

## **SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

**Madison Board of Education  
Board of Education Regular Meeting  
September 22, 2020  
7:30 PM  
via Zoom**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

*Full documentation of these proceedings can be found through on demand video located in the Meetings/Minutes section of the district website*

### **1. Call to Order / Attendance**

### **2. School / Community Session - 7:30 p.m.**

Katie Stein, Board Chair:

In early April, this Board began meeting weekly to begin the rigorous process of finding a new Superintendent for Madison Public Schools. The search committee acquired input from our community through focus groups, surveys and interviews to create a profile that guided the search process. We learned about the qualities, characteristics, experiences the ideal candidate should possess. That profile guided our recruitment, performance standards and candidate interview questions.

The four-month process was intense and yielded a wonderful candidate to lead our district. I am proud to introduce Dr. Craig Cook. Dr. Cooke has been an educational leader in Connecticut for 24 years. An Old Saybrook native, he shares our love of the Connecticut shoreline. He is joined here tonight by his wife Kristin and his three daughters. He holds a PhD in Educational leadership and has broad administrative experience most recently as superintendent of Windsor public schools for the past eleven years. Dr. Cooke is the current vice president of the Hartford Area Superintendents Association and was recognized by his peers by as the 2019 Superintendent of the Year prize by UCONN's NEAG School of Education.

In addition to his impressive credentials and extremely supportive references, he impressed us all his personal style during his interviews. He is calm, thoughtful and humble. His answers to some particularly thorny questions demonstrated an ability to resolve issues with the utmost professionalism. As a leader, he is described as a convener who brings people together around ideas and actions.

It is for these reasons and many others that the Madison Board of Education has high confidence in Dr. Cooke's readiness to transition to the district, even in these challenging times.

I would like to thank Dr. Betty Osga from New England School Development Council for shepherding us through this process and Kirk Barneby for his leadership as the search committee chair- thank you both. Finally, I hope you will all join me in welcoming Dr. Cooke to Madison. We are very excited to work with you.

Dr. Cooke thanked the Board and expressed appreciation for his welcoming to the district.

## **2.1. Appointment and Introduction of Superintendent of Schools**

MOTION: Moved, that, in accordance with Conn. Gen Stat. Section 10-157, the Board of Education elects Dr. Craig Cooke to serve as Superintendent of Schools for the Madison Public School for a three-year term commencing December 7, 2020, and

MOVED FURTHER: That the Board authorizes its Chairperson to execute the related contract of employment with Dr. Cooke on behalf of the Board.

Motion by Pellegrino, seconded by DeSantis.

AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

## **3. Board of Education Student Representative Report**

Isabelle Vagell and Eric Dillner

Sports have begun, except for football, and games will be held as early as this weekend. Eric reported that he and Isabelle Vagell met with Mr. Sickles and discussed issues reported at the last Board meeting and possible ways to correct those issues. With regard to SAT testing, 220 of the 280 seniors are planning to take the test. PSAT's are scheduled at that time as well. Eric also stated he met with Mr. Salutari to discuss the possibility of an online, revised version of the induction to the honor society.

Isabelle Vagell reported this week was vastly different than the previous weeks; students are spending far less time dealing with technical difficulties. A new committee has been formed to discuss AP classes and how to deal with the challenging coursework while in a hybrid model, as well as how to support students while online. Isabelle reported on student preference and willingness to stay in the hybrid model. Theatre is considering a fall play. Student leadership meetings will begin soon. New microphones in the classroom were discussed with Mr. Sickles in the hopes of addressing sound issues.

As a follow-up to Isabelle's last report, Mr. DeSantis asked if there was any improvement from week one. Isabelle reported students have gotten better at taking an occasional break from their cameras during online classes.

## **4. Interim Superintendent's Report**

Dr. JeanAnn Paddyfote

### **4.1. DHHS Advanced Placement Course Participation**

Gail Dahling-Hench is unable to attend this evening. The AP Course Participation presentation will be moved to the October 6 Board meeting.

