

February 9, 2023 in the Central Office Conference Room at 7:00 p.m.  
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- **Winter Season Update** - Returning from break in January, we do continue to see FLU, RSV, and COVID-19 cases among students and staff. Continued regular cleaning and disinfecting will help combat the spread of illness. No new guidance has been provided by the State of CT.
- **Skate Inn PTO Event** - The PTO hosted a fun family night at the Plainfield Skate Inn.
- **Winter Sports** - Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball and Cheerleading are almost complete. Athletes practice and play games daily.

- **Connecticut State Assessment Individual Student Reports (SBAC, CTAA, CAPT, CMT, Skills Checklist)** - 2023 testing season is underway, our teachers have completed training for our alternative assessment to administer to a select group of students who qualify for that specific test.
- **School Lunch Program**- School lunch continues to be free through the month of February. During the month of March our School Lunch Program will be having a Comprehensive Audit. This includes information regarding policies, compliance procedures and production. It also includes an onsite visit by the State of Connecticut to review our program. Tom O'Connor and I have been working closely to complete the components of the audit.
- **Upcoming:**
  - February 3 & 4 Boys Basketball Tournament
  - February 10-17th Spirit Week (flyer distributed)
  - February 10th Pep Rally and Cheerleading Competition
  - February 13th and 15th Semi-finals/Finals for basketball
  - February 16th Math Night 5:30-6:30pm
  - February 17th 12pm Dismissal Professional Development Science of Reading and Committees
  - February 20th and 21st No School

### **Curriculum, Learning, and Instruction**

- **VES Website** - Great effort has been made to update and post current information/resources for families. Updates to our website continue as new information changes.
- **Meetings** - Include regular meetings of the following committees as needed: English/Language Arts, Mathematics, TEAM, Wellness, Student Services Department, Safe School Climate, Crisis Intervention Team, Transportation, School Readiness Council, Indoor Air Quality/Tools for Schools/Safety, School Security and Safety, JHS/HS Transition, and a Faculty Meeting monthly as determined logistically.
- **Professional Development** -Teachers and Paras continue with professional learning. Reading teachers are participating in professional learning related to the program implementation. On early dismissal days, committee meetings, professional learning and grade level work takes place.
- **Teacher Evaluation Plan** - The State of CT will be releasing additional guidance this Spring regarding updates for the teacher evaluation programs. Additionally, the EDREFLECT platform will be discontinued and our PDEC committee will be reviewing other programs from surrounding districts.
- **Grants/Reports/Applications**
  - **Connecticut Office of Early Childhood** - The monthly School Readiness Reports for the Voluntown Elementary School Pre School and School Readiness Program are submitted through the ECE reporting system.
  - **FY 22 School Readiness and Quality Enhancement Grants** – Updated information has been provided by the Office of Early Childhood for the upcoming fiscal year and the grants were approved and are drawn down monthly in the grant system for expenditures.
  - **FY 23** allocations for the Priority and Competitive School Readiness Enrollment-based Grants have been disbursed. SR has received a lump sum of \$21,000 for programming. This money can be used to improve our program, which may be through building our Natural Playground.

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

- Brian Kallio, Director of Maintenance, continues to review, implement, and address needs within our school building and on our grounds.
- Anne Michaud, Director of Transportation, continues to review and address needs within our transportation department.

### **Community and Public Relations**

- **PTO** - Suggestions are welcome for the school year. Contact Hailie Davis [hdavis@voluntownct.org](mailto:hdavis@voluntownct.org). A BMX assembly has been reserved with PTO and YSB for May, 2023.

- **Youth Service Bureau/Local Prevention Council** – The YSB-LPC Advisory Board meets virtually on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. Contact Melinda Bryan [mbryan@voluntownct.org](mailto:mbryan@voluntownct.org). Many programs for are underway.

