



TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR MEETING July 22, 2020 - 7:30 PM

VISION STATEMENT

To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.

REVISED

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82157585713?pwd=WDhleHk2ZGtlWXVrM0xoSzVTbkdlldz09>

Meeting ID: 821 5758 5713

Password: 6HVQb8

One tap mobile

+19294362866,,82157585713#,,,0#,,452050# US (New York)

+13017158592,,82157585713#,,,0#,,452050# US (Germantown)

Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 821 5758 5713

Password: 452050

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82157585713?pwd=WDhleHk2ZGtlWXVrM0xoSzVTbkdlldz09>

AGENDA

July 22, 2020

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- June 23, 2020 – Special Meeting
- June 24, 2020 – Special Meeting
- July 8, 2020

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the

administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Alexandra Costa and Simar Grewal

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

H.1 Continuity of Learning Plan (No enclosure)

H.2 HS Assistant Principal Update (No enclosure)

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

K. Executive Session

K.1 Superintendent Evaluation

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Town Council Meeting Minutes – July 14, 2020 – Special Meeting

N. FUTURE

Dr. Willett will set up:

- School rounds / tours / starting with TIS (briefings/tours/debriefings)
- Mental Health Services Initiatives (presentation and discussion)
- School Bus Stop Safety (presentation)
- Portrait of a Graduation / Visioning (presentation and discussion of initiatives)
- Pathways and Lighthouse Programs
- Understanding By Design (presentation and discussion)
- Regionalization (presentation and discussion)
- Board of Education Goal Setting (working session and establishment of goals)

O. NEW BUSINESS

P. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
ZOOM Meeting

SPECIAL MEETING – June 23, 2020

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Anthony Holt, Secretary; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: none

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: none

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

B. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Jacob Marie motioned to go into executive session at 7:08 PM for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's Evaluation and invited Dr. Willett to attend.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:27 PM.

C. ADJOURNMENT

Dana Philbin motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 PM. Jacob Marie seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Palumbo

Executive Secretary to the Superintendent

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
ZOOM Meeting

REGULAR MEETING – June 24, 2020

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Tony Holt, Secretary; Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: Renie Besaw

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Nick Caruso, Senior Staff Associate for Field Services, CAFE

- A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
 Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – n/a**
- C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - June 10, 2020
 Mr. Marie motioned to approve the minutes of the June 10th meeting.
 Mr. Holt seconded the motion. Changes: none.
 A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.
- D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none**
- E. CORRESPONDENCE**
 Mr. Holt noted the following correspondence:
 - e-mail offering support for the one-to-one technology initiative; the writer described her experience borrowing the unit from the district and she felt the Chromebook was a crucial component to her student's successful completion of the educational requirements
 - e-mail complimenting Dr. Willett and the community of educators for their perseverance during the pandemic; Dr. Willett's daily communication was appreciated
- F. POINTS OF INFORMATION**
 - Ms. Howard-Bender presented a proposal to rename Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day in the 2020/21 school calendar and provided rationale including a history of Christopher Columbus and that changing the name would be more inclusive by recognizing multiple indigenous tribes.
 - Ms. Lundgren responded to Ms. Howard-Bender's proposal. She does not believe this is necessarily a Board action. She explained that it is a federal holiday and state policy. The state has tried to change this and it did not pass. Until the state makes this requirement she does not feel this should be a Board decision. She asked Mr. Holt for his input as the Chair of the Policy Committee.
 - Mr. Holt commented that they cannot change the name of a federal holiday. To change the name would require congressional approval. He believes this is outside of the purview of the Board.

- Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she respectfully disagreed. She is not proposing to change the state holiday name. She is proposing to change what it is called on the Tolland Public Schools' calendar. In light of recent events and looking to be more inclusive and aware, it is incumbent upon them to ensure they have the most accurate historic perspective possible as the Board. She believes they should want to get such a "problematic" person off of the school calendar. She will share the proposal and resources with the Board members.
- Ms. Moran commented that other districts have changed their calendars to reflect the name change and believes they need to do their homework on this.

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Fisher Thompson & Alexandra Costa

- o End of the school year went well including the locker clean-outs
- o Student Council Officers are officially in place.
- o Virtual Graduation was a great success and Fisher was surprised at how wonderful it was.
- o Last Ride held on June 20, 2020 was a great event and was a fun time for all

Fisher read the following:

Tonight I have the special privilege of introducing both the town and the Board of Education to Simar Grewal, your next Student Representative to the Tolland Board of Education, but before I do so, I'd like to deliver a few parting words as this is my last meeting as a Student Representative. If I've learned anything over the course of my two terms on the Board of Education, it's that Dr. Willett is practically indispensable to the Board and the Town of Tolland, and one of the kindest, most caring people I've ever met. This goes to both Simar and the Board: if you need anything—be it clarification, advice, anything—Dr. Willett is your guy. Now, while I still am at liberty to say, I would like to suggest a few limits to this. Dr. Willett, as any human, needs to sleep, and to be frank I'd wish he'd be able to get more. Do not overwork him. We as a district are understaffed, and being the kind and caring person Dr. Willett is, he will take it upon himself. He is a fantastic resource, but he is also a fantastic human, who, again, I wish would get more sleep.

