

**Please Note: These minutes are pending Board approval.
Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on May 3, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair	L. Rodrigue (absent)
J. Vouros, Vice Chair	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
R. Harriman	7 Staff
D. Cruson	30 Public
J. Kuzma	1 Press
J. Larkin	
C. Savo	
M. Irvine	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the donations to Hawley School and the correspondence report. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation

Laura Main, 42 The Old Road, is a parent of a NHS 2019 graduate. She explained that her son, who attends UConn, is unprepared. In addition to UConn, she credits Newtown Public Schools and his teachers for preparing him for the academic rigor for applying to medical school. However, she feels he is unprepared because of his lack of exposure to culturally relevant teaching. She encourages the BOE to take action to make sure all students are afforded culturally relevant teaching.

Melissa Beylouni, 15 Equestrian Ridge, spoke to the BOE as a parent, not PTA President, about the Healthy Food Certification. After looking into this quite extensively, she spoke to Dr. Rodrigue about her concerns. It is a problem. Her son is only receiving 2 oz. of protein during lunch and not allowed to get two lunches at the same time. She stated that this is also a problem in the high school because they are no longer allowed to sell snacks in the school store. Not everything that is free is good and asks the BOE to review this program.

Tony Keating, 7 Oak Ridge Drive, spoke about the new African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Students. He stated that is clear that a lot of people were involved in creating this curriculum but what was not clear was how diverse, equitable, and inclusive the team was in terms of historical, social, political, and economic perspectives. He believes that academia has effectively cancelled objective and conservative perspectives.

Giselle Martinez, 101 Walnut Tree Hill Road, is a junior at Newtown High School. She felt compelled to tell the Board how important the new African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course is for students. Having an educational window into other's experiences while still in high school sets the students on a path of gratitude. This will make the students more thoughtful, insightful and appreciative of others. She praised Ms. Torres, teacher at NHS, who will be teaching this new course.

Cyrena Arokium, 28 Bradley Lane, is a junior at NHS and a member of SADE. She expressed the importance for the new African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course. She is saddened that many of the contributions made by African-American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino men and women are not discussed or exhibited in the books that are read in school. This is not only her history, it is our history.

Ryan Knapp, 11 Jeremiah Road, is speaking to the Board as an individual, not on behalf of the Legislative Council of which he is a member. He raised his concerns about the Transportation bid and contract. He outlined the frustrating situations regarding bussing. Unhappy drivers, reports not being provided, drivers not being paid during the Pandemic, and driver shortages are some of the situations mentioned. Unfortunately the Board does not have three competitive bids to consider so it is not clear what savings could have been realized. He raised his concerns with the RFP process and what more could have been done.

Item 4 – Reports

Chair Report:

Ms. Zukowski reported that they will forego the Superintendent's report this week.

Dr. Rodrigue's father passed away and she is spending time with her family.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Cruson reported that the Policy Subcommittee continued to review the policy regarding face masks and communicable diseases with Dr. Rodrigue and Ms. Dalton. Three new policies were brought to the committee last meeting that need to be in place by July. The committee will start to review these policies at the next meeting and possibly add a special meeting if needed.

Mr. Ramsey reported that Communications Subcommittee had a debriefing about the format and content of the newsletter. New data has become available through the Smore Program which outlines how many people view and read the newsletter. He encouraged the public to read upcoming newsletters.

Mr. Vouros reported that Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee met to discuss and answer questions regarding Math Pathways. They are prepared to move forward.

Mrs. Kuzma reported that Social Emotional Health & Wellness Subcommittee met and discussed a variety of things. Anne Dalton met with the Newtown Prevention Council and is working on a town-wide vaping campaign. Ms. Dalton also spoke with a Yale Senior research assistant about visiting health classrooms to speak about vaping. On May 25th, a mini health fair will be located in the lobby.

Mrs. Kuzma reported that Superintendent Search Committee narrowed down the candidates and is in the process of conducting the first round of interviews.

Mr. Cruson reported that he went to the Booth Library for the NHS SADE Club's read aloud for elementary students. They read "Our Skin – A First Conversation about Race". Mr. Cruson said it was a wonderful event and the kids were able to do arts and crafts after the read aloud. Everyone did a great job.

Mr. Vouros praised the Reed Drama Club with their performance of "Becky Thatcher". He also had the pleasure to be a volunteer and said it was pure joy. He encouraged the public to visit the school's art, theater and musical performances.

Mrs. Harriman attended a presentation by an organization called 15 For Life with the Boys & Girls Lacrosse team. May is Mental Health Awareness month and it is time to normalize talking about mental health. The website to read more about this organization is 15forlife.org.

Mr. Ramsey had the opportunity to observe two co-taught classes and was very happy to see how engaged the students and teachers were.

Ms. Zukowski thanked all the teachers on behalf of Teacher Appreciation Week.

Students:

Ms. Savo reported that the Environmental Club was at the Earth Day Festival at NMS on April 23rd and many students stopped by to support their fundraising for The Thirst Project. The Chess Club is hosting a spring tournament on May 20th.

Mr. Irving reported many exciting awards. Mark Deloughy and Curtis Shaw won the 2022 SWC Unified Sports Athlete and Partner Award. Will Eagleson and Nora Kliczewski won the 2022 CIAC Unified Sports Athlete and Partner Award. Chloe O'Connell and Mitchel Schrader won the 2022 SWC Scholar Athlete Awards. Ally McCarthy and Isaiah Williams won the 2022 CIAC Scholar Athlete Awards and Saahil Ray was chosen as one of the three winners of the George A. Coleman Excellence in Equity Award.

Item 5 – Presentations

DEI Update:

Mr. Johnson gave an update on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Mr. Johnson presented findings from a survey about students using Anonymous Alert App.

