

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on October 1, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Office Building, 3 Primrose Street.

M. Ku, Chair	L. Rodrigue
R. Harriman-Stites, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Cruson, Secretary	R. Bienkowski (absent)
D. Leidlein	5 Staff
J. Vouros	2 Public
A. Clure	2 Press
D. Delia	

Mrs. Ku called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Ku clarified that the discussion of Policy 9240 should be listed as Board Member Professional Development instead of Meeting with Town Boards and Commissions.

Also, she would like to remove the discussion of the enrollment study because Mr. Bienkowski could not be here tonight and he has been doing the work with the contractor on the study. There were no objections.

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the resignation of Lianne Cohagen and the correspondence report. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation

Item 4 – Reports

Chair Report: Mrs. Ku reminded the Board of the upcoming CAFE conference and to let Kathy June know if they were interested in attending. She visited the Legislative offices to talk about Newtown's experience in changing the school start times because the State is discussing that as a statewide initiative. She thanked Dr. Rodrigue, Mr. Bienkowski and Mr. Gerbert for attending the Board of Finance meeting and presenting the Board of Education's CIP for approval. They also made the request for money to be deposited in the non-lapsing fund which was approved. The changes to the CIP policy were discussed. There would be a non-meeting after tonight's meeting regarding the teacher negotiations.

Mr. Vouros inquired about what was said regarding school starts times at the State level.

Mrs. Ku said that in California their legislation does not allow any school to open earlier than 8 a.m. No one proposed anything so they are considering what people come up with. Two-thirds of the discussion was about health concerns. She told them it was a successful change for us.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Rodrigue provided an update on school facilities work with much of the major work being completed. The Sandy Hook lighting controller screen has been ordered, boiler repairs at Head O'Meadow have been completed, as well as the high school stadium sandblasting work. She thanked Mr. Gerbert for doing an excellent job in getting things done. The Better Day Café is running at the Community Center and is incredible to observe. The Special Education Action Steps are in progress and the administration and staff will attend a meeting to share what we are experiencing. A great deal of professional development is being offered and we completed

an audit of the entire district with respect to our services. A social worker was moved from Sandy Hook to the middle school and we hired a speech/language pathologist for the pre-school.

Dr. Rodrigue worked with SEPTO over the summer. The SPED PTA is working to support parents and fund-raise. Agendas will also be prepared for each meeting. We are ensuring that the appropriate assessments reach the correct parents and information is shredded after PPTs. Mrs. Petersen worked with the administration and staff regarding confidentiality and the handling of sensitive information. There will be updates in November with staff and administrators.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites asked that regarding the implementation of agendas for these meetings if Dr. Rodrigue would bring the Board evidence that the items were discussed. The Board received a communication from a parent and wanted to know that when students are outplaced if the parents can continue to receive district communications. Dr. Rodrigue said normally they do not but we should be able to include them and would let her know.

Committee Reports:

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said the Policy Committee is working to get the 9000 series in place to be able to have a comprehensive Board packet ready before December.

Mr. Vouros said in the last Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting they discussed foreign language in the elementary schools and there will be a discussion on how it will look moving to grades five and six. At some point there will be extensive talk about how this program will be assessed. Projected final completion date for math 6-plus and math 7 and 8 will be done by the end of this school year. Tonight we have the ELA self-study.

Student Reports:

Mr. Chand reported that the Link Crew hosted an ice cream social for students before the football game. The open house was last month with HHA students helping parents find their way around the building. Some of the school organizations set up information tables for parent to inform them of the opportunities for students.

Ms. Jojo reported that students were able to meet with various club leaders and sign up for the groups they were interested in hosted by Peer Leadership.

Mr. Chand stated that Newtown's GSA Club hosted Ally week with a different event each day. This has spread awareness about the LGBTQ community.

Ms. Jojo said that last Tuesday the AP Environmental students went to Long Island Sound where they had a scavenger hunt and tested water quality and compared it to the Pootatuck River.

Mr. Chand said Sunday they welcomed the Chinese delegation with 18 students and two teachers.

Ms. Jojo reported that seniors and juniors had the chance to hear about colleges in the career center.

Mr. Clure attended the open house and thanked the staff for a tremendous job.

Item 5 – Old Business

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve Policy 9000 Roles of Board members as in the Board packet. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites noted that a revised version of this policy was given to the Board tonight. Mrs. Ku and Mr. Delia had suggested changes to that sentence. Mrs. Ku's revision to #7 is "The Board will receive reports of retirements and resignations and will act on terminations when required by statute or contract."

Mr. Delia's suggested change in that sentence is "The Board is responsible for approving resignations and retirements through the consent agenda. The Board is responsible for acting on terminations when necessary and will be informed about terminations through executive session."

The difference in the two adjustments is whether the Board will approve resignations and retirements. Both Dr. Rodrigue and Mrs. Ku spoke to legal counsel and they suggested Mrs. Ku's language.

Mr. Delia just wants the Board to be informed. It's important we know when people are resigning and to celebrate retirements. He asked what receiving reports meant in Mrs. Ku's wording.

Mrs. Ku said that would address how we want to receive the information such as in the superintendent's report or weekly email.

Mr. Delia didn't need to know the names or read the letter, but just know the number who resigned in a period of time.

Mrs. Ku feels it's a good practice to keep track of that information so we could continue the practice currently but voting on them is the difficult part.

Mr. Cruson felt there should be some sort of time period on receiving the reports.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites agreed with both Mr. Delia and Mr. Cruson and would say to receive terminations also because that is an area we are caught flat footed a lot.

Mrs. Leidlein said with a resignation or retirement the letter can be shared in public. If someone is terminated she was not sure if it was legal to discuss in public.

Dr. Rodrigue said it's a fine line with terminations because things could be in place such as a hearing. It could have many layers.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites wants a conversation with the Board that something is happening.

Dr. Rodrigue said if our attorney says it's the time to release information it would be given to the Board.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites feels the policy needs to have something about communication with the Board and sharing information when appropriate.

Mrs. Ku stated that our Board attorney and CAGE said that it's not something to share with the Board. It puts us at risk for sharing information that should not be shared.

Mr. Clure suggested excluding termination from that paragraph.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites was not suggesting the Board has a say in terminations.

Mr. Delia said the policy should state that terminations would be shared only if necessary.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said we need to be informed of what is happening but tell us when it's finished.

Mr. Vouros said it works well for him so he doesn't need to know what is happening.

Mrs. Leidlein prefers to get comments from CABE on this language and doesn't want to put the Superintendent into a predicament. She was not in favor of requiring the Superintendent to report terminations to the Board. We can receive the reports monthly and not as part of the consent agenda.

Mrs. Ku would send it to CABE and our legal counsel. We won't vote on retirements and retirees and continue to get them at every Board meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to table the motion until the next meeting. Mr. Delia seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 6 – New Business

ELA Self-Study:

Dr. Rodrigue said the original study was done four years ago.

