

**DANBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 26, 2022 - 7:00 PM**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER**  
**63 BEAVER BROOK ROAD, DANBURY CT**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Chaleski called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Those assembled recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. ROLL CALL**

Present: Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, Albert Russo, and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

Also Present: Kara Casimiro, Michael Seelig, John Spang, Kim Thompson, Kelly Truchsess and Kevin Walston.

**IV. RECOGNITIONS**

**EXHIBIT**

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**EXHIBIT**

MOTION: L. Daly moved and G. Cooper second, that the Board of Education approve the items on the Consent Calendar, Exhibits 22-114 through 22-118, as recommended:

**MINUTES**

10/3/22	Community Relations Committee	22-114(pg.4)
10/12/22	Regular Board Meeting	22-115(pg.21)
10/18/22	Finance Committee	22-116(pg.27)
10/18/22	Special Board Meeting	22-117(pg.28)
10/19/22	Policy Committee	22-118(pg.29)

Vote Yes: Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, Albert Russo and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Motion carried at 7:02 pm**

**VII. EDUCATIONAL STAFF REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS**

NEA-Danbury Representative: Erin Daly, President-None

DSAA: Dr. Kristy Zaleta, President-None

## **VIII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

DHS Representatives: None

ACE Representative: Kaylee Cottrell and Ezequiel Joyner

Ezequiel

- On Friday October 21st ACE staff DJ Jimenez and Daneila Esposito brought students to the Dodge Poetry Festival. Dodge Poetry High School Student Day, which introduces thousands of teenagers from the Tri-State Area to poets from widely diverse backgrounds, offering them the opportunity to see the world from perspectives entirely unlike their own. The day also offered ACE students the opportunity to meet working poets who are like them, and to experience first-hand that there is a larger world of like-minded people who welcome and understand them. This was an exciting, inspiring and liberating experience for all of our students. ACE has been participating in the Dodge Poetry Festival since 2002.
- Norwalk Maritime Center  
On October 19th, the Green Chemistry classes visited the Norwalk Aquarium with Katja Pieragostini. In addition to exhibits, the students experienced the 4D Theater showing of Blue Planet II and Octopus.

Kaylee

- ACE Spirit Week will be taking place the week of October 24th through October 28th. Themes for each day are generated and voted on by the students and staff. Today was red and black day to show school spirit by wearing our ACE school colors.
- On November 9th, Kyle Trocolla and Katja Pieragostini will be taking the Astronomy class and the African American, Black, and Latino Studies classes to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. In addition to the exhibits within the museum, students will be attending a show at the Hayden Planetarium to view ("Worlds Beyond Earth"). Students will return to ACE by 5pm.
- ACE would like to publicly recognize:  
Lulu Concieaco for the ACE of hearts for caring.  
Cole Ferrentino as the ACE of spades for hard work.
- I would also like to recognize our student award winners for the month of September. They are seniors Kat Cruz and Tyler Scherer. Congratulations to you both.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

A. Danbury Public Schools Strategic Plan 2022-2027

MOTION: B. Guertin moved and K. Conetta second that the Board of Education approve the Danbury Public Schools Strategic Plan 2022-2027 in accordance with 22-119(pg.30)

- T. Buzaid said she has a problem with Action Steps #3 of teaching and learning. She doesn't like the language of "Develop a process to ensure both curriculum and resources

to support implementation are inclusive and culturally relevant.” Her point is that education should be equal for all, we are a melting pot and diverse.

- K. Casimiro explained that all students need to have access to the same education and that all students feel included and supported. We have worked hard to offer a diverse approach and engagement for all students.
- T. Buzaid asked to see a list of the authors.
- K. Truchsess reiterated that all students need to feel a sense of belonging in the school community. Students are aware that not everyone is the same but that is ok.
- G. Cooper added that Board members can say that they disapprove but how do we go about changing it.
- B. Guertin stated that cultural relevancy adds to the curriculum.
- K. Casimiro added that this is a nationwide initiative to make sure that we are addressing the needs of all of our students. This is meant to enrich the curriculum and adding more substance to it.
- K. Conetta said she is looking at “Strengthen and make curriculum accessible for all and include enrichment and interventions to improve academic outcomes”. My takeaway from this statement is improving the curriculum by making it more inclusive and creating opportunities for all of our students to improve academic achievement.
- R. Pietrafesa asked, just to be clear we are not watering down the curriculum, we are just making it more accessible.
- T. Buzaid said she doesn’t see how culture has to do with math.
- G. Cooper added that it is hard to satisfy everyone.
- A. Russo asked, are we segregating our students.
- K. Casimiro explained, when we are reading a story to all students, we try to offer a diverse offering of genres and authors so that all students can relate to the content.
- L. Zagottis-Britton added, to achieve the goals we need to allow these action steps to do the work that they need to do to reach all students.
- M. Coelho said, when you break it down it is a more individualistic approach.
- K. Casimiro added that most people want their kids to grow up in a rich and diverse environment. She explained “it helps students become more well-rounded and they appreciate the education they get in DPS”.
- M. Coelho said, it would be great to see a list and curriculum.
- K. Casimiro added that she looks to provide a variety.
- B. Guertin asked if all curriculum includes music and art as well.
- K. Casimiro said, that yes you will see a reflection of that.
- L. Daly stated that bringing variety creates excitement.

