

# 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 June 23, 2021 via Zoom. In attendance were Mrs. Lyons, Dr. Perkins-Banas, Mr. Phaiah, and Mr. Richards. Mr. Atchinson and Mrs. Jolley were absent. Mrs. Buell, Superintendent, Mr. Otto, Board of Finance, and Mr. Ives, First Selectmen, 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 7:04 p.m.

2. Public Comment

No public comment

3. Approval of Minutes

a. May 26, 2021 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 26, 2021.

(Perkins-Banas/Richards)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

4. Correspondence and Communication

a. Beagary Charitable Trust - Thank You

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you note to the Beagary Charitable Trust for their continued support of the Brooklyn Public Schools. The Beagary Charitable Trust pledged fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for the Brooklyn Middle School's new fitness course, which will include a walking track and ten (10) work-out stations. Their pledge is extremely generous and greatly appreciated.

b. Dollar General Literacy Foundation - Thank You

Mrs. Buell stated she sent a thank you note to Dollar General Literacy Foundation for their very generous \$2,500 grant that will be used for the Summer Academy Reading Program to purchase books. Mrs. Buell stated that she appreciates Dollar General Literacy Foundation for their support of the Brooklyn Public Schools.

c. QMC: End of Year Correspondence

Mrs. Buell stated that she received the Quinebaug Middle College (QMC) 2020-2021 Year End Report and it is posted on the Town's website. QMC is a magnet school run by EASTCONN. Students can take college courses at the same time as their high school curriculum. Students can also receive their associates degree and their high school diploma at the same time with no cost to the students.

d. June 7, 2021 Letter from Woodstock Academy

Mrs. Buell stated she received a letter from Mr. Sandford, Head of School, at Woodstock Academy. Mr. Sandford wanted to thank the entire Brooklyn Public Schools district for the work that had been done on behalf of the students in our region. There were 270 graduates this year, of which 33 were Brooklyn students.

e. Thank You Note From Mr. Robert Chenail

Mr. Chenail sent a thank you note for providing staff with a week of recognition, appreciation, kind words, and thoughtful treats.

f. Anonymous Donor - Thank You

Mrs. Buell stated that she sent a thank you note to an Anonymous Donor for their generous donation of \$2,000 to the Brooklyn Elementary School STEAM program to support the Greenhouse and Greenhouse activities, which will provide students with hand-on educational experiences.

5. Administrative Reports

a. Enrollment Report

Mrs. Buell discussed the enrollment report. There were no major changes with it being a short month.

b. Brooklyn's Best

**BES**

- Grade 4 had a very successful promotion ceremony
- PTO and parent volunteers pulled together a wonderful Fun Day for our staff and students
- The custodial staff is already working hard to prepare our buildings for fall
- Laura Gatlin put together a beautiful Virtual Arts Show that was shared with families

**BMS**

- Successful 8th Grade Outdoor Graduation and Parade
- 8th Grade Dance was a huge success
- Good Cookie May 2021:
  - Grade 5:** King/Nault: Allison Frechette  
Carson/Desabota: Alayna Adams  
Payant/DS: Anastasia Haveles
  - Grade 6:** Logan Hamel, Gabi Clark
  - Grade 7:** Hailey Therrien, Caleb Simoneau
  - Grade 8:** Kaylee Bynum, Austin Sebastian
  - Distance Learning:** Ella Balgenorth, Elizabeth Marshall

6. Board of Education Committee Reports

Nothing to report

7. Board Representatives to Other Committees

Dr. Perkins-Banas interviewed for the Woodstock Academy Liaison and was notified she was accepted. The Board congratulated Dr. Perkins-Banas on being accepted.

8. Old Business

No Old Business

9. New Business

a. Universal Screen Data

Mrs. Buell shared the performance data. The results are mixed with some positive and some negative data. Reading was easier to teach during the different learning models and Math was more challenging. There were some decreases in some areas and growth in other areas. Instruction is challenging during the hybrid model. Mrs. Buell stated the data is posted on the website. Mrs. Buell stated that they are looking at a Scientific Research-Based Instruction (SRBI) model with intervention. There is more training being provided and intervention with

academic structure. Mrs. Buell stated that there will be more data when the SBAC scores come in.

b. Climate Survey Results 2020-2021

Mrs. Buell stated the school climate survey is done every year at both schools. The survey data is posted to the Town of Brooklyn's website. Surveys include:

- i. BMS
  1. BMS Parent Survey Results
  2. BMS STaff Climate Survey Results
  3. Grade 5 School Climate Survey Results
  4. Grade 6-8 School Climate Survey Results
- ii. BES
  1. BES Parent Survey Results
  2. BES Staff Climate Survey Results
  3. Grade 3-4 School Climate Survey Results

Mrs. Buell stated that overall people did not like the different learning models, and remote learning.

c. Approval of the 1303 Contract

Mrs. Buell stated that the 1303 contract has been approved. Mrs. Lyons and Mr. Phaiah are on the committee. Mrs. Buell stated the contract has not been ratified as of yet. There was an additional language change.

