

Ashford Board of Education
Ashford, Connecticut
Meeting Agenda
August 16, 2018
7:00 pm
Ashford School
District Office Conference Room

1. Call To Order
2. Communications
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
4. Approval of Minutes: 07/19/18; 08/02/18
5. New Business
 - a. Approval of FY 18 Year-End Budget Transfers
 - b. Staff Resignation
 - c. Approval of School Medical Advisor
6. BOE Committee Worksessions (7:30pm – 8:15pm)
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Building & Grounds
7. Committee Reports to Board
8. Old Business
 - a. Discuss BOE Curriculum Committee
9. Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items
10. Second Opportunity for Public Comment
11. Adjournment

Ashford Board of Education Goals

The Ashford Board shall:

1. Initiate policies and practices, as well as devote appropriate resources towards the improvement of Ashford students on Connecticut standardized testing.
2. Promote instructional practices rooted in the individual skills, talents, needs and performance of the student.
3. Initiate mechanisms for improved and effective communication with the community as well as town leaders and other town boards and committees.
4. Develop a three-year school improvement plan that presents, and explains, an optimal path towards educational excellence in Ashford.

All meetings, conferences, programs and activities at Ashford School are available, without discrimination, to individuals with disabilities as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or Title II of the American with Disabilities Act. Individuals with disabilities requesting relocation of this meeting should call the Superintendent at 429-1927 or e-mail a request to jplongo@ashfordct.org not later than 2 working days prior to the meeting. Hearing impaired individuals may communicate their request for accommodations by using the e-mail address above, or calling the State of CT TDD relay service (800) 842-2880 or the national relay service number (800) 855-2880.

Enclosures: Regular meeting minutes 07/19; special meeting minutes 08/02

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – July 19, 2018
7:00 pm
Ashford School District Office Conference Room

Note: Per CGS 10-218, Board of Education Meeting Minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exceptions of motions and votes recorded, the minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote by the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.

Call to Order

Board Chair J. Lippert called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Present were members J. Urban, K. Warren, J. Calarese (7:20 pm), and S. Gamache. Also present were Superintendent J. Longo and Asst. Principal G. Dukette. Present in the audience were AEA member J. Lindsay, R. Haeger, K. Johnston, S. Irvine and K. Kouatly. Unable to attend were members L. Donegan and M. Matthews.

Communications

Everyone had received the CAFE booklet on the new laws passed by the General Assembly for 2018.

Opportunity for Public Comment

- K. Johnston wanted to know where to send the survey for the EO Smith students from Ashford. They only received the surveys 2 days ago and her daughter didn't have time to finish it. She would like it on the agenda again.
- R. Haeger stated she was looking forward on having the BOE start a Curriculum Committee. She also wanted to have some clarity on why Principal Hopkins's title was changed. She also wanted an explanation on social literacy.
- S. Irvine stated that she was glad to see that the survey went out.

Dr. Longo stated that he could give them their answers further down on the agenda.

J. Lippert motioned to add to the agenda item 5d, New Business, to allow Dr. Longo to give explanations to the persons that spoke during public comment and J. Calarese seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Special Meeting 6/28/2018

The following are the corrections to the minutes:

- *Under Year-End District and Administration Report*
4th bullets, 2nd sentence change "was discussed", to were discussed.
- *Under BOE Subcommittee Work Sessions*
- *Under Personnel – end of first sentence*
Change "in conference", to in the conference
- *Under New Business, Item c:*
2nd sentence change "must to be increased by \$.10 to \$2.85" to must be increased by \$.10 to \$2.85 as per federal mandate.
- *Under Old Business*
Item a: add the word year between 10 and capital
- *Under Second Opportunity for Public Comment*
1st bullet: 3rd sentence: change "She spoke the" to She spoke about the, AND change "classroom" to classrooms;
4th line: change "asking if is it" to asking if it is
5th line: delete the word stated

J. Calarese motioned to accept the minutes of the special meeting of June 28, 2018 and seconded by J. Urban. Passed unanimously.