One thing that makes Dr. Willett such an amazing superintendent is that he cares deeply about our students and staff here in the Tolland Public Schools. He goes above and beyond anything and everything to make sure we as a Board follow, and I quote, "our moral, ethical, and legal obligations." This being said, if you as a Board are not making decisions based on their educational values to students, you are not doing the job of a Board of Education. Teaching and learning are not about party lines or budget figures, they are about the twinkle in a child's eye when they're first experiencing science in the open, or a high schooler going off to college. We have amazing school staff in this town, and we need to support them to support our students.

The vision of the Tolland Board of Education is "to represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success." Either you live up to that, or you don't. Either you prepare each student for success, or you don't. In my eyes, and in the eyes of our ever-changing society, there is no middle ground. Either we act as a full community, or we don't. We can cross as many t's and dot as many i's as we'd like, but if we don't have this vision in our minds every step of the way, we've already lost, and I'd like to thank both past and current Board members, as well as Dr. Willett, for opening up my eyes to this in my two terms here on the Board. Intervention is necessary. Mental health resources are necessary. The arts are necessary. Technology is necessary. I could pontificate for as long as I'd like, but it wouldn't change this basic truth: if you are not preparing each and every student for success, you are not doing the job of a Board of Education. It is in my experience that getting students involved will help with understanding what's best for students and bridging whatever divide there may be, and students tend to know more than anyone is willing to

give them credit for. Though I will soon no longer be a Student Representative, this won't be the last time you'll hear this—and more—from me and many others, even once we can get back into Town Hall.

Simar is one of the most civically-involved students in the Tolland Public School system. She already actively fights for justice with the American Civil Liberties Union, and has embraced a life of fighting for what's morally, ethically, and legally correct. She is one of the most involved people in Tolland High School's Student Council, and is always the first to suggest a project to do completely out of the goodness of her own heart. She is incredibly intelligent, well-spoken, and is truly a force to be reckoned with. Dr. Willett has always talked about leaving a legacy as a Student Representative, and I have to tell you, I am proud to have Simar join my colleague and friend, Alexandra Costa, as a Student Representative. They will be a wonderful team, and I couldn't think of two others I would want more to act as the legislative voice of our students, so everyone, please join me in welcoming Simar Grewal and Alexandra Costa as next school year's Student Representatives.

And, with that, I conclude my Student Representative's Report.

Simar commented that she is excited to work with the Board and hopes real changes will be made.

Ms. Lundgren wished Fisher the best.

Ms. Moran commented that she has enjoyed having Fisher on the Board. She and her family enjoyed his speech during the virtual ceremony – it was wonderful, insightful, and thoughtful. She is sure Fisher will go on to do great things and congratulated him. Ms. Moran welcomed Simar.

Dr. Willett commented that Fisher has been a great representative and has gone well beyond the role that anyone expected. Dr. Willett thanked Fisher for his contributions.

Ms. Howard-Bender thanked Fisher and noted that it has been a pleasure working with him.

Ms. Philbin commented that Fisher's words were eloquently spoken and she looks forward to getting to know Simar. Ms. Philbin is excited to see the roads Fisher, Alexandra, and Simar will travel and the paths they will create.

Dr. Willett noted that there was a tremendous amount of work related to the Virtual Graduation and he expressed kudos to Todd Blais, Amy Steed, Kathleen Marshall, Dominique Fox and Todd Zenczak. The Parade and all of the events success have everything to do with them. Public Safety and Food Service did an amazing job as well. Mr. Lambert played music and Dr. Willett is thankful to everyone including staff and parents.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

H.1 Goal Setting

Dr. Willett introduced Mr. Caruso

Dr. Willett provided a brief history of the BOE goals and the Vision & Mission Goals (VMG) process. The objective is to provide a sense of how the process and goals have evolved over time and are developed within the district.

History of the BOE goals:

- Dr. Willett noted that some Tolland boards have completed goals while others have functioned more autonomously and examples were provided.
 - 2006: broad-based goals focused on budget, curriculum, maximizing achievement, and increasing awareness and recognition of contributions
 - 2009 – 2012: goals became more detailed; focus included achievement, the ability to function in a multi-cultural society, curriculum in the 21st century, ensuring the system as a whole engages in continuous improvement and self-evaluation, and a comprehensive plan
 - 2019-2020: goals were set at the end of 2018/19; eight goals were developed
- The goal setting process has been in collaboration with the superintendent and is designed to connect with the overall goal process of the district. The latter is grounded in educational literature, professional objectives, and staff objectives. The process is used to ensure that the goal setting of the principals is tied to the goal setting of the district. The goal setting of the teachers is tied to the goal setting of the schools and principals. Thus the process has the following levels: district – school – staff. Staff executes goals that are based on the schools' goals and the schools' goals are based on the district's goals.
- Board goals traditionally parallel the district's goals. For example, the Board usually gets a review of the district's academic, cultural, and SRBI/RTI goals and in its goal setting process creates goals which are parallel and supportive in policy and practice of the overall educational objectives of the district.
- As the Board goes through the goal setting process it is setting the stage for how it will operate, write and enforce policy, and execute a budget.
- Dr. Willett reviewed the current 8 goals and how they have been tied to action.
- Dr. Willett takes the Board's goals and the district's goals and uses them to determine how things are executed in the district. As the Superintendent he looks to both to identify what he needs to get done.
- In summary, goals have gone from a generally stated paragraph form to more detailed more categorized goals to what they are today – directly connected to the Board's actions.

