

These minutes were approved by the Torrington Board of Education on October 27, 2021.



Torrington Public Schools

SUSAN M. LUBOMSKI
SUPERINTENDENT

SUSAN FERGUSSON
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

Board of Education Special Meeting Monday, October 4, 2021, 6:00 P.M. Migeon Ave/Zoom

Minutes

1. Call to Order: 6:00 P.M.
2. Roll Call: Ms. Cappabianca, Mr. Corey, Ms. DePretis, Mr. Eucalitto, Ms. Fappiano, Ms. Hoehne, Mr. Kissko, Mr. Maniccia, Ms. Richardson
Excused: Ms. Todor
Also Present: Ms. Lubomski, Ms. Fergusson, Ms. Schulte, Ms. Klimaszewski, Ms. Boisvert, Mr. Barlow, Ms. Herold, SLAM Representatives, Mr. Arum
3. Approval of Agenda: Ms. DePretis made a motion to approve the agenda, second by Mr. Kissko. All in favor.
4. 6:00 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. Covid Update: Ms. Lubomski presented a PowerPoint on COVID-19 Updates. The Governor's Executive Orders were extended, impacting schools until February 15, 2022. Masks will be worn by everyone while inside of school buildings and on school buses. There will be 10 days of quarantine for those who are unvaccinated and deemed close contacts. No quarantine for asymptomatic vaccinated people. What is considered a close contact? In the classroom - within 3 feet for more than 15 minutes with or without a mask.
Outside of class - within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes with or without a mask.
There will be synchronous learning, when whole classes are quarantined and asynchronous lessons, when individual students are in quarantine. Students and parents can work with teachers to clarify lessons and concepts, while experiencing asynchronous learning. Transmission continues to occur outside of school. Unvaccinated staff: if an unvaccinated staff member tests positive, they must take sick days to account for the absence. Staff members who are asymptomatic and test negative on days 5-7 can return to work on day 8. Unvaccinated staff must test every week. Test results are sent to the staff member and district. Contractors must complete an attestation verifying vaccination or testing of all staff members. Shipman has created the document the district is using for medical mask exemptions. If a staff or student needs a medical mask exemption, this

requires their family physician to complete a medical attestation on the nature of the medical condition that necessitates the mask exemption. Board Chairs and Superintendents will continue to meet weekly with the CSDE, DPH, CABE and legal advisors to ensure the proper implementation of all mandates and addenda. District staff is 90% vaccinated. Mr. Corey asked what would happen if a staff member who is unvaccinated, did not want to continue to test weekly? Ms. Lubomski replied that the mandate states they would be placed on administrative leave and then the process toward their termination would begin.

5. 6:30 P.M. THS/TMS Building Update – Overview- Ms. Lubomski shared the history of the Elementary and Secondary Ad Hoc Committees’ meetings. The Board received a binder with the documents covering the last 3 years of the Secondary Ad Hoc, pre- and post-referendum work on the THS/ TMS/Central Office Building Project. CSG representatives, SLAM representatives, and Mr. Arum gave a presentation to the board. The Board will decide the future of the programs that will be offered and housed in the new building. Slam clarified that the State only allows a certain amount of net square feet per student. The reimbursement of the State will go down significantly if the project goes over the allowable square footage. The architects worked on the educational specifications after many focus groups with staff and administration to determine where the classes can be shared and teachers can share space. They really focused on making the building more efficient. Ms. Cappabianca wanted to discuss a shared library media center. Ms. Lubomski replied that we would have to schedule who would use the space and when. Ms. Richardson had a concern with this because “the use of library would be cut down by 50%.” The board wanted to know how much square feet they are supposed to trim for the State requirements. Anywhere from 5,000-6,000 sq/ft.. Ms. DePretis asked if a 1,000 sq/ft can be trimmed from a few rooms? The response was that they would have to look at room use to make sure they could still meet the State standards. Mr. Eucalitto wanted to trim the grey area spaces where they are not impacting students educationally. It was commented that automotive could be taught digitally. It would be part of the STEM/Hi-Tech Manufacturing Pathway. Ms. Lubomski stated that our goal has been for our students to have exposure to electives, including various trades. However, the new building is not a trade school. The enrollment numbers that the architects used were from 2019/2020. When they started this project, they were low in auto mechanics. Ms. DePretis wanted the Board to take a straw poll regarding adding a designated and separate automotive and carpentry space. Ms. Richardson wanted to know which electives were gaining space and which ones were losing space. The Chair asked if the Board has a strong desire to put automotive and construction technology into the plan, then a 5,000 (3,000 and 2,000) sq/ft space would have to be found somewhere else and would have to be kept within budget. The board members agreed that they would like to see the automotive and construction technology space inside the new building without giving anything else up and without increasing the expense of any other education specifications. The board members reviewed the options proposed by SLAM representatives, and they voted to review 4 possible options: 1) MS and HS share the Library Media Center, 2) Change to 4 Lunch Waves for both MS and HS 3) Eliminate Lockers 4) Reduce the number of athletic and PE lockers. Once the SLAM

representatives determine the savings of each line item, they will bring this to the Building Committee and, subsequently, to the Board.

6. Comments for the Good of the Order: (Paraphrased)

Armand – “Thank you everyone.”

Nikki – “Thank you for your patience with us.”

Sue D. – “Thank you so much for your patience and for answering all our questions.”

Ellen “Thank you for our patience with us.”

Chair “Thank you so much. Everyone is coming from a good place to do the best for our students and community.”

7. Adjournment: Mr. Kissko made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Mr. Corey. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.