

The Board of Education

Town of Brooklyn
119 Gorman Road
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Mae Lyons, Board Chair
Keith Atchinson, Secretary
Tana Jolley

Melissa Perkins-Banas, Vice-Chair
Justin Phaiah
Carolyn Hackbarth

Mission: The Brooklyn Schools will foster a drive for learning within each student to reach his/her greatest potential. To achieve this mission, the school will continually improve its educational programs and services to meet this community's expectations for a quality education for all.

The Brooklyn Board of Education held their monthly meeting virtually on January 27, 2021 via Zoom. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Dr. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Atchinson, Mr. Phaiah, Mrs. Hackbarth, and Mrs. Jolley. Mrs. Buell, Superintendent, was also present.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Brooklyn Board of Education will conduct a virtual meeting in accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B.

To support public participation the documents will be posted on the
Town of Brooklyn Website as well as the Brooklyn Public
Schools Website.

You are encouraged to send questions or comments to buell@brooklynschools.org prior to the meeting.

1. Attendance, Establishment of a Quorum, Call to Order

Quorum established. Dr. Perkins-Banas called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Minutes

a. December 16, 2020 BOE Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 16, 2020.
(Phaiah/Hackbarth)
No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

4. Correspondence and Communication

a. Presentation on TiO2 Coating by Todd Hodrinsky

Mr. Hodrinsky presented information on the TiO₂ Coating safety analysis data on the permanent surface cleaner. He stated that they have been developing for over 20 years in Japan and their Engineers are beginning to manufacture here in Connecticut and are in the process of getting EPA approvals for green certifications. Mr. Hodrinsky discussed the key features of the TiO₂ Coating:

- * One time coating of any surface - remains as long as the substrate exists
- * Fast acting - most organisms are killed on contact
- * Clear and invisible; no harmful chemicals
- * 100% safe for humans
- * UV-A or sunlight activated to decompose and destroy organics

Mrs. Buell stated that she and the Board have been learning about this product and want to make sure it meets the safety guidelines. Other benefits are eliminating odors and to eliminate using many cleaning products. The schools use many cleaning products and this product will help with staffing, time and would be cost effective for the school. She believes that the Board should consider the use of the TiO₂ Coating product.

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated she would like to add an agenda item under New Business 9d. Discussion of an early release day on Wednesdays when we have a full week of remote instruction.

b. Thank you letter - Lebanon Lions Club

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to the Lebanon Lions Club for their generous donation this year supporting Brooklyn families. The Lebanon Lions Club donated eleven (11) boxes of food to Brooklyn Public Schools that will be distributed to Brooklyn families in need.

c. Thank you letter - Beagary Charitable Trust

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to the Beagary Charitable Trust for their continued support of the Brooklyn Public Schools. Through this donation, all students at Brooklyn Elementary and Middle schools will benefit from the enhanced instructional materials, education and research.

d. Thank you letter - Brooklyn Xtra Mart

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to Brooklyn Xtra Mart for their generous \$500 grant to be used for the maintenance and support of instruction in the areas of math, technology, and/or science.

5. Administrative Reports

a. Brooklyn BOE Expenditure Report

Mrs. Buell discussed the expenditure report. She stated that we are halfway through the academic school year. Mrs. Buell stated that the report shows a negative balance currently and will be offset with revenues still coming in from excess costs and CRF (Corona Relief Funds) will offset it as well. She believes that the school will make it to the end of the year and stay on budget. Mrs. Buell stated that there are line item transfers for next month. There is currently a budget freeze as well.

b. Enrollment Report

Mrs. Buell discussed the enrollment report. The enrollment has not changed much from December and is stable. She stated that there are a mix of students that are in full distance learning and anticipate those students to return in a normal learning environment for next year. Mrs. Buell stated she continues to track those students if they are in distance learning or not.

c. Brooklyn's Best

BES

1. Preschool and Kindergarten registration has begun. The office staff has worked hard to streamline the online process.
2. Ms. Craig and Ms. Stanton have completed TEAM.
3. We had a successful 2nd school monitoring visit.

BMS

1. Grade 8 Science Teacher, Ms. Machewicz, delivered thank you notes from students to healthcare workers at Day Kimball Hospital.
2. Good Cookie Awards:
Grade 5: Elijah McKenna, Abigail Langevin, Calianne Worth
Grade 6: Tomas Gutierrez, Kendal Ternowchek
Grade 7: Owen Lamontagne, Kloe Pike
Grade 8: Mishtie Patel-Gandhi, Devi Patel-Gandhi
3. Mrs. Kelly King had a published blog on the Assistments website.
4. Mrs. Sarah Kozey successfully completed TEAM.

District:

1. Congratulations to our teachers who have completed TEAM requirements. Teachers begin their careers and need to learn so many things, on top of the pandemic and changing teaching environment, they completed the requirements of TEAM.
2. Congratulations to our new IT Support Specialist, Mr. Gabe Bryant. He comes to us with extensive school IT experience. He will work with our current technology stipend positions held by Mr. Kelleher and Ms. Geeza to create a smooth transition and recommend how we can continue to grow and meet the changing technology needs of the district and the Town of Brooklyn.