History of how the district's goals were built in the past is part of this presentation, and how it connects to the work the Board will do next is covered in the next 2 sessions.

- 2015/16: the summary of visioning activities was presented that culminated in the pillars of the programmatic approach; 5 overall vision statements were used to create goals; Dr. Willett reviewed the process
- 2016/17: a coherence layer was added to the goal setting process in regard to if goals were achieved, at what level, and obstacles encountered; teams and their effectiveness were reviewed and teams encouraged to work as one team to one end; priority areas were identified; 3 Cs (curriculum and instruction, comprehensive assessment, climate and culture) were added; School Improvement Program (SIP) goals were created from the 3 Cs; all Tolland schools now had 3 categories of goals: academic, culture and climate, and RTI
- 2017/18: similar to 2016/17

- Examples of SIPs were presented; every administrator is responsible for writing the SIPs; SIPs have a series of goals based on the district's vision, mission, and goals; SIPs break down into the following goal categories: academic, RTI/SRBI, and culture and climate
- Dr. Willett reviewed the most recent data (mid-year)
- Summary: setting of the district's goals, setting of SIP goals by the schools, setting of goals by teachers based on the district's and schools' goals; every administrator's goal has to adhere to a district goal; goals are designed to be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time bound and connected to the district's objectives
- At the beginning of the process each year, the administrators are presented with the Board's goals. The administrators are then introduced to the district's goals which are typically worked on by admin at their summer meetings and are tied to the Board's goals. Example goals and planning documents are provided.
- When the Board sets its goals it looks back to the district's goals. When the district sets goals it looks to be in alignment with those of the Board.
- SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals have been used since 2015
- Vision statements tie into how they train, execute on goals, measure goals, and create individual goals on which the staff is assessed.
- This year, the conversation shifted to Mission-Vision/Portrait of a Graduate Work and is an evolution of the process. "In partnership with the community, our mission is to inspire and empower all learners to responsibly contribute to a dynamic global society." An example of recent work as well as the Professional Development Presentation (dated February 19, 2020) was reviewed.
- The question was posed what are they looking for as far as long term outcomes for students in Tolland Public Schools? What do students need to have when they graduate? What skills and dispositions will they need in order to be successful in this world? Staff was asked what needs to be done to make creative and critical thinkers and make them effective, independent, and innovative problem solvers. In the process how do they develop empathy and kindness and ensure integrity is reinforced and foster resilience and persistence. How do they foster a growth mindset in students?
- Dr. Willett's objective for February - June was to reach out to people such as business executives, engineers, and the marginalized populations and ask how the items noted in the previous bullet may be fostered. Math and ELA goals are still in place and all goals tie into the Portrait of a Graduate. Due to COVID, this work was not completed but will be addressed July - December. That said, Dr. Willett can provide a perspective on the skills and dispositions the district sees as necessary for students to be successful to the Board to assist it in setting its goals.
- Evaluations: district vision and Portrait of a Graduate is used by the administrators to create their SIPs; SIPs are used to evaluate the administrators; administrators use the SIPs to transfer goals to the teachers; teachers are evaluated on these goals.

Mr. Caruso commented that while the completion of the Portrait of a Graduate would be helpful for the Board, given the timeline and the availability of the defining information the Board can go forward. Dr. Willett confirmed that while not ideal, due to the pandemic and the timeline, Dr. Willett and the staff will have to do the SIP goals and the Board can review them; otherwise, it would have been sequential. Mr. Caruso noted that he will speak with Dr. Willett to discuss alignment under these circumstances. He noted that while the planning process needs to continue, the Board will need to be prepared to sidestep periodically as new information and revisions to information regarding reopening become available to districts. Mr. Caruso advised that the more information that Dr. Willett can provide to the Board in regard to the work that has gone into the Portrait of a Graduate and where the staff is in the plan the better. In Mr. Caruso's mind it still looks to be a district improvement plan that will be broken down into the school improvement plan. He does not want to subvert this by bypassing it as this is where the data is studied and the needs of the district are assessed. He believes they can work together to make something that will work for the district. Dr. Willett agreed that many districts are holding off until the state's requirements are known. Mr. Caruso commented that between the Superintendents National Association and the business officials it has been figured that the average-sized district will have \$1.7M-\$1.8M in COVID-related expenses. He noted that the work for goal-setting is too important to put off for a year and recommended at least having a target in mind even if they end up being slower on the initiatives. Dr. Willett agreed that the work is important and new goals will be needed.

Mr. Caruso will send 3 documents about how school boards can most effectively influence student achievement to Dr. Willett for the Board to review prior to the next meeting:

1. The Role of the Board
2. Worksheet (developed from The Role of the Board)
3. Template to help the Board focus on what is important and build opportunities into the timeline to discuss goals

Ms. Moran commented that the Portrait of a Graduate work is going to be important as part of the goals. She attended the initial workshops and it was interesting to see the commonalities that came out of the work that was done and where everyone felt students should be headed. Important work was in process and it should be incorporated in the goals.

