

The Board of Education

Town of Brooklyn
119 Gorman Road
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Mae Lyons, Board Chair
Justin Phaiah, Secretary
Kayla Burgess

Melissa Perkins-Banas, Vice-Chair
Keith Atchinson
Isaias Sostre

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 December 15, 2021 via Zoom. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Mrs. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Phaiah, Ms. Burgess, and Mr. Sostre. Mr. Atchinson was absent. 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

Dr. Perkins-Banas started with roll call: Isaias Sostre, Kayle Burgess, Justin Phaiah, Kayla Burgess, and herself were present. Mrs. Buell stated that Mae Lyons joined virtually as well. Keith Atchinson was absent.

Quorum established. Dr. Perkins-Banas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Buell read the following Executive Order:

This is a reminder to members of the Board of Education and the Public:

Under Governor Lamont's Executive Order 13A, the Commissioner of Public Health created a list of venues where masks are required. It states, "All people, vaccinated or unvaccinated, need to wear a mask when they are inside a school building or childcare facility."

2. Public Comment

Louise Morrison, 78 Christian Hill Rd, stated that she would like the Board to consider Alice training, active shooter training. She stated the "stay put" in lockdowns was

designed in the 1990's for gangs in Los Angeles that were shooting outside of schools. She stated that it is not designed for active shooters. Mrs. Morrison stated that she teaches in Thompson and they use it, Woodstock Academy uses it as well. She stated that it saved many lives in Michigan last week and believes that the Board needs to look into training students and staff on how to get out in case there is an active shooter. Mrs. Morrison stated she would like the Board to consider this and is aware that it is an expensive program, but believes kids' lives are worth it.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. November 23, 2021 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for November 23, 2021.
(Burgess/Phaiah)

Vote Count: 4, 0 (Mrs. Lyons was virtual and the Board could not hear her vote)
Unanimous vote to approve

4. Correspondence and Communication

- a. Retirement Letter - William Briere

Mrs. Buell stated she received a retirement letter from William Briere and she read it to the Board. Mr. Briere will be retiring at the end of the school year after 41 years of being an educator. In his letter, he stated that he feels it is time to end this chapter of his life and he looks forward to the next chapter with excitement and a bit of trepidation. Mr. Briere thanked the Brooklyn community for the opportunity to teach the children of Brooklyn since 1985. Mrs. Buell and the Board thank him for his years of service to Brooklyn students and wish him well.

- b. Thank you letter - Jeff Larrow

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to Jeff Larrow for his donation of \$100.00 from Horace Mann. The donation is to be used for our Community Fitness Course.

Mrs. Buell stated that the construction of the Community Fitness Course is scheduled to begin in the spring.

- c. Thank You Letter - Allen Hill Tree Farm

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to Allen Hill Tree Farm for their generous donation of fifteen (15) gift certificates for Christmas trees, which will go to Brooklyn families in need to make their holidays a special one. Mrs. Buell stated that this donation is in honor of our very own Brooklyn native, Trooper Patrick Dragon and makes the donation even more meaningful.

d. Thank You Letter - Bob & Ann Marie Dragon

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you letter to Bob and Ann Marie Dragon for their monetary donation to Allen Hill Tree Farm, which their donation in turn was donated to Brooklyn Public Schools in the form of fifteen (15) gift certificates for Christmas trees. The gift certificates will go to Brooklyn families in need in honor of their son, Patrick Dragon. Mrs. Buell expressed gratitude for Patrick's service to the Brooklyn community and deepest condolences to them and their family for their loss.

e. Thank You Letter - Brooklyn Town Library

Mrs. Buell stated that she sent a thank you letter to the Brooklyn Town Library for their donation of books to the Brooklyn Elementary School. Mrs. Buell stated that the following books will be greatly used and appreciated by the Brooklyn Elementary students:

Ban this Book by Alan Gratz
The Fourth Stall Part III by Chris Rylander
Ramona Quimby, Age 8 by Beverly Cleary
Albert's Alphabet by Leslie Tryon

Mrs. Buell quoted Stephen Hawking, "Nothing is better than reading and gaining more and more knowledge." She expressed gratitude for giving the gift of knowledge to Brooklyn Elementary students' young minds.

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated that Keith Atchinson handed in his resignation letter to the Brooklyn Board of Education. She read Mr. Atchinson's resignation letter to the Board of Education stating that the time has come for him to step down from the Board of Education. He wrote that it's been a pleasure to serve the parents, students, staff and administrators for the past six years. Mr. Atchinson wished he had more time to devote to the Board of Education. Dr. Perkins-Banas thanked Keith Atchinson for his six years of service.

