

**Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
March 12, 2018 7:00 PM  
PPMS Library

**1. Call to Order**

Sean Nugent; Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7pm. Other members present: Deborah Burke-Grabarek, Cindy Luty, Ed Gauthier, Dan Harris and Tom Turner. Charles Raymond was absent. Also present: Dr. Seitsinger; Superintendent, Gloria Homiski; Recording Secretary, John Spang; Director of Finance, Ray Bernier; Principal PVMS, Dr. Davis-Tomczuk; Principal PPMS and Director of Curriculum, and Attorney Nick Grello.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Staff Recognition**

Dr. Seitsinger acknowledged the hard work of the cafeteria staff; Katarina Potter, Kim Heinzelman and Lona Cote. Sean Nugent also thanked them for their efforts and dedication. Preston hosted an Area 9 Legislative breakfast in January and also a BOE Retreat in February. Members of both events raved about the food that was prepared and served by our cafeteria staff. Sean shared a letter that he wrote which will be part of the personnel files of Katarina, Kim and Lona.

Moved, to take the agenda out of order to address executive session needs. Turner/Luty. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Moved, to enter into executive session at 7:05pm to discuss Attorney Client Privileged Communication per Conn. Gen. Stat. € 1-210 (b) (10). Luty/Harris. Burke-Grabark, Nugent and Turner also in favor. Gauthier abstained. Motion Carries.

Dr. Seitsinger and Attorney Grello were invited into Executive Session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:58PM.

No actions or motions were taken.

**4. Public Comment**

Linda Congdon; School Nurse, would like to see the cafeteria staff use their talents for day to day meals. She would like to see less processed foods on the student menu. Others agreed. Sean Nugent stated that the Board would try to work this into next year's budget.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

Corrected Minutes of January 11, 2018: Sean Nugent adjusted these minutes to meet the requirements of the FOIC Commission.

Moved, to approve the corrected minutes of 1-11-18. Harris/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Moved, to make the following addition to the minutes of 1-11-18: The Board agreed to go into executive session pursuant to CGS 1-200 (6). Harris/Luty. Nugent, Turner, Burke-Grabark, Raymond also in favor. Gauthier abstained. Motion Carries.

Moved, to approve the regular meeting minutes of 2-12-18 with the following addition: Item 5: 1-11-18 minutes placed on hold until further investigation of an FOI question. Gauthier/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

Moved, to approve the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of 3-5-18 with the following addition: invited staff and Dr. Seitsinger to participate in Executive Session discussion. Gauthier/Turner. Unanimous. Motion carries.

Moved, to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of 3-5-18. Gauthier/Luty. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

#### 6. Principals' Reports

Dr. Davis-Tomczuk: The 7<sup>th</sup> grade is going to NYC in April. They raised \$2558.00 at a recent Pasta Dinner Fundraiser which included a generous donation from Mohegan Sun. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Student/Staff basketball game fundraiser will be held on March 20<sup>th</sup> to support their trip to Boston.

On March 29<sup>th</sup> Ginger Katz will present "Courage to Speak" to PPMS students. She is the parent of an opioid victim.

Ray Bernier: On 3-9-18 PVMS celebrated Dr. Seuss Day. Dr. Seitsinger read to the school. In the past PBIS conducted re-teaching during such events. So that students do not miss out on such activities, re-teaching is now conducted during the lunch period.

Trooper Bettini is overseeing the DARE program for grade 5 students.

Safe Futures will present a "Violence is Preventable" program to grade 4 students.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held next week at both schools. Teachers are using Sign Up Genius to schedule their conferences.

The walk thru for vendors interested in bidding on the gym floor occurred today. The bids will be opened on Friday.

Grade K at PVMS will participate in the "Choose Love Movement." This is a movement started by the parent of a Sandy Hook victim.

#### 7. Reports of Committees

LEARN: (Cindy) Meeting cancelled due to inclement weather

CABE: (Sean) See information attached

Finance Committee: (Sean) FY19 Budget submitted to BOF on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Sean thanked the Finance Committee, the BOE and Dr. Seitsinger and John Spang. Andy Depta previously questioned Melissa Lennon's ability to serve as BOF liaison to the BOE Finance Committee. This led to a review of BOE Policy 9132.2 Finance Committee. Sean made recommended changes to the policy.