Mr. Marie noted that he would like the Board to follow up on and review goals on a regular basis.

Ms. Lundgren noted that she would like to review more information about the Portrait of a Graduate. She has some reservations and explained that every student will not be interested in technology, writing code, and doing things of that nature. She wants to ensure the district is still well-rounded for students in other areas and can provide for all students. Dr. Willett explained that this is more about broadly providing skills so students can approach and solve problems. She explained that students are being lost to the tech high schools. Dr. Willett noted that Portrait of a Graduate is inclusive of

trades and other areas, and some trade school attrition has to do with the practices of tech school admissions in Connecticut.

Ms. Moran recommended that the Board members become familiar with the Portrait of a Graduate. It incorporates the 21st century world into every profession.

Ms. Plourd inquired of Mr. Caruso what other towns and boards are doing. She would like the Board to be able to learn of any best practices for goal setting in the workshops. Mr. Caruso explained that the Portrait of a Graduate is an "in" thing. The product of the goals is now student-focused rather than task-focused.

Ms. Howard-Bender commented on Portrait of a Graduate and agreed that it is the "in" thing. It is the "in" thing because it is part of the NEASC accreditation. Portrait of a Graduate is about ensuring students have the skill sets and capacity to succeed in what they choose to do and/or study. It is student-focused rather than task-focused. She confirmed that the district will be reaching out for input from stakeholders from different industries. A brief discussion regarding attrition and the different programs available to students took place.

Ms. Philbin commented that she likes having stakeholders involved so they may communicate opportunities to students. She asked for a description of how Portrait of a Graduate meets the definition of, "each young adult or student's own success" specifically in preparing for tech, military, and trade schools. Dr. Willett provided examples. Ms. Philbin commented that they need to foster students and young adults to be global, well-rounded, and able to follow a path to be successful. Ms. Philbin is looking forward to delving further into these topics.

Ms. Lundgren noted the dates (BOE meetings) of the upcoming components of goal setting: July 13, 2020 & August 17, 2020.

Dr. Willett will post information on the Dashboard.

H.2 Budget

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.2.

Dr. Willett has been acting on the recommendations voted upon at the last meeting and the remaining budget fluctuates daily as was predicted. High/low predictions were provided.

H.3 High School Principal Position

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.3.

Dr. Willett provided background information about Mr. Thomas Poland and noted that it is the intention of the Superintendent to complete the transfer of Thomas Poland into the position of Tolland High School Principal effective July 1, 2020. He added that Mr. Poland is needed in the role of Principal of THS.

Dr. Willett noted that the THS Assistant Principal position being left by Mr. Poland will be posted.

Mr. Marie commented that he would like to have Mr. Poland and other administrators attend a Board meeting.

Ms. Howard-Bender thanked Dr. Willett for moving quickly on this in a volatile time. Tolland is lucky that Mr. Poland has decided to take this position. She noted that administrators all "work their tails off for us" and wants people to know this. Mr. Poland has Dr. Willett to look to as he navigates the role of principal and she looks to the Board to support Mr. Poland as he makes this transition.

Ms. Moran commented that when she met Mr. Poland she was very impressed with him. She has had interactions with him at THS and knows he has student-centered philosophies. Students respect and like him. Ms. Moran looks forward to seeing him in this new role and thanked Dr. Willett.

Mr. Holt noted that he had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Poland numerous times and believes the district is in a great position. Mr. Poland not only wanted the position but also could move into the position. Mr. Holt asked about the process of and timeline of hiring for the Assistant Principal position. Dr. Willett will post this information.

H.4 Community Workshop- Voices for our schools: A discussion on how scholastic experiences can be designed to prepare students for a diverse society – June 29, 2020 @ 7PM (no attachment)

Dr. Willett explained that this is the first in a series of workshops being offered in the district. It ties in with Portrait of a Graduate and many students are interested in being part of the process providing crucial input on their experiences in the Tolland Public Schools and in the community to move the district forward and to ensure that education is provided in an equitable manner. Information about the workshop has been posted. Dr. Willett will moderate the panel and public participation will be available. Subsequent workshops will highlight students and graduates who will be the focus of the panel and future workshops. The series will center on the voices of black students, brown students, and others Dr. Willett believes need to be centered in the conversation. It is important work that will be used to segue into Portrait of a Graduate work to ensure graduates are going into the world and functioning productively with people of all backgrounds.

Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she is excited to have these conversations. They are overdue. She inquired if there has been any reach out from the Town Council to Dr. Willett to co-opt any community-wide conversations or if this is focused on the schools. Dr. Willett responded that this is focused on the schools and there is a lot that they need to hear. He believes there are a lot of students who have been looking for an opportunity to speak and share. He would be happy to work with the town to do community work at the municipal level as well. Ms. Howard-Bender asked if this is a new initiative for Tolland Public Schools. Dr. Willett responded that it is not a completely new initiative. They need to center black and brown voices in the work that is done. People are interested in contributing and he wants to be sure they have a chance to do so. Dr. Willett will manage technology and facilitate but hopes to provide

the opening for work to be done and voices to be shared and heard that have not been or that feel they have not been.