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

- As the Tech sand Magnet School acceptances are received, we begin transferring IEP and 504 documents to the 8th graders' schools of choice. We plan to schedule transition meetings for each of those students with their next school. The meetings are virtual and hosted by us with a representative of the receiving school. NFA will not be participating in this process and will rely on a records review. The Tech Schools, Wheeler, and GHS will have a representative attend those meetings.
- At this point in the year, most department members have developed or completed CT-SEDS IEPs or 504 Accommodation Plans. The time demands are significant. After-school hours are needed to complete the documents in a timely manner as required by statutes. We understand that the Bureau of Special Education is responding to districts' concerns about the increased workload CT-SEDS has created statewide by offering an additional Stipend Grant. The application is available. The funds may be spent through the summer of 2023. Voluntown qualifies for a grant of \$10,000. The funds may be used for planning time, learning time, and professional development. It may also be used for substitute coverage for in-district and out-of-district training opportunities.
- Dr. Emily Casey, our consulting psychologist, is leading department members in exploring the Feifer Assessments of Reading and Writing. She has administered these new assessments recently for a few of our students. These assessments are more accurate in identifying dyslexia and dysgraphia than those used previously. We purchased the evaluations for our department with grant funds. The training in the Feifer Assessment of Reading was completed in October/November. We're planning to engage in the training on the Feifer Assessment of Writing in February. Once trained, our Special Education teachers can administer these assessments when deemed necessary at a PPT with parent approval.
- As of February 9, 2023, this Director has chaired 90 PPT/504/Parent Meetings distributed among the following schools: VES, The Learning Clinic in Brooklyn, EastConn's Northeast School in Killingly, EastConn's Autism Program in Columbia, Norwich Free Academy, Griswold High School, Griswold Alternative School, Wheeler, The Marine Science Magnet High School in Groton, Norwich Transition Academy, and EastConn's Regional Transition Program in Danielson.

The census of students in Pre-K to 12+ receiving special services is as follows:

|              | <b>10/1/2020</b> |           | <b>10/1/2021</b> |           | <b>2/9/23</b> |           |
|--------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
|              | IEP              | 504       | IEP              | 504       | IEP           | 504       |
| PreK -8      | 38               | 21        | 34               | 31        | 36            | 41        |
| 9-12+        | 22               | 11        | 20               | 15        | 16            | 17        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>60</b>        | <b>32</b> | <b>54</b>        | <b>46</b> | <b>52</b>     | <b>58</b> |

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

- Calendar of Events for February and March 2023
- The District Enrollment Report noted 253 students in Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 113 high school students.
- \$20,493.28 has been returned to the Town of Voluntown Undesignated Fund from grants, rebates, and other unanticipated savings received.
- 22/23 School days cancelled/delayed report
- Tuition rates letters from NFA, North Stonington, and Griswold Public Schools.
- Ellington Public Schools BOE endorsement of HB 5003 - *An Act Concerning Education Funding in Connecticut*
- Notification that Governor Lamont announced that DEMHS accepting applications for the School Security Grant Program (SSGP) and the Multi-Media School Grant Program (MMSSGP)

**MOTION # 2 (2/9/23) was made (Grant/Thompson) to authorize the Superintendent to develop and submit applications for the School Security Grant Program (SSGP) and the State of Connecticut Multi-Media School Security Competitive Grant Program (MMSSGP), which requires approval from the Board of Selectman; all in favor; motion passes.**

- CCM Municipal Training Webinar information on Energy Efficiency Funding Opportunities for Municipalities and Public Schools
- CABE Policy Highlights – January 20, 2023 (District Philosophies of STEM and STEAM); and February 3, 2023 (CSDE Releases Model Enrollment Policy)
- Mr. Burrows distributed the annual Physical Fitness Test results
- Also provided was information on the ECS or Educational Cost Sharing Formula for 23/24 and 24/25: State Budget Proposal Creates a Financial Challenge for Local Taxpayers in Voluntown urging state legislators to adjust the proposed grant for the next two years; Student-Centered Funding Proposal
- A Solar Panel Committee information was provided along with CT Solar Lease and Eversource invoices

