

**VOLUNTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
195 Main Street, Voluntown, CT 06384  
Phone: (860) 376-9167 [www.voluntownct.org](http://www.voluntownct.org)  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS: Adam S. Burrows

**BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES**

March 12, 2020

Board of Education Meeting Room - 7:00 p.m.

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- I. CALL TO ORDER** Chairperson Beauparlant meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
- ATTENDANCE** **Present:** Kate Beauparlant (Chairperson), Cathy Grant (Secretary), Kristen Trahan (Vice Chair), Arikka Kalwara, Meagan Wicks and Christopher Wilson  
**Absent:** Skart Paul  
**Also Present:** Adam S. Burrows (Superintendent) and Amy Suffoletto (Principal)
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- III. CITIZENS / COMMENTS** - Dennis Page and Terry Hollowell were present. Terry asked the Board to consider approving the “J1 Request” for a foreign exchange student from Spain that she and her husband are hoping to host for the next school year. The student would be attending NFA. The Board will discuss and follow up with her.
- IV. GUESTS** - Tracey Hanson (First Selectman), Jackie Vaillancourt (VES Teacher), Emilee Penman, Alyson Paige and Kayla Berard
- V. CONSENT AGENDA**  
**MOTION #1 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Wicks) that the Board approves the Consent Agenda as presented; all in favor. Motion carries.**  
  
**MOTION #2 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Wicks) that the Board adds “Track and Field Coach Resignation” to the Agenda as item IX-10 under New Business; all in favor. Motion carries.**
- VI. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**
- 1. PRINCIPAL’S REPORT** (by Amy L. Suffoletto)
- Students as a Focal Point**
- **Sports** - Congratulations to our Boys’ Basketball team for winning first place at the S.E.M.S.A.C Basketball Finals. Congratulations to our Cheerleading Team and Girls’ Basketball team for competing in the finals as well.
  - **Student Council** - Comprised of members from grades 5-8, the Student Council began a bi-weekly school store and concessions during sporting events. They use the revenue to give back to VES and to support other charities. Student council raised over \$435.00 to donate to an Australian Wildlife Charity - WIRES.
  - **Read across America Week** - A fun-filled week celebrating the love of reading was held from March 2-3, 2020. Rep. Brian Lanoue visited and read to our grade four students.
  - **Pennies for Patients** - Pennies for Patients has begun and runs through March 27, 2020.
  - **Spirit Week** - Spirit week was held the week of February 19, 2020. This year we unveiled our Soccer Championship banner.
  - **Connecticut State Assessment Individual Student Reports (SBAC, CTAA, CAPT, CMT, Skills Checklist)** - The State Department of Education has been providing information for the upcoming 2020 spring testing.
  - **SRBI** Session 3 began February 3, 2020. SRBI provides literacy and math services to Kindergarten - Eighth grade students; some receive both literacy and math. SRBI provides services to all students, as it is a general education initiative. Tier 1 and/or Tier 2 is provided in the general classroom by the general education teacher during WIN block. In grades K-4, Tier 2 and Tier 3 support is provided by our SRBI Interventionists during WIN/Science-Social Studies. In grades 5-8, Tier 2 support is provided by our general education Reading and Math teachers during their classroom block.
- Curriculum, Learning, and Instruction**
- **Faculty Informal/Formal Observations:** Trimester 2 Formal and Informal observations are completed. All Mid-Year meetings are closed for faculty. Professional development was held on 2/14/20. Faculty worked on SBAC training and other professional learning activities were provided, as well as curriculum and student data review.

- **Connecticut Office of Early Childhood** - the Monthly School Readiness Reports for the Voluntown Elementary School Pre School and School Readiness Program have been updated for submission by the monthly due date.

**Building, Grounds, and Transportation & Safety**

- School Safety - Brief orientation meetings are held on a regular basis for Substitutes and Volunteers to review our security and safety procedures, as well as confidentiality procedures and completion of the DCF Authorization Form. .
- Summary of Drills - Fire Drill (5); Earthquake Drill (1); Lockdown Drill (1); Evacuation Drill (0)

**Community and Public Relations**

- **PTO** - Monthly PTO meetings are held at either 3:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. in the VES Library. The PTO is hosting a movie night on March 6, 2020 and a family dance on March 27, 2020.
- **Youth Service Bureau/Local Prevention Council** - The YSB meets the second Wednesday of the month in the BOE room. YSB GRASP Programs are offered on Monday afternoons throughout the school year. Voluntown YSB has been working to provide improved programs and a variety of opportunities for our students.

