

The Board of Education

Town of Brooklyn
119 Gorman Road
Brooklyn, CT 06234

Mae Lyons, Board Chair
Justin Phaiah, Secretary
Isaias Sostre

Melissa Perkins-Banas, Vice-Chair
Kayla Burgess
Rick Ives

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 a meeting in the Central Office Community Room and virtually on November 22, 2022 via Zoom. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Dr. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Phaiah, Mrs. Burgess, and Mr. Ives. Mr. Sostre was absent. Mrs. Buell, Superintendent, was also present.

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

Mrs. Lyons stated that a Quorum has been established. Board members that were present: Melissa Perkins-Banas, Justin Phaiah, Kayla Burgess, and herself, Mae Lyons. Mr. Sostre was not present.
Mrs. Lyons called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was held by the Board.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Minutes

a. October 26, 2022 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes for October 26, 2022.
(Perkins-Banas/Burgess)

No discussion

Vote Count: 5, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

4. Correspondence and Communication

a. BMS Student Presentation - Fall Athletics

Mrs. Buell stated that Brooklyn Middle School Fall Athletics for Soccer and Cross Country were present. Mrs. Buell stated that the Board is thrilled to have them all present.

Mrs. Tamsin thanked everyone that were present for the Board of Education meeting stating that it is a great showing of support for BMS athletics. She stated that there are so many students trying out for sports and it is exciting for coaches and administration to see. Mrs. Tamsin stated that it is an important part of middle school development being part of a team and learning skills. She stated that the fall athletics were very successful this year and the Girls Soccer Team, Boys Soccer Team, and the Cross Country Team were present. Mrs. Tamin stated they are there to celebrate the students and thank the coaches for their hard work.

Mrs. Mackewicz, Girls Soccer Team Coach, stated that it was a record breaking season. She stated the team did everything she asked and more. She recognized a few students that were present and they received their t-shirts as well as a gift from the Board of Education.

The Girls Soccer Team:

Olivia White
Aislynn Hassett
Finley Hamilton
Harper Simoneau
Lillian Frechette
Claire Anderson
Brenna Howard
Samantha Cote
Aris Roane
Lily Mioduszewski
Lilah Ledogar
Nina Purcell
Melanie DiPippo
Thailia Collette
Cora Hefner

Mrs. Mackewicz stated that the team will be signing a t-shirt that will be displayed in the case along with a couple of plaques that Mr. Gutierrez stated that one is for their regular season and one is for the Board of Education Championship.

Mr. Gutierrez stated that a few boys were present representing the Boys Soccer Team: Sam Anderson and Zach Lackner. Mr. Gutierrez stated that they are looking forward to a productive season next year.

Mr. Gutierrez stated that there were some students present representing the Cross Country Team:

- Emilia Langevin: top performer of the season and finished first overall for the championship race and out of 356 runners, she finished 55th place in the State's Cross Country Championship.
- Ella Peterson and Avery Schaefer: both 7th graders and are the top performers of the season and are Brooklyn's top five runners at the QVJC Championship
- Avery Schaefer was not present for the Board meeting
- Ronan Curran: 8th grader, led the Boys Cross Country Team
- Gage Long and Griffin Tissler: both 7th grade runners and participated in the State's Cross Country Championship.
- Lochlan Curran and Nolan Wakely: both 5th grade runners and participated in the State's Cross Country Championship

Mr. Gutierrez stated that there was a great turnout for tryouts and the Cross Country Team had a great season.

Mrs. Buell stated that Mr. Gutierrez is the Athletic Director and has done a fabulous job his first year.

b. Letter to Mr. Tanner - Brooklyn Town Selectman

Mrs. Buell stated that she sent a letter to Mr. Tanner, Brooklyn Town Selectman, stating that the Brooklyn Public Schools had budgeted \$19,584,719.38 for expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and the amount unexpended is \$44,654.62, which were unspent funds.

5. Administrative Reports

a. Brooklyn Enrollment Report

Mrs. Buell discussed the enrollment report. Brooklyn Elementary School went down by four and the homeschool number went up by 1. Brooklyn Middle School went down by 3 and the homeschool number went down by 1. The high school enrollment went down by one. She stated that overall there was a decrease of 8 students for enrollment. The enrollment has gone from 1298 to 1290, down by 8 for total enrollment.

b. FY23 Financial Reports

Mrs. Buell discussed the expenditure report. She stated that there are not many changes from last month's meeting. She stated that they had drawn down some of the grants to help with the salary lines. Also, Mr. Carey, the new Business Manager, has been working on the health and dental insurance lines with how it is encumbered in Ivisions.