### **4.2. Governor's Executive Order Number 7C on Educator Evaluation & Support**

Dr. Paddyfote reported that this year, the Commissioner is allowing flexibility with the Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plans. Issues were identified in a memo received over the summer with emphasis on the importance of social/emotional learning and wellbeing. The Professional Development Evaluation Committee (PDEC), under the leadership of Gail Dahling-Hench, has and continues to review this memo. Teachers will develop student learning goals while administrators will focus on how they will support student learning for social/emotional learning, and student & family engagement.

## **5. Board Members' Comments**

Chair Stein extended condolences to Gail Dahling-Hench on behalf of the Board of Education.

### **5.1. Resignation of Board Vice Chair and Appointment of new Board Vice Chair**

Katie Stein

Later in the agenda is are action items to accept Mr. Barneby's resignation and open nominations for the new vice-chair.

## **6. Board Committees / Liaison Updates (Ref. Bylaw #9450)**

### **6.1. Curriculum and Student Development**

Members: Galen Cawley, Chair; Greg DeSantis, Catherine Miller

The committee met on September 15. Mr. Sickie reported on bandwidth usage and Chromebook delivery status. Mrs. Dahling-Hench spoke to how information has been gathered and reported out to parents, teachers and students regarding technology issues. DHHS AP course participation was discussed, as well as student social/emotional wellness and summer offerings. Parents are encouraged to attend webinars which are recorded and posted on the district website. Challenges at all grade levels were discussed, particularly how to keep students in the lower grades engaged after a 5-month hiatus and the absence of their friends and classmates. The committee discussed the challenges of Baseline Assessments, K-8. Mrs. Dahling-Hench reported on AP course participation and the amount of time involved online for just one course, as well as related homework.

### **6.2. Communications Committee**

Members: Emily Rosenthal Chair; Greg DeSantis, Kirk Barneby

The committee has not met; the next meeting will be October 6. However, Mrs. Rosenthal provided the following: We do receive emails directly to the reopening account however, the Board also receives questions and comments directly from the public through the "Contact the Board" button on the district website. Mrs. Rosenthal discussed communications received since the last meeting and noted all emails, questions and comments submitted to the Board via the website, as well as the Board secretary are shared with all Board members. Comments help inform the Board as well as FAQ's regarding re-opening.

### **6.3. Facilities Committee**

Members: Tom Pellegrino, Chair, Kirk Barneby, Galen Cawley

Committee has not met since last Board meeting. Next meeting October 6 at 6:30 p.m.

### **6.4. Finance Committee**

Members: Galen Cawley, Tom Pellegrino

Finance Committee has not met.

### **6.5. Personnel Committee**

Members: Violet McNerney, Chair, Diane Infantine-Vyce, Catherine Miller

Personnel Committee has begun negotiations with the Association of Madison Administrators. More to come.

### **6.6. Policy Committee**

Members: Greg DeSantis Chair; Violet McNerney, Emily Rosenthal

The committee met earlier this evening. Mr. DeSantis reported on comments and suggestions received Policy #5090.3.1, Student Dress, and Policy #3541.5 – Transportation, which are slated for a third reading

at the October 6 Board Meeting. The committee unanimously recommended for Board adoption, with a waiver of readings, Policies #5113, Student Attendance, and #5110, Student Discipline, which will also be presented at the October 6 Board meeting. Shipman & Goodwin policy recommendations for the committee to consider are scheduled to be reviewed at the October 20 Policy Committee meeting.