Meagan Wicks commended Amy for her calm and efficient evacuation during a recent brush fire outside the school building. The Superintendent also expressed thanks and praise to the Voluntown Fire Department for their quick response and to the Faculty and Staff on how well everything was handled and executed.

**2. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES REPORT** (by Lloyd A. Johnson, Ph.D.)

- Transition meetings with high schools of choice have begun. We're planning to schedule them when practicable in conjunction with Annual Reviews to conserve staff time out of class.
- As of March 12, 2020, this Director has chaired 129 PPT/504/parent meetings distributed among the following locations: VES, The Learning Clinic in Brooklyn, EASTCONN's Northeast School in Killingly, EastConn's Autism Program in Columbia, NFA, GHS, GAS, The Marine Science Magnet High School in Groton, United Services Inc. in Willimantic, and Quinebaug Middle College in Danielson.
- The census of students Pre-K to 12+ receiving special services:

	<u>IEP</u>	<u>504</u>
Pre-K to 8	49	24
9-12+	22	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>36</b>

**3. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS** (by Adam S. Burrows)

- Calendar of Events for March and April, 2020
- The District Enrollment Report noted 263 students in Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 130 high school students.
- The BOE received grants, tuition payments and other funds that have been returned to the Town account. (\$77,542.59 in 2017/18 and \$96,408.40 in 2018/19). \$43,894.30 has been returned to the Town for 2019/20. The total for the last three years has been \$217,845.29 as of 3-12-20.
- Superintendent's Report on the Governor's ECS (Educational Cost Sharing) Proposal. Voluntown, based on the Governor's budget proposal received a -\$86,575 decrease this 2019-2020 school year. There is now a projected -\$89,346 per year for 2020-2021 and for the next 8 years with a final deduction of \$134,621 for 2028. Our small rural town, based on this multi-year proposal, is to receive a -\$822,997 total reduction in the ECS grant. This loss of state revenue is one of the largest deductions in the state when compared with all other cities and towns.
- 2019/20 Faculty/Staff Assignments
- CABE Liaison for March
- UNCAS Health District – COVID-19 Planning Meeting (3/4/20): A number of steps have been taken to comply with Board of Education Policy # 6114 on Emergency and Disaster Preparedness and Policy # 6114.8 on Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update: Amy Suffoletto distributed a newsletter sent out to Parents on VES precautions currently being taken to prevent the spread of viruses. This update shared the work of our school's CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) that coordinates activities. "Any school closure will be made by school district administration with support and guidance from the UNCAS Health District and the State Department of Education." Effective March 16, 2020, all after-school activities/events for groups of more than 100 people are gathered, including in-school assemblies where families are invited, are cancelled until April 30, 2020. Also, all field trips, out of state travel and many Youth Service Bureau

events have been cancelled/postponed until further notice. Further updates will be given as information is received and decisions are made. The Superintendent noted that our district has the resources and ability to react appropriately and that effort is being made to circulate and disseminate accurate information.

- Kate Beauparlant distributed a letter from Bob Rader, Executive Director, and Patrice McCarthy, Deputy Director and General Council of CABE regarding roles and responsibilities during the Coronavirus Crisis.
- The Superintendent distributed a draft of the VES 2019/20 Pandemic Plan which included the following: Pandemic Emergency Response; Prevention and Education Efforts; Surveillance Systems; Communication; Continuation of Instruction; School System Review.

**VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS** - Reviewed under Consent Agenda

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

1. **J-1 Request** – Mr. Burrows reported that this request was forwarded to the NFA Director of Guidance who is familiar with F-1 and J-1 student programs. There will be a review of this request and he will receive and update. The Board of Education will then review the information to determine if this request will be approved because there is a tuition cost for this one-year placement.

2. **2020-21 Budget Development Session** (Initial Summary Proposal)

The Superintendent distributed a third draft of the budget proposal for 2020-21 of \$6,848,722 which represents an increase of \$63,526 or 0.94% over the 2019-20 approved budget of \$6,785,196. Also distributed was a report on Budgetary Savings for Faculty and Staff. The Board reviewed and discussed the budget proposal at length.