Mrs. Uberti thanked Ms. Papalia, Mrs. Marks and Dr. Longobucco for their leadership in this study. They met regularly last year. The presentation summarizes the work to date and the next steps moving forward.

Mrs. Papalia and Mrs. Marks reported that the goal of the study aligned the K-12 curriculum and practices that develop skilled readers and writers, provide effective implementation of the K-12 curriculum, ensure professional development to support district instructional models and programs, address grammar and spelling instruction, provide tiered support, have consistent reading homework expectations, and evaluate the effectiveness of district-wide writing instruction.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites appreciated how they used data to provide helpful information that will have an impact on our budget.

Mrs. Leidlein noted that Readers and Writers Workshop wasn't mentioned and asked if it would continue to be part of the curriculum development.

Mrs. Marks said it was in an area in the original self-study and is still part of the process.

Ms. Papalia said it is imbedded in our curriculum work so this report was our next steps to move forward.

Mr. Delia asked if we were getting rid of Words Their Way.

Ms. Papalia said that Foundations would be in grade two and Words Their Way in grades three and four.

Mr. Delia asked about the higher grades.

Mrs. Uberti said the next step will be looking at grades three and four and the transition to fifth grade. Implementing Words Their Way is challenging and we will look at what we will do next.

Mr. Vouros asked how the move to high school was progressing.

Mrs. Marks said we've been meeting with middle school and high school teachers regarding reading units to help students have more of a variety to read.

Mr. Vouros asked what they are doing in eighth grade to get ready for high school.

Ms. Papalia said we are ensuring they have shared experience in their reading class and independent reading. There is a club model and partnership model.

Mrs. Ku said the 2017 report mentioned a need for supplies and she asked how our libraries were for Readers Workshop.

Mrs. Uberti said they are adequate at all levels.

Mrs. Ku requested the presentation be sent to the Board and thanked them for this report.

BOE Budget Goals for 2020-2021:

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved that the Board of Education approve the Board of Education Budget Goals for 2020-2021. Mr. Cruson seconded.

Mrs. Ku said these were revised from last year and took one item off that wasn't appropriate for this year.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said the piece about ensuring money for mental health is very important along with special education items. She asked if we could combine the special education contingency with funding so it's all in one place.

Mr. Clure was concerned that someone would think these are in a priority order and suggested having a footnote saying that they are in no particular order.

Mr. Delia asked if the Board would consider adding an item about curriculum as a priority. The Board and Dr. Rodrigue agreed that should be added. Mr. Delia would develop one and Mrs. Harriman-Stites would combine the funding items.

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved to postpone the discussion to the next meeting. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Church Hill Road Property:

Mrs. Ku said in April 2009 there was a Board discussion about this property. The Board sent a letter to the Board of Selectman to look into purchasing this property for the safety and security of Hawley School. We are talking about the difficulty we have with the HVAC process and the difficulty with the equipment needed on the small property. The means of egress is important. The cafeteria has never been a full cafeteria. The other issue is parking at Hawley. Parents often park across the street.

Dr. Rodrigue said Dan Rosenthal would bring it to the Board of Selectman.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said a number of parents mentioned this to her. It is definitely worth exploring but we need a cost benefit analysis done to show it's appropriate. The issues will not go away and the elementary enrollment is increasing.

Mrs. Leidlein said these reasons were brought up years ago. There are still concerns regarding the travel pattern on the property. It makes sense to look into this more deeply and have a study done.

Mr. Vouros said parking in the back in the afternoon is problematic because the lines are across the parking lot. Safety is a big concern. If purchased, the buses can be reconfigured so they can go around the building. We could also look at putting in a cafeteria. If we had a child with disabilities there is a concern about how they would get to the cafeteria. People have asked if we have cameras on that side of the building.

Mrs. Ku stated we could ask the First Selectman to look into it and have our reasons in writing. Dr. Rodrigue agreed that we need a rationale. It may not be the perfect timing but we need to look at the enrollment study first and at the traffic patterns and how they have changed.

Mrs. Ku said that in 2009 the Board made a motion to have the Superintendent send a letter to the First Selectman suggesting that there may be use for that property and suggested making a motion to do so.

Mr. Vouros asked what became of that.

Dr. Rodrigue was told that the Board of Selectman was interested but the sequence of events is not clear. It was discussed in executive session.

Mr. Clure asked if we owned the land Hawley School is on.

Mr. Cruson said we don't own the fields in the back. The Hawley Fund is specific on use of the money.

Mrs. Ku said it's up to the Board of Selectman and the Legislative Council to do any property purchasing.

Mr. Delia wants to know the purpose of the purchase before asking anyone to investigate purchasing the land.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites understood it was for parking and reconfiguration of the driveway but was not sure about the cafeteria piece.

Mrs. Ku said the piece about the cafeteria was that it was not a full cafeteria like in other schools. The land would allow us to build.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites hesitates to put too many parameters around it. It's hard to say we want to build a building on the property. It's alright to send a letter but even if it's not appropriate at this time there's nothing wrong with figuring out the cost.

Mr. Cruson said there would be costs for demolition and what we want to put on the land to make usable for whatever purpose.

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to send a letter to the First Selectman suggesting that there may be use for the property at 27 Church Hill Road to enhance the safety of students at Hawley School and that we would like further discussions with the Town, the Board of Education and Parks and Rec. Mrs. Harriman-Stites seconded.

Mr. Delia asked if there was any data to support purchasing this land that would enhance the safety of Hawley School.

Mrs. Ku said Hawley comes right up against the property. The concern by parents is how we keep track of what goes on there which is a safety issue.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said the safety piece is more about the traffic in the parking lot. Maybe Mr. Moretti should come to a meeting and look for a way to ease the dismissal process.

Mrs. Ku asked if we should postpone this given these questions.

Mr. Delia had more questions such as the plan for the land, the anticipated cost beyond that and the concern for asbestos if we tear down the building.

Mrs. Harriman-Stites said the letter is just saying there is property for sale which could be an education benefit to Hawley School and if this was a viable option. All decisions on the purchase would not be under our purview. We need to know if there is any appetite on the Board of Selectman or Legislative council on moving forward.

Mr. Cruson said the letter makes our case as to why we want them to look at it. We have to make a strong case for this. He would like us to have a clear picture of what we want in this letter.

Dr. Rodrigue will compose the letter and share it with the Board. The items have to do with security and traffic patterns. What we can't do is get so far ahead in possible building.

Mrs. Ku directed the Superintendent to write the draft letter to be reviewed by the Board.

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to rescind the motion. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Policies:

Mrs. Harriman-Stites reviewed the policies for first read.

9100 – addresses the officers of the Board.

9110 – to be rescinded because it is restated in the Town Charter.

9125 – Attorney – added Newtown.

