

# The Board of Education

Town of Brooklyn  
119 Gorman Road  
Brooklyn, CT 06234

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Mae Lyons, Board Chair  
Keith Atchinson, Secretary  
Tana Jolley

Melissa Perkins-Banas, Vice-Chair  
Justin Phaiah  
Nathan Richards

**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 in the Brooklyn Middle School Auditorium and virtually on October 27, 2021 via Zoom. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Phaiah, and Mr. Richards. Mr. Atchinson, and Mrs. Jolley were absent. Mrs. Buell, Superintendent, and Mrs. Bean, Finance Director, were 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](mailto:buell@brooklynschools.org) prior to the meeting.

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

Quorum established. Mrs. Lyons called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Public Comment

Mrs. Buell stated that she received an email to share with the Board from Jessica Solis, 22 Juniper Way, Brooklyn, CT. She has two girls attending the elementary school that are not included in the intervention group in their classrooms. After listening to the Board of Education meeting last month, she is frustrated that she is sending her girls in for live instruction, but they are using computer programs due to them not meeting the criteria for intervention. She believes they deserve the opportunity to advance their education as well and not self-learning on a regular basis.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. September 22, 2021 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for September 22, 2021.

(Phaiah/Richards)  
No Discussion  
**Vote Count:** 4, 0  
Unanimous vote to approve

#### 4. Correspondence and Communication

##### a. Introduction of the 8th Grade Class Officers

Mrs. Buell introduced Mr. Gutierrez, 8th Grade Class Advisor.

Mr. Gutierrez introduced the 8th Grade Class Officers:  
Benjamin Arters - President  
Emily Mumford - Vice President  
Olivia Tracy - Treasurer (not present)

Mr. Gutierrez stated that the procedure to run for class office is that students need to get recommendations from two teachers from the 8th grade team, two teachers from the 7th grade team and the administration. They then will give a speech to the entire 8th grade and then the students will vote.

Benjamin Arters spoke to the Board of Education. He stated that he is the newly elected 8th Grade Class President. Benjamin is excited to work with the other officers, student body and administration to make this a great school year. He stated that this class is a close knit grade and he is honored to be the class president.

Emily Mumford spoke to the Board of Education. She stated she ran to be Vice President because she wanted to contribute to the class. She stated that the students are the best and kind to each other. Emily stated she is happy to be a class officer.

Mrs. Buell wanted to compliment Benjamin, Emily, and other classmates that went before the audience and their classmates giving amazing speeches. She stated that they didn't look nervous and they did an outstanding job.

Mrs. Lyons congratulated them on being able to speak in public.

Mrs. Buell thanked the students, parents and staff members for supporting students with personal growth and expects them to do great things this year.

Mr. Gutierrez wanted to share some breaking news in regards to the Cross Country Championship from earlier today. There were approximately 14 other schools, 129 boy runners and Brooklyn's own, Owen Hamilton, came in first place. There were 99 girl runners and Brooklyn's own, Olivia Tracy, came in first

place. Mr. Gurierrez stated that both the Brooklyn boys and the Brooklyn girls came in third place in the Cross Country Championship.

b. Presentation by BES and BMS Instructional Coaches

Mrs. Buell introduced Mrs. Violette, Instructional Coach, at the Brooklyn Elementary School and Mrs. Crawford, Instructional Coach, at Brooklyn Middle School.

Mrs. Violette stated she has four students excited to share how they use technology in their classrooms with the Board towards the end of the presentation. She first shared a video of Mrs. Froehlich, First Grade teacher, utilizing technology during phonics instruction. Mrs. Froehlich used her SMARTboard and a document camera to show letter tiles on the SMARTboard for the students to see the words in the story.

Devices used at the Brooklyn Elementary School are SMARTboards, document cameras, teacher devices, and 1:1 devices for Grades 1-4. Programs being used at the Brooklyn Elementary School are Lexia, ST Math, Raz-Kids, STAR Assessments, Google Classroom, and Zoom.