Moved, to approve Policy 9132.2 as amended. Turner/Burke-Grabarek. Luty, Harris and Gauthier also in favor. Nugent abstained. Motion Carries.

Curriculum Committee: (Cindy) Sean asked that Cindy craft a policy if this is to remain a standing committee.

Transportation Committee: (Charles) Sean will ask Charles to craft a policy for this committee as well.

Community Relations Committee: the Board decided to sunset this committee.

#### **8. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Seitsinger stated that March is Board recognition month. He said that it takes a great deal of time to become a well-informed Board member and he thanked each of them for their service with a small gift.

Water Monitoring; A resampling was conducted on February 27<sup>th</sup>. No concerns found. This test should be the last one performed after conducting them for nearly ten years since the oil spill.

NFA Placement Test: 8<sup>th</sup> grade students must take a placement test before they are able to attend high school at NFA.

The Strategic Plan will be presented at the April 12<sup>th</sup> BOE Meeting.

Weather: The school calendar will be reviewed again at the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. March 13<sup>th</sup> will be the 9<sup>th</sup> day off so far this winter.

BOF Presentation: The BOE will present to the BOF on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7PM at Town Hall. In the past, posters were used to aid in the presentation of the budget. This year Dr. Seitsinger has a different idea and hopes to present the budget as well as tell the story of our District. Highlights will follow soon.

March 12<sup>th</sup> -March 16<sup>th</sup> is National Public School Week.

March 14<sup>th</sup> is National Student Walk Out Day in honor of lives lost in school shootings. Dr. Seitsinger stated that Preston students will be encouraged to show their support without walking out and causing a disruption in learning.

The Transportation Bid openings will take place on March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5PM.

A Special BOE Meeting will be held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30PM to review all bid awards.

The First Congregational Church of Griswold sent a prayer letter to Preston stating that they are praying for our schools' safety.

**Moved, to take the agenda out of order to discuss item 10, Non-Tenured Personnel. Nugent/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.**

The Board received a confidential list of staff notified of non-renewal. All affected staff met with Dr. Seitsinger and were informed personally of the pending action.

Moved, that pursuant to CT General Statute 10-151, the Preston Board of Education non-renew the teaching contracts of those teachers who received non-renewal notices dated March 1, 2018, at the end of the 2017-2018 school year as recommended by the Superintendent. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action in writing to the teachers and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any requests for a hearing, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teachers and/or their representative pursuant to applicable provisions of CT General Statute Section 10-151; and that the Superintendent be directed that any response to a request for a hearing, if a hearing is required by law, indicate that such hearing is to be before the Board of Education. Nugent/Burke-Grabarek. Unanimous. Motion Carries.

9. **Expenditure/Projection Report**

John Spang; Director of Finance, presented his expenditure report to the Board. Sean asked that the reports in Phoenix be used to present this information in the future.

10. **Business: Discussion and Votes Required**

11. **Public Comment**

Heather Helwig asked that Preston visit the gym floors installed by interested bidders. She also stated that she hopes the addition of a social worker will bring down the number of outsourced students in our district.

Bob Congdon suggested that the BOE hold their Special Meeting on 3-22-18 at 6:30 before their presentation to the BOF. Sean said there would not be enough time to discuss the bids on that date.

12. **Executive Session**

13. **Adjournment**

Moved, to adjourn the meeting at 9:03PM. Turner/Luty. Unanimous. Motion Carries.



# Connecticut Association of Boards of Education

*Vincent A. Mustaro, Senior Staff Associate for Policy Services*

## PRESENTS POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

March 2, 2018

Volume 17 – Issue #18

**Increased Focus on Physical Education:** As a result of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) school districts nationwide are elevating physical education standards beyond traditional sports in order to provide a more well-rounded education. ESSA has shifted control over physical education and fitness to the states, resulting in a wide range of interpretations and standards. Connecticut, Vermont and Michigan, for example, now include physical education or fitness in the required federal accountability plans. It is only two years since the introduction of the new ESSA standards. Therefore, approaches to physical education continue to evolve. States are addressing the new standards differently.