9140 – Appointments – this is if a special meeting needs a Board member to attend.

9221 – Filling Vacancies – this makes it clearer.

9230 – Orientation of Board Members – added wording to make more sense.

Mrs. Ku said that CAFE has a new member orientation and they will come to us.

9240 – Professional Development needed clarified language.

9260 – Rescinding Board Member Protections

Minutes of September 17, 2019:

MOTION: Mrs. Harriman-Stites moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of September 17, 2019. Mr. Cruson seconded. Vote: 6 ayes, 1 abstained (Mrs. Leidlein)

Motion passes.

Item 7 – Public Participation

MOTION: Mr. Vouros moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Daniel J. Cruson, Jr.
Secretary



Middle Gate Elementary School
7 Cold Spring Road • Newtown, CT 06470
(203)426-7626

September 12, 2019

Dear Dr. Rodrigue,

Having worked in the district for over twenty-two years, it is with conflicted emotions that I write this letter to inform you of my intent to retire on December 31, 2019. After recent personal incidents and my imminently approaching age of sixty in fairly good health, I have decided to seize this time to slow down and enjoy life's gifts which include a blended family of nine grandchildren.

I would hope that my departure in January would be seen as an opportunity and not a hinderance. With schedules and programs in place, my successor would step into an already established school year. Also, if possible, the benefit of shadowing me for some time would not be lost.

I believe that through some metaphysical osmosis, all those that have touched my life in my career have become part of who I am and will continue to be. With that in mind, I say Thank You to my friends and colleagues, especially at Middle Gate, who have supported me through personal and professional trials and triumphs.

With that in mind, I wish nothing but the best for the Newtown School District as it continues to pave the way for excellence in education.

With Warmest Regards,

Liane Cohagen

Special Education Teacher, Middle Gate Elementary School

Correspondence Report
09/17/2019 – 09/30/2019

Date	Name	Subject
9/20/2019	Alissa Mendoza	SPED Action Plan
9/23/2019	Alissa Mendoza	Re: SPED Action Plan

School Facilities Update – September 27, 2019

Hawley

- No major activities.

Sandy Hook

- New lighting controller screen ordered to replace failed screen (covered by warranty).
- Investigating lighting controls to implement proper schedules for interior and exterior lights.
- Trane has visited school to inspect HVAC equipment and will prepare a maintenance proposal for all equipment.

Middle Gate

- No major activities.

Head O'Meadow

- Mulvaney Mechanical completed boiler repairs.
- Same boiler developed leak in different section and will require additional repairs.

Reed Intermediate

- McKenney Mechanical to install new a/c units for two data closets.
- Hughs Mechanical completed oil tank work and poured new concrete pad.

Newtown Middle School

- Willco serviced several exterior doors.
- Fuss & O'Neill completed an air test in Rm A4 in response to a parent complaint. No air quality issues were found.

Newtown High School

- Stadium sandblasting work to be completed over weekend of 9/28. Will explore options for painting and/or sealing.
- New boiler plant startup scheduled for 10/1. Will allow for heating of pool.
- LED lighting retrofit work continues.
- Hussey repaired gym basketball hoop cable which was locked up.
- New England Roofing installed flashing around auditorium smoke vents.

Recommendation 1:

Specialized Reading Programs and Certified Staff: Specialized reading programs were an area that precipitated the special education review of the District. Since issues were first identified the District has taken significant action in ensuring sufficient trained and/or certified personnel in one or more specialized reading programs. In addition to current efforts, the District should review the IEP of all students identified as SLD/dyslexia to ensure that an appropriate reading program is in place for the student. Such a review should also take place for each newly identified student with SLD/dyslexia within this school year to ensure a system is in place to appropriately identify students and ensure an appropriate and timely implementation of a specialized reading program by appropriately trained and/or certified staff. The District appears to be engaged in ensuring training, professional development and certification opportunities for staff for the implementation of specialized reading programs such that programmatic concerns with regard to this issue are being addressed. The District should continue the focus on ensuring a sufficient number of trained and/or certified personnel. Monitoring and supervision of staff in delivering a specialized reading program with fidelity should occur by the District special education administration. Attention to staff concerns regarding time for collaboration and professional development should be addressed.

Action Steps:

- Under the supervision of the district leadership team, consisting of SPED and regular education teachers and administrators, a review of the IEPs of students identified with SLD/dyslexia will be conducted to ensure the appropriate and consistent implementation of reading support programs in place and delivered by trained/qualified NPS.
- Review early screening assessments for children of dyslexia or other language related deficiencies, such as the use of Dibels, running records, etc.
- Continue to offer comprehensive professional development in phonemic and phonological awareness to support instruction of identified dyslexic students (e.g., Wilson, Orton, Lindamood Bell), including the addition of a phonics program that will support all students.
- Facilitate collaborative conversations between SPED teachers and Language Arts Consultants to determine appropriate programming for students and professional development needs for both general and special education teachers.
- Ensure consistent and ongoing communication of students' language needs and instructional strategies with appropriate regular education teachers and staff.

- Monitor programs in place and district assessments, as well as student progress monitoring systems, to determine success of students.
- Continue to ensure appropriate programs are in place, as needed, including learning opportunities for those students transitioning to the secondary level.
- Report to C & I regarding programming and services, as well as future needs, including the restructuring of support services.

Progress:

- In April, reviewed all IEPs for students of Dyslexia to ensure they are in place, appropriate, and providing supports.
- Progress of students with IEPs reported 4x a year.
- Ongoing training of staff in Wilson and OG. Continue to open up training and send staff to professional development in the areas of reading intervention.
- District staff and administrators reviewing the addition of a new phonics program for all students (e.g., Foundations or Teacher's College). Will determine appropriate program, training, and funding to begin roll-out in fall of 2019.
- On March 20th, met with LA Consultants for a review of Foundations phonics program observation in another district.
- By the end of May, additional observations of phonics programs in other districts will conclude and a determination will be made as the best "fit" for the District. An overview of the program will be provided at a June C & I meeting.
- Training dates in the summer will be scheduled for key staff in reading program for K-1.
- Continue to finalize training of key staff on Alpine as database for SRBI plans and progress monitoring.
- Set up meetings for counselors to meet with staff from sending schools and SPED teachers to consults with regular education teachers.
- Teams meet with teachers to review end of year.
- As appropriate and relevant, various school assessments may be reviewed with parents as part of the referral process.

Timeline:

The leadership team, along with the Special Education Department, will conduct an in-depth analysis of the IEPs to determine appropriate services are being provided by May 1st. **A report to the Superintendent and Board of Education will take place at the 2nd BOE meeting in June.**

Professional development for staff is ongoing and will continue to be provided.

