

Board of Education
Sept 13, 2021 7PM
Virtual

1. Call to Order

Dr. Nugent; BOE Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:07PM. Other members present: Cindy Luty, Charles Raymond, Deborah Burke-Grabarek, and Tom Turner. George Carver was absent. Dan Harris was excused. Also present: Dr. Seitsinger; Superintendent and Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary.

Dr. Nugent explained that the Board is still transitioning from CABA Meeting to BoardBook Meeting and that we are also revamping our website.

At the current time, BOE meeting information can be found as an alert on the Preston Public Schools homepage, as well as on the Town website under Board Agendas.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Consent Agenda

Accepted as presented.

4. Superintendent's Reports/Updates

The Board will have two union negotiations this year; EAP and Administrators. Dr. Nugent asked Deborah Burke-Grabarek and Cindy Luty to sit in on negotiations with him.

Dr. Seitsinger remarked on the 20th anniversary of 9/11 and the impact of those events today.

The School Board of the Future: the role of the school board is definitely changing. In today's world it is becoming more and more challenging to find and keep board members. This is due to the fact that their changing roles are making the work much more complex as time goes on.

Governor Lamont nominated Charlene Russell-Tucker as Education Commissioner. Congratulations!

NFA Correspondence: Dr. Seitsinger commented that Brian Kelly is an excellent communicator. Recently NFA had a power outage and he had to make the decision to evacuate the campus. He sent correspondence to sending schools explaining the situation. Dr. Nugent asked that Brian be asked to attend an upcoming BOE meeting.

John Spang: Director of Finance and School Business Operations Transition: Dr. Seitsinger has contacted several agencies in search of an interim while a permanent person is hired. All agencies spoke very highly of John Spang. Dr. Seitsinger stated that John will be missed and will also be very difficult to replace. Also, Dr. Seitsinger pointed out that Central Office will not be able to maintain the current detail of reporting and timeliness during the interim period.

A lengthy discussion followed. Dr. Seitsinger recommended the hire of a 5 day a week Director at the BOE, but also respects the needs of and partnership with the Town. The BOF will meet on Wednesday. The Board asked Dr. Seitsinger to receive their input and come back to the BOE. There may be a need for a special meeting.

Extended Administrative Authority: vaccine accountability and much more:

Dr. Seitsinger sent out a mandatory confidential google survey wherein employees are to document proof of vaccination or the fact that they are not currently vaccinated. Dr. Seitsinger and the nurses will manage this information. Executive Order 13G states that all school employees must be vaccinated prior to 9-27-21 or must submit medical, religious, or or refusal exemptions. In the case of such exemptions, employees will need to be tested weekly and pay for their own tests. Over the next few days Dr. Seitsinger will meet with various groups to better explain this procedure. If enough people are out on 9-28-2021, we will not be able to open.

The Board agreed to extend Dr. Seitsinger's Executive Administrative Authority. They asked that he continue to keep the Board updated.

5. Principal and Special Education Director Reports

Mrs. Ann Perzan: Smooth opening and no variances with predicted special education numbers.

Mr. Ray Bernier: Thanked the Board for approving the hire of an additional kindergarten teacher and pre- k teacher. PVMS is currently re-arranging cafeteria rotations to ensure safe social distancing. The morning drop off has been significant. PVMS is opening the doors 5 minutes earlier and it has helped a great deal. The enrollment at PVMS is just under 300 students. This is one of the highest enrollments during Mr. Bernier's tenure there.

Dr. Ivy Davis-Tomczuk: The current enrollment at PPMS is 129. There are 3 sections of grade 6 with a total of 41 students. There are 2 sections of grade 7 with a total of 39 students. There are 3 sections of grade 8 with a total of 49 students. PPMS is no longer requiring one way hallways. Students are kept 3 feet apart in classrooms. It has been a positive, productive start! The main area of concern is the need for substitutes.

6. Expenditure/Projection Report

John Spang presented his report to the Board. He stated that \$102,000 will be returned to the Town. Currently Mr. Spang sees two potential areas for budget savings; health insurance and Special Education. The budget is tight and must be managed carefully. The federal money we will receive cannot be used to supplement the budget.

The capital paving project at PPMS was a great success. Two capital projects are left; PPMS roof, and the purchase of a 9 passenger van for the transportation department.

The board had a short discussion about erecting a fence with gates at PPMS.

Dr. Nugent, Dr. Seitsinger and other Board members thanked John Spang for a job well done and wished him well at his new post in Danbury.

7. Adjournment

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10PM. Luty/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