Mrs. Violette discussed the September data on student learning:

- Lexia: 66% are below grade level; 26% are grade level; 8% are above grade level.  
Current data from September to today, October 27, 2021:
- Lexia: 57% below grade level; 33% are grade level; 11% above grade level.
- Reading A-Z: 935 books have been downloaded, 1,856 were listened to with headphones or audio, 1,929 books were read so far this year and 1,970 quizzes with 76% accuracy rate
- ST Math: 293 average puzzles solved and 82,645 total puzzles solved

Mrs. Violette stated that a lot of credit is owed to the teachers. This year has been challenging for several reasons and the teachers are doing amazing things.

Mrs. Crawford stated that Brooklyn Middle School is utilizing some of the same programs as the elementary school: STAR Assessments, Google Classroom, Zoom, Freckle, and Moby Max. Devices being used are SMARTboards, document cameras, teacher devices and 1:1 devices Grades 5-8.

Mrs. Crawford discussed the current data for the middle school:

- Usage reports in ELA: 19.4K minutes; Math: 31.9K minutes;
- Growth Reports: ELA - average grade level growth is 72% and  
Math - average grade level growth is 53%.

Mrs. Crawford stated that using the programs 20 minutes a day, students will

make successful progress, in addition to the curriculum in the classrooms.

Mrs. Crawford shared videos of students utilizing technology in grades 5-8:

- A 5th grade student showed how he used Freckle for math and reading. The student demonstrated how to log on to Freckle and showed where teachers post assignments.
- A 6th grade student shared what he has been learning in STEAM.
- A 7th grade student shared a Google Jamboard in ELA interacting with everyone in the classroom by typing on sticky notes, google forms - share a response and submit the google form.
- An 8th grade student showed how to use MobyMax to reinforce the curriculum in ELA and Math.

Mrs. Violette had four Brooklyn Elementary students share how they utilize technology within their classrooms with the Board of Education using their Chromebooks.

Mrs. Buell introduced Rushie Bean, Finance Director, to the Board of Education.

Mrs. Bean is excited to be at the Board meeting and to meet everyone. She is also excited to be in her new position. She stated she loves Brooklyn, lives in Brooklyn and her children were students in Brooklyn.

c. Appreciation

Mrs. Lyons had written and read the following Board of Education Appreciation letter:

*"Since this is the last meeting we will be having before the Municipal Elections, I wanted to take this opportunity to Thank Everyone on the Board for their hard work and perseverance throughout the past two years.*

*I'm sure no one could have envisioned that their time on the Board would be more about keeping the doors open and how to keep the kids learning when we couldn't do that; than it was about developing lofty goals for achievement. It wasn't what you signed up to do but it is what had to be done and you all did a commendable job.*

*We, as a school system, as a town, owe a debt of gratitude to Patti Buell for her untiring leadership. She took this pandemic head on with an unwavering attitude that "we can do this" and we did. Tough decisions, unpopular decisions, had to be made. These were decisions that did not make everyone, or maybe even anyone, happy but allowed us to forge on with the job of educating our kids.*

*From Patti to our administrators, to our staff, our parents and grandparents and our kids, I'd like to extend a huge "Congratulations" on a job well done. Maybe*

*it wasn't perfect, but that was not for lack of effort on everyone's part. The going got tough and this school community pulled together to keep moving forward.*

*We will have some new faces on the Board after the election as Tana Jolley is not running for reelection. Thank you to Tana for all her efforts to coordinate her job, her children and their education, and still find time to participate on the board. It was no easy task. Apologies go out to her for the meetings on Zoom where sometimes we could not hear or see each other. It was a pleasure to work with you and, going forward, we hope that you will become one of the regular attendees at our meetings.*

*Thanks to Nathan Richards for stepping in when we had a vacancy mid-term. His previous experience allowed him to hit the ground running. Thank you Nathan for your continued commitment to the children in the Brooklyn Schools.*