New Business

a. Approval of FY 18 Year-End Budget Transfers

Lisa Dyer wants to table her report to the end of the month as PO's are still coming in from the vendors.

b. Board of Education Goals

In the future the Board wants to consider 3-year goals. Dr. Longo handed out some goals to be discussed at the retreat. The Board would like to see the bids for next year's capital projects.

c. Discuss Agenda for 8/2/18 Strategic Planning Meeting

Dr. Longo has invited Ann Littlefield, the Board's attorney, to speak at the beginning of the retreat.

d. Response to Questions from Public Comment

Principal's Title: Dr. Longo explained that by changing Mr. Hopkins' title to Principal/Asst. Supt. it would give him some experience working partly as a superintendent in case he ever wanted to leave his position at Ashford School and it will allow Dr. Longo to mentor him.

Social Literacy: Mr. Dukette stated that K-6 teachers are responsible for all subjects, with limitations due to time. In order to maximize efficiency and also support better student learning, Social Literacy combines reading instruction

with social studies. Both subjects are driven by the Common Core literacy standards so they work well together. In addition, Social Literacy provides the opportunity for students to read novels that are in context of what they are learning in social studies. For instance, if learning about Africa, students have a choice of novels about Africa. Research shows that extending learning beyond the subject and into other subjects better enables the learning to move into long-term storage. For grades 7-8, SS and ELA are still separate subjects but we are emphasizing as much interdisciplinary learning as possible.

Old Business

a. Student Survey Follow-up

Surveys were sent to all recent Ashford School graduates. The results of the survey will be given out at the BOE retreat on Aug. 2. K. Warren also wanted the surveys to go to Windham Tech and any other school Ashford students were attending.

b. Search Committee Update

Mr. Dukette gave a recap of the search committee process. The 1st round consisted of an interview and a writing component. Troy and I looked over the writing. Teachers Jen Lindsay, Darcy Compton, and Maureen Connolly, a student Shannon Connolly, Troy and myself were the interview committee. The entire committee agreed upon the same top two candidates to move to the second round. The second round consisted of a 30-minute algebra lesson focused on stations learning and differentiation. Observing the lesson were teachers Darcy Compton and Maureen Connolly, as well as Troy, Cindy, and me. In addition, we had six students, ranging from students entering 6th grade to students entering 9th grade. All students wrote reflections on the two candidates and voted on who they preferred. Helene Poppleton received the majority of the student votes (4-2). In addition, our committee unanimously selected her as our choice as well. I called all references and they were sterling. The search committee recommended Helene Poppleton for the middle school math position.

K. Warren motioned to accept Helene Poppleton to be the new middle school math teacher seconded by J. Urban. Motion passed unanimously.

c. BOE Curriculum Committee

J. Lippert stated that K. Warren mentioned to him that State Statue 10-220(e) requires the BOE to appoint a curriculum committee. The committee will consist of teachers, BOE members, and general public. Discussion was had that maybe people in the audience would volunteer at the retreat to serve on this committee once the BOE decides who and how many will be on the committee.

J. Lippert made a motion to add to the agenda under #8, salad bar, and move the rest of the agenda items down. Seconded by J. Calarese. Motion passed unanimously.

S. Gamache reported that there is a grant to get a free salad bar for the cafeteria. Discussion followed. She stated that it takes from 12-18 months from the time you apply for the grant to receive the salad bar. The cafeteria committee will meet before a BOE meeting with the janitor and kitchen crew.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

K. Kouatly stated that she preferred a video of the BOE meetings. She also was concerned that there would be waste to the salad bar.

R. Haeger suggested having the salad bar for the upper grades only. With social literacy, she would like to see more on the student survey.

S. Irvine asked that in the future that the BOE explain what they are talking about because sometimes the audience doesn't know. She also suggested having pre-made salads then the students can have the protein added to it as they go through the line.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next meeting is the BOE retreat on August 2 in the media center from 2pm to 7pm. Dr. Longo handed out a proposed agenda for the meeting. Discussion about live streaming or taping BOE meetings will be added to the agenda.

J. Urban motioned to go into executive session at 9:20 pm. for the Superintendent's evaluation and seconded by S. Gamache. Motion passed. Present were K. Warren, J. Lippert, J. Urban, J. Calarese and Dr. Longo. The BOE and Dr. Longo exited the executive session at 9:40 pm. The decision was to table Dr. Longo's evaluation until the retreat on Aug. 2.

K. Warren motioned to go into executive session at 9:42 pm for discussing a personnel matter and seconded by J. Urban. Motion passed. Present were K. Warren, J. Lippert, J. Urban, and J. Calarese. The BOE exited the executive session at 10:20 pm. No action taken.