Mr. Carey stated that the health insurance line will be under budget than what Ivisions is currently showing. He stated that both he and Mrs. Cates have been working on the numbers.

Mrs. Buell stated that they will continue to work on the insurance line and will present the Board with the numbers. She stated that they are on track and knew the insurance number was off in Ivisions.

c. Data Dashboard

Mrs. Buell discussed the attendance for the month of October with staff and are continuing to monitor attendance. Full day absences have slightly improved at Brooklyn Elementary and slightly decreased at Brooklyn Middle School. The partial day attendance remained the same, no big changes. There are still some staff getting sick with Covid. There has not been a big outbreak.

d. Brooklyn's Best

BES

- Our Kindergarten families did not disappoint with their attendance at Snacks and Stories. Thank you to all of the families that participated in this event and read with our kindergarten students.
- Our October BEAR winners are Gabby Webster, Zephyr Horton, Amber Rose Odiorne, Zoey Maldonado, Aricia Giambattista, Samuel Silver, Matthew Delaney, Kash Franco, Carson Breznick, Ainsley Ledogar, and Audrey King.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences were a success. Thank you to the parents for coming out and all of our teaching staff for their preparation!
- Grade 1 students earned their Word Detective badges, presented to each class by our Resident Trooper Kyle Ambrose. The students were very proud of themselves and excited.

BMS

- Good Cookie October 2022:
Grade 5: King/DS/Desabota: Henry Snyder
Carson/Nault: Rocco Asermelly
Grade 6: Kaydence Saucier, Aiden Black
Grade 7: Carlita Herrera, Gavin Lalumiere
Grade 8: Logan Hamel, Logan Hamel
- Girls Soccer won the QVJC Championship with a perfect 12-0 season!

- As for the Cross Country team. The girls finished their season 4-1 with Emelia Langevin coming in first place out of 104 runners at the QVJC Championships. She was followed by other top Brooklyn runners, (13th) Avery Schaefer, (22nd) Ella Peterson and (33rd) Ayla Wojcik. For the boys they finished 1-4. Their top finishers out of 184 runners were (23rd) Gage Long, (35th) Lochlan Curran, (38th) Anthony Malone and (50th) Landon Bessette.
- We also had 8 runners run in the 2.2 mile Cross Country State Championship at Wickham Park, they were Emelia Langevin, Avery Schaefer, Gage Long, Nolan Wakely, Griffen Tissler, Ronan and Lochlan Curran.
- Boys Soccer had a 1-9 record and Coach Gadomski was pleased with the growth they showed as a team. We are optimistic on the future performance as the team was very young and showed great potential.
- Athletes did a great job representing the best of Brooklyn!
- Q2 after school program has 6 offerings and 50 students participating (HW Club (Tuesdays and Thursdays), Indoor Yard Games, Board Game Club, Art Club, Gay Straight Alliance)
- We had a successful fundraiser to support our 8th Grade Class Trip to Nature's Classroom.
- Thank you to the parent volunteers that helped distribute orders to families.

6. Board of Education Committee Reports

None to report

7. Board Representatives to Other Committees

None to report

8. Old Business

a. 2023-2024 School Calendar - DRAFT 1 (Feedback/revisions)

Mrs. Buell stated that there were some minor revisions to Draft 1. Thanksgiving was not listed as a holiday, which adjusted our end date and there were some dates in the center that needed correcting.

The survey feedback received and suggestions from parents/staff:

- February vacation: Move March 1st and March 4th, to the end of the February vacation so they almost get an entire week off from school, instead of having to pull the kids out and then have two days off a week later.

Mrs. Buell stated that the March 1st date is a Professional Development

Day and March 4th is a Regional Professional Development Day. Mrs. Buell stated she prefers not to move the March 4th PD day.

- April Vacation: Two Comments inquiring about having our calendar align with Putnam and other surrounding towns as some parents work in surrounding districts.