*Justin Phiah and Melissa Banas-Perkins have been steadfast in their commitment to attending meetings. Both are always willing to take on a new assignment for a sub-committee or attend an important meeting. You are both wonderful to work with.*

*Again, thank you to all for your ability to react to the many changes we were required to make in the last eighteen months. Hopefully we are on our way to returning to a more normal time where we can again focus on student achievement."*

Mrs. Buell stated on behalf of all of the Board members, they appreciate Mrs. Lyon's leadership and thanked her for always being there for them.

d. Thank you Letter - Walmart

Mrs. Buell stated that she sent a thank you letter to Mara Tessier, People Lead at Walmart Supercenter #5777, for reaching out to Brooklyn PTO President, Michelle Parmeter, wanting to donate school supplies to the Brooklyn Public Schools. Walmart Supercenter donated several large boxes of school supplies and the supplies have been distributed to the Brooklyn Elementary School and Brooklyn Middle school and have already been put to great use.

e. Thank you Letter - Lebanon CT Leo Club

Mrs. Buell stated that she sent a thank you letter to Lebanon CT Leo Club for their generous donation of \$3,200.00 through their fundraising efforts. They donated the use of one of their trailers during the Brooklyn Fair for the Lemonade Stand and donated the \$3,200.00 earnings to the Brooklyn Middle School Fitness Course.

5. Administrative Reports

- a. Brooklyn Enrollment
  - i. October 1, 2021

Mrs. Buell stated that they are required to submit an enrollment report to the State of Connecticut as of October 1, 2021. She shared the October 1, 2021 enrollment report with the Board, which impacts all of the student funding from the State.

- ii. Current Enrollment

Mrs. Buell discussed the current enrollment report, numbers are approximately the same and continues to be consistent.

- b. FY22 Financial Reports

Mrs. Buell shared the expense summary report by object, which outlines the budget line item, what has been spent and has been encumbered. She stated that there are some negative balances, which is due to grants that have not been drawn down yet to offset some of the encumbrances. There are some expenses that are higher than budgeted due to two teachers on long-term leave with substitutes in place. There are approximately seven leaves of absences by the end of the school year. She is watching the budget carefully to keep it balanced. Mrs. Buell discussed the expenditure report, salaries is one of the items in the negative.

- c. Transfer Request

Mrs. Buell discussed the budget transfer requests in the amount of \$85,510.00. She would like the Board to approve to move \$85,510.00 from three line items to six line items.

Motion to transfer \$85,510.00 from the three lines identified to the six lines identified on the budget transfer request form dated October 27, 2021.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count:** 4, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

Mrs. Lyons asked about bus routes being combined, will there be some savings? Mrs. Buell stated there will be savings. She stated that we started with 15 buses and now have 13 buses running. Mrs. Buell stated that there are over 100 parents dropping off/picking up on a daily basis. With there being fewer students on the buses and the bus driver shortage, they were able to collapse some of the runs.

- d. September Data Dashboard

Mrs. Buell discussed the Data Dashboard for September with the Board. She stated that at the last meeting, they discussed the District Advancement Plan and the goal is to look at: Where are we now? What are we doing to improve our student outcomes? Mrs. Buell stated that the District Advancement Plan depends on the curriculum implementation.

Brooklyn Elementary School Data for the month of September:

- % of students in intervention Tier III: 213; 40.73%
- 6 observations reviewed
- Instructional pacing on track: 88.33%
- Learning objectives: 100%

Brooklyn Middle School Data for the month of September:

- Assessment completed on time: 100%
- At or above expectations: 38.84%
- Student intervention Tier III: 57; 16.43%
- 4 observations reviewed
- Instructional pacing on track: 50%
- Learning objectives: 100%

District Attendance:

- BES student attendance: 523; 93.14%
- BES staff attendance: 88; full day - 96.48%; partial day - 96.92%
- BMS student attendance: 347; 94.09%
- BMS staff attendance: 64; full day - 98.29%; partial day - 96.88%

Mrs. Buell stated that attendance is important for students and for staff in order to have consistent and regular instruction for student achievement. The Data Dashboard will be posted monthly to the school's website.