Instead of old favorites such as dodgeball and basketball, some districts have introduced more individually focused activities such as rock climbing, cross-training and yoga. “We are seeing new physical education now because the ultimate goal is to prepare students to be active and healthy for a lifetime,” says Carly Wright, senior manager of advocacy for SHAPE America, the Society of Health and Physical Educators.

“Most adults who stay physically active don’t participate in team sports, so the goal is to expose students to as many different kinds of physical activities as possible.” States addressing chronic absenteeism in federal accountability plans should consider that healthier, active students are more likely to attend school, says Wright.

SHAPE America’s national standards define what a physically literate student should be able to do:

1. Demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movements.
2. Apply to performance in class the knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and activity.
3. Demonstrate skills to maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
4. Exhibit responsible personal and social behavior.
5. Recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and social interaction.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era saw a focus on core subjects, such as English and math, often at the cost of physical education instruction. In the wake of that, physical educators have worked hard to get administrative support or professional development. “Often on PD days, they get lumped in with English and science teachers,” says Wright. “They don’t get access to physical education best practices or learn about the great new innovative programs.”

Administrators can look to Title II for funding to improve physical educator professional development.

Source: "ESSA drives new approaches to K12 physical education," by Ray Bendici, *District Administration*, January 2018.

**Policy Implications:** The new website of the Connecticut State Department of Education contains a section pertaining to physical education with resources to consider. It states, in the "Overview" section the following:

Planned, sequential PK-12 physical education provides psychomotor, cognitive and affective content and learning experiences that promote optimum personal development. Quality curriculum and instruction, provided in a safe, supportive environment, offer meaningful, challenging learning for all students, and result in lifetime learning outcomes of skills, literacy, and ability to understand concepts and develop plans for lifetime physical activity and wellness.

Physical education is one component in a coordinated approach to school health. For information about the role of physical education in coordinated school health programs, go to: [Healthy ConneCTions](#).

Physical education and physical activity is covered in a number of policies which include those listed below:

1. Policy #6142.101 – Student Nutrition and Physical Activity/Student Wellness (a mandated policy)
2. Policy #6142.10 – Health Education (an optional policy)
3. Policy #6142.6 – Physical Education (an optional policy)
4. Policy #6142.61 – Physical Activity (an optional policy)
5. Policy #6142.62 – Recess/Unstructured Time (an optional policy)
6. Policy #5144.4 – Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students (a mandated policy)

Sample copies of the above are available upon request from CAGE's Policy Service.

**Issues in Teaching Controversial Content Reviewed:** The courts usually leave to the schools, issues pertaining to the curriculum. However, the courts will intervene when necessary to protect the legal rights of parents and students. Curriculum-related lawsuits usually result from disputes over content. While courts usually defer to schools, a board's curricular discretion, either to require content or to censor it, is limited.

Following is a listing of what schools are and are not permitted to do, based upon judicial decisions over time pertaining to controversial issues in the curriculum. Schools may:

1. Require students to learn controversial content, even if such content may offend the ideological or religious sensibilities of some in the community.
2. Teach about religion.

3. Require values or character education. The fact that some secular values parallel religious tenets does not taint a program as establishing religion.
4. Hold or require activities based on cultural traditions or fantasy, as long as they do not border on religious ritual.
5. Teach about religious holidays.
6. Include religious music in a school music group's repertoire.
7. Restrict content based on legitimate pedagogical grounds. These include age appropriateness, professional acceptance, consistency with general educational objectives, or currency.
8. Require a teacher to teach content he/she finds objectionable.
9. Discipline a teacher for violating curricular guidelines or common sense propriety. Academic freedom does not permit a teacher to show a R-rated movie to young students or be in violation of district policy.

Schools may not:

1. Make arbitrary curriculum decisions without rational reasons. A decision must be rationally related to a legitimate governmental purpose.
2. Ban academic content solely because it's controversial or offensive to the religious or family values of some community members. Courts have held that students have certain legal rights to receive information, even if controversial.
3. Engage in religious instruction. Promoting or denigrating religion is unconstitutional.
4. Fail to address abuses of discretion by teachers.
5. Teach religion in the guise of other subjects.
6. Hold activities, that border on religious practice.
7. Hold religious celebrations.