Mrs. Buell recommends moving the April vacation to the third week of April. She stated that currently our Proposed Calendar is scheduled for the week of April 8-12th. Most districts seem to be proposing the next week, which is April 15-19th. Mrs. Buell stated that Killingly, Putnam, Union, Pomfret, and Woodstock Academy are taking the third week of April and she recommends that the Board move the April vacation to the third week of April. She stated that the transportation costs would be a major reason. The Board agrees to move the April vacation week to the third week.

- December: Proposed that December 22, 2023, the last day before winter break be an early dismissal as it has been done previously. A five (5) day week with five (5) full days can be a lot for students and staff with all the holiday excitement and energy. A ½ day would allow families and staff the ability to travel easier for their holiday locations as well.

Mrs. Buell stated that this school year Friday, December 23, 2022 is NOT a ½ day. Mrs. Buell stated that it would be two days before Christmas. The Board agrees to not having a ½ day prior to Christmas break.

Mrs. Buell stated that if the Board agrees keeping the calendar the same, the only change would be April vacation to the third week, April 15-19th.

Dr. Perkins-Banas asked where the March 1st Professional Development day would be moved to in February, February 21, 2023? Mrs. Buell stated that people are asking to extend the February days off. She stated it could cause hardship for parents having three days in a row off.

The Board had discussion in regards to losing continuity with having a lot of time off from school. They also discussed possible dates of moving the March 1st Professional Development day.

Mrs. Buell stated that there is a requirement of Professional Development hours per year. She also stated that in order to have 182 days of school and to have additional Professional Development days, early release day counts as a full day of school. Snow Days will need to be made up in June.

After the Board discussed alternative dates for Professional Development, Mrs. Buell will come back with more drafts for the next meeting for the Board to review.

9. New Business

None

10. Public Comment

Julia Jarvis, 95 Bunny Lane, Brooklyn - Miss Jarvis stated that she is a Killingly High School student and she is present for an assignment in her American Resolution class at Killingly. She stated that in past meetings, she knows the Board discussed mental health at Killingly. She did a little bit of research and found that 49.5% of kids ages 10 to 19 have mental issues, which would include middle school students in Brooklyn. She is asking if there are any protocols in place to help middle schoolers with mental health issues in Brooklyn.

Mrs. Lyons stated that she knows that we have social workers and other things in place and the Board would report on it at a later date.

Mrs. Buell stated that Public Comment is when we receive public comment from the community and the Board does not always address the comments. She asked Miss Jarvis what kind of feedback she needs for her class.

Miss Jarvis stated that she needs to make sure that her name is in the minutes and she asks a question to the Board.

Mrs. Buell asked the Board to respond tonight. The Board gave her permission. Mrs. Buell stated that she has two social workers at the middle school and approximately 350 students at the middle school. A social worker used to be shared between the elementary and the middle school, Brooklyn no longer does that. There are now two full time social workers at the middle school. They are available to support students through individual and group counseling sessions and are accessible to students all the time. She stated that students do access the social workers. The social workers hold social groups and work with other teachers with social matters that need to be addressed in a classroom. Mrs. Buell stated that they try to address the needs and they understand that students can go to the social workers at any time during school hours or outside school hours in the summer. Mrs. Buell recognizes that there are needs and is addressing the students' needs. She stated that the social workers work with families and attend PPt meetings, Special Education meetings and 504 meetings. Mrs. Buell stated that if Miss Jarvis had any other questions, she could email or call her.

Dr. Perkins-Bana stated that social emotional learning is also addressed through the curriculum. Mrs. Buell stated that social emotional learning is addressed through classroom meetings or circle time. The social workers also support the teachers with the social emotional needs and through the health curriculum. There are two physical education teachers teaching health that address the needs as well.

David Jarvis, 95 Bunny Lane, Brooklyn - Mr. Jarvis stated as a parent and having kids go through middle school moving here from another district, he stated the culture at Brooklyn as been great. He stated his kids thrive in Brooklyn and do well. Brooklyn has open arms and the support was there when moving in the middle of a school year. He stated that open communication goes a long way. With new people coming in being in different districts, it takes a lot longer to be accepted than it did coming to Brooklyn. Mr. Jarvis stated hats off to the teachers and administrators. His kids do well and are going to high school.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No Discussion

Vote Count: 5, 0

Unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna L. DiBenedetto

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Board Clerk

Justin Phaiah, Board of Education Secretary

Date