**MOTION # 3 (2/9/23) was made (Muschiano/Grant) to approve the request from the Voluntown Economic Development Committee to use the school grounds for the Farmers Market during the summer of 2023; all in favor; motion passes.**

## **VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Initial Budget Proposal for 2023-24**

This 2-9-23 draft of the initial budget proposal for 2023-2024 shows a total of \$6,990,615 and represents an increase of \$140,282 or 2.05% over the 2022-2023 town approved total of \$6,850,333. This initial proposal will continued be reviewed and adjusted as we review the educational needs of our students, faculty/staff projections, prepare for the annual town meeting, consider the financial needs of the community.

This proposal includes:

- Negotiated salaries for teachers and classified faculty and staff with non-certified to be negotiated.
- The projected cost for outplacement of Special Education students based on identified needs.
- Projected cost of tuition based on the numbers attending eight designated high schools.
- An initial projected increase of 10.5% in the cost of health insurance.

Mr. Burrows distributed a summary of budget changes and a multi-year comparison report on health benefits costs. The Board of Education reviewed sections of the budget and spent time analyzing several increases based on implementing appropriate programs for students.

#### Timeline for the 2023-2024 Budget Development

|          |          |  |
|----------|----------|--|
| Thursday | 03-09-23 | Updated 23-24 budget proposal presented to Board of Education  |
| Thursday | 03-16-23 | <b>23-24 Budget Proposal is sent to the Town Clerk for public review</b>   |
| Thursday | 04-06-23 | Public Hearing about the 23-24 education budget proposal and <b>Board of Education approval of the 23-24 budget proposal</b> |
| Thursday | 04-17-23 | Approved budget proposal for 23-24 sent to Town Clerk  |

Date is to be determined for the Annual Town Meeting at VES to vote on the Town and Board of Education Budgets

### **2. Federal and State Grants**

The following is a summary of short-term grants:

- COVID Relief Fund (\$176,639 – Expended)
- Elementary/Secondary Emergency Relief Funds or ESSER I (\$32,674 – Expended)
- Elementary/Secondary Emergency Relief Funds or ESSER II (\$136,204 being expended)
- American Rescue Plan or ARP-ESSER III (\$306,105 being expended)
- Special Education Stipend Grant (\$20,000 Expended)
- ESSER II Special Education Recovery Grant (\$30,000 – Approved)
- ESSER II Bonus Special Populations Recovery Grant (\$25,000 – Approved)
- ESSER II Bonus Dyslexia Recovery Grant (\$3,250 - Approved)
- Homeless Grant (\$1,770 – Application Submitted)
- USDA School Lunch Program Equipment Grant (\$25,000 Expended)
- Comcast local grant to school systems (\$3,500 approved and being expended)
- Sp. Ed. Grants (\$10,000 for Certified and \$5,000 for Non-certified – Expended)
- HVAC Grant request of \$170,000 to State of Connecticut (submitted on 12/1/22)
- Special Education Stipend Grant #2: Application from CSDE will soon be distributed.

The above grants are additional allocations for a wide variety of COVID and other related priorities especially related to improving air quality in schools throughout the nation, addressing learning loss, supporting technology connectivity, additional PPE of Personal Protective Equipment, etc. These funds were not used to replace the day-to-day and year-to-year school expenditures for our local school budget. These federal grants require us to maintain a “Continuity of Services” during this time to implement health and safety protocols and addressing learning loss during the time of COVID.

### 3. **Building Committee Update**

The MINUTES of the 1-10-23 and 2-7-23 Building Committee meetings were provided along with a comparison of the video security contractor bid, and a summary of the CT Communications quote.

**MOTION # 4 (2/9/23) was made (Grant/Kalwara) for the Board of Education to approve the 2/6/23 recommendation from the Building Committee for an upgrade to our video surveillance system as submitted by CT Communications for \$75,879 from an approved ESSER III grant; all in favor; motion passes.**

### 4. **Vision of an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduate**

A “DRAFT” of a Vision of an 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduate was provided. Suggested revisions are to be sent to Amy prior to the next BOE meeting.

