



**TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 6:00 P.M.  
355 Migeon Ave – Remote Meeting**

**Minutes**

1. Call to Order: 6:02 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Corey, Ms. DePretis, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Todor, Ms. Fappiano, Ms. Richardson, Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Ferguson, Mr. Arum, Ms. Schulte, Mr. Barlow, Ms. Herold, Ms. Klimaszewski (Everyone attended this meeting remotely.)  
Absent: Mr. Eucalitto
3. Approval of Agenda: Ms. Hoehne made an amendment to the agenda to add discussion and action for Pizza Fundraiser, BINGO fundraiser and Delayed Opening and Early Dismissals, second by Ms. DePretis. All in favor.
4. School/Community Service/Public Participation: None
5. Information Sharing Session:
  - A. Superintendent's Report: Recap – Over the last 48 hours, the CDC did make a statement that there is little transmission at the school sites. The current vaccines will be effective against the various strains. The first group of ages 75+ will have received the majority their vaccines this Saturday. The next group will be phase 1B, ages 65+. They will begin their vaccination cycle within the next two weeks. Regarding the secondary education model, the goal is to transition to an in-person option before the end of the year. A parent survey will be sent out during the next week. We would love to have some sense of normalcy. After talking to the Torrington Health Department, we believe an in-person model is possible. More Plexiglas has been ordered. The transition may mean some switching of class periods to allow for larger classrooms to house higher enrollment classes, but the students will not have to change teachers. The district will be receiving federal money, Cares Act II funds. We should be receiving at least double the amount of Cares Act I funding.
    1. Office of Teaching and Learning Update: Work continues with learning targets and embedded formative assessment. Plans are being finalized for February 16<sup>th</sup> – last district wide PD of this academic year. The OTL is collaborating with the Dept. of Student Services to provide learning

opportunities relevant for everyone. The “Novel Preview Team” continues to meet to review/discuss options. The winter student assessment window is January 19 through February 12. The Grading Expectations Committee (6-12) continues to explore barriers to student success and will make recommendations to overcome these barriers. Mr. Kissko asked what the grading problem is? Ms. Ferguson stated that there is a lack of consistency in grading. In Technology, we are preparing for the SBA administration. Ms. Herold is testing the lockdown browser with remote administration capabilities. The IT Department has completed the 2020 e-rate infrastructure upgrades.

2.Special Education Update: Ms. Klimaszewski stated the district is below 15% to 14.98% for CT SDE Annual Performance Report Prevalence Rate. This is very exciting news! The district is still below the state average for the outpace percentage at 11.65%. Twenty-six students have exited from special education this year. Right now, ten students are being homeschooled, so they are not included in this data. Ms. Klimaszewski reviewed the Mental Health and Social Emotional Support Reaching Out to Students and Families During the Pandemic document. She explained the numerous resources available to help everyone deal with the pandemic and other current issues. For example, at least one Registered Behavior Tech is assigned full-time in every building to assist with student behaviors and provide mental health first aid. Mr. Maniccia asked if there is guidance from the state on special education referrals and qualifications? Ms. Klimaszewski stated that as a district, we really must differentiate if there is a disability or absences.

- B. Monthly Financials: There is still a surplus at this point, but it is still early in the fiscal year. We are under budget by one million in transportation costs.
- C. COVID-19 Expenses: The district received its first allotment. We will put in our second request by the end of February and the money should be transferred in the beginning of March.
- D. Board Goals: Mr. Kissko stated that the SIC committee reviewed the board goals and portioned them out to the appropriate committees:

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1. **Monitor the implementation of the district strategic plan and its integration into the city strategic plan once that plan is developed.** The full board to oversee this goal, then it will go into School Improvement.
2. **Monitor and support the Middle School/High School Building Committee and allocate resources to the development and implementation of the “Pathways” approach to the secondary curriculum.** – School Improvement Committee will oversee this goal.
3. **Develop a plan to re-align TPS facility needs once the new building opens.** – Facilities & Technology Committee will oversee this goal.
4. **Oversee and support whatever is necessary to deal with the educational impact of the effects of prolonged distance learning.** – The School Improvement Committee will oversee this goal.
5. **Implement the capital plan as presented.** – Facilities & Technology Committee will oversee this goal.

E. Pizza Fundraiser – All of the elementary schools and possibly TMS will be participating in the pizza fundraiser. It is a \$10.00 ticket for a cheese pizza at Vinny’s and the money will go to all elementary and middle school students to bring enrichment experiences to each school. They anticipate raising \$2,000.

The board will approve this fundraiser upon the approval by the auditor to use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party program to receive the funds.

F. Bingo Fundraiser - The Middle School is starting their PTO fundraiser. The BINGO fundraiser is occurring on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2021. The money will be distributed in thirds to the following: student activities, PTO events, and the principal’s fund to benefit all students. They anticipate raising \$2,500.

The board will approve this fundraiser upon the approval by the auditor to use a 3<sup>rd</sup> party program to receive the funds.

G. Delayed Opening and Early Dismissals – Ms. Lubomski clarified the impossibility having a delayed opening on previously scheduled early dismissal days. Distance learning days will be scheduled under these conditions, since there would not be enough instructional hours to start school late and end early. For the hours to count as an official school day, there can only be a delayed opening or an early dismissal.