Upcoming schedule of budget development:

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|----------|----------|--|
| Thursday | 04-09-20 | Public Hearing about the 2020-21 education budget proposal and Board of Education approval of the 2020-21 budget proposal                                |
| Thursday | 04-23-20 | Approved budget proposal for 2020-21 delivered to Town Clerk for public dissemination  |
| Tuesday  | 05-19-20 | Possible projected date for annual Town Meeting to vote on the Town and Board of Education Budgets at Voluntown Elementary School gymnasium at 7:00 p.m. |

Mr. Burrows reported there has been a 26.5% decrease in electricity usage (in a comparison of Jan/Feb from 2019 to 2020). He noted these results will be reported to Eversource to request a change in our peak meter rating to request a reduction in the cost of our electricity. We are beginning to see the benefits of the energy efficiency upgrades that were made last summer.

**MOTION #3 (3/12/20) was made (Trahan, Grant) that the Board approves the 2020-21 budget proposal of \$6,848,722 which represents an increase of \$63,526 or 0.94% over the 2019-20 approved budget of \$6,785,196; Motion passes with 4 in favor (Trahan, Grant, Kalwara, Beauparlant), 1 against (Wilson) and 1 abstain (Wicks).**

This 3-12-20 proposal includes:

- Negotiated salaries for teachers, and classified faculty and staff with the non-certified being negotiated.
- The *projected* cost for the outplacement of Special Education students based on identified needs.
- *Projected* cost of tuition based on the estimated numbers for attendance at seven designated high schools.
- A *projected* increase of 5.0% in the cost of health insurance.
- *Projected* energy costs for heating fuel, propane, diesel/gasoline and electricity (with estimated savings due to recent energy efficiency upgrades).
- Continuation of the 10-11-18 Board of Education decision to eliminate a full time Assistant Principal.
- Continuation of the elimination of a classroom teacher in 2019-2020 due to declining enrollment.
- Reduction of the 1.0 FTE School Counselor to 0.60 or three days per week.
- Elimination of an SRBI (Scientifically Research-Based Intervention) Tutor
- Elimination of a fourth grade classroom teacher due to declining enrollment and reassignment to SRBI primary grades and library responsibilities.
- Elimination of a 7th and 8th grade writing teacher due to declining enrollment and reassignment to co-teach in the Special Education Department, support JHS SRBI needs, and continuation of existing library responsibilities.
- A proposed \$29,233 estimated reduction in overall transportation costs due to declining enrollment and projected needs.

This proposal does not include a Foreign Language Teacher that has been under review for the last several years. If this program is added, the projected cost for 2020-2021 would increase the proposal by \$51,081 for salary (M-3), plus \$11,261.69 for benefits.

This year, there have been unanticipated extra expenses of approximately \$48,000 due to needed repair of leaking windows in the Pre-K section of the school and the purchase a new van for Special Education transportation needs.

3. **School Calendar for 2020-21** (Fifth review)  
**MOTION #4 (3/12/20) was made (Wilson, Wicks) that the Board approves the 2020-21 School Calendar as presented; all in favor. Motion carries.**
4. **Wheeler High School, North Stonington**  
 Mr. Burrows gave a follow-up on his recent written request to Peter Nero, Superintendent of Wheeler High School on establishing a straight tuition policy. North Stonington is reviewing a straight-forward tuition proposal for a per diem charge for days attended.
5. **2019-20 Board of Education Performance Self-Evaluation** (Second reading)
6. **Five-Year Facilities Plan** (Second draft)  
**MOTION #5 (3/12/20) was made (Wilson, Trahan) to approve the Five-Year Facilities Plan as presented; all in favor. Motion carries.**
7. **Policy # 3516 – Safety** (Second reading)  
**MOTION #6 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Kalwara) to approve Policy # 3516 on Safety as presented; all in favor. Motion carries.**
8. **Policy and Regulation # 3517 – Security of Buildings and Grounds** (Second reading)  
**MOTION #7 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Wilson) to approve Policy and Regulation # 3517 on Security of Buildings and Grounds as presented; all in favor. Motion carries.**
9. **Regulation # 4112.51 – Employment/Reference Checks** (Second reading)
10. **Policy and Regulation # 4118.112 – Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment** (Second reading)  
**MOTION #8 (3/12/20) was made (Trahan, Grant) to approve Policy and Regulation # 4118.112 on Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment as amended; all in favor. Motion carries.**
11. **RevTrak** – An update was given to the Board.

#### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **SRBI Program**
2. **Capital Improvement Plan** (First reading)
3. **Food Services Program** – The Breakfast Plan was reviewed.  
**MOTION #9 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Trahan) to approve the price changes of the following: Chips to \$0.75; Bottled Water to \$1.00; and Ice Cream to \$0.75; all in favor. Motion carries.**
4. **Healthy Food Certification/Authorization for the Sale of Food and Beverages**  
**MOTION #10 (3/12/20) was made (Wilson, Grant) that the Board of Education complies with the Healthy Food Certification mandates: Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**MOTION #11 (3/12/20) was made (Trahan, Wilson) that the Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**MOTION #12 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Kalwara) that the Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**MOTION #13 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Wilson) that the Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to submit the Healthy Food Certification/Statement for 2019-20; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**5. Eighth Grade Graduation**

**MOTION #14 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Wicks) that the Board of Education approves the tentative date of Monday, June 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. for the Eighth Grade Graduation; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**6. School Readiness Program**

**MOTION #15 (3/12/20) was made (Grant, Trahan) to approve the last day of Pre-K to be June 16, 2020; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**7. Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers**

**MOTION #16 – 23 (3/12/20): made (Grant, Trahan) that the Board of Education approves pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151 that the Voluntown Board of Education non-renew the following non-tenured teacher contracts of Alyson Paige, Emilee Penman, Kayla Berard, Emily MacEwen, Amanda Gould, Chelsea Burns, Kathleen Groth and Marissa Kadar. The Board further moves that the Superintendent of Schools be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board of Education to any requests for a hearing, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151; and further move that the Superintendent be directed that any response to a request for a hearing, and if a hearing is required by law, indicate that such hearing is to be before the Board of Education.**

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| • Alyson Paige   | <b>MOTION #16</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Emilee Penman  | <b>MOTION #17</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Kayla Berard   | <b>MOTION #18</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Emily MacEwen  | <b>MOTION #19</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Amanda Gould   | <b>MOTION #20</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Chelsea Burns  | <b>MOTION #21</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Kathleen Groth | <b>MOTION #22</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
| • Marissa Kadar  | <b>MOTION #23</b> (Grant, Trahan); 5 in favor and 1 abstain (Wilson) |
|                  | <b>MOTION CARRIES</b>  |

**8. Voluntown Housing Authority**

**MOTION #24 (3/12/20) was made (Wilson, Trahan) to approve the request from Voluntown Housing Authority for up to 10 of their residents to use our Pre-K parking lot for a week in April while their parking lot is being repaved; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**9. Fingerprinting**

**10. Track and Field Coach Resignation**

**MOTION #25 (3/12/20) was made (Wilson, Grant) to accept Rhonda Bursey's resignation request as a Track and Field Coach; all in favor. Motion carries.**

**X. SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

- Upcoming BOE meetings at 7:00 p.m.: March 26, 2020 (Special Meeting) and April 9, 2020 (Regular)
- Budget Preparation Timeline and Process for 2020-21
- Wheeler High School
- 2019-20 BOE Self-Evaluation – (Third draft)
- J-1 Request
- Capital Improvement Plan (Second reading)
- Non-renewal of non-tenured teachers as a part of the 2020-21 Budget Development Process
- Regulation # 4112.51 – Employment/Reference Checks (Third reading)

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION #26 (3/12/20) was made (Trahan, Kalwara) to move into Executive Session at 9:40 p.m. for the purpose of discussing negotiations and noncertified personnel; all in favor. No action was taken.**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION #27 (3/12/20) was made (Wicks, Trahan) to adjourn at 9:56 p.m.; all in favor. Motion carries.**

Witness

Date

Attest

Date

Respectfully drafted and edited by:

*Dee Dee Jackman, Board of Education Clerk*

*Adam S. Burrows, Superintendent of Schools*

**APPROVED BY THE BOE ON 5/14/20**