



CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN

New Britain Board of Education Regular Meeting

April 3, 2023 - 6:00 PM | New Britain
Educational Administration Center

Call to Order and Roll Call

Call to Order

Ms. Gayle Sanders-Connolly, President of the New Britain Board of Education, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Board Members Present

Mr. Merrill Gay, Mr. Anthony Kane, Mr. Joseph Listro, Mr. Matthew Marino, Ms. Annie Parker, Ms. Diana Reyes, Ms. Gayle Sanders-Connolly and Ms. Tina Santana.

Student Representatives Present:

Tomas Portillo, Olivia Rutkowski

Meditation

Ms. Sanders-Connolly asked everyone to take a moment of meditation.

Resolution

Approve Board of Education Resolution Declaring April 2023 as Autism and Neurodiversity Awareness Month

A RESOLUTION recognizing April 2023 as Autism and Neurodiversity Awareness Month

WHEREAS Autism Spectrum Disorder is a complex, lifelong developmental disorder that can impact the individual behaviors, social skills, communication, and the ways relationships are built that vary in severity based on the individual; and

WHEREAS Autism remains the fastest-growing classifications of neurodevelopmental disorders in the United States, with 1 in 44 children being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder; and

WHEREAS of the 9,322 students strong in our Consolidated School District of New Britain, 1,959 or 21.01% live with Neurodevelopmental disorder, and receive support in education; and

WHEREAS Autism disorders affect the person living with the condition and their community of support regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, or geography; and

WHEREAS there is a continued need for awareness and acceptance of those with Autism through improving support and opportunities in education, employment, housing, health care, long-term services; and

WHEREAS April is now recognized as Autism Awareness Month to increase community awareness about signs, symptoms and to promote greater acceptance of individuals living with Neurodevelopmental disorders, especially those living with Autism; and

WHEREAS during April 2023, the aim of Autism Awareness is to celebrate differences and build an inclusive society for individuals with autism to live fully through connection and acceptance;

NOW, THEREFORE be it resolved by the New Britain Board of Education that said members hereby recognize April, 2023 as Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month

Submitted by Ms. Tina Santana, Mr. Anthony Kane, Mr. Matthew Marino

Mr. Gay motioned to approve Board of Education Resolution Declaring April 2023 as Autism and Neurodiversity Awareness Month. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Participation

Shairi Benavidez: Ms. Benavidez, is a 12th grade student of NBHS and also a Leader of Connecticut Students with a Dream – a youth lead organization that fights for the rights of undocumented minorities in CT. She expressed her concerns of racism that she experienced in the school, by the staff. She would like to set up a meeting to sit with the board to discuss creating a safer environment for the students of color at NBHS.

Angel Velasquez: Mr. Velasquez is an 11th grade student at NBHS. He expressed his concerns that are going on at the school. There are only 2 bathrooms open and over 2,000 kids in the school.

Cynthia Ramales: Ms. Ramales is a current student and expressed her concerns at NBHS. She explained that there is currently only one bathroom open that is shared amongst over 2,000 kids. Security doesn't assist with the traffic of the bathroom and in turn, the bathroom is always packed and unsafe. She also expressed that she'd like to see more translators in the school. NBHS is a predominantly Spanish demographic, but due to the language barrier, Spanish speaking students are failing because they aren't able to learn and grasp the materials.

Mariangeliz Mejias: Ms. Mejias is an 11th grade student at NBHS. She is also a member of CT Students for a Dream whose purpose is to assist undocumented students obtain proper resources. One concern she discussed was the bathroom policy. As the other students expressed, students aren't always able to use the bathroom during the day because lack of availability. She also stated that students are given a lot of work and the emotional draining it causes due to lack of time to get everything done. Her last concern was the safety of the students, and the lack of professionalism from teachers when it comes to dealing with students. She stated that she doesn't feel safe and would like to see a change in the school.

Jose Lopes: Mr. Lopes is a current student and expressed his concerns at NBHS. He explained that there is currently only one bathroom open that is shared amongst over 2,000 kids. Security doesn't assist with the traffic of the bathroom and in turn, the bathroom is always packed and unsafe. He said they don't have enough time to use the bathroom, and in turn, end up in ISS (In school suspension).

Ana Zulvaga: Ms. Zulvaga is an 11th grade student at NBHS, who expressed her concerns as a student in that school. She mentioned that some teachers do not follow protocol when it comes to curriculum. She also mentioned that the food options aren't healthy and the portions are small. Ms. Zulvaga stated that she'd like to see more counselors in school, as there is only one that speaks Spanish. When needing assistance, it's hard to make an appointment because resources are limited.