Recommendation 2:

Confidentiality: There is a perception by parents that breaches of student confidentiality are somewhat frequent and happening throughout the district. The district should review their current practices and the system in place for the distribution of information to parents about their child. A review of the District policies and procedures, analysis of the system currently in place that utilizes the school psychologist, and the administrative monitoring by administration might identify targeted areas for improvement. Targeted training/professional development for all school staff, including paraprofessionals, on confidentiality and the protection of student information should be considered and incorporated into the trainings/professional development opportunities offered to staff, particularly those working with students receiving special education or by experts in the area of reading.

Under the direction of the Director of Pupil Services, the following practices will be implemented:

- Review expectations and mandates regarding confidential information and records.
- Mandate annual training by all certified and non-certified staff and supervisors regarding handling of confidential student information (beginning of the year faculty meetings and central office), including identifying and handling breaches of confidential information and reporting such breaches of special education records to supervisors in a timely manner.
- Require staff signatures to confirm their attendance at training.
- Continue a “checks and balances” system for FERPA requests so these are checked and reviewed by two or more staff members as outlined in the communication to all SPED parents on October 2017.

Progress:

- Reviewed all expectations and mandates around confidentiality and discussed current practice in handling this information.
- Shared with administrative team that annual training regarding handling FERPA requests and other confidential information will take place in August (early professional development/faculty time).
- Director of Pupil Services met (60 minutes) with all principals in July as a group to discuss the “checks and balances” that will need to take place for both certified and non-certified staff regarding handling confidential information (e.g., peer checks, reviewed by supervisors, etc.).

Timeline

Beginning February 1st, all special education staff will be receiving their yearly refresher training in confidentiality and handling information related to FERPA.

Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, all staff including non-certified and certified employees will receive training in confidentiality and handling information related to FERPA. This will become a mandated training that requires a sign-off.

Recommendation 3:

Professional Development/Training: The District should review the needs of general and special education staff, to include but not be limited to academic content and the behavior/social emotional needs of students. The District should: (a) ensure that training and professional development needs are identified annually for general and special education staff; (b) continue to redefine and align paraprofessional hours with the school day and to incorporate and/or compensate, to the extent appropriate, paraprofessionals for participation in training; and (c) work with the newly formed SEPTO to identify needs and resources to provide training to families. Providing information, training and support to parents on federal and state special education requirements including identification, evaluation (including IEEs), eligibility, development and implementation of an IEP, and dispute resolution would be helpful in fostering communication and collaboration between parents and District staff and administration.

Under the supervision of the Superintendent's Office, the following actions will be put into place:

- Work with the District Safe School Climate Committee to organize and oversee training and professional workshops in social/emotional/behavioral needs for all staff.
- In alignment with the CASEL model, ensure consistent social/emotional practices are implemented in all classrooms K-12.
- Offer paraprofessionals training in working with students with special needs and require training for paras who are dealing with students with highly specialized needs.
- Evaluate and expand informational opportunities for parents through evening events and forums. Work with existing PTA and SEPTO organizations to solicit needs and feedback.
- In collaboration with SEPTO, develop a parent mentor program that helps support parents of special education students (e.g., information, resources, tips, process) at elementary, intermediate, middle and secondary levels.
- Utilize the new district webpage to highlight family and parent resources (e.g., articles of interests, webinars, workshops, etc.) in special education topics.

Progress:

- Working with para union president and para culture and climate committee (district) to develop important trainings/professional development useful for paras (e.g., CPR refresher, Epipen, restorative practices).

- The PTA Presidents meeting in June solicited feedback for the kinds of evening events parents would find helpful around Special Education or related topics.
- Staff in transition program got certified in Food Handling/Sani Serv in order to open and run the Better Day Café in partnership with the Community Center.
- Met with SEPTO over the summer of 2019 to develop a parent mentor program that will provide support to new SPED parents.
- Will meet with the newly organized SEPTA group to remain engaged in events related to Special Education for families and students.
- The new District website already contains useful information under the SPED Department (flow chart for parents), but additional resources continue to be added to support parent understanding. The new District website is up and running.
- A report on SEL framework and practices in the district will be presented at C & I. Discussions will occur in the fall and at BOE meetings throughout the year.

Timeline

Training and professional development for staff and paraprofessionals is ongoing and will be evaluated each year in alignment with District SEL and educational goals, State mandates, and initiatives.

A yearly report regarding progress of SEL training, consistent practices, and parent informational opportunities will be provided to C & I beginning June of 2019 (first year only summary and baseline information).

Enhanced parent resources will be made available beginning January 22, 2019 and will continue with the new District website.

Recommendation 4:

Staffing: As previously stated, the crucial issue in a review of special education staffing is whether students' IEPs are being implemented with fidelity. Newtown clearly has a dedicated staff that works to ensure that all IEPs are implemented with fidelity although there is a perception that this may not *always* be the case, or, that appropriate implementation requires staff to give up essential planning and collaboration time and work longer hours than they should. The District should undertake a review of staffing patterns in the District to determine: (a) whether the District employs the appropriate number of staff including instructional, related service and non-certified personnel; (b) whether staff is being appropriately utilized and deployed throughout the district to ensure that IEPs are being implemented with fidelity; and (c) whether job responsibilities are appropriate to staff skills and time (including, for example, a review of caseloads and how school psychologists are utilized in the PPT process).

Under the supervision of the Director of Human Resources in collaboration with staff and administration, a qualitative and quantitative comprehensive review of the following will occur:

- Special education staffing needs across the district
- School psychologists' responsibilities and their roles
- Schedules and opportunities to maximize service delivery
- Use paraprofessionals and other support personnel to ensure efficiency and appropriateness in supporting students, including a thoughtful review of district plans to support staff absences.

Progress:

- Director of Human Resources, in consult with the Director of Pupil Personnel, met with all building and District leaders to discuss staffing across the system.
- Meetings included soliciting information/data around current staffing needs in the district, and making recommendations.
- Discussions with leaders included roles and responsibilities of personnel, which led to recommendations (see attachment).
- Two additional staff members were hired as a result of the SPED audit post-budget (pre-school: SLP and teacher) due to enrollment issues.

Timeline

The Special Education Supervisors, Director and Building Administrators will work with the Director of Human Resources to assess certified and non-certified special education staffing needs and responsibilities across the district by May/June to determine appropriate changes.

Prior to the scheduling of student classroom placement for the 2019-20 school year, which takes place in May/June, the Director of Human Resources will collaborate with building administrators and special education supervisors to review schedules, evaluate placement of students within the general and special education classrooms, and in alignment with IEP services.

Recommendation 5:

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) and Individualized Education Program (IEP): The district should consider providing parent information, resources and educational opportunities to families regarding PPT meetings and the development of IEPs. In addition, the development of district-wide policies, procedures and practices around planning, leading and participating in PPT meetings, to be implemented consistently throughout the district, will be helpful to both staff and parents. These could include how and when school staff and parents will be informed when a special education administrator will be at a PPT and the role and responsibility of that person in the PPT. Policies and practices to be considered

could also include the use of meeting agendas that provide time for parents to have their concerns addressed and considered. It is also important to address mechanisms for communication to ensure all staff has the ability to participate and provide information and their professional opinion to the team through various means.