6. Board of Education Committee Reports

Nothing to report

7. Board Representatives to other Committees

Nothing to report

8. Old Business

a. Draft #4 2021-2022 Calendar

Mrs. Buell stated that the Draft #4 2021-2022 Brooklyn Public School's calendar has been updated with the changes made from the last meeting and that the calendar is ready for Board approval.

Motion to approve the Draft #4 2021-2022 Brooklyn Public School's calendar.
(Phaiah/Hackbarth)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

9. New Business

a. Update Brooklyn Education Model

Mrs. Buell stated that we are currently in a distance learning model. Mrs. Buell understands that it can be a challenge and a hardship for families. She explained that the case numbers in Brooklyn are very high and with staff and students quarantining, it makes it difficult to offer quality instruction to a large number of students that are being quarantined. Mrs. Buell stated that two weeks ago, there were 115 positive cases in Brooklyn. Last week, we went to 112 positive cases, which was over a 10% positivity rate for the Town of Brooklyn. Mrs. Buell stated that we need to be vigilant with all the mitigation strategies. There is still a challenge of remaining six feet from one another with students getting on/off the bus and walking in/out of the building. The latest information Mrs. Buell stated she received last week from DPH, NDDH, and a medical advisor, there is a new variance of the virus. The new variance is more contagious, more people will get sick with the virus. Mrs. Buell hopes that our numbers will decline and be able to reopen in a hybrid model. The distance and spacing needs to be maintained, hand washing, face masks and ventilation in order to return.

Mrs. Jolley stated that there are some students in the school right now and asked Mrs. Buell to explain what the criteria is for those students that are still in school, does it depend on what IEP or 504 plans that are in place? She stated that those plans are written for a school environment and cannot be followed when the students are at home. She asked if there is a guideline that is set to make it

understandable for other parents? Mrs. Buell stated that they originally started with bringing back the highest needs student population, who can not access any learning. Mrs. Buell stated that there are zero students in school and even the highest needs population are currently not in school, due to the seriousness and the spread of the virus. Mrs. Buell stated that the Director of Special Education, in coordination with Special Education Teachers, and Administration were developing a plan on bringing some students back to school. Right now everything is paused, no students are in school.

Mrs. Jolley asked if the high schoolers are still going to school and being bussed to Killingly High School. Mrs. Buell stated that it depends on the day. Killingly High School and Woodstock Academy are currently in remote distance learning. Mrs. Buell stated that she doesn't dictate what those schools do. Mrs. Jolley stated that people are stating to her that they are seeing Brooklyn buses on the road. Mrs. Buell stated sometimes there will be Brooklyn buses out on the roads.

Mr. Atchinson stated that Woodstock Academy stated that most of their faculty have received the first dose of the vaccine. He asked what the time frame would be for the Brooklyn school staff. Mrs. Buell stated that the state of Connecticut is in phase 1b and has many levels. She has not received an exact time frame for teachers in 1b. She believes it will be the end of the February beginning of March. There was a communication error where some schools uploaded their full roster and employees received an email to schedule vaccinations, which caused some people to get vaccinated before they were supposed to. Only school nurses were supposed to be included in 1a.

b. 2021-2022 Budget Planning Review

Mrs. Buell stated the Board of Education is reviewing the proposed Superintendent's Budget for the 2021-2022 school year. The initial budget was proposed at \$19,980,834, which is \$806,842 or a 4.21 % increase over the 2020-2021 school year. Mrs. Buell stated that she has discussed some items to reduce the budget and possible additions to the budget. There were no changes made to the budget as of yet. There will be discussions on the budget at the next Budget Workshop.

Mrs. Buell stated that all budget documents will be posted on the Brooklyn Schools website at www.brooklynschools.org. Anyone that has comments or questions about the budget to email budgetquestions@brooklynschools.org. Budget questions and answers will be posted to the Brooklyn Schools website as well.

c. Hiring of IT Support Personnel

Mr. Gabe Bryant will begin working for the Town and the Board of Education on February 2, 2021. He will be funded this year from savings that were realized due

to the COVID situation. Moving forward, the Board of Education and the Town of Brooklyn will share the costs.

- d. Discussion of an early release day on Wednesdays when we have a full week of remote instruction

Mrs. Buell stated she received some feedback that the work is very intense on a full week of remote learning and makes long weeks for the students and can be challenging. Mrs. Buell stated she was asked if there could be an early release day on Wednesdays when there is a full week of remote instruction. Mrs. Buell stated she spoke with the Administration team about the possibility of an early release day, they would adjust the schedule if the Board were to approve it. Staff would use this time for accreditation work, curriculum and develop assessments, professional development, check-ins with students or families if possible based on need. Mrs. Buell would like to make the adjustment to the calendar only when it is a full week of remote learning.

Motion to edit the calendar to make Wednesdays early release days when the district has a full week of remote learning.

(Lyons/Phaiah)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

10. Public Comment

None

11. Executive Session

- a. Superintendent's goals for the 2021-2022 school year

Motion to go into executive session at 8:05 p.m. to discuss the Superintendent's goals for the 2021-2022 school year and to invite Superintendent Buell to attend.
(Phaiah/Lyons)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated that there will be no further votes or actions tonight. They will be going into the executive session and then adjourning the meeting.

Motion to come out of executive session at 8:51 p.m.
(Hackbarth/Jolley)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:51 p.m.
(Hackbarth/Jolley)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna L. DiBenedetto

Donna L. DiBenedetto
Board Clerk