Mr. Cruson saw that there was a small group of students that had technical issues. He asked if there was a follow up question asking the students to elaborate.

Mr. Johnson said they did not have a follow up question but agreed that it would be beneficial to know what the technical issues were.

Mrs. Larkin asked if Mr. Johnson could speak, in the most general terms, what students reported and how the District handled the reports.

Mr. Johnson said this survey was about what the students, parents and teachers are reporting. Mr. Johnson is invited to be a part of some of the conversations if the report is around race and gender bullying. He believes the Administrators do a wonderful job with their investigation of the problem.

Mrs. Larkin commented that there was a question specific to race and gender but it was discussed that ability is also under the DEI umbrella. Mrs. Larkin asked if there will be any questions in the future about ability and special education.

Mr. Johnson said there would.

Mrs. Larkin mentioned that a parent reached out to her regarding the site being down so she referred the parent to Dr. Rodrigue.

Mrs. Larkin asked what Mr. Johnson's goals were in next 6 months.

Mr. Johnson answered that he is prepared to continue to fine tune how the anonymous alert app is serving our students. It is critical that if this app is going to be beneficial to all of our students then it is important to get data on the younger students as well. Mr. Johnson also mentioned the school-based teams and how it is important to train people to be able to have the conversations and navigate when situations arise.

Mr. Ramsey complimented Mr. Johnson on his magnetic personality and work he has been doing with the students.

Mr. Ramsey and Mr. Johnson agreed to have a private conversation regarding some comments from the public.

Mrs. Harriman commented that she finds that there is a lack of knowledge that this Anonymous Alert App exists. She hopes to see a question asking if they knew we had this app before this survey.

Mr. Johnson agreed.

Item 6 – Old Business

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education approve the African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies. Mrs. Harriman seconded.

Mr. Cruson asked why this item is on the agenda for action since it is a curriculum mandated by the State. Mr. Cruson approved the curriculum but is questioning why the Board has to take action on a State mandated curriculum that is provided by the State with no input from the Board.

Mrs. Uberti said every curriculum that is taught in Newtown Public Schools is reviewed and voted on.

Mrs. Kuzma stated that she does not support the process in which this was done. She approves the content of the course but she thinks the State is setting a bad precedent to mandate a curriculum where we have no input or ability to change.

Mr. Ramsey agrees with the opinion of Mrs. Kuzma. He stated that he deeply supports the teachers and students for this course; however, he will be providing a no vote on a procedural issue.

Mrs. Harriman stated that she is proud to vote yes on this curriculum. She is excited for her son to take this course.

Mr. Vouros reported that 20 students have already signed up for this course and he believes it will be an overwhelmingly popular course.

Ms. Zukowski said she will be voting yes in support of this course but understands the procedural concerns.

VOTE: 6 ayes, 1 nay (Mr. Ramsey). Motion passes.

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education approved the proposed changes to Math Pathways. Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mrs. Uberti provided a summary of where we are since this is a continuation of a discussion that began on April 5th. At the April 5th meetings, the C&I Subcommittee reconvened on April 26th to engage in further discussion regarding the proposal to make two changes to the existing NPS Math Pathways. The first change would be to defer placement into an advanced math class until grade 6 and the second is to eliminate the math accelerated class in grade 7.

Mr. Ramsey mentioned that he received concerns from parents so he spoke to math coordinators, teachers and Principals. He saw enthusiasm in the children's faces.

Ms. Zukowski has some concerns and questions regarding this new program. She finds it worrisome to have parents trust this program with no knowledge.

Mrs. Uberti said that this is a new program but the standards that we are teaching are the same. It provides teachers with all different types of activities to bring the standards to life.

Mrs. Uberti continued to say that if this program is approved they will change “Math 6+” to “Math 6/7” which will be much more descriptive of what it will be because it will be all of 6th grade and half of 7th. “Math 7/8” will be the rest of 7th grade and all of 8th grade.

Mrs. Harriman commented that she remembers this program has been talked about since pre-pandemic so it gives her comfort and she will be supporting this program.

Mrs. Kuzma had some concerns, especially after talking to parents. The misconception going around is that a program is going away/getting cut. Mrs. Kuzma suggests better explaining to parents, especially the ones thinking that a program that will be beneficial to their child will be cut. Mrs. Kuzma also mentioned that it makes her more comfortable knowing that this will be evaluated regularly.

Mrs. Uberti said if this program is supported then they are fully prepared to send communication to the parents and take time to speak with parents that are concerned.

Mrs. Larkin said she cannot support this because there are too many parts in this for her. She said her recommendation would be to wait one more year.

Ms. Zukowski said that the goal is to get everyone prepared to take Algebra in 8th grade so they would open up to a wider variety of math courses in the high school. Ms. Zukowski believes that the learning loss from the pandemic is a key factor in why some students are not as ready for advancement. She does not have the confidence in it yet.

Mrs. Uberti said there are factors that are present but delaying advancement gives the students more opportunity. She would expect to see the majority of students who would have qualified if the pandemic never happened be able to qualify in 5th grade.

VOTE: 5 ayes, 2 nays (Ms. Zukowski, Mrs. Larkin). Motion passes.

Item 7 – New Business

Ms. Zukowski suggested waiting on a motion until Mrs. Vadas is finished with her presentation.

Mrs. Vadas presented two options for the Board to take action on regarding the transportation contract. Newtown received one bid from All Star. There are two options for the contract. The first option is a one year contract extension. The financial impact carries a high cost with an additional \$350,000. The second option is a five year contract. The five year contract meets the budget expectations.