5. Administrative Reports

a. Brooklyn Enrollment

Mrs. Buell discussed the November enrollment report. She stated that there was no change in enrollment at the Brooklyn Middle School and the Brooklyn Elementary School is up by 8 students. The total enrollment is up by 8 students.

b. FY22 Financial Reports

Mrs. Buell shared the Budget Expense Summary by Object. She stated that there are some negatives that she and the Business Manager are monitoring. Mrs. Buell stated that there have been unexpected expenditures with additional overtime with custodians, additional substitute teachers, and more staff taking the insurance. She stated that there is some savings in the special education tuition line items and in the transportation line since the number of buses have been reduced. The insurance line looked to be too high last month and is now showing in the negative, more where it should be. Expenditures are higher than normal. There will be some savings in special education and transportation. Mrs. Buell stated that she will continue to monitor spending.

c. Transfer Request

Mrs. Buell discussed the budget transfer requests that reflect some of the expenditures in the maintenance department in the amount of \$8,192.86. She would like the Board to approve to move \$8,192.86 from three maintenance line items to three maintenance line items to offset the deficit.

Motion to approve the transfer of \$8,192.86 as detailed in the transfer request.
(Phaiah/Burgess)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 4, 0 (Mrs. Lyons was virtual and the Board could not hear her vote)

Unanimous vote to approve

d. November Data Dashboard

Mrs. Buell discussed the Data Dashboard for November with the Board. She stated the purpose of reviewing the Data Dashboard on a monthly basis is to focus on maintaining student outcomes. Mrs. Buell stated that administrators are in classrooms everyday and is not always showing on this report.

Brooklyn Elementary School Data for the month of November:

- Assessment completed on time: NA
- At or above expectations: Math - 40%; ELA - 44%
- % of students in intervention Tier II: 114; 21.84%
- % of students in intervention Tier III: 91; 17.43%
- 12 observations reviewed
- Instructional pacing on track: 91.70%
- Learning objectives: 100%

Brooklyn Middle School Data for the month of November:

- Assessment completed on time: NA
- At or above expectations: Math - 20%; ELA - 59%
- % of students in intervention Tier II: 128; 37.10%
- Student intervention Tier III: 62; 17.97%
- observations reviewed: Data not available

- Instructional pacing on track: NA
- Learning objectives: 100%

District Attendance for the month of November:

- BES student attendance: 539 ; 87.48%
- BES staff attendance: 88; full day - 95.34%; partial day - 96.25%
- BMS student attendance: 348 - 91.78%
- BMS staff attendance: 64; full day - 96.64%; partial day - 96.41%

e. Brooklyn's Best

BES

- Laura Gatlin has offered to host another Paint Night for a Brighter Christmas Fundraiser. We have 35 staff members that will participate.
- We have entered our 15 day window for the NAEYC assessors to observe our program. The assessor will be here for 2 days in January. During that time they will observe the program, observe at least 3 kindergarten classes and 3 preschool classes and review the preschool, kindergarten and program portfolios. The early childhood staff, custodial staff, nursing staff and office staff have exceeded our expectations in preparing for this visit.
- We have hired a long term substitute for STEAM. She has begun in the position.

BMS

- Good Cookie November 2021:
Grade 5: King/DS: Mason Lee
Carson/Nault: Kaydence Saucier
Grade 6: Chris Bowen, Kassidy Rosinski
Grade 7: Cogan Gosselin, Finley Hamilton
Grade 8: Owen Murray, Shelby Geragotelis
- Chorus members sang at the Tree Lighting Ceremony
- We have begun auditions for Shrek the Musical
- Successful start to the winter sports season
- Celebrated our Quarter 1 High Honor and Honor Roll Students
- Q1 Lions Club Recipients:
Grade 5: Molly Morrisette
Grade 6: Makenzie Lee
Grade 7: Madison Bomster
Grade 8: Raven Bishop

6. Board of Education Committee Reports

None to Report

7. Board Representatives to Other Committees

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated she attended the Brooklyn Parks and Recreation meeting on Tuesday, December 14, 2021. She wanted to acknowledge how hard the Brooklyn Parks and Recreation staff work helping the community. There is a toy drive this week and Dr. Perkins-Banas stated that there are 120 kids in need of toys this year. She stated it was wonderful to see everyone collaborating, trying to make the holiday season happy for so many children.