Ms. Moran commented that this is subject matter that Dr. Willett has brought into the schools through past community workshops. She inquired if this relates to culture and climate as well as Portrait of a Graduate. Dr. Willett responded that it absolutely does. One of the core goal objectives is to make progress with culturally responsive education and culture and climate. A large part of the Skills for Adolescents class was to ensure they were centering conversations that are important for students and graduates to have to foster understandings. The process has been happening but needs to evolve. This extends and evolves the process.

H.5. Update on Tolland Re-Opening Advisory Committee (no attachment)

Dr. Willett provided an update and reviewed the following in regard to the Committee:

- **Purpose**
 - Receive updates from the Superintendent regarding local, state, and federal guidelines with respect to Re-Opening
 - Review the plans and information presented by the Superintendent and developed by school staff teams in accordance with state mandates, requirements, and guidelines.
 - Provide the Superintendent feedback for consideration by school staff teams
- Meeting dates/times
- Connection information
- Review of the membership and composition

Dr. Willett noted that his objective is to have an operational plan for the district by August 3, 2020.

Ms. Howard-Bender motioned to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

- **Policy** – Mr. Holt provided an update; discussions took place in regard to the civility policy and Policy 1030
- **Finance and Facilities Committee** – Ms. Griffin noted that they reviewed the Facility Agreement between the Board and the town, the Phase III updates, and Policy 3010. The Committee will meet again in August.
- **Graduation Task Force** – Ms. Griffin noted that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday. They learned that the Governor will allow 250 people at graduations. The ultimate goal of the task force was to have all of the students able to walk together and now that can happen. The next meeting will focus on the logistics.
- **Communications** – Ms. Moran noted that they will have a meeting with the PTOs on June 30th.
- **Birch Grove Building Committee** – Ms. Philbin noted that there is no update.

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - none

K. BOARD ACTION

K.1 Educational Reserve Fund Request

Ms. Plourd motioned the Tolland Board of Education, pursuant to Ordinance 86, Chapter 8, hereby makes the request that the Town Council transfer 30% of the BOE audited balance of June 30, 2020 into the Educational Reserve Fund.

Ms. Howard-Bender seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Alexandra Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that earlier in the meeting the issue of Columbus Day was touched upon. The renaming of Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day on the Tolland Public Schools calendar is now more important than ever. From her own research she believes it is imperative that the Board see the realities. The renaming of the day will hopefully create more acceptance and understanding in the community. Just because the state cannot rename the holiday should not prohibit them from doing so as a community.

Colleen Yudichak, 12 Blueberry Hill, commented that she is happy Mr. Poland is taking the THS Principal position. Students seem to like him and she thinks he will be great. He has a lot of energy. Ms. Yudichak congratulated Fisher and thanked him for his service to the Board. She watched the graduation, attended the parade, and is proud of the Class of 2020. These young adults are great and there are a lot of good people going into the future.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commended Ms. Alexandra Costa on her comment and she is in agreement. Ms. Liz Costa went on to say that she too is proud of Fisher and cannot say enough about his graduation speech and what he said tonight. She is hoping he will return and live as an adult in the community. Ms. Costa congratulated Mr. Poland on the position. Having attended a number of budget workshops she noted that he is a fantastic fit for the position. Lastly, she would like to see, after the community workshops, the Board put out a statement on anti-racist behavior and more inclusive behavior in general.

Jayden Regisford, 68 Old Stafford Road, congratulated Fisher on doing a phenomenal job over the last few years. He has represented students well. Everything that is good in life that is coming to him he deserves. Mr. Regisford welcomed Simar and is sure that she and Alexandra will do great. Lastly, mentioning anti-racism in Tolland schools could be beneficial to a lot of students. At the beginning of the school year there is a club fair where students are introduced and this would be a good place to go over how to treat people.

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Town Council Meeting Minutes – June 8, 2020

Town Council Meeting Minutes – June 9, 2020

Town Council Meeting Minutes (Special Budget Presentation) – June 17, 2020

- Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she sent an e-mail with links in regard to the Portrait of a Graduate to the Board members.
- Ms. Plourd addressed Mr. Regisford. She would be happy to discuss a statement from the Board regarding anti-racism and bring it to leadership. She will reach out to him via e-mail.

- Simar Grewal, 21 Sugar Bush Lane, commented that they should discuss including more African American history and other minority history in the classrooms via curriculum. This is important because this is where students learn the most. She has taken AP History and has seen little about African American history and the history of minorities.

N. FUTURE

Dr. Willett will set up:

- School rounds/tours starting with TIS (briefings/tours/debriefings)
- Mental Health Services Initiatives (presentation and discussion)
- School Bus Stop Safety (presentation)
- Portrait of a Graduation / Visioning (presentation and discussion of initiatives)
- Pathways and Lighthouse Programs
- Understanding by Design (presentation and discussion)
- Regionalization (presentation and discussion)
- Board of Education Goal Setting (working session and establishment of goals)

O. NEW BUSINESS - none

P. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Marie motioned to adjourn the meeting 10:03 p.m.

Ms. Plourd seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk

Tolland Board of Education
Zoom Meeting

Regular Meeting – July 8th, 2020

Members Present: Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: Tony Holt, Secretary

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Katie Murray, Chair, Birch Grove Building Committee

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

n/a

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Plourd motioned to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2020 – Special Meeting.