Mr. Cruson does not support either of these options. The retention and recruitment options are unsettling. He hopes that if rewarded the contract, they would look at the problem of retention. Mr. Cruson also suggested bringing buses to “Touch-A Truck” events.

Mr. Cruson’s biggest concern is ending up with five years of status quo again and won’t make any improvements.

Mrs. Larkin does not support either option. It looks like options that All-Star presented to Newtown and not Newtown’s options. Newtown did nothing wrong and holds the risk. She wishes she could see other options with different payment options. Mrs. Larkin is not comfortable signing up for another five years. A one year contract gives Newtown the opportunity to move away from All-Star next year.

Mrs. Vadas said there is a lot of risk with a one year contract.

Mrs. Kuzma does not agree with either option. She feels that we are rewarding five years' worth of bad service that Newtown has received. Mrs. Kuzma asked if a two or three year contract was discussed.

Mrs. Vadas said no because the RFP already went out and there is no incentive to do so.

Mrs. Vadas reminded the Board that the past couple of years have been hard on bus companies with the pandemic.

Mr. Ramsey supports the five year contract and has faith that All-Star will be held accountable.

Mr. Vouros asked if the 5 year contract is supported and we are not happy with the service, is there anything we can do legally.

Mrs. Vadas said it would have to be clearly defined in the contract.

Mr. Cruson believes that communication is a big part of the problem.

Mr. Vouros suggested having a Board Liaison to All Star. He also volunteered to be the Liaison.

Ms. Zukowski said that she agrees that these are not good options. She believes the one year contract gives Newtown leverage because it gives All-Star one year to change. However, she feels that the five-year contract is the way to go. She believes that the driver shortage will continue until next year and we will have a new Superintendent dealing with a transition.

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education accept the current transportation bid. Mr. Cruson seconded. 5 ayes, 2 nays (Mrs. Kuzma, Mrs. Larkin). Motion passes.

First Read of Policies:

Mr. Cruson spoke about three policies Policy 4112.6/4212.6 – Personnel Records, Policy 4112.8 – Nepotism, and Policy 4114/4212 Assignment/Transfer/Reassignment. Our HR Director, Suzanne D'Eramo, reviewed these policies.

Mrs. Larkin asked if Policy 4112.8 – Nepotism refers to colleagues that are not family now but meet at work and become family.

Mr. Cruson said yes.

Mr. Cruson asked the Board to send any questions to him via email before the next policy subcommittee meeting.

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Board of Education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. Mr. Cruson seconded.

Mr. Cruson asked if this is something the Board has to vote on every year.

Mrs. Vadas said yes, any school that participates under the National School Lunch Program have to either agree or disagree to this motion. However, Districts that are fully on the National School Lunch Program, this motion would provide the District with an additional 10 cents for reimbursement meals.

Mrs. Kuzma asked if this applies to school parties or bake sales.

Mrs. Vadas said that is correct but that is why there is a second part to the motion.

Mr. Cruson said there is a policy that governs food that can be brought into school.

Mrs. Larkin asked where the 10 cents goes.

Mrs. Vadas said it stays in the District.

Mrs. Kuzma asked if the students or parents were surveyed regarding this program.

Mrs. Vadas said she is not aware of any survey. She reminded the Board that Newtown is out for bid for food service. It does help the District to be on this program.

Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales.

Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Kuzma moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of April 19, 2022. Mr. Cruson seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Public Participation

Tony Keating, 7 Oak Ridge Road, spoke about the DEI initiative and would like to ask the Board to consider its track record and not its vocabulary. He said his comments are not based on opinion but on the track record.

Carrie Grummons, 5 Black Walnut Drive, attended the SADE Read-Aloud at the Booth Library. There were about 20 students in attendance and all the high school students were great with the children and led them in an age appropriate conversation. She is thankful for Rachel Torres and Wes Johnson.

Phil Carroll, 1 Fieldstone Drive, respectfully disagrees with some of the comments about the transportation contract. He believes that Newtown is being over bussed if Newtown is able to get the job done with 9 less buses. He believes that All-Star has had a bad attitude from the beginning.

John Feder, 27 Poverty Hollow Road, is a father of three and showed support for the math program.

Nicole Maddox, 14 Nighthawk Lane, stated that to her knowledge, it has been a month since her children heard a racial slur. It is a big deal for her family. Families in the town are looking to

move because the discrimination. She urges the Board to continue the reporting structure to ensure that these incidents are being reported to the proper authorities.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 - Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

To: Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue
From: Christopher Moretti
Date: 4/18/2022
Re: Private Donation



The Blackbaud Giving Fund has donated \$20.00 to Hawley School for the purchase of classroom supplies and books.

I am requesting that the Board of Education accept this generous gift on our behalf.

To: Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue
From: Christopher Moretti
Date: 4/25/2022
Re: Newtown Education Foundation Donation



The Newtown Education Foundation has donated \$750.00 to Hawley School for the purchase of STEM materials for each grade level.

I am requesting that the Board of Education accept this generous gift on our behalf.

To: Tim Hart

From: Laura @ Middle Gate

Date: April 26, 2022



Re: Newtown Education Foundation Donation

Tim, enclosed you will find a donation check for \$750.00 from the Newtown Education Foundation.

Per the letter that came with the donation (enclosed), this donation is to be used for STEM materials.

Thank you.

