Judy O'Meara and Assistant Principal of Meghan Amado, recognized the scholastic achievement of CES Stars of Honors in Grades K-2. Ms. Aamdo said the students were also recognized at the October 14, 2023 UConn Men's Soccer game. The following students were recognized:

Kindergarten Stars of Honor: Carleigh DiFronzo-Hayes, Salem Singletary, Aashi Patel, Levi Trant, Vincent Capodicci, Sylvia Pastuszak, Andrew McGlynn, Theodore Ryan, Greyson Gianini

Grade 1 Stars of Honor: Jeremias Bermudez-Garces, Brooks Naples, Madisyn Faski, Remi Kent, Nadine Badu, Adelynn Lumadue, Florence Morse, Brigham Bell, Bonnie Oddis

Grade 2 Stars of Honor: McKinley Petersen, Karter Uzialko, Finn Stahl, Garrett Kerrigan, Oliver De Leon Nadeau, Porter Winters, Carson Reid, Henry Szczur, Skylar Bigelow, Lucas Payne, Lorenzo Christy, Emma Kennedy

### **3. STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS REPORT**

#### **3.1 Student Board Member Report**

Brooke Dean gave the student board member report. Ms. Dean said Bacon Academy held their homecoming dance this past weekend. Prior to the dance, Bacon Academy had spirit week and afterward the homecoming football game. Ms. Dean said that there will be an upcoming event, Powder Puff, where junior and senior girls will play under the lights at Cougar Field, playing flag football coached by the football team. Ms. Dean reported that for Breast Cancer Awareness, Interact is hosting “manis for a cure” where students can get their nails done for a donation of five dollars.

Ms. Dean said that William J. Johnston Middle School held their annual book fair on Monday. At JJIS Jack-to-Lantern is being hosted by the PTO from 6:00-8:00 PM on Wednesday, October 25, 2023.

Ms. Dean said the biggest concern is getting the football fields back together.

### **4. \*ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**

#### **4.1 New Agenda Items**

None.

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

#### **5.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct**

None.

### **6. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT**

#### **6.1 Update from the Superintendent**

Superintendent Sullivan gave an update on safety staff. Mr. Sullivan stated that the District is fully staffed with a School Safety Officer (SSO) at each school. In addition the District has a substitute SSO to help cover if anyone is out. Mr. Sullivan stated there will be training this week and also on election day for the SSOs. Superintendent Sullivan reported that the school safety plan has been submitted to the state and a flip chart on school emergencies is in process of being completed and will be distributed to staff throughout the schools.

Mr. Sullivan said that he is working with Business Director, Rachel Linkkila, on the HVAC grant submission to address the HVAC needs at Bacon Academy.

Superintendent Sullivan discussed the new state law on kindergarten start age. Mr. Sullivan stated that the state Department of Education is working on guidance for districts in regard to the new start date.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the district is currently working on the 2024-2025 budget and each school/department will submit their budgets in Excel by Thanksgiving to the Superintendent and Business Director. Mr. Sullivan stated that he will be meeting with newly elected Board members and others on the budget process.

Superintendent Sullivan stated that the Pride and Purpose committees have begun to meet. Mr. Sullivan stated that if people are still interested in being involved with a committee, they can email him and he will let the committee chairs know of their interest.

**7. \*CONSENT AGENDA**

- 7.1 \*Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes of September 26, 2023
- 7.2 \*WJJMS Grade 8 Band/Chorus Field Trip to Broadway in NY
- 7.3 \*WJJMS Grade 8 Band/Chorus Field Trip to Six Flags in Agawam, MA
- 7.4 \*BA Band Field Trip to Symphony Hall in Boston, MA
- 7.5 \*BA Choir Field Trip to Broadway in NY

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To approve the consent agenda as presented.

**Second:** R.Gignac

**Roll call:** All in favor.

**Vote:** Motion carried.

**8. POLICIES – FIRST READ**

- 8.1 9110 Oath of Office
- 8.2 9325 Meeting Conduct
- 8.3 9326 Minutes/Taping/Broadcasting

Donna Antonacci discussed the first read of policies 9110, 9325, and 9326. Ms. Antonacci stated that 9110 Oath of Office is an update from Shipman & Goodwin and the Committee added language as well that Oath of Office would be per charter to cover any future charter changes. Ms. Antonacci stated that policy 9325 is recommended for removal. Ms. Antonacci stated that policy 9326 Minutes is an update from Shipman & Goodwin which has language regarding electronic meetings. Discussion was had on the 9326 and recommendation was to change the word “reduced” in writing to “summarized” in writing.

**9. \*POLICIES - SECOND READ**

- 9.1 \*1180 Memorials to Deceased Students and Staff

Ms. Antonacci stated that the Committee had discussion on policy 1180 given feedback received from Shipman & Goodwin. Superintendent Sullivan recommended that any memorial the District may do be a dedicated space at each school for individuals that have passed away during their time at the school.