Under the collective supervision of district and school leaders, consistent practices in the planning and scheduling of PPTs will include the following actions:

- Develop a practice for using a PPT agenda, including timeline and meeting norms or expectations.
- Better orient parents in the PPT process (timelines, information that will be shared, opportunities to voice concerns, etc.) and their role and responsibilities as a member.
- Provide information on the SPED website for parents regarding the PPT process and resources.
- At the building level, ensure that all participants understand their role and responsibility as a member of the team.
- Present information and pertinent data at PPTs, including SRBI (Strategic Research-Based Interventions) and progress monitoring, in order to support the referral process.

Progress:

- Flowchart for SPED parents uploaded onto website (SPED Dept.) by January 31.
- The practice of using an agenda at PPTs was put into place at every PPT and began prior to May 1st.
- In the fall of 2019, all administrators will include a general review of SRBI practices and referral process (pre SPED) so the data collected through progress monitoring will support PPT discussions and educational decision making.
- Additional resources for parents will continue to be added and will be a part of the new District website to provide helpful information on SPED process and parent tips.
- Mentor cards (ie. SEPTO) to support parents who are new to SPED will be offered during PPTs.

Timeline

By April 1st, the practice for using an agenda at PPTs will be established and reviewed with PPS staff and administrators. Implementation of this practice will begin by May 1st.

Parent resources, including a flow chart of the PPT process will be uploaded to the District's SPED website by January 31st. The presentation of pertinent data is an ongoing part of the PPT process

Leadership and Accountability

Under the collective oversight of district administrators, the following practices and accountability measures will be implemented:

- Offer relevant and deliberate professional development for SPED and Regular Education staff related to students with disabilities (e.g. Orton training for both SPED and regular education, social/emotional, QPR training for all staff), and Hope Squad).
- Include SPED supervisors in relevant administrative team meetings and professional learning community time to stay connected to building and district goals, as well as to share pertinent updates.
- When unique and sensitive situations arise involving students with an IEP and/or their families, every effort will be made by building-level administration to solicit, as appropriate, the input, collaboration, and relevant guidance from the SPED department.
- Self-Study action team, composed of the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Pupil Services, Director of Human Resources, and Principal representative(s) will convene by June 30th to review the collective status and progress toward identified action steps in the Self-Study.

Progress:

- Currently, 13 staff have received training in Orton/Wilson (5 Orton/5 Wilson). Three more staff members are in training.
- QPR – question, persuade, refer - QPR training is also being provided for staff (secondary staff and paras) and adults to listen and become trusted adults.
- SPED supervisors will be included (on rotating basis) in District admin team meetings so they can share pertinent information and collaborate with key leaders to problem solve issues re: SPED in a timely and consistent manner.
- Hope Squad – several administrators and staff will be attending a training/workshop on this program, which is another layer supporting students with social emotional needs: peer to peer mentoring that addresses mental health needs.

Timeline

June 30th – first year review of the progress of all action steps and determine revisions and future timelines as necessary.

July/August – continue to update BOE on progress.

October – share current progress (revised) and plan presentations by pertinent staff and administrators in November/December.

Revised

9000(a)

Bylaws of the Board

Role of Board Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)

The Board of Education is a legal body created by the statutes of the State of Connecticut. As an agency of the state with powers delegated to it by the legislature and the State Board of Education, the Newtown Board of Education is responsible to carry out mandatory laws, and to consider and accept or reject the provisions of all permissive laws. In those cases where the state laws do not provide or prohibit, the Board shall consider itself the agent in establishing and appraising the educational activities of the district.

The Newtown Board of Education views its required functions in these broad areas:

1. Legislative and policymaking. The Board is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a superintendent to implement its policies.
2. Appraisal. The Board is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation. It shall evaluate how policies have been executed by the school staff, and weigh the results. The Board shall rely on the school staff, students, and the community to provide evidence of the effect of policies.
3. Provision of financial resources. The Board is responsible for adoption of a budget which will enable the school system to carry out the Board's policies.
4. Public relations. The Board is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. Educational planning and evaluation. The Board is responsible for establishing educational goals which will guide both the board and the staff in working together toward the continuing improvement of the educational program. It is responsible for the approval of student standards which relate directly to the goals which identify specific expectations for students in terms of skills, knowledge and competence. It is responsible for providing for the ongoing evaluation of the school program against the curriculum goals and standards set forth by the Board and by the State Board of Education.
6. Superintendent. The Board is responsible for the hiring, supervision, evaluation and/or termination of the superintendent.
7. Personnel. The Board delegates to the superintendent the responsibility for the hiring of all non-certified staff and all certified staff with the exception of administrators. The superintendent is responsible for accepting staff resignations and initiating termination proceedings, if necessary. The Board ~~is responsible for approving~~ will receive reports of retirements and resignations and ~~for acting~~ will act on terminations when required by statute or contract.