Laura
Laura

The Newtown Education Foundation Inc PO Box 3524 Newtown, CT 06470		LOOK FOR: 3D hologram foil across top Heat-reactive circle in upper-right corner	228 51-7229/2211
Date		April 19, 2022	Date
Pay to the Order of	Middlegate School	\$ 750.00	
	Seven hundred fifty and 00/100	Dollars	 Security Features Details on Back.
Newtown Savings Bank			
For	STEM bins		M [®]
⑆ 221172296⑆ 200 289 929⑆ 0228			
Security Check			

Correspondence Report
04/19/2022 – 05/02/2022

Date	Name	Subject
04/19/2022	Randall Collins	Link to Completed Applications/Packet Interview Workshop (April 28, 2022)
04/21/2022	Daniel Cruson	April 28 th Superintendent Search Meeting
04/21/2022	Deborra Zukowski	Fwd: Newtown Charter Revision Commission Draft Report for Submission to the Legislative Council
04/22/2022	Hiscavich, Michelle	Visual and Performing Arts Events
04/24/2022	Deborra Zukowski	April 24, 2022 Week in Preview
04/24/2022	Lorrie Rodrigue	Sunday Highlights
04/25/2022	June, Kathy	Dr. Rodrigue Retirement Celebration
04/25/2022	Parent Adv...	Parent Emotional Supports Survey
04/26/2022	Kiley Gottschalk	BOF 4-28-22 Agenda
04/26/2022	Deborra Zukowski	Everything Passed!!
04/26/2022	Lorrie Rodrigue	Re: Retirement of NMS Principal
04/27/2022	Janet Kuzma	Candidate Meeting
04/27/2022	Kiley Gottschalk	Math Plus
04/28/2022	David Weiss	Video at last meeting?
04/28/2022	Kathy June	Tonight's Meeting
04/28/2022	Kathy June	BOE Mailing – May 3, 2022
04/28/2022	Randall Collins	Candidates for First Round Interviews/Schedules
04/29/2022	Melissa Martucci Go...	DEI? Or is it?
04/29/2022	Melissa Martucci Gomez' via Newtown BOE	DEI with attachments
04/29/2022	Randall Collins	Interview Schedule (First Round)
04/29/2022	Tanja Gouviea	Fwd: Food Sevice Vendor Score Sheets

TO: Lorrie Rodrigue, Superintendent
FROM: Suzanne D'Eramo, Director of Human Resources
RE: Superintendent's Report – Certified Staffing Update for APRIL 2022
DATE: April 29, 2022

APRIL 2022

CERTIFIED RETIREMENTS:

Tom Einhorn – NMS Principal (eff. 8/30/22)

Linda Baron – MGS grade 4 teacher (eff. 6/30/22)

Mary Connolly – NMS language arts teacher (eff. 6/30/22)

CERTIFIED RESIGNATIONS:

Sarah Chow – NHS Spanish (eff. 5/9/22)

Amanda Perna – HAW school psych (eff. 6/30/22)

Francis Saraceni – NMS Project Challenge (eff. 6/30/22)

CERTIFIED NEW HIRES:

Bree Prezioso – RIS/NMS school psychologist (start date 8/24/22)

CERTIFIED OPEN POSITIONS:

None

ADDITIONAL DISTRICT HIRING NOTES:

Here is a recap of all certified/non-certified staff who began working in April:

Building subs/LT subs = 1

Paraeducators = 2

BTs = 1

Tech Specialist = 1

Of the 5 newly hired employees, all identify as white/non-Hispanic.

2021-22 SPRING COACH ROSTER

NAME	SPORT	STEP
JEREMY O'CONNELL	GIRLS GOLF	3
MAUREEN MAHER	GIRLS TENNIS	3
ANNA MALKIN	BOYS TENNIS	2
BECKY OSBORNE	OUTDOOR BOYS TRACK	3
BECKY BOURRET	OUTDOOR GIRLS TRACK	3
MEGAN GUARINO	ASSISTANT BOYS TRACK	3
LAURA MCLEAN	ASSISTANT GIRLS TRACK	3
KEVIN HOYT	ASSISTANT BOYS TRACK	3
RYAN EBERTS	ASSISTANT GIRLS TRACK	3
BARBARA SKIDMORE	ASSISTANT BOYS & GIRLS TRACK	3
JOANNA CLOSS	SOFTBALL	3
KERRY BEGIN	SOFTBALL - JV	3
CHRISTINE TISI	SOFTBALL - FRESHMEN	2
IAN THOESSEN	BASEBALL	3
MATT PAOLA	BASEBALL - JV	3
MATT MENARD	BASEBALL - FRESHMEN	3
SCOTT BULKLEY	BOYS LACROSSE	3
NICK GROCCIA	BOYS LACROSSE - JV	2
ANTHONY FITTI	BOYS LACROSSE - FRESHMEN	3
SANDY DOSKI	BOYS VOLLEYBALL	3
KELLY TERASZKIEWICZ	BOYS VOLLEYBALL - JV	1
MAURA FLETCHER	GIRLS LACROSSE	3
LOU SANTOLI	GIRLS LACROSSE - JV	3
LARRY SALADIN	UNIFIED HEAD COACH	
REBECCA MILES	UNIFIED ASSISTANT COACH	
BOB PATTISON	WEIGHT ROOM SUPERVISOR	
JOHN LEARY	WEIGHT ROOM SUPERVISOR	
JOSEPH LIZZA	SEASONAL SITE SUPERVISOR	
MIDDLE SCHOOL		
ANDREW TAMMERO	SOFTBALL	
MICHELLE FONTAINE	ASSISTANT SOFTBALL	
GREGORY HORNE	BASEBALL	
COLLIN RUSSELL	ASSISTANT BASEBALL	
ANDREW TAMMERO	UNIFIED HEAD COACH TRACK/VOLLEYBALL	
KEN KANTOR	ASSISTANT UNIFIED COACH TRACK/VOLLEYBALL	
VOLUNTEERS		
CHRISTINA WOLF-GALLO	SOFTBALL	
LINN HERTBERG	SOFTBALL	
JOE CRIMI	BASEBALL	
JOSEPH LIZZA	BASEBALL	
MATT PAZ	BASEBALL	
NANCY ANDERSON	GIRLS TENNIS	
STEVEN GOCEIA	BOYS LACROSSE	
STEPHANIE SUHOZA	GIRLS LACROSSE	
CASEY REGAN	GIRLS GOLF	

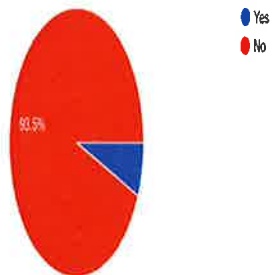
Diversity Equity & Inclusion Update

Board of Education Presentation
Wesley A. Johnson II, Coordinator for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Ever Used and Frequency of Use

Have you ever used Anonymous Alerts to report an incident?