6. Committee Reports:

A. Budget Committee: The committee is working on the budget. The committee will continue to review student activities, monthly financials, and Covid-19 expenses. There will be a budget presentation of the 2021-2022 Superintendent’s Budget Proposal at the end of February.

B. Facilities & Technology Committee: The committee is working on the windows’ budget estimate. The security grants applications will be available in April.

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- C. School Improvement Committee: Mr. Kissko reported that coming up for this month the committee will discuss: Liaison responsibilities, the distinguished alumnus process, and grading in the time of Covid-19.
- D. Building Committee: Mr. Arum send out the agenda and materials for next week. The architects are moving along with the program planning by meeting with all the different departments and related staff.
- E. Liaison Reports: (Paraphrased)
  - Ms. Todor – “Forbes transitioned back, and it went relatively smoothly. Staff reminded students of safety protocols. Their percentages of 66% in person and 33% distance learning has been consistent. The students are finishing up their Star reading testing this week. They finally opened the beautiful new playground for Pre-K. They are trying to enjoy outdoor recess all year long.”
  - Ms. Fappiano – “Vogel-Wetmore talked about the changes due to Covid-19. Drop off and pick up is different and causes a traffic jam each day. The administration thanks the parents for their understanding. Our teachers and students have become masters of technology. Polar Express day was celebrated. The staff recorded themselves reading the book to share with their students.”
  - Ms. DePreteis – “Southwest reported that they are doing Star testing. A student there initiated a contest to display posters to put on the trail from Torrington to Winsted. They are looking for lumber and plexiglass donations for this contest. They did a virtual field trip to the New England Air Museum. They are making a thank you paperchain for the health care workers at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.”
  - Mr. Kissko – “EdAdvance did meet in January. There is not much to report because they don’t have a lot going on during this time of year. More to come.”

7. Action Items:

- A. Monthly Financials – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to approve the monthly financials, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
- B. BOE Regular Meeting Minutes – December 29, 2020 – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
- C. BOE Special Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2021 – Ms. DePreteis made a motion to approve the minutes, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
- D. Committee Meeting Minutes – Mr. Maniccia made a motion to receive all the committee meeting, second by Ms. Todor. All in favor.
  - 1.School Improvement – December 2, 2020
  - 2.Budget Committee - December 9, 2020
  - 3.Facilities and Technology Committee – December 9, 2020
  - 4.Building Committee – December 8, 2020
  - 5.Building Committee – December 15, 2020

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- E. Consent Agenda: Appointments, Retirements & Resignations – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the consent agenda, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
  - F. Pizza Fundraiser – Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the Pizza Fundraiser contingent upon the approval of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party payment, second by Mr. Maniccia. Ms. Fappiano abstained. Everyone else in favor.
  - G. Bingo Fundraiser – Mr. Kissko made a motion to approve the Bingo Fundraiser pending legality and the approval of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party payment, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
  - H. Delayed Opening and Early Dismissals – Mr. Kissko made a motion that on the days where there are previously scheduled half days and we need a 2-hour delay, those days would become distance learning days, second by Mr. Maniccia. All in favor.
8. Comments for the Good of the Order: (Paraphrased)
- Armand – “Thank you to the staff. I am happy there are more funds coming our way. The meeting minutes have been great. They are very helpful to those who have not been able to be at the meetings.”
- Nikki – “I agree with Armand. Thank you to the staff. I am also happy there are more funds coming our way.”
- Sue D. – “Thank you to everyone for all their hard work, especially Sue L, Sue F. and Fiona for your endless meetings and phone calls.”
- Sue L. – “Thank the board for being so supportive during these crazy times.”
- John – “My continued respect for the whole staff for keeping us going during this time.”
- Ellen – “I echo John and thank whoever was on the call this morning for handling it so smoothly.”
- Ed A. – “There is always a light at the end of the tunnel, and we can see it.”
- Kim – “I share everyone’s sentiments.”
- Sue F. – “Thank you everyone. Have a great night.”
- John – “Thanks everyone.”
- Cathy – “After hearing these liaison reports, I think we all recognize how hard these teachers are working and how creative they are being for our students. The teachers are doing an extraordinary job during these difficult times.”
- Jessica – “Ditto what everyone else said.”
- Ally– “I echo what Ed said, and thank you everyone.”
- Ed C. – “Echo all the thank yous, and I am happy to hear that vaccine eligibility is increasing.”
- Laura – “Ronnie Magistrali is retiring. She has been wonderful, and this will be a big loss.”
- Chair Fiona – “I want to thank everyone and as it comes closer to the one-year mark of dealing with COVID, I think everyone is getting burned out. Hopefully, we are looking at the other side of this. I also want to thank the PTOC for extending an invitation to myself and Ellen to attend their meeting and to discuss their policies and procedures.”
9. Items for Upcoming Agenda
- A. Budget

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B. Monthly Financials

10. Future Meetings:

- Wednesday, February 3, 2021 (Migeon Ave.)  
6:00 p.m. – School Improvement Committee
- Thursday, February 4, 2021 (Torringtonford)  
5:30 p.m. – Building Committee
- Wednesday, February 10, 2021 (Migeon Ave.)  
6:00 p.m. – Facilities/Technology Committee  
7:00 p.m. – Budget Committee
- Wednesday, February 24, 2021 (Migeon Ave.)  
6:00 p.m. – Regular Board of Education Meeting

11. Adjournment: Mr. Maniccia made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 P.M.