

NEW CANAAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
NCHS WAGNER ROOM
April 18 2022
7:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order

Chair, Ms. Parkhill called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Attendance:

| | Alves | Bennett | Hayes | Hogan | Naughton | Parkhill | Rashin | Schwedel | Toal |
|---------|-------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|--------|----------|------|
| Present | ✓ | ✓ (7:07) | ✓ (7:08) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Absent | | | | | | | | | |

II. Review and approve agenda: April 18, 2022

Ms. Schwedel moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Naughton.

| | Alves | Bennett | Hayes | Hogan | Naughton | Parkhill | Rashin | Schwedel | Toal |
|---------|-------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|--------|----------|------|
| Yes | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| No | | | | | | | | | |
| Abstain | | | | | | | | | |

III. Approve Minutes:

April 4, 2022.

Ms. Rashin moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Alves.

| | Alves | Bennett | Hayes | Hogan | Naughton | Parkhill | Rashin | Schwedel | Toal |
|---------|-------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|--------|----------|------|
| Yes | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| No | | | | | | | | | |
| Abstain | | | | | | | | | |

IV. Comments from the Public:

None.

V. Reports and Recognition

A. Special Education Program Update

Mr. Bill Tesbir

Mr. Tesbir introduced the Special Education Leadership team and explained the laws that govern Special Education. Students may be referred to Special Education by any person with knowledge of the students. Once referred, a Planning and Placement Team Meeting (PPT) is held with an administrator, SPED teacher, general education teacher, parents and any specialists that might be pertinent. This team designs and conducts an evaluation of the student to determine eligibility. If a student is eligible, goals are developed for areas of concern. A program of specialized instruction is created for the student with the least restrictive environment, including the student in general education as much as possible.. The evaluation and identification process has to be completed within 45 school days. Once a PPT is in place,

the student's progress is monitored yearly and new goals are developed if required. Every three years the student is evaluated to see if they continue to need SPED services and if not, are exited back into the general education curriculum.

Across the district there are also specialized programs for more complex students. A Preschool program is mandated by law for students identified through Birth-3 or parent referral. Classes have a ratio of 50% SPED students and 50% typical peers. Currently there are two three year old classes and two four year old classes. At the elementary schools, there are programs for complex learners which include establishing basic routines, early literacy and numeracy skills, speech and language services and behavior regulation. At Saxe, the Access Program creates an individualized educational experience for students. Students typically divide their time between general and special education and receive related services as needed. They also begin to have community experiences weekly. At the high school, students take the Life Skills program. Here they learn functional academics such as how to work with money, time and written communication, pre-vocational skills, and community experiences become a daily part of their routine. After high school, students can enter the Launch Program where services will be provided until the student's 22nd birthday. It is a community-based transition program and also provides internships in a variety of settings for students. The Downtown Campus was established in 2018-19 for students that need a smaller, more individualized setting. It currently has 15 students with approximately half taking part in the Special Education program. It uses project based learning since students who attend are in different grades/courses.

Mr. Tesbir discussed current trends in Special Education. There has been an increase in visually impaired students, an increase in the prevalence rate across the state and DRG, and students with significant mental health concerns. As of early April, there were 527 students that had IEP's with a prevalence rate of 12.4%, which he feels may increase over this year and into next year. Currently, the prevalence rate is one of the lowest in our DRG. On July 1, 2022 there will be a new CT Special Education Data System implemented. Training for teachers will be ongoing January through March and there will be a parent coffee/presentation on May 18th with information on the parent portal.

The Special Education administrators and staff are proud of the outcome for their students. SAT scores are above the state average and the graduation rate of students with disabilities is 88%. In addition, 80% of students go on to a two or four year college. At the Downtown Campus, 100% of students have a plan after graduation with 71% of students going on to a two or four year college. Students who complete the Launch Program also have great success and are competitively employed at establishments including the New Canaan YMCA, The New Canaan Diner, the Prospector Theater and Locali.

B. Budget Update

Dr. Luizzi & Cabinet

The budget season was concluded at the last Town Council meeting before the break. It adopted and moved forward the budget that was approved by the Board of Finance. The Capital Budget was also approved and will be bonded by the town. The end of the year experience with insurance will be forwarded to the Board of Finance so that final budget numbers can be addressed. The Board said that the town were "great partners" during the budget process and was grateful for the constructive dialogue on all sides. The Cabinet will keep the Board informed if there are any changes.

VI. Comments from the public:

None.

VII. Announcements and Future Meetings: Next Regular Meeting Monday, May 2, 2022

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Hayes moved to adjourn at 8:28 PM, seconded by Mr. Naughton.

| | Alves | Bennett | Hayes | Hogan | Naughton | Parkhill | Rashin | Schwedel | Toal |
|---------|-------|---------|-------|-------|----------|----------|--------|----------|------|
| Yes | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| No | | | | | | | | | |
| Abstain | | | | | | | | | |

Respectfully Submitted,
Dan Bennett
Board of Education Secretary