The rules for making textbook decisions are similar to those for curricular decisions. Schools may:

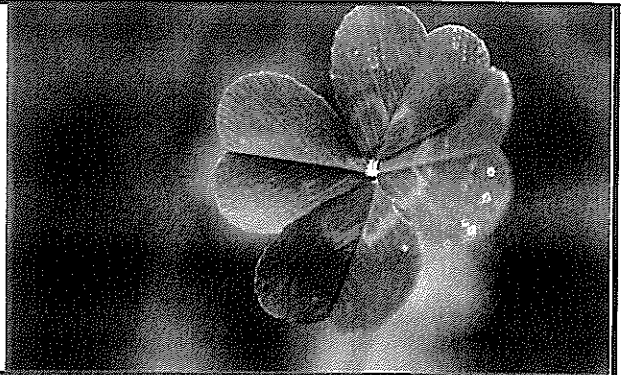
1. Require assignment of materials even if some parents object to some of the ideas in them.
2. Forbid use of textbooks or materials in class because of vulgarity or graphic treatment of sexual matters, even where material has great literary value.
3. Rely on motion picture ratings to determine the appropriateness of films for students.
4. Use religious materials in class to teach about religion and culture.

Schools should not remove instructional materials from the curriculum based solely on religious and ideological beliefs of parents/guardians and community members.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires districts receiving federal funds to adopt a policy giving a parent the right to inspect any instructional material, regardless of format, used as part of the educational curriculum. Parents must be notified, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the existence of the policy. Policy #6162.51, Surveys of Students (Student Privacy) addresses this issue.

March 2018

# CABE Liaison Newsletter



## **CABE Liaisons:**

*Please talk with your Board about these upcoming events at your next meeting.*

### **Upcoming Advocacy Activity**

**March 7, 2018**

#### **CABE Day on the Hill**

8:30 am • The Bushnell, Hartford

Register at: [www.goo.gl/6P9T2s](http://www.goo.gl/6P9T2s)

### **Policy Department**

The CABE Policy Department has completed the draft of the next issue of the Policy Update Service Publication which will contain information and policy material pertaining to alternative education opportunities for expelled students, the Supreme Court ruling clarifying F.A.P.E, student privacy rights regarding surveys, and the Title 1 comparability of services requirement. Also included is a reworking of policy material pertaining to service animals and therapy (comfort) animals in the school setting.

Policy update service subscribers will be receiving this publication in April.

### **Upcoming Professional Development**

#### CABE/CAPSS Convention

#### **Call for Proposals**

CABE recently emailed our Call for Proposals for workshops at the 2018 CABE/CAPSS Convention. *We are encouraging you to submit proposal(s) highlighting best practices in your district.* This year's theme is *Connecticut's Future: Transforming Schools, Transforming Lives.* The strands are: High Performing Boards and Superintendents; Innovation; Diversity, Equity and Excellence; and Student Growth and Well-Being.

Criteria and application form can be found online at <https://www.cabe.org/page.cfm?p=1145>

*Deadline for submission is: Monday, March 5, 2018.*

#### **Showcase Your Talented Students**

Showcase your talented students at the CABE/CAPSS Convention. We are seeking a variety of diverse and talented student performing groups to help kick off the General Sessions on Friday and Saturday morning. We are also seeking artists, science, debate teams, technology, robotics to display their abilities in the Student Showcase on Friday of the Convention.

The entry form and details can be found online at [goo.gl/L5a5DW](http://goo.gl/L5a5DW).

Contact Lisa Steimer at 800-317-0033 / 860-571-7446 or [lsteimer@cabe.org](mailto:lsteimer@cabe.org) for more information

*Deadline for submission is: Friday, May 18, 2018.*

**April 7-9, 2018**

**NSBA Annual Conference**

**San Antonio, TX**

To register contact NSBA - 703-838-6722 or register online: <http://www.nsba.org/conference>

Get the Most Up-to-Date Education News - Local, State and Federal - by Following CABE on Social Media!