821 responses



How often have you used Anonymous Alerts?

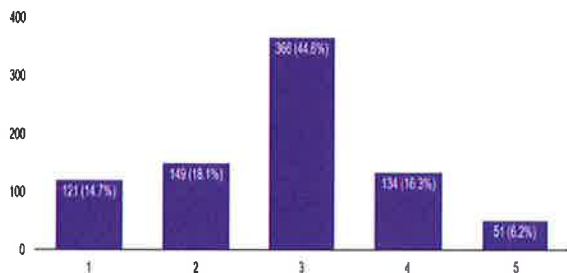
821 responses



Affect vs. Effect

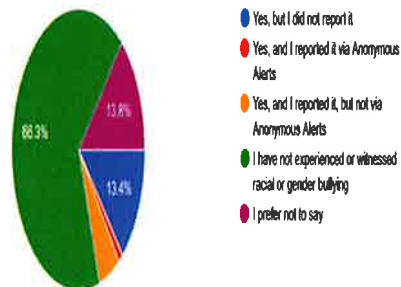
Do you believe the Anonymous Alerts app has helped address bullying, discrimination, harassment and other forms of mistreatment?

821 responses



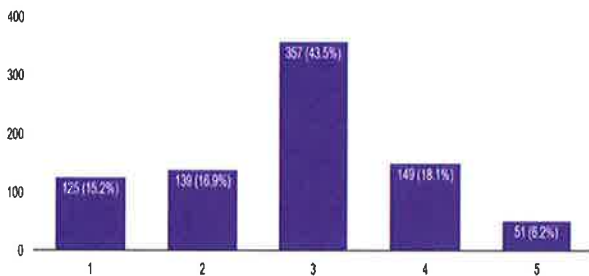
Have you experienced or witnessed racial or gender bullying? If so, did you report it?

821 responses



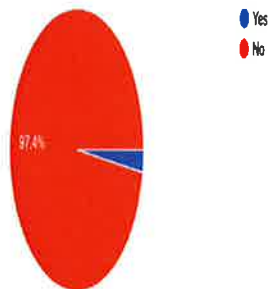
Do you find the Anonymous Alerts app an effective and useful tool?

821 responses



Have you had any technical issues using the app?

821 responses



School-Based Teams

DEI Building Teams rather than tacking diversity and inclusion onto staff's existing core duties allows our District to ensure Race, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion receives the attention, support, and resources it merits in each building.

1. Dedicated Teams Bring the Right Staff Driven Support to Lead DEI Initiatives
2. Dedicated Teams Position Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as a School-Wide Priority
3. Dedicated Teams Support Underrepresented Groups within the building from being/feeling excluded



Professional Development/Curriculum & Instruction

Every school in the district recently participated in DEI training as a part of their professional development. It included activities, articles and small group discussions. In a fun way it explored terms like Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice. It also included a resource extracted from the CT State Board of Education's position statement on culturally responsive and Culturally Responsive Education.



SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

I have been actively involved in the **SSCC** conversations/meetings regarding the district's climate survey. My role is to support and help ensure that diversity and inclusion is reflected in the survey.



Newtown High School
Diversity, Equity, &
Inclusion Discussion

Personnel Certified/NonCertified

Personnel Records

Personnel records shall be kept on all current employees and shall include information usually expected in good personnel administration.

A file shall be kept for all resigned or retired employees, including such essential information as shall seem appropriate to the administration as specified by state and federal laws.

The Superintendent, on behalf of the Board, shall notify an employee and a collective bargaining representative, if any, in writing when a request is made for disclosure of the employee's personnel, medical or similar files, if the Superintendent reasonably believes disclosure would invade the employee's privacy.

~~The records will be disclosed unless written objection is received from the teacher or employee's collective bargaining representative, within seven business days from the receipt by employee or collective bargaining representative.~~

~~The records may be disclosed when the Superintendent does not believe such disclosure would legally constitute an invasion of privacy. The records, in such a situation, shall first be disclosed to the requestor, followed within a reasonable time after disclosure, with the sending of a written or electronic copy or brief description of such request to the employee and any applicable collective bargaining representative. Disclosure shall only be considered an invasion of privacy where (1) such records do not pertain to a legitimate matter of public interest and (2) disclosure of such records would be highly offensive to a reasonable person.~~

~~Records maintained or kept on file by the State Department of Education or the Board of Education that are records of a teacher's performance and evaluation shall not be released without the written consent of the teacher. Such records are not public records subject to FOI.~~

~~Records maintained or kept on file by the State Department of Education or the Board, that are records of a teacher's personal misconduct shall be deemed to be public records, and subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Disclosure of such records of a teacher's personal misconduct shall not require the consent of the teacher. ("Teacher" includes all certified employees below the rank of Superintendent.)~~

Each employee's own file shall be available for his or her inspection at reasonable times, and, upon request, employees will be provided a copy of information contained in his or her file.