### 5. **Capital Improvement Plan 2023-27**

The Board reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan for 2023-2027. This plan has also been reviewed by the Building Committee.

Mr. Burrows noted more time is needed due to recent maintenance and facility repairs that are under review. An example would be the recent sliding door repair in the gym. It was evident that this needs to be replaced and we are awaiting a more accurate quote to verify the current estimate of \$120,000. We have a 66,000 square-foot school that is in good condition. The building has been upgraded in 1953, 1970, 1990, and 2000, which means annual maintenance costs have been increasing.

### 6. **School Calendar for 2023-24 (2<sup>nd</sup> review)**

Calendars from NFA, EASTCONN, and the LEARN Regional Calendar were reviewed. Any suggested changes can be sent to Amy before the next meeting.

### 7. **Job Description Updates**

The IT Technician job description was tabled. Mr. Burrows is researching quotes from LEARN and Novus.

**MOTION # 5 (2/9/23) was made (Kalwara/Grant) to approve the Substitute Teacher Job Description as presented; all in favor; motion passes.**

**MOTION # 6 (2/9/23) was made (Muschiano/Thompson) to approve the Paraeducator Job Description as presented; all in favor; motion passes.**

**IX. NEW BUSINESS****1. Personnel**

**MOTION # 7 (2/9/23) was made (Thompson/Muschiano) with regrets to accept the resignation of Hillary Sirois. The Board expressed many thanks and appreciation for her 18 years of service at VES; all in favor; motion passes.**

**2. Annual Meaningful Notice 403(b) Plan Vendor List**

**MOTION # 8 (2/9/23) was made (Kalwara/Muschiano) to approve the Annual Meaningful Notice 403(b) Plan Vendor List as presented; all in favor; motion passes.**

**3. 22-23 BOE Mid-Year Self-Evaluation**

The BOE Mid-Year Self-Evaluation was provided. This was a first reading.

**4. Policy & Regulation # 3542.43 – Charging Policy (2<sup>nd</sup> reading)**

**MOTION # 9 (2/9/23) was made (Muschiano/Grant) to approve the Charging Policy and Regulation # 3542.43 as presented; all in favor; motion passes.**

**5. CT Multi-Media School Security Competitive Grant Program (MMSSGP)**

Discussion and motion was held during Superintendent's section above.

**MOTION # 10 (2/9/23) was made (Kalwara/Muschiano) to authorize the Superintendent to submit a grant application for FY2023 CT-SEDS implementation Stipend by the 3/1/23 due date; all in favor; motion passes.**

**X. UPCOMING MEETING(S)/AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Regular BOE Meeting – March 9, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Central Office Conference Room
- 2023-2024 Budget Proposal Update
- Griswold High School Presentation
- Building Committee Update
- Technology (IT Support, IT Technician Job Description-2<sup>nd</sup> review, and Cyber Insurance)
- Capital Improvement Plan (4<sup>rd</sup> reading)
- School Calendar for 23/24 (3<sup>rd</sup> review)
- Vision of and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduate (3<sup>rd</sup> review)

**XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION # 11 (2/9/23) was made (Kalwara/Grant) to enter Executive Session at 9:32 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Personnel; all in favor; motion passes.**

**MOTION # 12 (2/9/23) was made (Thompson/Muschiano) to invite the Superintendent of Schools to the Executive Session; all in favor; motion passes.**

The Board of Education came out of Executive Session at 9:34 p.m. No action was taken.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION # 13 (2/9/23) was made (Muschiano/Thompson) to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.; all in favor; motion passes.**

---

**Witness**


---

**Date**


---

**Attest**


---

**Date**

Respectfully drafted and edited by:

*Dee Dee Jackman, Board of Education Clerk*

*Adam S. Burrows, Superintendent of Schools*

**APPROVED AT THE 3/9/23 BOE MEETING**