Discussion was had in regard to a fundraising activity at Bacon to purchase bricks. Mr. Sullivan stated that if the Pride and Purpose Facilities Committee brought that

recommendation forward it would have to be approved by the Board prior to implementing.

**Motion by:** D.Antonacci

To approve policies 1180

**Second:** M.Tomasi

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried.

## 9.2 \*9250 Remuneration

**Motion by:** D.Antonacci

To approve policy 9250

**Second:** A. Oliphant

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried

## **10. REPORTS FROM BOARD LIAISONS / COMMITTEES**

### 10.1 Reports from Board Liaisons

- Board of Selectmen: Donna Antonacci  
Ms. Antonacci stated there will be a town meeting in regard to the senior center as well as a town meeting this Thursday for a tax exemption for Colchester firefighters. Mr. Bisbikos and Mr. LaChappelle gave thanks to Dr. Charles Hewes for his service to Colchester Public Schools.
- Board of Finance: Christopher Rivers  
Mr. Rivers reiterated the town meeting and subsequent referendum on the senior center. Mr. Rivers stated that the audit from last year is still being finalized and that the audit for this past year has already started. Mr. Rivers stated that Rachel has been assisting the town to help close out the WJJMS bonding which should result in a significant reimbursement to the town.

Mr. Rivers spoke to the July and August monthly financial reports. Mr. Rivers stated that the significant change in the salary line used from July to August is due to the majority of staff salaries first hitting the budget in August which are then encumbered for the fiscal year.

Mr. Rivers presented transparency software that he created to track monthly Board expenditures. Mr. Rivers said that he has heard many community members speak of wanting more transparency. He said that companies offer this service often at a significant cost; however, he was able to build one at no cost using open source statistical software R/R Studio). Mr. Rivers presented the transparency software and asked the Board to review it and let him know any questions or changes they would like to see. Mr. Rivers stated that he would volunteer time to train the Board of Education finance office to support its use.

Michelle Millington thanked Mr. Rivers for building the software for the Board. Ms. Millington stated that this will be easier for many to review where money is being spent.

- P&R Commission: Margo Gignac  
None.
- PTO Collaborative: Margo Gignac  
None.
- C3 Collaborative: Rosemary Gignac  
Ms. Gignac said that at the last meeting the collaborative discussed budget items and a grant they will be submitting.
- Commission on Aging: Mary Tomasi  
None.
- Youth & Social Services: Michelle Millington  
Ms. Millington stated that Youth & Social Services put a presentation online about child anxiety which is a great resource.

10.2 Reports from Board Committees

- Budget Finance Committee  
Report given during liaison report.
- Policy Committee  
No further report.
- Curriculum Committee  
None.
- Facilities Committee  
Mr. Rivers stated that the committee may work on an updated Capital Improvement Plan depending on what the Pride and Purpose Facilities recommends moving forward.

**11. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION ITEMS**

11.1 Next Meetings

- Budget Finance Committee Meeting: Wednesday, November 1 2023
- BOE Regular Meeting: Tuesday, November 14, 2023

11.2 October 1, 2023 Enrollment

The enrollment was 2,161 for October 1.

11.3 Personnel Report

Informational only; attachment in Board packet.

11.3 Notices of Retirement/Resignation

- Valerie Stanton
- Erin Hermann
- Gregg Shalor

## **12. PUBLIC COMMENT**

12.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

Mr. Sullivan asked that the Board add two topics for executive session; a legal matter and a personnel matter.

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To add two items to executive session including a legal matter (13.2) and a personnel matter (13.3).

**Second:** M.Millington

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried.

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To recess for two minutes.

**Second:** D.Antonacci

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried.

## **13. \*EXECUTIVE SESSION**

13.1 \*Discussion on the Colchester Association of School Administrators Contract for 2024-2027 (proposed for Executive Session)

13.2 \*Discussion on a legal matter (added to the agenda; proposed for executive session)

13.3 \*Discussion on a personnel matter (added to the agenda; proposed for executive session)

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To move into executive session at 7:01 PM for discussion regarding the Colchester Association of School Administrators contract, a legal matter and a personnel matter; inviting in Superintendent Daniel Sullivan and Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara for portions of the session.

**Second:** M.Millington

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried

The Board returned to public session at 7:27 PM.

## **14. \*POSSIBLE ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

14.1 \*Colchester Association of School Administrators Contract for 2024-2027

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To approve the Colchester Association of School Administrators contract for 2024-2027

**Second:** C.Rivers

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried

**15. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by:** M.Gignac

To adjourn the meeting at 7:28 PM

**Second:** D.Antonacci

**Roll call:** All in favor

**Vote:** Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather R. Petit

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk