



North Canaan Board of Education

MEETING MINUTES

90 Pease Street, North Canaan, CT 06018 www.nceschool.org

*The North Canaan Board of Education met at
6:30 pm on Tuesday, September 8, 2020, virtually through Google Meet.*

A virtual meeting was held using Google Meet: Rebecca Cahill, Dorothy Cecchinato (phone), Matt Devino, Erin Drislane, and Amy Dodge.

Others present: Dr. Alicia M. Roy, Principal; Lisa Carter, Superintendent; Dr. Scott Fellows and Jill Pace, Assistant Superintendents.

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm. by Mrs. Drislane

II. Consent Agenda:

Mrs. Cecchinato made a motion to approve the minutes for August 18, 2020, as written. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodger

Mrs. Drislane recommended to the Board that item "D" be added to the Action items for the hiring of a long-term substitute teacher. Mrs. Cecchinato seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge

III. Public Comment: None

IV. Communications:

- A. A resignation letter was received from Patricia Vanicky. Dr. Roy commented that Patricia Vanicky took a job as an art teacher with Housatonic Valley Regional High School but continues to support her AHA replacement, Chea Medico. The school wishes her well.
- B. Sarah Mauro resigned and has been asked to send a signed letter of resignation. Her job has been posted.
- C. Allison Gray, a volunteer at NCES, donated 50 large pencil cases. Dr. Roy passed out all the pencil boxes to students who needed them and will send a thank you note.
- D. VFW Auxiliary 6851 Canaan donated 10 backpacks with supplies. North Canaan Elementary students and parents were very thankful for them. Dr. Roy will send a thank you note.
- E. Town volunteers came to the school to clean the courtyard and donated mulch (Jacquier Farm). Students will be utilizing the outside as much as possible and tent canopies will be placed around the school.

Dr. Roy added that Penny Teri donated and made 50 masks for North Canaan Elementary School. Mrs. Teri used her stimulus money to purchase materials to make them. She is now working on Halloween masks. The students and staff who received these masks are very thankful for these donations.

V. Region I Report - Mr. Bartram, North Canaan Representative

Mr. Bartram was unable to join the meeting but reached out to Mrs. Drislane to remind people to watch the meeting online and to say that the MOA was passed.

VI. All Boards Chair Report

Mrs. Drislane reported that there was no August meeting and until their September meeting there wasn't much to report.

VII. Reopening of school

Dr. Roy was excited to report that the first few days in school have gone smoothly. Students were able to bring and wear a mask without problems. Considering some students were having their first experience with school and parents could not come into the building there were no tears to report, and we offered extra support to ensure a smooth transition for these students and families. There are 60 Distance learners starting the year and we have been able to work out some start-up glitches. Dr. Roy wanted to thank the teachers for all their hard work in carrying out the Distance learning and in-person classroom teaching.

VIII. Policies (1st reading)

Policies 6172.61 Distance Learning and 4118.237 / 4218.237 / 5141.8 Face Masks/Covering were read. Ms. Carter commented that after hearing another school's comments on the Face Mask Covering policy she was looking into making revisions to this policy. There was no further discussion.

IX. Action Items

- A. Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the approval of the hiring of Jeffrey Durkin as a grade 3 teacher for the 2020-2021 school year at a master's step 2 with a salary rate of \$46,548.00. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge
- B. Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the approval of the hiring of Cheri Dressel as a teacher assistant 1 for the 2020-2021 school year with a salary rate of \$14.19 per hour. Mrs. Dodge seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge
- C. Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full board the approval of the 2020-2021 Memorandum of Agreement with the North Canaan Faculty Association regarding distance learning as presented. Mr. Devino seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge.
- D. Mrs. Drislane recommended to the full Board the approval of the hiring of Gage Murphy (during the absence of Mrs. Davis, which is anticipated to be 6-8 weeks beginning in October) as a grades 7-8 long-term English language arts substitute teacher at a per diem rate of \$225.24 upon successful completion of the Praxis assessment. Mr. Devino seconded. Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge.

X. Administrative Reports (A copy is available through the link on the September agenda.)

Principal's Report: Dr. Roy provided a brief overview of her monthly report. Some of the items she reported are listed below:

- We are welcoming many teachers new to NCES this year. Some come with much experience. All come with much enthusiasm.
- Staff members spent seven days during the past two weeks learning and preparing, learning our safety requirements, and participating in professional development. Most teachers also came in during their own time in August to remove the spring decorations and welcome fall.
- Each teacher created and shared a video last Monday with all families of students in their class (cohort) providing an overview of the classroom, welcoming students, and highlighting our safety features in each room.

Assistant Superintendent's Report: (A copy is available through the link on the September agenda.) Mrs. Pace and Mr. Fellows both reported an overview of their monthly report. Some of the items they reported are listed below:

- Almost 20 new teachers were hired to fill vacancies created by teachers who retired or moved out of the Region.
- New curricula for English/language arts K-3 was written by EdAdvance and is being taught by teachers at those grade levels.
- Middle school mathematics teachers reviewed the Illustrative Math Program for grades 6-8 with the goal of revising the "Compacted Math" curricula so students could complete algebra 1 in eighth grade and enter high school taking algebra 2
- Middle school science teachers reviewed the existing NGSS units for grades 5-8 and revised, reworked, or eliminated those that were not helping students to discern critical scientific concepts. They also added additional units.
- A 5-day Regional Professional Learning Conference was organized for the first week in September which included topics such as COVID-19, Training in Recognizing Trauma in Students, Distance Learning Strategies, Social-Emotional Learning (activities), and many more.
- A partnership with Medicine for the Greater Good and Johns Hopkins was arranged to provide current information for students, staff, and the Region One community. Staff training began on August 31, and are being scheduled for families and students for the coming weeks.
- Mrs. Pace wanted to thank the Northwest Corner Prevention Network team for providing resources and tools for the new teachers in K-12 to use.

Superintendent's Report: (A copy is available through the link on the September agenda.)

Ms. Carter wanted to commend Dr. Roy and the North Canaan teachers and staff for doing a wonderful job getting the new school year off to a great start. Some of the items Ms. Carter reported on are listed below:

- Facilities managers and custodians have been organizing classrooms and outfitting them with plexiglass where necessary to meet physical distancing needs. They are also putting up signs and laying down floor markings to communicate information and manage traffic flow.
- Principals have been working with their leadership teams, teachers and paras to organize and implement building-specific routines, protocols and professional learning to ensure that they are prepared to receive students on September 8.
- Support staff teams are busy ensuring that all teachers have supplies, onboarding new students and attending to the many other tasks that need to be completed before the students arrive.
- Food service staff are organizing in-school and out-of-school meal service. Students who are in school will follow safety protocols and will either eat in classrooms or in reduced numbers in the cafeteria. Meals for students who are not in school will be organized for pick-up throughout the week.
- Approximately 176 new students will attend school in the Region.
- An MOA was created with the teachers under the guidance of CEA. Region One teachers and administrators collaborated with faculty association presidents to produce a final agreement that broadly outlines guidelines for all aspects of school operations impacted by provisions for COVID-19.
- The CSDE has released allocations to schools from the CoronaVirus Relief Fund (not to be confused with the CARES Act funds.)
- We are working on recommended COVID-related policies.
- The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference has published a fall schedule that includes a six-event high school schedule for football and a twelve-event high school schedule for each of the other fall sports. The athletic events are expected to take place regionally. No-contact non-sport-specific conditioning has taken place since mid-August. Practices are allowed to begin on September 21 if Connecticut COVID-19 numbers remain low. Games will begin on October 1. All conditioning and practice sessions must follow a strict protocol that specifies a health screening procedure, the length of practice, and activities that are allowed during practices.

XI. Public Comment

Don Drislane would like to volunteer his services in any way to promote a fall activity for the elementary schools. Mr. Drislane stated that he thought it is very important to keep children active and social. Ms. Carter responded explaining that the administration has decided there will be no fall sports for the elementary schools due to the fact that the biggest hurdle and full attention has been to get the students back to school in a safe and secure environment and to keep it that way. This has taken a huge amount of time and effort on all school staff and administration. Ms. Carter said she would look into some activities in the future that would be within the safety measures.

Adjournment: Mr. Devino made a motion to adjourn at 7:31 pm. Mrs. Cecchinato seconded.
Vote: 5-yes Mrs. Cahill, Mrs. Cecchinato, Mr. Devino, Mrs. Drislane, and Mrs. Dodge

Respectfully submitted,
Kerry Rooney

Approved: October 13, 2020