The Superintendent shall comply with state and federal law, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), when a request is made for disclosure of an employee's personnel, medical or similar files.

Files containing medical information regarding an employee will be kept separate from other personnel files.

Personnel Certified/NonCertified

Personnel Records (continued)

In accordance with federal law, (ESSA), the District shall notify parents at the beginning of each school year of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of paraprofessionals for any teacher or paraprofessional who is employed by a school receiving Title I funds and who provides instruction to their child at that school. The District will provide such information on request in a timely manner. The District shall also provide notification to the parent/guardian of a child who has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher not meeting applicable state certification at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

NOTE: The information to be provided upon request regarding teachers shall indicate whether the student's teacher has met state certification for the grade level and/or subjects taught. Information pertaining to a paraprofessional should indicate the educational background of the individual, including secondary school diploma or its equivalent, study at an institution of higher education and any degree earned.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1206 Denial of access to public records or meetings.
1213 Agency administration. Disclosure of personnel, birth and tax records.
1-214 Objection to disclosure of personnel or medical files (as amended by PA 18-93)
1-215 Record of arrest as public record
10151a Access of teacher to supervisory records and reports in personnel file.
10151c Records of teacher performance and evaluation not public records. (as amended by PA 02-138 and PA 13-122)
Perkins v. Freedom of Information Commission, 228 Conn. 158 (1993)
The Americans with Disabilities Act
Section 1112(e)(6) The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
Section 1112(e)(1)(B) The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Policy adopted:

NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Objection to Release of Personnel Records

The Newtown Public Schools shall provide notice to an employee and the employee's collective bargaining representative, if any, whenever the District receives a request to inspect or copy records contained in an employee's personnel or medical files and similar files, and the Superintendent or designee reasonably believes that the disclosure of such records would legally constitute an invasion of privacy (the "Notice"). The employee or the employee's collective bargaining representative, if any, may object to the release of records that the Superintendent or designee has determined legally constitute an invasion of privacy.

This form shall be used by an employee or employee's collective bargaining representative who is objecting to the release of information that the Superintendent or designee has deemed to be an invasion of privacy. Such records will be disclosed to the requesting party UNLESS this form is received by the District within seven (7) business days from the receipt by the employee or the employee's collective bargaining representative, if any, of the Notice or, if there is no evidence of receipt of written notice, not later than nine (9) business days from the date the Notice is actually mailed, sent, posted or otherwise given.

Date: _____

Name, address and phone number of employee concerned:

Name, address and phone number of employee's collective bargaining representative, if any:

Description of the records that the Superintendent reasonably believes would legally constitute an invasion of privacy and the disclosure of which the employee or representative objects.

Under the penalties of false statement, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, there are good grounds to support my objection to the release of the records described above and my objection is not intended to delay the process.

Signature of employee or employee's collective bargaining representative

Print name

Date

Personnel – Certified

Nepotism

Purpose

It is the policy of the Board to recruit and hire qualified applicants for employment within the Newtown Public Schools, while avoiding both nepotism and the appearance of nepotism.

Definitions

“**Immediate family**” means a spouse, child, parent, sister, brother, half-sister or half-brother.

“**Relative**” means a sister-in-law, brother-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, step parent, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, first cousin, grandparent, step child, foster child, grandchild or individual living in the same household.

“**Familial relationship**” means a relationship between a member of one’s immediate family or a relative, as defined within this policy.

Prohibitions on Hiring

No relative or immediate family member of the Superintendent shall be hired to any position of employment by the Board of Education.

No immediate family members of a Board member or any other district level administrator shall be hired to any position of employment by the Board of Education.

Restrictions on Employment of Relatives or Immediate Family Members

No individuals shall be hired in a position of employment that would result in a supervisory or evaluative relationship between a current employee and a relative or immediate family member.

No employee may be involved in the process of screening for advancement in the application process, interviewing or hiring his or her relatives or immediate family members.

Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in the same school or work unit or department in which a relative or immediate family member is already employed, unless the Superintendent of Schools approves such an assignment ~~in writing~~.

No administrator or supervisor shall supervise any of his or her relatives or immediate family members.

~~Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in which they will have access to confidential information regarding a relative, such as, but not limited to, information regarding benefits selections, confidential medical information or personnel records that are not subject to public disclosure.~~

P4112.8(b)

Personnel – Certified

Nepotism (continued)

~~Restrictions on Employment of Immediate Family Members~~

~~No individuals shall be hired in a position of employment that would result in a supervisory or evaluative relationship between a current employee and an immediate family member.~~

~~No employee may be involved in the process of screening for advancement in the application process, interviewing or hiring of an immediate family member.~~

~~Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in the same school or work unit or department in which an immediate family member is already employed, unless the Superintendent of Schools approves such an assignment in writing.~~

~~No person who is a member of the immediate family of a building administrator or department supervisor may be nominated for or transferred or otherwise assigned to any position within that administrator's building or supervisor's department.~~

~~No administrator or supervisor shall supervise any member of his or her immediate family.~~

~~Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in which they will have access to confidential information regarding an immediate family, such as, but not limited to, information regarding benefits selections, confidential medical information or personnel records that are not subject to public disclosure.~~

Disclosure Requirements

A Board member or administrator who has an existing familial relationship with an employee, as defined above, or who has had a change in circumstances which creates a familial relationship with any employee of the **Newtown** Public Schools, shall declare such relationship to the Superintendent or Chair of the Board immediately.

If a change in circumstances creates a familial relationship between an employee and his or her supervisor, the Board, through its Superintendent, reserves the right to seek a transfer of any employee in order to resolve any concerns about the operations of the district with respect to nepotism or the appearance of nepotism. The Superintendent may also provide for the evaluation and/or supervision of the employee outside of the typical chain of command in order to resolve any concerns about nepotism or the appearance of nepotism.