Dr. Perkins-Banas asked if the administration is seeing a difference in teaching with the Instructional Coaches. She stated it looked like it is interactive learning and great to see how engaged the students were. She asked if it has always been the case or are there some differences? Mrs. Buell stated that yes they are seeing a difference. It looks different when an administrator walks into the classroom to observe than when the instructional coaches are in the classroom. Instructional coaches see things differently and get honest feedback and are seeing improvements and changes.

e. Brooklyn's Best

**BES**

- Grade level data teams are a success. Grade level teams are discussing student data and placing children in appropriate tiered interventions.
- We have hired a few substitutes that will begin working over the next few weeks.

- Our PreK and Kindergarten class have been observed in preparation for our NAEYC accreditation. We have received good feedback from the assessor.
- The PBIS committee has set up common language for the staff and students regarding the expectations around school rules in various locations.

### **BMS**

- Good Cookie September 2021:  
**Grade 5:** King/DS: Gage Lacasse  
Carson/Nault: Asher Jarvis  
**Grade 6:** Ethan Laoroyal, Ella Petersen  
**Grade 7:** Avery Schaefer, Brady Bolton  
**Grade 8:** Elizabeth Ladzinski, Owen Hamilton
- Thank you to staff members that supported our fundraising efforts for the Community Fitness Course at Feargrounds with their time:  

Enrica Desabota	Kelly King	Kristen Schaetzle
Sarah Kozey	Rachel Mackewicz	Shanna Pascale
Diane Wimmer		
- We currently have about 50 students signed up for our first session of after school activities.
- Boys cross-country has finished their season with a record of 7-1 and the girls, a record of 5-3. The cross-country team will have the Championships this Wednesday, October 27, 2021, at Owen Bell. The following week, on November 6, 2021, there will be a few runners from the team heading to the State Championships at Wickham Park.
- Both the girls and boys soccer teams have had a great season. The girls have a record of 5-5, with the possibility of going 6-5 after today's game. This record has ensured that the girls made it to the semi-final round. They are currently ranked third in the conference. The semi-final game will be played against Griswold. Each game against Griswold was a loss of one point. The semifinal game should be intense, with any team making the finals. This year the boys' team has been a competitive team in the conference. The boys' current record is 4-5, placing them in fourth place. After the last game is played their records might improve to 5-5. They will be playing in the semi-finals against Plainfield. Both games are scheduled for November 1, 2021. Girls will be playing at Griswold and boys will be playing at Plainfield. Both games will start at 3:00 p.m.

### 6. Board of Education Committee Reports

### 7. Board Representatives to Other Committees

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated she attended the finance committee meeting, executive meeting and a luncheon/tour at Woodstock Academy. She stated that she is very impressed with their fundraising efforts. She stated that they have an Inspire 150 campaign, which is

approaching in the fall of 2023, and Woodstock wants to restore the building to its original state. She said they have a wonderful arts program and what they do for their students. Dr. Perkins-Banas recommends parents going on a tour with their 8th grade students.

Mr. Phaiah stated he attended his second EASTCONN Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, October 26, 2021.

Mrs. Lyons stated that negotiations will be starting for the certified staff on Monday, November 1, 2021.

## 8. Old Business

### a. Narcan Policy - Second Reading

Mrs. Buell stated that this is a second read for the Narcan Policy 5141.213. She recommends using the second paragraph, alternate language and inserting nurse's office at BES and BMS. She also recommends including paragraphs 6 and 7 Delegation of Responsibility as written and paragraphs 11 and 12 Acquisition, Storage and Disposal paragraphs, omitting "or other location designated by the school nurse in accordance with the drug manufacturer's instructions."