"Follow" us on Twitter  
[@CTAssocBdsOfEd](https://twitter.com/CTAssocBdsOfEd)

"Like" us on Facebook



Subscribe to

Connecticut Association of Boards of Education





# *First Congregational Church Of Griswold*

878 Voluntown Road, Griswold, CT 06351

<http://www.firstchurchgriswold.org>

Phone: (860) 376-2682

[email:firstchurch.pastorede@gmail.com](mailto:email:firstchurch.pastorede@gmail.com)

Rev. Edythe M.K. Steele

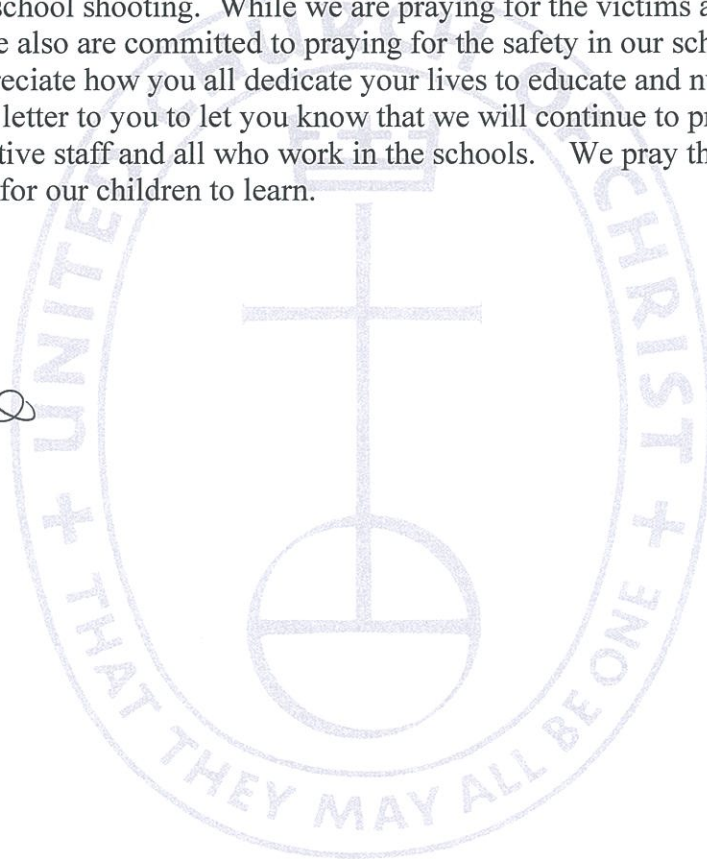
February 22, 2018

The enclosed prayer letter is something that my congregation signs each Sunday. We then send them to people for whom we have included in our prayers that day. We were all saddened to hear of yet another school shooting. While we are praying for the victims and families in Parkland, Florida we also are committed to praying for the safety in our schools all over the country. We so appreciate how you all dedicate your lives to educate and nurture our children. We are sending this letter to you to let you know that we will continue to pray for the children, teachers, administrative staff and all who work in the schools. We pray that all of our schools may be a safe place for our children to learn.

Blessings,



Rev. Ede Steele



# First Congregational Church Of Griswold

878 Voluntown Road, Griswold, CT 06351

<http://www.firstchurchgriswold.org>

Phone: (860) 376-2682

[email:firstchurch.pastorede@gmail.com](mailto:email:firstchurch.pastorede@gmail.com)

Rev. Edythe M.K. Steele

***We prayed for you today.***

Mona Ames  
John

Jim + Ellen Kendall

Erika Rogers

Wanda + Joanne  
Robbins

Paul N. Ly  
Liz Jorgensen

AKC  
03

Silvia Fuentes

Paul Phillips

Robt J. Barrell

Elizabeth Bowers

Robert + Valerie King  
Janet

Miriam  
Belisle

Maureen Greene

Laure Grills

Scotty Norman

Robt + Val King

Edythe  
PEOPLE FOR PEOPLE

Elizabeth Carlson

Neal Waterman

Michael Higgins