A Board member or administrator who knows that a relative or immediate family member has applied for a position with the Newtown Public Schools shall declare such relationship to the Superintendent or the Chair of the Board as soon practicable.

In addition to the requirements set forth above regarding familial relationships, if a romantic relationship develops between an employee and (1) an administrator who has a supervisory or evaluative relationship with the employee, or (2) a member of the Board, the affected administrator or member of the Board shall declare such relationship to the Superintendent.

P4112.8(c)

Personnel – Certified

Nepotism (continued)

Recusal

~~A member of the Board should not vote on any action of the Board which will directly affect a relative or member of his or her immediate family.~~

Discharge and Denial of Re-Employment

No current employee will be discharged or denied re-employment pursuant to an applicable recall provision based on this Policy.

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

Personnel – Certified/Non-Certified

Assignment/Transfer/Reassignment

The assignment and transfer of all certified/support staff personnel shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools (Superintendent) or designee.

~~Requests for transfer within the school system may be made at any time and must be in writing. Transfers are subject to availability of position, vacancies, and qualifications of employee.~~

Transfers will be made in the best interests of the school system, subject to provisions of applicable employee organization agreements and Newtown Board of Education policies.

~~Not later than the November meeting of the Board of Education the Superintendent shall present the staff listing of regular assignments. Changes of regular assignments shall be reprinted periodically.~~

Policy adopted:

cps 5/04

**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting held on April 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street.

D. Zukowski, Chair	L. Rodrigue
J. Vouros, Vice Chair (virtually)	A. Uberti
D. Ramsey, Secretary	T. Vadas
R. Harriman (absent)	5 Staff
D. Cruson	13 Public
J. Kuzma	1 Press
J. Larkin	
C. Savo	
M. Irvine	

Ms. Zukowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
Mr. Vouros joined the meeting virtually.

Item 1 – Pledge of Allegiance

Item 2 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the donation to Newtown High School and the correspondence report. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Participation

Ryan Knapp, 11 Jeremiah Road, Newtown, spoke about the minutes from April 5, 2022. He gave praise to the Board for the detailed minutes but expressed his frustration with a letter that was sent to the Newtown Bee. The BOE minutes outline the Board's intention to split the two policies and he feels that the local paper should set the record straight.

David Stott, 3 River Run Road, Newtown, commented about the minutes from April 5, 2022 and offered his words of encouragement about next school year's budget. It is important to fulfill the needs of the school and was proud to hear the Superintendent outline the needs in the budget. He felt compelled to offer words of appreciation. BOE displayed extreme professionalism.

Item 4 – Reports

Chair Report:

Ms. Zukowski said that the budget plan was approved by the Legislative Council with a reduction of \$300,000. It is now in the hands of the Newtown voters. The vote is on Tuesday, April 26th. Also, on April 11th, the BOF recommended a special appropriation of \$781,000 for the NHS stadium turf practice field. The Legislative Council will be considering the appropriation on Wednesday, April 20th. Finally, if all goes well the Charter Revision Commission will be finishing up on Wednesday.

Superintendent Report:

Dr. Rodrigue welcomed everyone back from Spring Break which now marks the last quarter of the year. It also marks our ability to celebrate and recognize the wonderful staff and students in Newtown. The recognition we will have at future board meetings will include the top 5%, our Valedictorian, our Salutatorian, CAFE award winners, and Profiles in Professionalism. One of the last meetings for PEAC is coming up and in that meeting we will be creating a recap of the

year and presenting to the Board at a future meeting. Finally, our last PD day is on April 29th and schools will be closed for students.

Committee Reports:

Mr. Cruson said that the Superintendent Search Committee and the public received the finalized search results. They received twenty-two applicants. The Board should have received an email to review the applicants.

Mrs. Kuzma expressed her thanks to the community that gave their input. Mr. Collins said he normally does not receive as much input as he did from Newtown. The total was 566 entries

Mrs. Larkin reported on the CFF Subcommittee. They are reviewing food service vendors and will be receiving bids on Wednesday, April 20th. Mrs. Vadas is planning on meeting with the bus vendor, All Star, to discuss the upcoming bus contract. Finally, Facilities was able to repair the floor in the High School over spring break.

Students:

Ms. Savo reported that it is the third week of Autism Awareness Month. Students are selling candy, gum and snacks to raise money for Autism brain research.

Mr. Irving reported that the NHS Composers Concert will be on Wednesday, April 20th at 7 pm and Newtown's Night of Jazz will be on May 5th at 7:00 pm. He also said that the High School students are getting ready for AP testing.

Financial report:

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report for the month ending March 31, 2022. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Mrs. Vadas presented an overview of the report.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 5 – Presentations

African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies:

Department Chair, Amy Deeb, and NHS Principal, Dr. Longobucco, presented this curriculum.

Mr. Cruson asked if this course was a full year.

Ms. Deeb said that it is and it was decided on a state level.

Mr. Ramsey thanked Ms. Deeb for her presentation and asked if she could address the biases in the community section.

Ms. Deeb said that the curriculum is over 300 pages and will have to find that section and give you the information at a later time. The full curriculum can be found online.

Mrs. Uberti reminded the Board that Ms. Deeb will not be teaching the course and the teacher that will be teaching this course will be receiving extensive training.

Ms. Deeb said that 150 people that contributed to writing this curriculum are listed on the website.

Ms. Zukowski asked if this course would have a lot of cross over.

Ms. Deeb said that there naturally would be. The American History course is being re-written now and going through the final steps but she expects a lot of cross over.

Ms. Zukowski said it sounds like a very interesting course and would love an update next year.