8. Old Business

a. 2022-2023 School Calendar

Mrs. Buell stated that there are three options for the 2022-2023 school calendar and she shared it with staff and to the Board as a follow-up from the last meeting.

- Option 1:
Mrs. Buell stated that this is the calendar from the last meeting and similar to what we currently have.
- Option 2 - Mrs. Buell discussed the differences:
Changed election day to be a parent conference day;
No school on veterans day;
January 3, 2023 as no student day (PD for teachers);
February 21, 2023 as an additional day off instead of a PD day;
The last day of school would be June 15, 2023
- Option 3:
Mrs. Buell stated that if they change election day to a work day from a PD day, teachers are losing a PD day. She stated that there used to be six PD days and it would bring it down to five if election day is changed to a work day for conferences. There are four early release days for PD.

Dr. Perkins-Banas asked if they retain the February 21, 2023 PD day, would that make for the loss in November. Mrs. Buell stated that the February PD day was moved to January 3, 2023. She explained that the teachers work 188 days and election day is a work day for holding conferences, an additional PD day is not needed and the requirement of 188 days is met.

Dr. Perkins-Banas asked what the teachers thought about the conference on election day. Mrs. Buell stated that she did not receive a lot of comments on the calendar options.

Dr. Perkins-Banas stated that the February date for teachers to have off does not affect the student days or continuity of instruction. She is concerned about the gaps in the calendar of non-instructional days. She thinks after the winter break off and not returning to school for an

additional two days in January, makes it hard to get the students back into a structured routine.

Mrs. Burgess thinks the half days are more disruptive for working parents. She suggests having a full PD day when there is a half day later on.

Mrs. Buell stated that she can draft another calendar and bring it back for the Board to review at the next meeting.

Mrs. Burgess suggested keeping January 3, 2023 as a regular school day and moving the PD day to May. Mrs. Buell stated that she would prefer to have full PD days closer to the beginning of the school year and March may be a better time than in May.

Mrs. Buell will amend the calendar for the next meeting for the Board to review.

b. 2022-2023 Adjusted BOE Meeting Dates

Mrs. Buell stated the proposed BOE meeting dates from the last meeting needed to be adjusted.

Proposed Board of Education 2022 Meeting Dates:

January 26, 2022 at 7:00 PM

February 23, 2022 at 7:00 PM

March 23, 2022 at 7:00 PM

April 27, 2022 at 7:00 PM

May 25, 2022 at 7:00 PM

June 22, 2022 at 7:00 PM

July 27, 2022 at 7:00 PM

August 24, 2022 at 7:00 PM

September 28, 2022 at 7:00 PM

October 26, 2022 at 7:00 PM

November 22, 2022 at 7:00 PM

December 21, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Mrs. Buell recommends that the Board of Education meetings continue to be held in the Brooklyn Middle School Auditorium, due to the continued risk of COVID and the mitigation strategy of maintaining physical distancing.

Motion to accept the 2022 Board of Education meeting dates proposed tonight. Meetings will be held in the Brooklyn Middle School Auditorium, due to the continued risk of COVID and the mitigation strategy of maintaining physical distancing.

(Justin/Sostre)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 4, 0 (Mrs. Lyons was virtual and the Board could not hear her vote)
 Unanimous vote to approve

Reminder, Budget workshops for the 2021-22 school year are scheduled for:

January 12, 2022 from 5:00 - 7:00 PM

January 26, 2022 from 6:00 - 7:00 PM (prior to BOE Meeting)

March 23, 2022 from 6:00 - 7:00 PM (prior to BOE Meeting)

April 27, 2022 6:00 - 7:00 PM (prior to BOE Meeting)

c. Fall STAR Assessment Comparison Data

Mrs. Buell discussed the STAR Assessment Data as requested from the last meeting.

STAR Fall Reading Assessment % On or Above Grade Level:

Grade	Proficiency Fall 2018	Proficiency Fall 2019	Proficiency Fall 2020	Proficiency Fall 2021	% Change from 20 - >21	% Change from 19 - >21
1	EL	NA	62%	52%	-10%	NA
2	50%	EL	41%	28%	-13%	NA
3	50%	63%	55%	35%	-20%	-28%
4	47%	42%	48%	53%	5%	11%
5	67%	49%	49%	59%	10%	10%
6	63%	68%	51%	58%	7%	-10%
7	73%	60%	63%	60%	-3%	0%
8	79%	72%	64%	66%	2%	-6%
Growth in data over last fall, grade over grade						
Cohort growth from last year						