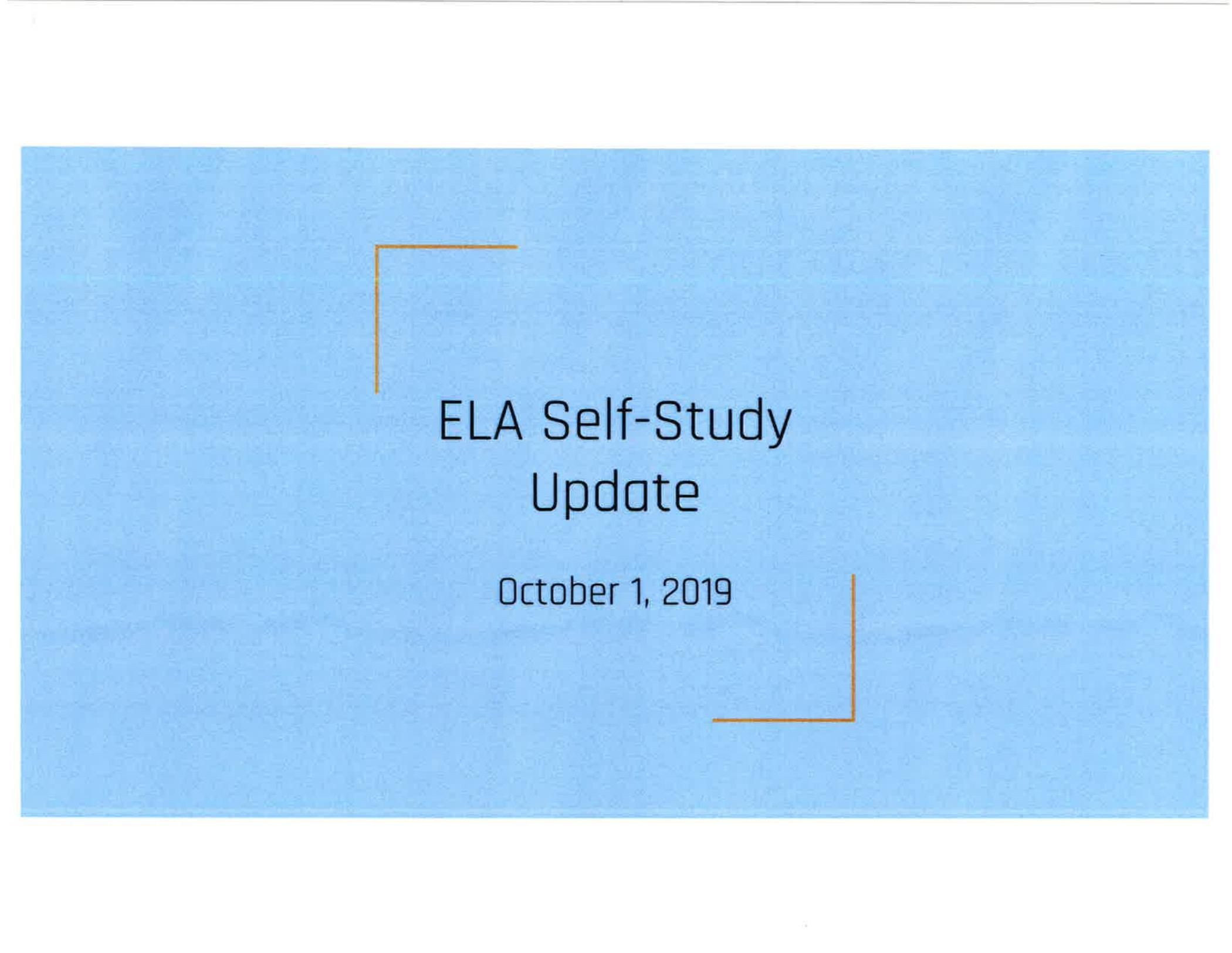
Role of Board Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties) (continued)

8. School Facilities/Transportation. The Board is responsible for working with the Superintendent to properly maintain good public elementary and secondary facilities. It is responsible for providing for the transportation of children to schools within Newtown and to those schools outside of Newtown required by law.
9. Pupil Identification. The Board is responsible for determining the number, age and qualification of the pupils to be admitted into each school and to designate the schools which are to be attended by the various children within the district. It is responsible for requiring each child five to eighteen years of age, living in the school district, to attend school unless parents/guardians of five to six-year-old students choose not to send their children to school or parents/guardians of sixteen and seventeen-year-old students consent to withdraw their children from school.
10. Cooperative Arrangements. The Board is responsible for establishing cooperative relationships with other educational agencies and institutions, including the sharing or exchange of services or the instruction of students.
11. Board-Superintendent Relations

Delegation of executive powers by the Board provides freedom for the Superintendent to manage the schools within the Board's established policies. The Superintendent shall be responsible to the Board for the outcomes of these delegated responsibilities.
(cf. 5111 – Admission/Placement)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 1-200 Definitions
 10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education
 10-220 Duties of boards of education
 10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
 10-240 Control of schools
 10-241 Powers of school districts

Bylaw revised:



ELA Self-Study Update

October 1, 2019

ELA Self-Study Areas of Focus - 2017

- Literacy Vision/Philosophy Statement
- Delivery Model
- Curriculum
- Rigor
- Assessment
- Communication (within and between schools)
- Successes
- Challenges and Suggestions



2-Year Progress Report

Goal: Aligned K-12 Curriculum and Practices that Develop Skilled Readers and Writers

Progress

- 4 grade levels (Grades 3, 4, 10 & 12) with new curriculum approved through consistent process; all other grade levels engaged in ongoing revision
- District PLC days to support alignment
- K-8 coordinators, Instructional Cabinet, and Director of Teaching and Learning support this work

Next Steps

- Revise Literacy Vision/Philosophy Statement (dated 2014) in K-12 ELA Curriculum Committee
- Anticipated BOE Approval:
2020: Grades 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, Creative Writing, Journalism
2021: Grades 7-8

Goals:

- Effective Implementation of the K-12 Curriculum
- Ensure PD to Support District Instructional Models and Programs

Progress

- Staffing: K-8 coordinators led to Director of Teaching & Learning; Language Arts Consultant at NMS
- Research: K-4 LACs explored new resources, conducted site visits, and adopted new resource (FUNdations)
- PD: District PLCs, training specific to ELA instruction, beginning of the year training at all levels in CBCI

Next Steps

- Consider need for Language Arts Consultant at NHS
- Ongoing support for teachers to implement CBCI
- Provide training for implementation of FUNdations in grade 2
- Ongoing support for grades K-1 implementation of FUNdations
- Learning walks to monitor effective implementation across all levels

Goal: Grammar and Spelling Instruction

Progress

- District grammar scope and sequence has been revised
- Grade-level subcommittees working to embed grammar instruction and standards into existing units of study at each level
- Words Their Way training for grades K-4 in 2018-2019
- FUNdations will replace Words Their Way in grades K-2

Next Steps

- Research and purchase resources for grammar instruction
- Continue to embed grammar instruction and standards into units of study during curriculum writing
- Coordinate with special education to support phonics/foundational literacy skills instruction

Goal: Providing Tiered Support

Progress

- K-6 staff, NMS coordinators and counselors, NHS counselors and support staff have been trained in Alpine
- 2017-18 K-12 ELA subcommittee took a preliminary look at interventions being used across schools
- Common guidelines for interventions developed K-6
- NMS Language Arts Consultant position developed and implemented in 2019-2020 school year

Next Steps

- Alpine training for all teachers
- Defined tiered interventions
- Accessible SRBI/Alpine resources for each level (K-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-12)
- Develop common intervention guidelines for grades 7-12

Goal: Consistent Reading Homework Expectations

Progress

- K-12 ELA Committee reviewed and made suggestions for revision to the District's reading homework guidelines

Next Steps

- Submit recommendations to BOE Policy Subcommittee for consideration during policy revision
- Discuss writing homework guidelines in K-12 committee

Goal: Evaluating the Effectiveness of District-wide Writing Instruction

Progress

- 2017-2018 K-12 ELA subcommittee began examining existing K-12 writing rubrics
- K-8 subcommittee meeting to align writing rubrics across genres for use this year

Next Steps

- Completion and implementation of consistent K-8 writing rubrics
- Continue alignment of 9-12 writing rubrics
- Begin to enter writing rubric data into Alpine for analysis
- Examine available data to evaluate effectiveness of curriculum

In Closing. . . .

Focus has built momentum for committee work over the past two years, and self study goals continue to drive our work.