Motion to approve the 1303 contract as submitted.  
(Phaiah/Richards)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

d. Cafeteria Management and Potential Outsourcing of the Contract

Mrs. Buell stated that it has been challenging to fill positions in the cafeteria and outsourcing has come up in the past. She stated she asked EASTCONN what it would look like if we were looking to outsource again.

Mrs. Buel stated that if the Brooklyn Public Schools were to outsource the cafeteria services to EASTCONN, there is a proposal that would cost \$12,000/site or \$24,000 the first year with a 2% increase each year for five years. She stated that it is possible that if EASTCONN is our provider, we may qualify for free meals at our sites moving forward. Mrs. Buell also stated that there is a fund balance that would be available for us to pay for the contract for the first few years. It would later need to be added to the budget to run the program.

Mrs. Buell stated that EASTCONN would interview our current cafeteria staff, but are not guaranteeing they will be hired.

There was discussion about the current cafeteria staff being interviewed by EASTCONN, but not being guaranteed positions and what the impact would be. Mrs. Buell stated that the Board of Education would need to potentially bargain the impact to the union.

Mrs. Buell stated that there are benefits to outsourcing and there are drawbacks for our current cafeteria employees. She stated that she has had the conversation with the employees and that it is something she is considering.

Mrs. Lyons stated that if EASTCONN is making the menu, do they also order the food? Mrs. Buell stated Brooklyn will still be ordering the food.

Mrs. Buell stated that if we have a five year contract, it would cost approximately \$125,000 to \$135,000 for the five years. She stated that there would be enough money in the cafeteria account to cover the 5 years.

Mr. Phaiah asked how much money will it save? Mrs. Buell stated if we had a cafeteria manager, which is a challenging position to find someone who meets the requirements of the State's meal program, the cost would be more. It is a challenge to find the right person. She had difficulty filling the lead position as well. It would cost the school more to hire the cafeteria manager. We would save money going with EASTCONN over hiring a full-time position..

Mr. Phaiah stated for everything we are getting, this doesn't seem expensive. He stated we are getting a lot for our dollar.

Mrs. Buell asked the Board if they would consider her discussing further with the union and discuss the impact to our union members and employees?

Mr. Richards stated he would like Mrs. Buell to discuss with the union and ask the questions and bring it back to the July meeting. Mrs. Buell asked if the Board would like to set up a subcommittee? The Board would like to be part of the subcommittee.

Mrs. Buell wanted to state there was not a financial report due to the auditors being at the school and they are still working on closing out the year. She stated that the school is still planning to return \$100,000 to the Town of Brooklyn.

## 10. Public Comment

Mr. Otto stated that there are three areas he would like to comment on. In regards to outsourcing the cafeteria work, he thinks we need to be more certain about the impact and action on the unionized employees. It sounds like management is taking an action that would eliminate the union employees. If they end up not getting hired by EASTCONN, the financial consequences of unemployment might be more than they are thinking about. In respect to the respective action, it sounds a lot like a program we have in the school, but we don't have a manager to manage the program rather than dozens of others. He

feels it would be worthwhile to find a capable manager, even at a higher cost rather than facing additional costs down the road.

Mr. Otto stated that he has had conversation by email with Mrs. Buell about the status of the employees of the Department of Education and the Parks and Recreation Department who will be working at the Summer Academy and the Summer Recreation Program. We are expecting an increase in the number of students participating in both of these programs. He doesn't understand why we are not requiring as a condition of employment that the people in contact with underage students that are not able to receive the vaccines, require employees be vaccinated as a condition of employment rather than relying on masks and separation.

Mr. Otto stated in respect to the test results, it is important to look at the incremental improvement in this difficult year. It's also important to look at the test results, especially in mathematics. These are not the results he would expect to see from a strong school system. We need to take a harder look at how to make a significant increase in the test scores.

## 11. Executive Session

### a. Discuss the Superintendent's Evaluation

Motion to go into executive session at 8:05 p.m. to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation and to invite Mrs. Buell to attend.

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve  
(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

The Board of Education does not intend to make any decisions or hold a vote following the executive session and will adjourn the meeting.

Motion to come out of executive session at 8:40 p.m.

No discussion, unanimous vote  
(Perkins-Banas/Richards)

## 12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

(Perkins-Banas/Phaiah)

No discussion, unanimous vote to approve

Respectfully Submitted,

*Donna L. DiBenedetto*

Donna L. DiBenedetto  
Board Clerk