Vote Yes: Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

No: Theresa Buzaid

Abstain: Michelle Coelho and Albert Russo

**Motion carried at 7:29 pm**

B. July-September 2022 Financial Report

MOTION: L. Zagottis-Britton and R. Pietrafesa second that the Board of Education accept the July-September 2022 Financial Report in accordance with 22-120(pg.42)

- A. Russo asked for John to expand on the shortfall of \$84,000 in transportation.
- J. Spang explained that there were 2 programs (DHS Students in collaboration with Westconn and teenage mothers) that were added that required transportation that we did not plan for and were unbudgeted expenses.

Vote Yes: Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, Albert Russo and Luisa Zagottis-Britton.

**Motion carried at 7:33 pm**

C. Policy Committee Actions

MOTION: J. Miliano and G. Cooper second that the Board of Education accept for first reading Board Bylaw 9124 - Recording Secretary, as recommended by the Policy Committee and in accordance with 22-121(pg.50)

Vote Yes: Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, and Albert Russo and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Motion carried at 7:34 pm**

**X. PRESENTATION**

**XI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

A. Superintendent Goals Update

Goal 1: College & Career Readiness for all Students

- Summative Assessment Data Presentation 22-122(pg.51)

K. Walston introduced K. Wanzer to present the data for 21-22 and previous years to compare due to COVID interruptions of testing.

Goal 1a: Increase staff capacity and support for the improvement of Tier 1 curriculum and in meeting the needs of learners in the form of academic acceleration, deepening the understanding of grade-level standards and social-emotional, and personalized engagement within the curriculum.

Goal 1b: Increase equity and access to a rigorous curriculum, programming, and opportunity, while reducing the academic achievement gap in literacy and mathematics for our high-needs students.

- High Needs Super Group Membership: economically-disadvantaged students, English learners (EL), Multilingual (MLL), and or students with disabilities (SWD).

K. Wanzer proceeded to present the district data:

- District Enrollment-12,110 as of 10/1/2022

- CT School Day SAT
- Smarter Balanced Proficiency by Grade Level
- Smarter Balanced Growth by Grade Level
- District Response

## **XII. DISCUSSION**

## **XIII. INFORMATION**

## **XIV. BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

R. Chaleski thanked board members that attended the Ellsworth event.

## **XV. BOARD REPORTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMENTS**

## **XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Present:** Rachel Chaleski, Loren Daly, Theresa Buzaid, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Brigid Guertin, July Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, Al Russo, Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Also Present:** Kevin Walston, Kara Casimiro, Kelly Truchsess, Mike Seelig, Kim Thompson

**MOTION:** J. Miliano moved and M. Coelho second that the Board of Education move into Executive Session to discuss a matter involving a student event that would result in disclosing a public record that is exempt from disclosure (CGS § 1-200(6)).

**Vote Yes:** Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, and Albert Russo and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Motion carried at 8:42 pm**

## **XVII. PUBLIC SESSION**

A. Russo made a motion to adjourn the Executive Session and return to public session. It was seconded by K. Conetta.

**Vote Yes:** Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano, Ralph Pietrafesa, and Albert Russo and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Motion carried at 9:54 pm**

## **XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn moved by L. Daly and M. Coelho second, that the Board of Education adjourns.

Vote Yes: Theresa Buzaid, Rachel Chaleski, Michelle Coelho, Kate Conetta, Gladys Cooper, Loren Daly, Brigid Guertin, Julie Miliano and Albert Russo, Ralph Pietrafesa and Luisa Zagottis-Britton

**Motion carried at 9:56 pm**

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Theresa Buzaid, Secretary