Committee is looking forward to working with our new Assistant Superintendent and Director of Teaching and Learning.

Thank you for supporting our work!

ASSUMPTIONS
2020-2021 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET

- The Newtown Board of Education's mission to inspire every student to excel will be the foundation of all decision making.
- Open and honest communication and cooperation will be maintained with other municipal boards and the community throughout the budget process.
- State and Federal financial support of education will not keep pace with increased programming mandates and will be further reduced by legislation and reductions of grants and other supports to local communities.
- Safety, security and health standards will be supported through continued training of staff; e.g., District Security, Safe School Climate, Blood Borne Pathogens, Sexual harassment/Title IX, Mandated reporting, OSHA (Office of Safety and Health Administration).
- Salaries and benefits will be based on commitments incurred through collective bargaining and other employment agreements.
- Existing programs and services will be reviewed, evaluated, maintained or adjusted as the educational needs of students change.
- Overall certified and classified staffing levels will be adjusted based on enrollment, programming, safety factors and facility considerations.

PRIORITIES
2020-2021 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET

- Support funding for appropriate class sizes at all levels of instruction.
- Maintain a contingency item in the budget for Special Education enrollment changes.
- Continue a level funding plan for expansion and sustainability of technology with access and equity for all students.
- Create a plan for maintenance of facilities and vehicles that includes a budget increase to provide air conditioning capacity in the schools.
- Continue to pursue opportunities to share services, where appropriate, between the Board of Education and all town departments and participate in regional services when they are beneficial to the district.
- Ensure adequate funding for mental health resources to meet student needs.
- Ensure adequate funding for special education that continues to meet needs.
- Ensure consistency in the support for all extracurricular activities in the district.

~~Called at 555 7000~~

Available: 1,841 sq.ft.

Lot Size: 1.03 acres

County: Fairfield County

Property Type: Land

Zoning: P-1

Primary Use: Investor/User

Sale / Lease: For Sale

Property Financials

Sale Type: Investment/User

Property Description

- Outstanding central Newtown location on Church Hill Road
 - Redevelopment (tear down) opportunity
 - City water/sewer connected.
 - Level 1.03 acre lot
 - 16,600 cars per day---strong traffic count
 - potential for 6,000+- sf building with 18 to 25 parking spaces.
 - P-1 Zone allows many uses: professional office, residential, office/residential, medical and personal services.
 - existing building has 3,730 sf gross. The living area is 1,841 sf.
- The improvements were built in 1903.

**Tom Greene--Ryer Associates
Commercial Real Estate**



View my website
Contact me
Office: 203 797 0200
Mobile: 203 733 0146



Ryer Commercial Real Estate



103 Mill Plain Road
Danbury, CT 06811

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REDEVELOPMENT

27 Church Hill Rd



Bylaws of the Board**Role of Board Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)**

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Role of Board Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties) (continued)

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 1-200 Definitions
 10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education
 10-220 Duties of boards of education
 10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
 10-240 Control of schools
 10-241 Powers of school districts

Bylaw revised:

Bylaws of the Board

Officers / Organization Meeting of the Board

The officers of the Board of Education shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary.

The Board shall organize biennially at the first regular meeting in December following the town election. The meeting shall be called to order by the Superintendent who will serve as temporary Chairperson and shall preside until a chairperson has been elected.

Election of all officers shall be by nomination from the floor and shall require a majority public vote of the members of the Board. A written ballot shall not be used.

A majority of the total membership of the Board shall be required to constitute election. If there are more than two nominees and on the first vote no nominee receives a majority vote of the full membership, the nominee receiving the lowest number of the votes shall be removed from the list of candidates before balloting again.

The new Chairperson of the Board will take office upon election and conduct the election of the Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

Officers shall remain in office until new officers are elected at the next organizational meeting, unless such officers cease to be members of the Board of Education. If there is a vacancy among the officers during the course of the year, the Board membership shall act promptly to elect a new officer to fill the vacancy.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, an officer of the Board may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the total Board membership.

Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Newtown Board of Education and shall perform other duties as directed by law, State Department of Education regulations, and by this Board. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson shall:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Board's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters which may occur between Board meetings.
4. Appoint Board committees, subject to Board approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Board as necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Board at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.

7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings.
8. Assume such other duties as may be authorized by the Board.
9. Appoint a Clerk of the Board.
10. The Chairperson's signature shall be an alternative signature on all legal documents requiring the signature of the Secretary.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Board, the Chairperson shall:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of the meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if it is not clear to every member.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Board.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries, referring questions of legality to the Board attorney.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

The Chairperson shall have the right, as other Board members have, to offer resolutions, discuss questions, and to vote.

The Vice-Chairperson

The Vice- Chairperson will:

1. Act in place of the Chairperson, when necessary, and preside at meetings when the Chairperson is temporarily absent. The Vice-Chairperson cannot fill vacancies required to be filled by the Chairperson and does not serve as an ex-officio member of committees.
2. Work with the Chairperson and Superintendent to become generally informed of Board business.
3. In the absence of the Chairperson, act as a resource to the Superintendent on decisions which may require further input between board meetings.
4. In case of illness, resignation, or death of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, as deemed by the Board, becomes Chairperson until the Board membership acts promptly to elect a new officer to fill the vacancy.

5. The Vice-Chairperson's signature shall be an alternative signature on all legal documents requiring the signature of the Secretary.

Secretary

1. A member of the Newtown Board of Education shall be elected Secretary by the members of the Board and shall perform the duties assigned by law and the Board.
2. The Secretary shall be responsible for accurate records of the proceedings of the Board; and for the preservation of reports of committees and communications addressed to the Board, reports of the Chairperson of the Board and reports of the Superintendent. The Board shall authorize the employment of a person to assist in fulfilling the responsibilities for this position.
3. The Secretary shall cause written notices of regular Board meetings and suitable notices of special meetings to be sent to Board members through the office of the Superintendent.
4. The Secretary will write an annual report on the activities of the Board for the Town Annual Meeting Report.
5. The Secretary shall serve as Acting Chairperson when the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are not able to preside at meetings.

(cf. 9020- Public Statements)

(cf. 9325 – Meeting Conduct)

(cf. 9222 – Resignation/Removal from Office/Censure)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-218 Officers. Meetings
Charter, Town of Newtown, Revised April 22, 2008
Section 2-70 Board of Education

Adopted: 4/10/12

Bylaws of the Board**Board of Education/Town Charter Provision**

In accordance with the provisions of section 2-70 (a) of the Town Charter, the Board of Education shall be composed of seven members serving four-year terms. At each regular town election, the members of said Board shall be elected in place of the members whose terms are expiring, in accordance with section 2-30(c) of the Town Charter, which provides that the number of any one political party elected to serve shall not exceed the bare majority of the number of candidates to be seated.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-200 Definitions
10-186 Duties of local and regional boards of education
10-220 Duties of boards of education
10-221 Boards of education to prescribe rules
10-240 Control of schools
10-241 Powers of school districts
Charter, Town of Newtown, Revised April 22, 2008, 2-30(c), 2-70(a)

Adopted: 4/10/12

Bylaws of the Board

Attorney

The attorney of the Newtown Board of Education shall be the legal advisor of the Board and its officers in questions related to their official duties. The Board of Education may appoint, either on a full-time or retainer basis, an attorney or attorneys to serve as school attorney. The primary function of the attorney is to provide professional legal counsel and representation for the Board and Superintendent.