STAR Fall Math Assessment % On or Above Grade Level:

Grade	Proficiency Fall 2018	Proficiency Fall 2019	Proficiency Fall 2020	Proficiency Fall 2021	% Change from 20 - >21	% Change from 19 - >21
1	56%	NA	56%	40%	-16%	NA
2	55%	42%	39%	49%	10%	7%
3	41%	57%	48%	36%	-12%	-21%
4	52%	48%	32%	35%	3%	-13%
5	23%	5%	24%	11%	-13%	6%
6	37%	28%	23%	18%	-5%	-10%
7	53%	52%	26%	28%	2%	-24%
8	52%	50%	46%	20%	-26%	-30%
Growth in data over last fall, grad over grade						
Cohort growth from last year						

March 2020 to June 2020: District was in remote learning 32% of the year

September 2020-June 2021: 55% in person instruction, 21% full remote instruction and 24% hybrid instruction. During this year 26%-18% students opted to be in full remote which was an option. Numbers changed based on the spread of COVID.

Impressions: Reading was much “easier” to teach remotely. Keeping the pace of instruction was easier and helping students read at home was easier for families.

Math instruction, monitoring and adjusting instruction was significantly more challenging remotely. It was very challenging to “see” work/errors in progress and more challenging for some families to support children at home during remote learning and hybrid learning. The pace was off and it was significantly MORE difficult to differentiate instruction.

Mrs. Buell stated that the focus is to monitor the data. The percent (%) change in the last columns did show some growth. She stated that teachers are working very hard on math and reading.

9. New Business

a. Ratification of the BEA Teachers Contract

Mr. Phaiah stated he and Mrs. Lyons served on the negotiations committee. Mr. Otto was also present for the negotiations.

- Negotiations ended with mediation.
- The role of the mediator is to assist both parties to find the middle ground based on what each party was hoping to achieve with knowledge of where teacher contracts have been settled across Connecticut, which is the information that arbiters will use if arbitration is required.
- Overall 9.6% increase over three years, which includes steps and 1.77%; 2%; 2% for top step employees.
- 1.5% increase in employee share of insurance, .5% in each of three years.

Mr. Phaiah recommends that the Brooklyn Board of Education approves the contract.

Mrs. Burgess asked if there were any other changes made to the contract or just what Mr. Phaiah had mentioned. Mr. Phaiah stated that mainly language needed to be cleaned up.

Motion to approve the contract as presented by the negotiations committee.

(Burgess/Sostre)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 4, 0 (Mrs. Lyons was virtual and the Board could not hear her vote)

Unanimous vote to approve

b. Discussion of the Continuity of Services Plan

Mrs. Buell stated that she had a consultation with the medical advisor. The medical advisor suggested we NOT use the Screen and Stay due to the transmissibility of the virus, Delta is more transmissible and the Omicron is even more transmissible. She stated she also had consultation with the local Health Department and they suggested “pausing” the Screen and Stay at this time due to the increased cases in and around Brooklyn. They have been working closely with CT DPH to analyze the transmission of the virus and have recommended a pause in area schools. At this time Pomfret, Eastford and Canterbury still have Screen and Stay in place. Killingly, Woodstock Academy, Woodstock, Thompson, Plainfield, Putnam (modified S/S), Windham, Sterling are NOT using Screen and Stay based on the same recommendations. Mrs. Buell believes it will be in Brooklyns’ best interest to pause screen and stay and will continue to track and communicate with parents. She will reassess in the middle of January.

Mrs. Buell stated that we will continue to follow the quarantine flow chart:

- If you test positive: quarantine 10 days regardless of vaccination
- Vaccinated individuals are NOT considered close contacts
- Unvaccinated close contacts need to be quarantined. Can test on day 5-7 days after exposure. Can return with documentation of a negative PCR test taken no earlier than day 5. Continue to monitor symptoms until day 14.
- “Close contact”: within 6 feet for 15 minutes or more.
- After a documented positive case, an individual does not need to test again for 90 days.

Mrs. Buell stated that no motion is required as the Board of Education has asked that she, the Superintendent, to continue to consult with the medical experts regarding the virus and next steps.

Mrs. Buell will communicate this information out to families, administrators and nurses tomorrow.

10. Public Comment

None

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m.

(Phaiah/Burgess)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 5, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna L. DiBenedetto

Donna L. DiBenedetto
Board Clerk

Justin Phaiah, Board of Education Secretary

Date