



Cromwell Public Schools

Placing Student First

CROMWELL BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Regular Board Meeting
Tuesday, June 9, 2020
Minutes and Motions**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Camilleri at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

II. Roll Call including Introduction of Administrators and Student Representatives

Board of Education

Present: Mr. Camilleri, Mrs. Kelleher, Mrs. Lamberson, Mr. Matrullo, Mrs. Merli, Mrs. Post, Mrs. Russ, Mrs. Cantwell joined at 7:05 p.m., Mr. Flanders joined at 7:10 p.m.

Administration

Present: Dr. Macri, Mrs. Binnington, Mr. Butwill, Mrs. Burke, Ms. Cocchiola, Mrs. DiFiore, Mrs. DiMauro, Mrs. DiTunno, Mr. Kuckel, Mrs. Lynch, Mr. Litwinczyk, Dr. MacLean, Ms. Maher, Mrs. O'Leary, Mrs. Wyskiel

Student Representatives

Hunter Vooys and Clara Rojas - CHS Representative

Absent: Paolo Messina and Aubrey Zimmerman-CMS Representatives

III. Approval of Agenda/Additions and Deletions & Chair's Review of Agenda Highlights

Motion to Approve the Agenda made by Mrs. Lamberson, seconded by Mrs. Post. Vote: Unanimous.

IV. Celebrating Our Faculty/Staff – Teacher Leadership Academy

Dr. Macri stated that we have a teacher leadership academy, which works with Central Connecticut University under Dr. Keri MacLean and Dr. Jeremy Visone, liaison to the Cromwell

Public Schools from the Department of Educational Leadership Policy, Instruction and Technology at Central. The following teachers were recognized; **Carol Aksterowicz, Karen Bosworth, Nicolette Burns, Marissa Humphrey, Peggy Loehr, Courtney Mason, Andrea Middlebrooks, Lisa Pergolizzi, Deb Roccapriore, Melissa Seguro, Steven St.Onge**. These teacher leaders all volunteered their time and have taken on extra leadership work throughout the year. They have led projects that were wide ranging and addressed theories of improving school culture and climate, piloting mastery based learning, improving teacher wellness, creating equitable conditions for all students, and improving student effort and motivation. Dr. Macri was very excited about the progress and that so many teachers wanted to participate in this program on their own time. It is a huge commitment and Dr. Macri also commented on the wonderful projects. She looks forward to the continued partnership with Dr. Visone and Central Connecticut State University.

Mr. Camilleri thanked the teachers for participating in the teacher leadership academy. Mr. Camilleri stated that he values each of them as important leaders in our school district and appreciates them going above and beyond to go through this program. Mr. Camilleri looks forward to many great things in the year to come and congratulates each of them.

V. Celebrating Our Students – CABE Student Leadership Award

Dr. Macri stated the students being celebrated were the students awarded with the CABE Leadership Award. **Lauren McCarroll of CMS, Abigail Burgess of CMS, Clara Rojas of CHS and Kaedrynn Pulling of CHS**.

Mrs. Cocchiola stated that every year it is always an honor to recognize two students from the Cromwell Middle School for their leadership skills within the classroom, family school life and within school activities. The two students are very sharp young ladies, they take pride in their work, and they are leaders, involved in multiple school activities. Mrs. Cocchiola was honored to congratulate Lauren McCarroll and Abigail Burgess. Dr. Macri congratulated Lauren and Abigail and is very proud of both of them.

Mrs. DiFiore stated the two students honored for Cromwell High School are Kaedrynn Pulling and Clara Rojas. Kaedrynn is a very poised and responsible student. Kaedrynn has been involved in clubs and extracurricular activities throughout her high school career and during her senior year she has served as President of the Student Council and Vice President of the Class of 2020. Kaedrynn has balanced her stellar academic achievement with this leadership position and is a standout varsity athlete on the girls' soccer team. Mrs. DiFiore congratulated Kaedrynn. Mrs. DiFiore also recognized Clara Rojas and stated she has made a conscious effort to improve the climate of Cromwell High School throughout her high school career. Clara has kept her leadership in many clubs including National Honor Society and National Spanish Honor Society, while also serving as a representative at every Board of Education meeting. She works really hard to maintain a perpetually positive attitude. Mrs. DiFiore congratulated Clara.

Dr. Macri congratulated both Kaedrynn and Clara and is very proud of both of them as well. Dr. Macri wanted to celebrate the last two years of Clara being our Board of Education Representative. Clara will be leaving to attend the University of Puerto Rico.

Clara thanked the Board and Mrs. DiFiore.

Mr. Camilleri stated that this is an important award and is very grateful for the students for their strong leadership in the schools and community. There will be great things to expect from each of you in the future. Mr. Camilleri, also added for Clara as the Student Representative for the Board of Education, it has been a pleasure having her on the Board. Clara brought a lot of perspectives and was never afraid to speak up and share her opinions and thoughts on important issues. Mr. Camilleri is very grateful that Clara had the strength and courage to speak up and share her opinions and wished Clara all the best. Mr. Camilleri congratulated Lauren and all the families of the students being honored.

Dr. Macri added that Hunter Vooys will be taking the role as a Senior Student Representative for the 2020-2021 school year. Hunter introduced the junior student representative Devon Riggio and stated she will be a great fit. Devon thanked the Board for the opportunity to represent the students. Mr. Camilleri agreed that she will be a great fit and congratulated Devon and the Board looks forward to working with Hunter and Devon.

VI. Correspondence

Mr. Camilleri stated that there were several correspondence regarding the budget, which will be shared. Mr. Camilleri has submitted a letter of resignation and it was not an easy choice and a very difficult decision. He has served on the Board since 2009 and is truly honored to have had the opportunity to serve the students of the Town of Cromwell. Mr. Camilleri added that given his increased demands as a lawyer for Pratt and Whitney, he is no longer able to dedicate the time necessary to be an effective Board member. This decision will be effective as of June 19th. Mr. Camilleri thanked everyone who sent notes of support; it met the world to him and he really appreciated it. The decision was made easier for him because we have an extraordinarily strong Board and he has a great deal of confidence in the Board which works with the faculty, staff, Mayor Faienza, and Chairman Neto to move our district forward. To the fellow Board members, it has been a privilege to serve with them. Mr. Camilleri introduced Mr. Matrullo as the new Chairman of the Board of Education. He has known Jeff for many years and considers him a good friend and a great, strong, calm, transparent leader. Mr. Camilleri added that Mr. Matrullo will be an effective leader and wished him much success. Mr. Camilleri thanked Dr. Macri and feels very confident in her leadership, passion, dedication, transparency, intelligence and creativity. Dr. Macri will continue to have success in the years to come. Mr. Camilleri also thanked the students. The students are the reason that we do everything we do.

Mr. Matrullo thanked Mr. Camilleri and he appreciates everything he has done for the Board over the years. The number of hours Mr. Camilleri has dedicated himself to this job cannot be estimated.

Dr. Macri added that she can't thank Mr. Camilleri enough for believing in her and his compassion and passion comes out in everything that he does. Even when they disagreed they have made it through and Dr. Macri has enjoyed those conversations and never felt that there was a moment that Mr. Camilleri could not be reached. His ability to reflect on things in ways that are very unique to others and he was an inspiration to Dr. Macri. Dr. Macri also stated that Mr. Camilleri always took his time to think things through before making a decision and she has learned a lot from that. Dr. Macri also thanked him for his mentorship and for his support. The

Cromwell Public Schools will be sending Mr. Camilleri a desk clock to honor him and his years of service with the Board of Education.

Mrs. DiFiore spoke on behalf of the administrators in thanking Mr. Camilleri in the commitment he has made for the 10 ½ years to our students, she also thanked Terri, Megan and Jessica for sharing him and all the times they sacrificed for not having him around. Mrs. DiFiore thanked Mr. Camilleri for leading the district through a lot of good times and times where we needed someone to lead the district. Mr. Camilleri was grateful for the kind words.

Mrs. Kelleher wanted to thank Mr. Camilleri for everything he has done. His availability was amazing and he put so much thought into everything and he will be greatly missed. Mrs. Kelleher also thanked Mr. Matrullo for stepping up and the Board is here to support Mr. Matrullo.

Mr. Camilleri formally stated that Mr. Matrullo will be taking over as Chairman for the rest of the meeting and moving forward. Mr. Matrullo stated he is looking forward to working with the Board and all the members.

VII. Superintendent's Updates and Responses to BOE Comments/Actions Items and Public Comments from Prior Meeting

Dr. Macri stated that she continues to find out more about graduation as the Governor loosens the requirements. Dr. Macri spoke to Chief Lamontange about the graduation plan. There will be a parade on June 15th. Seniors will drive by ECS, WIS, CMS, and then the graduation ceremony will take place at CHS. Dr. Macri thanked Mrs. DiFiore, Mr. Kuckel and all the staff at the high school who worked so hard on planning an event where it seems easy but there is a lot that goes into it.

Dr. Macri also commented on getting a few calls for the upcoming school year. As of right now, the State has not released guidance for opening schools next school year. The guidance from the State was supposed to occur on May 31st. While we await guidance from the State, a task force has been set up with Cromwell's administration. A meeting will be held tomorrow, June 10th. Leigh Neuman and Yolanda Demetriades will be joining the meeting to collaborate. We are hoping around the 3rd week of June to have the guidance from the State. Additional people will be added to the task force as we move forward with planning.

Dr. Macri also stated that there will be 35 students participating in the ESY (Extended School Year) program which will be in person and starting on July 6th. The ESY program will follow all regulations and requirements. The Cromwell school district is 1 of 5 districts moving forward with in-person ESY. Mrs. O'Leary and Dr. Macri think it is important for our Special Education students to receive occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language and therapy that they have not received during the school closures and some of the instruction that they have missed. It will give a good idea of what the school can look like moving forward with social distancing.

Dr. Macri stated the death of George Floyd is tragic and all the recent events have been troubling. Cromwell will continue to address social justice and racism and we will continue to plan through CREC. Unfortunately, this is work that has to be done in person and the work being done had to come to a halt with COVID-19. Conversations with staff, students and the

community will continue and we are committed to have equitable opportunities for our students and for all students to be successful and to feel safe.

Mr. Matrullo asked if the reopening discussion can be added to the next agenda to continue discussion on the update. Dr. Macri added that a survey will be sent to parents shortly regarding questions on reopening.

Mr. Flanders noted that he is deeply concerned about the reopening plans. Dr. Macri responded that although they are planning and discussing plans, guidelines from the health department need to be approved. Most plans at this point are not operationally feasible at this time. Mr. Flanders was also concerned about the curriculum component and wanted to know if staff know the levels of where students are. Dr. MacLean commented that there is a curriculum task force that is meeting. The task force provides Professional Development and formative assessment to teachers which is a way to get an idea of where students are. Parents/Guardians were notified via email regarding these assessments. Data is being collected and the curriculum leaders went through units to identify the most important concepts. Mrs. Russ also asked if programs such as i-Ready can be a tool to assess students. Dr. MacLean answered by stating she has a general idea of the levels for students and the curriculum that was missed during this virtual learning time, additionally i-Ready is a great program and the most powerful in regards to blended learning, when it is used properly. The program sends data every week which shows very helpful information for each student. Other Board members asked questions regarding this issue and each question was answered. Dr. MacLean added that students will be able to use the i-Ready program until August 15th.

VIII. Presentation and Reports of Administration

A. 2019-2020 Budget Update

Mr. Matrullo explained that we are coming to the end of the fiscal year, and at this time funds are often moved from one line item to another to make sure all line items are within the budget.

Dr. Macri stated a letter was submitted by Mrs. Burke to point out the unanticipated expenses. Dr. Macri discussed the items and explained the funds such as Special Education costs, transportation. Due to COVID-19 some items decreased such as substitute teaching, transportation, instructional supplies and coach stipends. Technology-related purchases are a priority. Dr. Macri thanked Mr. Litwinczyk and his team for doing the best they could under the circumstances. Air quality improvements in the buildings are another priority.

Dr. Macri continued to state that grades of 3, 4, 5 and 6 are in need of assistance in Math. The program of i-Ready can assess every student and can provide assignments in their portfolio during the summer to work on skills they need to improve. Teachers will be provided Professional Development to help with this program. Graduation funds will increase due to the needed items for the planning during this time of social distancing and additional requirements.

Mrs. Burke stated this time of year is when she works to close all Purchase Orders and receives final numbers to close the budget. Final numbers typically do not occur until sometime in August. Mrs. Lamberson asked if any remaining funds can be rolled into the next school year. Dr. Macri answered by stating the funds carried over can be 1% of the total budget, and those amounts are deposited into a Capital Fund; however, a few years ago, legislation was enacted that allows towns to use school funds for educational resources. Examples of the current situation might be to fund masks for students. The town would have to agree to have the Board carry over the funds and place it in a school account to retrieve next year. The town can also choose to keep the additional funds.

B. Action: Approval Budget Transfer Request: Transfer Funds from the Employee Benefits Account (200) to the Instructional Equipment Account (730) in the Amount of \$183,000.

Motion to Approve Budget Transfer Request: Transfer funds from the Employee Benefits Account (200) to the Instructional Equipment Account (730) in the amount of \$183,000 made by Mrs. Lamberson, seconded by Mrs. Russ Vote: Unanimous.

C. Action: Approval Budget Transfer Request: Transfer Funds from the Grounds Account (424) to the Instructional Program Improvement Account (322) in the Amount of \$7,500.

Motion to Approve Budget Transfer Request: Transfer funds from the Grounds Account (424) to the Instructional Program Improvement Account (322) in the amount of \$7,500 made by Mr. Flanders, seconded by Mrs. Lamberson Vote: Unanimous.

D. Action: Approval Budget Transfer Request: Transfer funds from the Grounds Account (424) to the Maintenance Physical Plant Account (420) in the amount of \$2,500.

Motion to Approve Budget Transfer Request: Transfer funds from the Grounds Account (424) to the Maintenance Physical Plant Account (420) in the amount of \$2,500 made by Mr. Flanders, seconded by Mrs. Lamberson Vote: Unanimous.

IX. New Business

A. Informational: Class of 2020 Post Graduation Plans

Mr. Matrullo stated this is one of his favorite items of the year, which is the post-graduation plans. The report that was submitted was discussed.

B. Action: Approval of Out of State/Oversight Field Trip Requests

Mr. Matrullo and other members discussed the information provided for the field trip requests. It was agreed to make sure when reserving the trips that refunds will be given in case cancellations need to occur due to the current or changing

requirements from each state regarding executive orders and or recommended guidelines.

Motion to Approve of out of State/Oversight Field Trips subject to the trips being held with the recommended guidelines made by Mr. Flanders seconded by Mrs. Russ.
Vote: Unanimous.

C. Action: Approval of Special Minutes and Motions – May 18, 2020 meeting

Motion to Approve of Special Minutes and Motions- May 18, 2020 made by
Mrs. Lamberson seconded by Mrs. Russ Vote: Unanimous.

D. Action: Approval of Executive Session Minutes and Motions – May 18, 2020

Motion to Approve of Executive Session Minutes and Motions- May 18, 2020 was not made.

E. Action: Discussion and Approval of School Transportation Contract Amendment

Dr. Macri stated that DATTCO has authorized the financial terms to all of their clients. According to the agreement, the daily rate from the start of the school closure through May 31st is 60%, and the daily rate from June 1st through the end of the school year is 95%. Mrs. Burke also agrees that the agreement with DATTCO is a good agreement and the reason we do not have a final number is we do not know the employees that will be returning and accepting their jobs back. Mrs. Burke is happy to move forward with the agreement.

Motion Discussion and Approval of School Transportation Contract Amendment as long as the percentage does fall below the proposed amendment made by Mr. Flanders, seconded by Mrs. Kelleher Vote: Unanimous.

F. Action: Discussion and Approval of 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget Line Items

Mr. Matrullo explained the Board originally adopted a budget of 6.14% increase and the amount was reduced to 3.6%, which meant that the Board had to find approximately \$781,000.00 to cut from the budget to get to 3.6%. The proposals from Dr. Macri were discussed in the last meeting and questions were also asked at that meeting.

Dr. Macri explained the references provided to the Board and discussed the recommendations she provided. Option 1, which is Dr. Macri's recommended option. The change in salaries occurred because the preschool position was returned and the paraprofessional position because the Open Choice Grant would fund these salaries. The Capstone position will be removed and the possibility to make it a stipend position was discussed, however, this would be based on knowing the

activity of sports. Restoring cross country and coverage for night games such as officials and police and the freshman basketball teams were added. The air quality is an urgent matter and will be moving forward with the current budget to make sure this is completed. Although positions will be cut, there are no actual people that will lose their jobs except for the .5 paraprofessional position.

Mrs. Cantwell asked about the transition position at the high school. Mrs. O'Leary explained that this position is through CREC and is a contracted service. However, the services in a student's IEP will continue. Mr. Flanders asked if there would be a person taking over for this job. Mrs. O'Leary stated although this service was a bonus to Cromwell, we have a transition coordinator in the high school which already does the assessments and planning for students. Mrs. O'Leary wants to individualize this and use a contracted person on a need basis.

Motion to Approve Option 1 to the 2020-2021 Board of Education Budget Line items made by Mrs. Kelleher, seconded by Mrs. Lamberson Vote: Unanimous.

X. Topics for Future Agendas and Possible Action to Approve Additional Topics

July 14 Re-opening Discussion

July 14 Characterization of the Impact of Magnet Schools and Management of the Costs

August 11 Board's Evaluation of Superintendent

Motion to add Future Agenda Item of School Re-opening Discussions made by Mr. Flanders, seconded by Mrs. Lamberson Vote: Unanimous

XI. Discussion of Matters Concerning Pending Litigation Regarding Title IX Complaint (proposed to be held in Executive Session) and Adjournment

Motion to enter into Executive Session for the Discussion of Matters Concerning Pending Litigation Regarding Title IX Complaint with the invite of Dr. Macri and Attorney Zelman and to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education at 9:23pm made by Mr. Flanders, seconded by Mrs. Russ Vote: Unanimous.

Public session of the regular meeting ended at 9:23pm

Respectfully submitted,

Alessandra Corvo

Alessandra Corvo
BOE Recording Clerk