To ensure the prudent and cost-effective use of legal services, the District will limit and designate the persons with the authority to request services or advice from contracted legal counsel. The persons authorized to confer with and/or seek the legal advice of the Board attorney include the Superintendent or his/her designee, Business Manager, Special Education Director, and Chairperson of the Board. The Board may authorize a specific member to confer with legal counsel on its behalf. Legal counsel will not be used unnecessarily to make management decisions or to obtain readily available information such as district policies.

Legal services required by the District may include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing general legal advice to the Board and/or administration;
2. Assisting with labor negotiations;
3. Assisting with personnel matters;
4. Assisting with expulsions and other disciplinary matters;
5. Conduct and/or assist with pending or actual litigation involving the District;
6. Other specialized legal services; and
7. Attendance at Board meetings or other activities as appropriate.

The performance of the school attorney(s) shall be subject to annual evaluation by the Newtown Board of Education and the Superintendent. Such evaluation shall include the areas of efficiency and adequacy of advice; results obtained for the District; reasonableness of fees; and responsiveness to and interactions with the Board, administration, and community.

The Board retains the right to terminate the service of any attorney.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

Bylaws of the Board

~~Meetings with Town Boards and Commissions~~

Appointments to Town Boards, Committees and/or Commissions

The Chairperson shall appoint representatives of the Board of Education to Town Boards, Committees or Commissions. Such appointments shall be for one year or until the discharge of the assigned function of said Board, Committee or Commission.

Board of Education Liaison with Community Organizations

The Chairperson of the Board of Education, at the request of the Board, may appoint a representative to act as liaison agent with community organizations. The representative shall be discharged when the assignment has been completed.

Adopted: 4/10/12

Revised:

Bylaws of the Board

Method of Filling Vacancies

Whenever a vacancy shall occur during the term of office of a member of the Board of Education, the remaining members shall elect a successor of the same political party as the former member to complete the term of office in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes.

The vacancy will be publicly posted.

In filling the vacancy, the Board shall consider, but not exclusively, recommendations from town committees of the appropriate registered political parties, as well as other appropriate sources. The Board may interview persons so identified.

A regular Board meeting, or a special meeting called for the purpose of electing a resident for the unexpired term, shall take place no later than thirty (30) calendar days following a letter of resignation posted to the Town Clerk. Voting shall be continued until a nominee receives a majority of the votes of those members present and voting.

If the vacancy is not filled at the end of the thirty (30) day period, the First Selectman, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, shall fill the vacancy by appointment within the next thirty (30) days.

Such successor shall hold office until the expiration of the term, in accordance with the provisions of the prevailing statutes of Connecticut or the provisions of the Town Charter.

Board Officer Vacancies

Whenever there is a vacancy in the Office of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, or Secretary, the Board shall elect a new officer to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of office once a full Board is seated.

(cf. 9100- Organization Meeting of the Board)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
 7-107 Vacancy appointments by selectmen.
 9-204 Minority representation on boards of education.
 10-219 Procedure for filling vacancy on board of education.
 10-156e Employees of boards of education permitted to serve as elected officials; exception.
 10-232 Restriction on employment of members of the board of education.
 Town Charter, 2-40(c)

Adopted: 6/5/12

Bylaws of the Board

Orientation of Board Members

The Board of Education and the administrative staff shall assist each new Board member-elect to become familiar with and to understand the Board of Education's functions, policies and procedures and operation of the school district before the member takes office. The following methods shall be employed:

1. The incoming member shall be given selected materials on the function of the Board of Education and the school district.
2. The Superintendent shall arrange a meeting of the Board Chairperson or their designee, other pertinent staff, and the new member for the purpose of answering questions and acquainting the member with the district.
3. The incoming member shall be ~~provided with a copy of~~ given access to the Board 's policies and bylaws, administrative regulations, copies of pertinent materials developed by the State School Board Association, Board minutes for the past year, and other helpful information explaining the Board's roles and responsibilities.
4. The Board Chairperson or designee shall arrange a meeting with new Board member(s) for the purpose of explaining and answering questions about Board processes and procedures.
5. The Board Chairperson may request a veteran Board member to mentor a new member.
6. The incoming member may attend, at district expense, workshops for newly elected members as approved by the Board of Education.

Bylaw adopted by the Board:

Bylaws of the Board

Board Member Professional Development

The Board of Education desires that its individual members learn, understand and practice effective governance principles. The Board is responsible for member orientation and development. Board members have an equal opportunity to attend state and national meetings designed to familiarize members with public school issues, governance and legislation.

In order to develop leadership capabilities, become informed about current issues in education, and improve their skills as members of a policy-making body, Board members may choose to participate in opportunities for development that may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- In-service activities planned by the Board and by the administration for staff members, as appropriate;
- Participation in conferences, workshops and conventions held by State and National School Boards Associations and other educational organizations;
- Subscriptions to publications addressing Board member concerns.

Recognizing the need for continuing training and development of its members, the Board of Education encourages the participation of all members in appropriate conferences, conventions and workshops. To control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Board establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

- The Superintendent of Schools or Board Chairperson will inform Board members, in a timely manner, of upcoming conferences, conventions and workshops. The Board will decide which meetings appear to be most likely to produce the greatest benefit to the Board and the district;
- Funds for participation at such meetings may be budgeted. When funds are limited, the Board Chairperson will designate which members would be most appropriate to participate at a given meeting;
- ~~If authorized to attend, and reimbursement is approved by the entire Board, Board members will be reimbursed, upon request, for reasonable and necessary expenses actually incurred;~~
- When a conference, convention or workshop is not attended by the full Board, those who do participate will be requested to share, by means of written or oral reports, information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

(cf. 1100 – Communication with the Public)

(cf. 4133 – Travel Reimbursement)

Adopted: 6/5/12

Bylaws of the Board

Board Member Protection

The Newtown Public Schools shall maintain adequate insurance to protect the district and its Board of Education against loss because of fire, damage to school property, loss to other property, or general liability resulting as a responsibility of the school district, and save harmless its Board and staff while acting in behalf of the school district.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-235 Indemnification of teachers, board members and employees in damage suits; expenses of litigation.

10-236 Liability insurance.

10-236a Indemnification of educational personnel assaulted in the line of duty.

Adopted: 6/5/12