Mr. Marie seconded the motion.

Changes: none.

A roll call was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Tammy Nuccio, 71 Merrow Road. Ms. Nuccio wanted to take the opportunity to praise and congratulate Coach Erin Reed as she was selected by the Connecticut High School Coaches Association as Outstanding Coach of the Year for Girls soccer. Ms. Nuccio stated that Coach Reed has been an amazing coach and a “rare gem”. She stated Coach Reed could really build up the kids and show their worth and has done so much for girls’ soccer. She also recognized another State Championship was won under Coach Reed.
- Cassidy Nuccio, 71 Merrow Road. Ms. Nuccio stated Coach Reed has been an amazing coach and she is thankful and grateful for her experience with her and Coach Reed was one of the best coaches she has ever had.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

None.

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORT – Alexandra Costa and Simar Grewal

- Fall sports Captains’ Practice Fall sports starting up again.
- Juniors and seniors who took AP tests in May should be seeing results soon. Score Reports are expected to be released on July 16th.
- Ms. Costa and Ms. Grewal attended the Community Conversation hosted by Dr. Willett last week. They discussed the climate in culture in Tolland Schools. Ms. Costa stated it was well-attended by community members and helped to prepare students for a diverse society in the future.
- Senior portraits are happening over the summer, July – August.
- Ms. Grewal reviewed the Community Conversation discussion on the curriculum that is changing from 2022 to 2023 and how even though the curriculum won’t be changing immediately, the community can still have discussions about racial inequality prior to that.

Ms. Philbin and Ms. Lundgren welcomed Ms. Grewal as this is her first official Student Representatives' Report.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

H-1 Erin Reed Recognition

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda Item H-1.

A discussion took place that included the following:

- Dr. Willett recognized that Coach Reed is "here every year" because she is absolutely amazing. In the past, more of a "physical" congratulations have been given, but due to Covid-19, Coach Reed was congratulated virtually. Dr. Willett stated that Coach Reed connects with the kids, helps kids find themselves, and is a huge asset to the community.
- Athletic Supervisor Todd Zenzack echoed Dr. Willett's praise and added that Coach Reed has been an amazing asset for Tolland High School, Tolland High School Athletics, and Girls' Soccer. Mr. Zenzack thanked Coach Reed for everything she has done and hopes she stays on board for another 30-40 years.
- Coach Reed thanked the Board for recognizing her. She stated Tolland is amazing. She said that she couldn't be in a better place and could not be happier.
- A round of applause was given.
- Ms. Lundgren thanked Coach Reed for all she has done.

H-2 Preliminary June Budget Update

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda Item H-2.

- Dr. Willett provided a preliminary budget update with information available as of July 1, 2020. As things are still in the process of clearing, these numbers are subject to change. A more accurate number will be available at the first budget report in August. The August figure will be finalized when the budget audit is complete for the year in third quarter of the coming year. Dr. Willett explained that as of 7/7/2020, the current balance is approximately \$742,000 so the numbers have not changed significantly.
- Dr. Willett reviewed the 30/40/30 split that was approved on the June 10th, 2020 meeting.
- ERF Transfer Request: The requested transfer of funds was made in the June 24th, 2020 meeting. In accordance with Ordinance 86 Chapter 8 thirty percent of the yearend balance was requested to be deposited into the Education Reserve Fund (for use in mitigating future Special Education, Technology, Capital needs. Once checked by auditors in the 4rd quarter of FY21 and allocated by the Town Council, the funds will remain BOE funds in the ERF until spent. These funds are important to help manage potential impacts of COVID-19 on special education, technology, and capital considerations.
- Covid/Pandemic/Account Creation: Request the creation of (may require ordinance language change) a COVID-19 fund for use for education needs during the Covid Pandemic (as discussed in the 6/8/2020 Town Council meeting). Any remaining funds could be requested to be reclassified as ERF funds (up to the total amount allowed for that year @ 1% of the budget) at the end of the period needed.
- Rollover: Allow a certain amount of end of year funds to remain in the accounts through the end of the fiscal year without making a request on them – effectively "rolling" those funds over to the town as of June 30, 2020. This can help offset budget impacts and help limit what is utilized from the town's fund balance.

There were no questions from the board.

H-3 School Reopening Update

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda Item H-3.

- Dr. Willett stated that over the last few weeks, teams have already begun the process of reviewing State guidelines and requirements and have generated information on scenarios. Essentially there are 40 staff members broken into teams that are working on various aspects of the State's plan.
- As of now, the Tolland Reopening Advisory Committee (TRAC) had its first meeting on Monday, July 6th, 2020. Dr. Willett said it was a very positive, very successful meeting. There was a lot of engagement and they were able to deliver small certainties in terms of expectations.

- A plan is due to the State by July 24th. A “work in progress” document will be submitted to the State based on what is going on. The document will have various scenarios so there is room for adjustment (“all in”, partial day, distance learning). The document will be continually updated all the way through August. Most Superintendents have a similar expectation.
- A draft will be presented at the July 22nd meeting.
- Dr. Willett encouraged everyone to visit the TRAC website for updates and information.
- Dr. Willett also described “Virtual Coffee” conversations that occur monthly and invited anyone interested to attend. Virtual Coffee Conversations are a free-flow conversation with superintendents and people can ask any questions that they’d like. There is no agenda and is open to the public.