SPED Co-Teaching:

Dr. Rodrigue introduced Deborah Mailloux- Peterson, Paula Correia-Grayson, and Maureen Hall who will be giving an overview of SPED Co-Teaching. Co-Teaching is not new to Newtown but thought it was good practice to bring back to NHS and now NMS.

Dr. Grayson said that she has been at NHS for the past 6 years. One thing that she found is there is no difference between the two teachers. If you observe, you cannot tell which teacher is the General Ed teacher and which teacher is the SPED teacher. Both teachers have their planning time to modify content based on student's needs. There are 36 co-taught classes in NHS this year.

Mrs. Mailloux-Petersen said that her department, along with Dr. Longobucco, looked at why there was a drastic increase of the number of co-taught classes. It was decided to bring co-teaching to NMS to see if it helps transition students and better prepare them.

Mrs. Hall thanked the Board for the support last year by adding a SPED teacher at the Middle School. It made an impact. Previously, the SPED teachers covered two clusters so they had to interact with 8 core teachers and up to 20 students in their caseload. Now, they can focus on 5 core teachers with smaller caseloads. The middle school has a cluster model. There are 5 co-taught classes in 7th grade and 5 co-taught in 8th grade. There has been great feedback from students and teachers.

Mrs. Kuzma asked if they find students are happy to not be pulled out of class.

Mrs. Hall said that the middle school students are very aware that they are being pulled out and do not want to be different. It is the goal to have students be in the least restrictive environment and have access to the general education instruction but at times students need a little more so co-teaching is a great opportunity for them.

Mrs. Larkin asked Dr. Rodrigue if local towns around Newtown offer this.

Dr. Rodrigue does not know how many.

Mrs. Larkin asked if a special education student was in each co-taught classroom.

Dr. Grayson said that there are classes in every grade level and there has to be a 50/50 ratio of special education and general education students.

Mrs. Larkin asked if the SPED teacher rotated with the students.

Dr. Grayson said that if a student is in 4 co-taught content areas they would have 8 different teachers.

Mr. Ramsey said that it sounds like this restores the joy of teaching and learning. The benefits are more security in instruction and the atmosphere in the classroom can be better. Newtown can be a shining example for other districts.

Dr. Grayson invited the Board to visit the high school to observe a co-taught class.

Mr. Vouros said that he went to an 8th grade middle school co-taught class and the comfort level of the students and teachers was phenomenal.

Ms. Zukowski agreed with Mr. Vouros and said all the children were engaged.

Ms. Zukowski asked if there is a wide range of ability of learners in a classroom and if it is difficult for the teachers to cater to everyone in the classroom.

Mrs. Hall said that the classes are heterogeneous and the teachers are used to teaching to a wide range of learners. The co-taught model isn't any different.

Ms. Zukowski asked how you measure success.

Mrs. Hall said that one measurement is she is looking at overall grades in the middle school.

Item 6 – Old Business

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the Integrated STEM Grade 5 Curriculum. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the Integrated STEM Grade 6 Curriculum. Mrs. Kuzma seconded.

Mr. Ramsey wants the record to show that he supports this curriculum. The stem program is very impressive and a great addition.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 7 – New Business

Hawley Update:

Dr. Rodrigue said that the work at Hawley will begin in the summer and continue the majority of 2022-2023 school year. She has been working with Lead Teachers and Assistant Principals to make this move smoothly. The Principals at each building have communicated with their staff through faculty meetings. Teachers will need boxes and other shipping materials. Dr. Rodrigue is requesting 4 early release days for all students. It will be a 2 hour release for all students except middle and high school which will be a 3 hour release. The early release days are helpful because the moving up ceremony is on June 14th and Graduation is on June 15th. After the summer break, teachers will need time to move/unpack and set up their classrooms so Convocation will be moved to the first day of school after the students are dismissed.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the 2021-2022 Non-renewal List. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Dr. Rodrigue said that these positions were 1 year contracts.

Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of April 5, 2022. Mr. Ramsey seconded.

Ms. Zukowski would like to clarify that in her Chair report, the total amount of money that was taken from facilities was \$70,000, not \$170,000.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 8 – Public Participation

Gina Mazzariello, 12 Bridle Path Trail, is a mother of a 7th grader at NMS and Junior at NHS. She offered her thanks and encouragement around the presentation for the new African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies course that will be offered next year.

Tony Keating, 7 Oak Ridge Drive, expressed his concerns with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He believes and respects that there is a large community of people that support and are invested in DEI being ramped up in communities. However, he also believes there is a much larger community of people that don't. He believes that DEI falls short and delivers the exact opposite of what it says it will.

Nerlande Foote, 12 Bears Hill Road, wanted to clarify that her issue with the Affirmative Action and Plan for Minority Recruitment policies was not because they were separated. She felt it was a watered down version of the two. She thanked the Board and would like to work with them in the future.

Don Lococo, 27 Hi Barlow Road, offered his thanks to the Board and reminded them that everyone that attends the Board meetings have a lot in common. He proceeded to quote US Representative Jahana Hayes regarding support for students and their success.

Linda O'Sullivan, 10 Farmery Lane, opened her comments in drawing attention to the good work that Mr. Johnson is doing and advising the BOE. She also noted that Mr. Johnson is an employee of the Newtown community and was giving his opinion as an employee of BOE with a background in DEI, not giving his opinion as a leader of the BIPOC community. Allies for Change (NAFC) is here to talk with you. The BIPOC community is not represented on the Board at all but they are a part of the community and it is the Board's responsibility to care about the issues.

MOTION: Mr. Cruson moved to adjourn. Mrs. Kuzma seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 – Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donald Ramsey', written over a horizontal line.

Donald Ramsey
Secretary