#### **6.7. LEARN Liaison**

Diane Infantine-Vyce

LEARN met on September 10. Dr. Infantine-Vyce provided the following report:

- Feedback from stakeholders regarding LEARN's reopening plan led to the hiring of a new online learning coordinator and the building of an instructional frame for the 20-21 school year, as well as a district-wide approach to online instruction.
- SECT schools opened September 8, with 30% of the families opting for full remote instruction. The Ocean Avenue LEARNing Academy and 18-21 year old Boston Post Road programs opened doors to 67 student, the majority of which are online and attending 4 days per week.
- Details of the Dual Language & Arts Magnet School and Birth to Three program were presented, as well as hiring and COVID-related staff inquiries/accommodations.
- LEARN implemented universal feeding at all schools through December 31, 2020.
- CARES act funding of \$317,000 used primarily for PPE and interim coordinator of online learning.
- State COVID monies of \$1.45M used primarily for increased expenses due to COVID such as PPE and additional cleaning staff.
- A negotiations committee for the LEARN Education Association (LEA) contract, as well as the newly-formed LEARN Administrators' Organization (LAO) have been established.

#### **6.8. Board of Selectmen Liaison**

Scott Murphy

Mr. Murphy reported the Board of Selectmen met yesterday to discuss, and approved, an early retirement program for Town of Madison employees. The Board also began the CIP process, looking at the current slate of projects for the upcoming year.

#### **7. Audience Response to Information Presented (Ref. Bylaw #9540.10)**

None

#### **8. Action Item: Motion to accept the resignation of Kirk Barneby, Board Vice-Chairman**

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to accept the resignation of Kirk Barneby, Board Vice Chairman.

AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Board members and Scott Murphy expressed their gratitude to Mr. Barneby for his many contributions to the Board of Education and the Town of Madison, his wisdom, his guidance and his friendship. Board members spoke of the various committees he served on – the CIP Committee, Finance Committee, Facilities Committee, as well as the Tri-Board School Facilities Working Group Committee. The Board expressed gratitude for his guidance and input in selecting a search firm for the purpose of seeking and hiring an interim superintendent as well as a new superintendent.

**9. Action Item: Motion to appoint Board Vice Chairman**

Mr. Pellegrino nominated Galen Cawley as the Board of Education Vice Chair, seconded by Infantine-Vyce.  
AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Additional Action Item:

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to waive the readings of Policy #1360 - School Volunteers/School Interns and other Non-Employees  
AYES: Barneby, Cawley, DeSantis, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**10. Action Item: Motion to approve Policy #1360 - School Volunteers/School Interns and other Non-Employees**

MOTION: by DeSantis to approve Policy #1360 – School Volunteers/School Interns and Other Non-Employees.  
AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

Additional Action Item:

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to waive the readings of Policy #4111.1 - Security Check/Fingerprinting  
AYES: Barneby, Cawley, DeSantis, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**11. Action Item: Motion to approve Policy #4111.1 - Security Check/Fingerprinting**

MOTION: by DeSantis to approve Policy #4111.1 Security Check/Fingerprinting.  
AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN: None  
MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**Additional Action Item:**

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to waive the readings of Policy #5120.3 - Health Assessments

AYES: Barneby, Cawley, DeSantis, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**12. Action Item: Motion to approve Policy #5120.3 - Health Assessments**

MOTION: by DeSantis to approve Policy #5120.3 – Health Assessments.

AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**13. Action Item: To approve the Minutes of the September 8, 2020 Board of Education Meeting (Ref. Bylaw #9540.9)**

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Cawley to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2020 Board of Education Meeting as amended.

AYES: Cawley, DeSantis, Infantine-Vyce, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

**14. Old Business**

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Appointment of Committee Chairs

**16. Meetings / Dates of Importance (see attached)**

**17. Adjourn**

MOTION: by DeSantis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

AYES: Barneby, Cawley, DeSantis, McNerney, Miller, Pellegrino, Rosenthal, Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 8-0

“The Town of Madison does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and the meeting facilities are ADA accessible. Individuals who need assistance are invited to make their needs known by contacting the Town’s ADA/Human Resources Director Debra Milardo at 203-245-5603 or by email to milardod@madisonct.org at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.”