A further discussion took place including the following:

- Ms. Lundgren asked if every town in Connecticut is scheduling the start of school on the same date. Dr. Willett said that conversations have been had about that, but as of now, it has been set aside.
- Ms. Howard-Bender encouraged all BOE members to review the 50-page document released by the State as well as take time to review the TRAC website. She stressed the importance that all members stay informed. Ms. Howard-Bender thanked Dr. Willett for the massive undertaking and stated how incredible it was that he is able to manage between building a new school and reopening schools during this global pandemic.
- Dr. Willett noted that the 50-page document is available on the TRAC website as well as a much shorter, summarized version.
- Ms. Moran recognized there are a lot of moving parts. She asked what are the staff members’ feelings towards reopening and if there is a contractual work to be done. Dr. Willett stated working part of the process is working closely with bargaining units and sub-committees. Staff are a major contributor towards moving forward. There is a lot of cross communication not only between our district but in other districts too.
- Eastern Highlands Health Districts will be holding a meeting Thursday, July 9th for Superintendents.
- Primary consideration is being given to the safety of students and staff. Everyone will have PPE and everyone will have to wear it – students and staff. There will be access to face shields and Dr. Willett intends to follow guidelines from the state.
- Dr. Willett explained it would be disingenuous to say that people are not concerned. Connecticut is in a good place at the time being, so the State is supportive of reopening. The damages done to students socially, emotionally, educationally would be greater than having them physically all together. Statistics are showing that kids/students are relatively safe as long as rules are followed. The bigger risk is isolation and keeping them out of schools. Kids are interacting on the streets without PPE, so having them in schools with PPE is one of the safer things we can do. Emotional and mental health issues start to get exacerbated when students are not in school and it makes sense to proceed.
- Ms. Moran asked about Federal funding. Dr. Willett responded that it would be great to get but we cannot rely on it. He would not build a plan on the assumption that Tolland would get federal funding beyond the CARES act. Dr. Willett would like to reiterate a plan that could go on without federal funding.
- Ms. Philbin reiterated that the TRAC site is incredibly informative. There is a form available for members of the public to ask questions. There are also many answers available. The information is not only helpful for a BOE member, but also as a parent.
- Ms. Philbin expressed her appreciation for a three-step plan towards reopening.

H-4 Assistant Principal Opening

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda Item H-4

- There was an internal posting and also a request to extend that posting which was obliged.
- Typically, an advisory committee is created with parents, staff, curriculum staff, students, and administrators and there are four interview steps.
- Dr. Willett reviewed the salary.
- Mr. Marie asked what the timeline is to see candidates and he hopes it is before the fall. Dr. Willett responded that before the fall is the goal and the process takes roughly 3-6 weeks.

- Mr. Marie asked how members of the advisory committee are determined. A notification is put out for people that are interested. If a large number of people express interest, a randomizer selects those members.
- Ms. Lundgren asked if there were any internal candidates. Dr. Willett confirmed there are and there was also an extension to this.

H-5 Voices From Our Schools Workshop

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda Item H-5 and discussed panelists that were part of the Community Learning Workshop/Courageous Conversation.

- Dr. Willett noted that there was a good number of people that participated in the meeting on June 29th as well as Board members. It was a timely and needed conversation to have to make education as equitable as possible. Dr. Willett commented the program was amazing and a lot of great conversations were had and anticipates more of these workshops in the future.
- The State of Connecticut has endorsed an African American and US Latino History class for the future.
- Literature is being reviewed in the district to ensure it is equitable and responsive and giving an opportunity for all backgrounds to have the literature resonate with them and allow them to feel represented.
- Ms. Lundgren asked if there was a link to view the meeting. Dr. Willett explained where to locate the information on the Tolland Public School's website.
- Ms. Moran was able to participate in the Workshop and appreciated the panel that was there.
- Ms. Philbin thanked Dr. Willett for putting on the session. She said it was eye-opening and she was very proud of those who spoke so eloquently and intelligently. She added that the guest speakers were brilliant and informative and this was a great opportunity to educate and inform. She looks forward to additional community workshops. Ms. Philbin praised Dr. Willett's boldness.
- Ms. Howard-Bender described students advocating for more culturally aware conversations and more diverse curriculum. She added this was very brave and very necessary to discuss this.
- Dr. Willett gave kudos to students to have these discussions and for sharing their thoughts and feelings. He deeply appreciated it. He continued that this is his professional and moral responsibility to make sure this information is out there.
- Ms. Plourd thanked Dr. Willett for providing the link. She asked if the plan is to have the same panelists in each workshop or rotate them. Dr. Willett explained the plan is to rotate the panel. Ms. Plourd commented she would love to see the new curriculum.
- Regarding the literature review, Ms. Plourd expressed concern about getting rid of literature. Dr. Willett explained that this isn't a "book burning", but more of an opportunity for students to choose literature that resonates with them and we make sure Tolland adds things that have been lacking.
- The State is preparing guidelines for the new curriculum. When it lands in the districts, it will be incorporated. This is expected to take 2-3 years.
- Mr. Marie was glad to see the upcoming curriculum and interested to see the selection in Language Arts programs.
- Ms. Howard-Bender explained it will be a while for the curriculum to be written, but the voices from the schools echoed they do not want to wait for the curriculum and this is in the realm of the BOE's responsibility.
- Ms. Costa thanked Dr. Willett for hosting the event. She emphasized students want to see these changes now.

