

BROOKFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
Brookfield Public Schools
REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2024
BROOKFIELD HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER
7:00 P.M.
MINUTES

Chairman Dr. Wendy Youngblood called the meeting to order at 7:01pm

Present: Dr. Wendy Youngblood, Rosa Fernandes, Stephanie Sikora, Joy Greenstein, Hala Hourani, Sarah Devine, Robert Fischetto, Superintendent Dr. John Barile, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Anna Mahon, Director of Business & Operations Kasey Diotte, Director of Special Education Bill Roland, BHS Principal Marc Balanda, WMS Principal Deane Renda, CLES Principal Dr. Dave Pepsoski, Director of Instruction Deb Farias, Director of Technology Eric Conklin and members of the staff and public.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT- AVA CANTONE

Ava Cantone gave an update on the happenings at BHS.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Chairman Youngblood, on behalf of the Brookfield Board of Education, read a proclamation designating the week of May 6th to May 10th 2024 as “Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week”. Tara Nygaard and were present on behalf of the teachers union.

Chairman Youngblood, on behalf of the Brookfield Board of Education, read a proclamation designating May 8th 2024 as “School Nurses Day”. Ashley Nusser was present on behalf of the nurses union.

The Board and Superintendent recognized the students who participated in the 17th Annual HRRA (Housatonic Resource Recovery Authority) annual poster contest.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Irene Corea spoke about the Board meeting schedule.

Andy Corea spoke about the Board meeting schedule, policy updates and the Superintendent’s evaluation process.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

Christina Zimmerman

- Background Checks of BPS Employees
- FOIA Employee Substitute Subsidiary
- Payroll Question

Erin Scalera - Whisconier Website

Kim Gerardi - June 19th a federal holiday

Matt Grimes - complaint under Policy 1312

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to approve the minutes listed below as recommended:

Regular Meeting- 4/10/2024

Board Retreat- 4/27/2024

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

SUPERINTENDENT’S UPDATE

Dr. Barile gave an update on the Swatting Grant and Parent University. Director of Technology Eric Conklin gave a brief update on spring technology projects. The Superintendent also gave updates on the CLES parking lot, Kindergarten enrollment, the NEASC upcoming district accreditation, the book, “The Anxious Generation, and the SPEACS meeting held on May 2nd. Mrs. Diotte gave an overview on the transition to the district’s new food service provider, Chartwells. Dr. Barile said the next Board of Education meeting on May 22nd will be in the BHS Auditorium.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy/Communications- 4/9/2024- Mrs. Hourani said the subcommittee discussed two policies coming to the Board later in the evening for a first reading.

Finance- 4/9/2024- Mrs. Fernandes said the subcommittee discussed the March financials, 2024-2025 budget and the food service RFP. The budget referendum will be held on Tuesday, May 21st. The subcommittee then entered into executive session.

CAPE- 4/10/2024- Mrs. Greenstein said the subcommittee discussed the CKLA Reading Program, the new high school post-secondary planning, and ASL.

CONSENT AGENDA

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to approve the items on the consent agenda as recommended.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

NEW BUSINESS

BROOKFIELD HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

The Board received a report on the BHS Athletic Program Review as presented by Brookfield High School Principal Marc Balanda.

APPROVAL OF THE CKLA SCIENCE OF READING PROGRAM

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, and after a presentation by Director of Instruction Deb Farias and K-4 Literacy Specialist and Instructional Coach Julie Vaughan, the Board voted 7-0 to approve the CKLA Science of Reading Program, as recommended by the CAPE subcommittee.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

2024-2025 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING DATES

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded to approve the 2024-2025 Board of Education meeting dates. After discussion, the Board of Education added a meeting on October 2, 2024, and removed the meeting date of January 2, 2025.

R. Fernandes moved, J. Greenstein seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to amend the motion to add the words, “including the 16 meeting dates as discussed”.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

The Board voted 7-0 in favor of the original motion.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE/JULY-DECEMBER 2024

S. Sikora moved, R. Fischetto seconded to approve the subcommittee meeting schedule from July- December 2024.

After discussion, the Board voted 7-0 to approve the subcommittee meeting schedule from July- December, 2024.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

R. Fernandes moved S. Devine seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to add an agenda item, under new business, to be discussed, to reconsider the 2024-2025 BOE meeting dates.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

After discussion, S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to approve the revised dates to the 2024-2025 Board of Education meeting dates to strike October 2, 2024 and add October 30, 2024.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

APPROVAL OF POLICY #6162.51, SURVEY OF STUDENTS

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, to approve Policy #6162.51, Survey of Students, for a first reading as recommended by the Policy/Communications subcommittee.

After discussion, S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, and the Board voted 6-1 to approve Policy #6162.51, Survey of Students, for a first reading as recommended by the Policy/Communications subcommittee.

W. Youngblood, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.
R. Fernandes voted no.

APPROVAL OF BYLAW #9324, MEETING PURPOSE

S. Sikora moved, J. Greenstein seconded to approve Bylaw #9324, Meeting Purpose, for a first reading as recommended by the Policy/Communications subcommittee.

R. Fernandes moved, S. Devine seconded, to strike the words, “on a regularly scheduled rotation by said station”, and furthermore, strike the words, “by anyone at any time”.

R. Fernandes moved, R. Fischetto seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to amend the motion so that the language states in its entirety, “All meetings will be broadcast via an online streaming service and will be available to view on the Brookfield district’s website.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

CONSIDERATION OF COMPLAINT

The Board considered the first of two complaints from Brookfield resident Matt Grimes. Dr. Youngblood relinquished the Chair to Vice Chairman Rosa Fernandes. Mrs. Fernandes gave a brief overview regarding the complaint process against the Board or individual Board members, and asked each Board member to address the complaint against Dr. Youngblood point by point.

After each Board member (not including Dr. Youngblood) addressed their views regarding the complaint against Dr. Youngblood, S. Sikora moved H. Hourani seconded, and the Board voted 4-2-1 to dismiss the complaint, and take no action, pursuant to the citizen complaint under Policy #1312.

R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto voted aye.

J. Greenstein and S. Devine voted no.

W. Youngblood abstained.

The Board considered the second complaint against Mrs. Fernandes from resident Matt Grimes. Dr. Youngblood asked each Board member to address the complaint against Mrs. Fernandes.

S. Sikora moved, R. Fischetto seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to dismiss the complaint and take no action regarding the complaint against Mrs. Fernandes.

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

OLD BUSINESS

BOARD OF EDUCATION’S ADOPTED BUDGET 2024-2025

The Board continued its discussion on the Board of Education’s 2024-2025 adopted budget, if necessary. Mrs. Diotte gave an overview on the budget cuts list presented to the Board of Education on April 10th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tim Hyland spoke about DEI

Andy Corea spoke about violations of code of ethics

Erin Scalera spoke about Special Education

3 MAIN POINTS

1. Technology Update
2. CKLA Science of Reading Program
3. Budget

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mrs. Sikora listed upcoming events

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANTICIPATED

S. Sikora moved, S. Devine seconded, to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's goals/evaluation, unaffiliated salaries & contracts at 10:10pm.

W. Youngblood moved, R. Fernandes seconded, and the Board voted 7-0 to amend the agenda to add the words to executive session, "and attorney-client privileged information"

W. Youngblood, R. Fernandes, S. Sikora, J. Greenstein, H. Hourani, R. Fischetto and S. Devine voted aye.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the original motion, as amended.

Dr. Youngblood called executive session to order at 10:16pm

Present: Dr. Wendy Youngblood, Rosa Fernandes, Stephanie Sikora, Joy Greenstein, Hala Hourani, Sarah Devine, Robert Fischetto

Dr. Barile was invited in at 10:17pm

Dr. Barile exited session at 10:30pm

Without objection, the executive session was adjourned at 10:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Gramling, Board Clerk

Stephanie Sikora, Secretary
Brookfield Board of Education