J. Urban motioned to adjourn the meeting and seconded by S. Gamache. Meeting was adjourned at 10:22 pm.

Minutes taken by

Kay M. Warren, BOE Secretary

Special Meeting Agenda
Annual Strategic Planning Session
Ashford School
Library/Media Center

Special Meeting Minutes – August 2, 2018

Chair J. Lippert called the special meeting to order at 2:07 pm. In attendance were L. Donegan, J. Urban, K. Warren, J. Calarese, S. Gamache, M. Matthews, Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, Director of Pupil Personnel C. Ford, Principal/Asst. Superintendent T. Hopkins and Asst. Principal G. Dukette. Present in the audience were K. Johnston and R. Haeger.

Board of Education Roles and Responsibilities

Presentation by BOE attorney Anne Littlefield. The presentation focused upon the roles and responsibilities of a BOE member with particular emphasis upon the legal position a BOE member is in. Executive sessions, non-meetings, exit interviews discussions outside BOE meetings, input from employees, conversations with citizens, and all aspects of confidentiality and appropriate BOE members conversations with each other outside the posted meeting, and what meetings must be posted were all topics of discussion. It ended with an opportunity for BOE members to ask questions.

End of the Year Superintendent's Report: State of the School

Dr. Longo reviewed the advances made in the school over the 2017-2018 academic year highlighting the STEAM and Project based learning components, improvements in staffing and the fact that the coming year would be devoted to refining current initiatives not adding new ones. Particular attention was given to the idea that the school had been improving in every way each year including curriculum, instruction, staffing, community relations, capital improvements, building and grounds and all of the other aspects of the learning environment that an administration can influence all of which have shown steady and consistent improvement.

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session, Action Anticipated)

Motion made by K. Warren to enter into executive session (4:10pm) for the purpose of Superintendent evaluation. Motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

Present: J. Lippert, J. Calarese, L. Donegan, S. Gamache, M. Matthews, J. Urban, K. Warren and Dr. J. Longo. The board and Dr. Longo exited executive session (4:50pm) with no action taken.

After exiting executive session the board had a working dinner while continuing its agenda.

Board Goals

Marian Matthews asked that we have brief goals and little verbiage. The Board asked for a definition of curriculum. A discussion was initiated about the BOE curriculum committee and how it might relate to the school curriculum committee. A discussion was held about the development of goals and each member had ideas for goals. A lively discussion of goals ensued resulting in a draft of both a mission statement and goals for the 2018-2019 year as follows:

Mission:

To support Ashford School as it prepares and inspires a community of learners to achieve the highest possible educational and personal potential as productive and responsible citizens of our diverse, global community

Goals:

Curriculum – Ensure a Kindergarten to 8th grade curriculum that challenges students to use methods of inquiry to solve problems, think critically, and express themselves creatively and effectively.

Financial - Develop a budget that ensures the best possible education while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers

Culture - Foster an environment of physical and emotional health and wellness for all. Support a community that recognizes professional expertise and provides diverse opportunities that enhance teaching and learning.

Community Relations and Facilities - Provide opportunities for enhanced community engagement and serve as a leader for Ashford in enhancing energy efficiency, developing a maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school's useful life, and demonstrates environmental responsibility.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Former PTO president Rebecca Haeger spoke to the BOE thanking the board and administration for all of the work that they do to ensure that the school is the best that it could be.

Budget Development Schedule

The proposed budget schedule was adopted as a draft with more detail expected as information from the Board of Finance emerges. Dates for submission to BOF, hearings and votes will be forthcoming from the board of finance.

- September: First opportunity for public input. Discuss goals and administrative recommendations, schedule three-board budget preparation meeting
- October – Continued opportunity for public input, survey staff and departments for budget needs
- November – Continued opportunity for public input, submission of first draft of the superintendent's proposed budget
- December – Development of first draft of BOE budget proposal
- January – Preparation of BOE budget document for distribution to board of finance
- February – BOE vote on BOE budget document for submission to BOF
- March – Editing of BOE budget and document based upon BOF recommendations, Public hearing
- April – Town Meeting
- May Budget Referendum