H-6 Policy 1030

Dr. Willett reviewed Agenda H-6.

- Shipman and Goodwin (S&G) recommends an index policy for non-discrimination. This is designed to provide the public with a general non-discrimination statement followed by where specific non-discrimination and non-harassment policies can be found.
- Dr. Willett intends to add a 504 ADA policy to this index.
- Mr. Marie asked to clarify that this is only consolidating existing policies - not creating anything new. Dr. Willett confirmed this is not creating anything new, just putting everything in one place. Mr. Marie added this seems like a good idea.
- Ms. Lundgren asked if Tolland currently has a 504 policy. Dr. Willett explained we have a 504 Policy for students but not for personnel. The existing similar policy for personnel was not comprehensive enough, so S&G's recommendation was to expand it to a 504 policy.

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

● Birchgrove Building Committee

- Ms. Philbin explained a thorough construction update was provided. The contractor will provide briefs at each meeting now vs. the first meeting of the month due to the significant progress being made.
- Progress includes: framing started, underground conduit for electrical is being run, installed steel.
- Everything is on schedule.
- No additional unsuitable soils reported to date.
- A Topping Off Ceremony is being organized for sometime in August. Date TBD. All are welcomed to attend.
- A virtual tour is being put together where renderings will be viewable. The presentation will be July 21st at the Birchgrove Building Committee meeting and a recording of the presentation will be posted online.
- The contractor is committed to providing not only the blueprints but also photos and aerials of progress at future meetings.

● Curriculum Committee

- Ms. Howard-Bender said the meeting was great and they had deep discussion about how the curriculum is written.
- The committee plans to have supervisors come in to discuss.

● Communications Meeting

- No meeting. Ms. Moran said they will continue to follow up with the PTO.

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

n/a

K. BOARD ACTION

n/a

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Jayden Reigsford, 68 Old Stafford Road. Mr. Regisford expressed how displeased he was with the Board of Education but also with the Town Council. He stated he hears a lot of talk about change but does not see leadership attending workshops. He questioned BOE members as to why they were not at the Community Workshop. He emphasized that there needs to be more involvement than just a Board of Education meeting if they expect to see change and want to help students with racial inequality.
- Steven Jones, 514 Old Stafford Road. Mr. Jones introduced himself as the Rotational Liaison.
- Liz Costa, no address provided. Ms. Costa thanked Dr. Willett for hosting the meeting and preparing students to go out into a world that is not similar to Tolland. She emphasized the poignancy of the student discussion during the Community Conversation Workshop and how all students can benefit from this.

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Ms. Lundgren addressed Mr. Regisford's comment about not attending the workshop. She attributed it to deadlines for work and simply did not have the time. She assured Mr. Regisford that she plans to watch the recording.
- Ms. Howard-Bender asked the BOE to consider adding a name change of Columbus Day to their agenda. She requests that it is renamed to Indigenous People's Day and asked that members review the resources she has made available to them. Ms. Lundgren stated they are doing their research on the matter and it is not off the table.
- Mr. Marie addressed Mr. Regisford's question. He stated he was unable to attend as he was visiting family members out of town without internet access. He cautioned Mr. Regisford that although this is an intense issue, people are going about their daily lives nonetheless and an absence at a meeting is not a sign of malevolent intentions to any group. He cited steps being taken (consolidating policies, reviewing curriculum).
- Ms. Philbin acknowledged Mr. Regisford and Ms. Costa. She stated the workshop was eye opening and educational and that the only way Tolland can continue to improve is to continue to listen. She appreciated Jayden's passion and can sympathize with his frustration. She cautioned Mr. Marie that it is not their job as BOE members to correct their constituents, it is their responsibility to listen, learn, research, advise, and do their due diligence. Ms. Philbin reiterated

that students spoke eloquently. She agreed everyone has busy lives, but strongly urged BOE members to attend community workshops if they can.

- Ms. Plourde addressed Mr. Regisford's statement and understood his disappointment. She apologized for not attending the meeting and is taking steps to further the conversation. She joined her company's African American Forum and also participated in a Day of Solidarity. She recited a statement "I stand in solidarity against injustice and in support of humanity."
- Ms. Grewal agreed with Jayden and believes more needs to be done in the district including having discussions with all minorities. She added this is not just an African American problem, it is an everyone problem.

N. FUTURE

Dr. Willett will set up:

- School rounds/tours starting with TIS (briefings/tours/debriefings)
- Mental Health Services Initiatives (presentation and discussion)
- School Bus Stop Safety (presentation)
- Portrait of a Graduation / Visioning (presentation and discussion of initiatives)
- Pathways and Lighthouse Programs
- Understanding by Design (presentation and discussion)
- Regionalization (presentation and discussion)
- Board of Education Goal Setting (working session and establishment of goals)

O. NEW BUSINESS

none.

P. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Marie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:07pm.

Ms. Plourd seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie DuPont
Clerk