Motion to approve policy 5141.213 to include:

Paragraph 2 (Alternate language) and insert *nurse's office at BES and BMS*

Paragraphs 6 & 7 Delegation of Responsibility as written

Paragraphs 11 & 12 Acquisition, Storage and Disposal Paragraphs

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count:** 4, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

## 9. New Business

### a. Information on PowerSchool

Mrs. Buell stated that Brooklyn has discussed PowerSchool in the past. She stated that Rediker/AdminPlus has been used at Brooklyn Middle School since 2001 and Brooklyn Elementary School since 2003. Mrs Buell stated that over 75% of districts in the state are using PowerSchool. It is more user friendly, and quicker. Rediker/AdminPlus is more of a database program whereas PowerSchool is easier to use. A benefit with switching to PowerSchool is power in numbers. The cost will be higher. She stated that our technology director recommends switching over to PowerSchool. He has a lot of experience using it. Mrs. Buell stated they will have the ability to use Esser funds to \$50,000, initially and \$18,450 annually afterwards. Rediker is currently \$13800. It will be a cost savings in personnel and time. Parents love PowerSchool, parents cannot use Rediker currently. There will

be a transition period. Mrs. Buell would like the Board to vote to support this transition. She has the support from the IT director, administrators and secretaries using PowerSchool.

Dr. Perkins-Banas made a motion to begin the transition to PowerSchool as the student information system for Brooklyn and the use of ARP ESSER funds to cover the cost of this change.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count:** 4, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

b. Initial Discussion of 2022-2023 School Calendar

Mrs. Buell stated that districts are starting to discuss 2022-2023 school calendars. April vacation is usually driven by when SAT's are administered and SAT's have already changed for this year. She stated that we try to align the days with high schools and regional schools as much as possible. Mrs. Buell would like to send the draft calendar out to our sending high schools and other area schools, staff and families for feedback. Mrs. Buell will bring it back to the next Board meeting for review.

c. Solar Panel Projects: Close-out

- i. BES Photovoltaic Project #019-0031PV
- ii. BMS Photovoltaic Project #019-0032PV

Mrs. Buell stated that the solar panel projects have been completed. The Board has already voted on this once and needs to close-out the projects. She stated that all the invoices have been processed and she will submit a report with the Board of Education's motions to the State to submit the final closeout and payment. Mrs. Buell stated the Brooklyn Elementary School project cost was \$683,761.36 of the budgeted amount of \$903,405 and the Brooklyn Middle School project cost was \$695,547.57 of the budgeted amount of \$898,850, both projects were under budget.

Mrs. Buell stated the Brooklyn Board of Education needs to accept the projects at both schools as being completed.

**Motion #1:**

Dr. Perkins-Banas made a motion for the Board of Education to accept as complete, the Brooklyn Elementary School Photovoltaic Project, DAS Project Number: 019-0031 PV.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count:** 4, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

**Motion #2:**

Dr. Perkins-Banas made a motion for the Board of Education to accept as complete, the Brooklyn Middle School Photovoltaic Project, DAS Project Number:

019-0032 PV.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count: 4, 0**

Unanimous vote to approve

10. Public Comment

None

11. Executive Session

a. Personnel Matter

Dr. Perkins-Banas made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:20 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter and invite Mrs. Buell to attend. The Board of Education will exit the executive session and will likely vote on the personnel request.

Motion to come out of executive session at 8:46 p.m.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count: 4, 0**

Unanimous vote to approve

There was no action taken on the personnel matter.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.

(Perkins-Banas-Phaiah)

No Discussion

**Vote Count: 4, 0**

Unanimous vote to approve

I, The Brooklyn Board of Education Clerk, certify that these meeting minutes are accurate.

**Donna L. DiBenedetto**

Donna DiBenedetto  
Board Clerk

**October 27, 2021**

(Date)