Capital Project Priorities

Questions were asked regarding the town's capital committees. John Calarese indicated that they had met but he had not heard when the next meeting would be held. Dr. Longo indicated that he had received authorization from the first selectman to proceed with hiring Friar & Associates to draw up architectural plans for the renovation of the "Tech/CORR" space. Marian Matthews asked why recommendations were different from those we paid for from Friar. Dr. Longo indicated his list was based upon previous BOE actions and wishes and was subject to revision. There was lively discussion regarding the needs of the district and how best to approach capital improvements to the facility. Ms. Matthews asked that Dr. Longo contact the Region 18 superintendent to see how they received grants and funds to replace their boilers. She further asked that we look at the energy audit and look for low hanging fruit projects that could be done by us using our funds, including our 1% account. Specifically items that are inexpensive such as exhaust fans. There was a discussion regarding the bonding issue discussed by the town and how that would address our capital improvement plans.

No final list was created and the matter would be carried forward to a future meeting.

STEAM and Project-Based Learning Report by Administrative Team

The administration presented its report with each administrator addressing a portion of it. Mr. Hopkins gave the initial overview emphasizing the concepts of STEAM and project based learning as well as how they fit into the states "Rubric for Effective Teaching" using a crosswalk that demonstrated that the Ashford School approach ran closely to the states requirements for evaluation of quality teaching as well as how our approach integrates with the regional accreditation requirements/standards of NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges), and how our high schools would soon have to meet those standards to receive accreditation. This is important because they would soon have to utilize more project-based learning and become much more compatible with our approach to instruction.

It was further noted how the decisions in the school were made. There are several committees, the membership of which is open to the entire faculty, each dealing with a different aspect of the school's leadership and direction, and each of those committees comes up with their recommendations for mission, goals, instructional strategies, school philosophy, and every aspect of culture, climate and instruction. It was further noted that all decisions were made by collaborative and collegial cooperation between the administration and the faculty. Dr. Longo pointed out that the leadership of the school was not top down, but rather collaborative, and everyone had opportunities to be heard.

Mr. Dukette reviewed the current state of curriculum, how it was developed, the software used by staff, the schedule of curriculum development and that currently the vertical articulation of most every curriculum was completed and that committees and individuals would be working upon the horizontal aspect of the documents. The BOE appointed Marian Matthews as chairperson of the BOE curriculum committee and Lisa and Shannon joined the committee. Parents and faculty volunteers were discussed at a previous meeting and it was suggested that we reach out to them as well as publically search for volunteers for the BOE to choose from.

Mrs. Ford gave a very detailed presentation regarding her responsibilities relative to Student Intervention Teams (SIT), 504 and special education. She further detailed how our staff would ensure that no students went unattended and fell through the cracks, particularly with the new school counselor added to the mental health team.

Staffing Goals

It was decided that specific staffing goals will be developed and articulated during the budget process. A plan to connect our budget requests to our goals for additional staffing will be clear in the budget narrative.

Long-Term Planning

A long-term plan was not discussed. It was decided that BOE should examine it and we should make it a central item on a future BOE meeting agenda.

Community Connections – Ideas and Proposals

Several ideas for increased engagement between the students and the community were discussed. Mr. Dukette was assigned leadership in this area and would meet with the Administrative team to develop ideas to increase community/school interaction.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

Rebecca Haeger restated her appreciation of the board and the administration for sticking to their efforts to have a quality school.

Board Roundtable

No comments.

Old Business

a. BOE Committees

All BOE committees will set up a schedule of future meeting at the next BOE meeting.

b. Discuss Certified Staff Non-Resident Student Attendance Policy

1. Renewal of MOA and Establish 2018-2019 Tuition

Motion by L. Donegan to reauthorize the current MOA with all its current costs and terms regarding non-resident certified staff enrollment of their children in Ashford School. Motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

c. Approval of Non-Union Employment Agreements

Wage increases for non-union employees had been voted on at a previous meeting.

Motion to approve FY 19 non-union employment agreements reflecting a 3% wage increase was made by J. Calarese and seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

d. Cafeteria Report and Discussion of Salad Bar Options

The cafeteria committee will meet at 6:30 on August 16 prior to the next BOE meeting. Karen Samperi and Mike Mellady will be invited.

e. Discuss Live-Streaming of BOE Meetings

Dr. Longo was asked to write Anne Littlefield and ask her opinion on the matter including her experience with other communities streaming their meetings.

Motion to adjourn the special meeting (9:15pm) was made by M. Matthews, seconded by S. Gamache and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Dr. James P. Longo, Superintendent