Perla Vanessa Cardoso: Ms. Perla, the New Britain Branch Leader of CT Students for a Dream discussed the program that she leads to assist undocumented students in the district. She discussed the challenges that a lot of these students have faced prior to coming to New Britain. She would like sit down and figure out a plan with the Board to support these students. She would like to start an afterschool program that was in place prior to covid but due to funding, has stopped.

Michael: Michael is a student at NBHS, who expressed concerns regarding the language barriers. He stated he went from an A to a lower grade because lack of translation. He stated he has to rely on his classmates to help him, despite it not being their job. He would like to play sports, but can't because there is barrier of understanding.

Reports

The Superintendent's report is attached.

Curriculum:

Mr. Kane mentioned the committee reviewed the Curriculum Audit.

Finance:

The committee accepted donations and discussed E-Rate.

Policy:

The committee discussed the flag policy that was sent down through Shipman & Goodwin LLP.

Personnel:

The committee went over revised job descriptions for the PE/Health department.

Board Reports:

Ms. Reyes stated how she was involved in speaking to Ms. Bodner civics class. The students were very intrigued and had a lot of great questions. She met a student that is interested in coming to one of the Board meetings. She also attended to the NBHS Clothing Drive, which was a great turn out.

Ms. Sanders-Connolly went to see Sister's Act performance, mentioned it was amazing like she expected. She

enjoyed the Pi Day Competition, as her son and Mr. Mazzei received the most pies in their face.

Ms. Santana wanted to highlight the work of Smalley Elementary, they now have the sticks program which is a drumming program for the students, as well as the hard work of Principle Mazzei at Slade Middle.

Student Reports

Mr. Portillo stated how they raised over \$300.00 at the Pi day competition, and how it was well received by the staff. He followed up on the great feedback of Sister Act, and mentioned it was a seamless production. Tomas found a candidate that would be a good role for student representative, and asked the process and timeline for that need.

Ms. Rutkowski stated she spoke with Mr. Pearce regarding the lack of bathrooms but surplus of students in NBHS. Despite being given 10-minute passes to use the bathroom, with so many students there are times 10 minutes is not enough. In regards to lunch, she mentioned the miscommunication between chefs, students and staff. The servings are small, and for students that are in school all day that also have extracurricular programs after school, it just isn't enough. The lack of counselors in school, especially for 12th graders has become an issue for students that don't have the proper knowledge and guidance to apply for college/school. On a positive note, the MET academy has created sensory boxes in lieu of it being Autism awareness month.

Executive Session

Mr. Kane motioned to go into executive session at 6:52PM to discuss a Personnel Matter with Attorney Erik Bartlett, and invited Chief of Staff, Maryellen Manning, and Superintendent Tony Gasper, seconded by Mr. Gay.

Meeting resumed in open session at 7:00PM

New Business

Operations: Approve Minutes from the Regular Board of Education Meeting on March 6, 2023

Submitted by Ms. Aja Edwards | No Committee Review

Ms. Santana motioned to approve minutes from the Regular Board of Education Meeting on March 6, 2023, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Operations: Accept Enrollment Report

Submitted by Mr. Jeff Prokop | No Committee Review

Mr. Kane motioned to accept the Enrollment Report, seconded by Ms. Santana. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Personnel: Accept Report of Personnel Transactions and Extracurricular Appointments

Submitted by Dr. Nicole Sanders | No Committee Review

Ms. Reyes motioned to accept Report of Personnel Transactions and Extracurricular Appointments, seconded

by Mr. Marino. Motion carried unanimously.

Personnel: Approve Revised Job Description – Paraeducator

Submitted by Dr. Nicole Sanders

Mr. Marino motioned to approve revised job description – Paraeducator, seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried by 6:2 vote.

Operations: Approve Implementation of Healthy Food Option

Submitted by Ms. Ann Alfano

Mr. Listro motioned to approve Implementation of Healthy Food Option and Food & Beverage Exemptions seconded by Ms. Reyes. Motion carried unanimously.

Operations: Approve Implementation of Beverage Exemptions

Submitted by Ms. Ann Alfano

Mr. Gay motioned to approve Implementation of Food & Beverage Exemptions seconded by Mr. Kane. Motion carried unanimously.

Operations: Approve Purchase Order Between Zeal Education Group and CSDNB for Security Audit of New Britain Schools and Gates Building (\$285,000.00)

Submitted by Dr. Tony Gasper | Funding Source: ESSER 101093126000 53340

Mr. Listro motioned to approve purchase Order Between Zeal Education Group and CSDNB for Security Audit of New Britain Schools and Gates Building in the amount of \$285,000.00 seconded by Ms. Santana. Motion carried unanimously.

Academics: Approve Contract Between Varsity Tutors for Schools LLC and CSDNB for Virtual 1-on-1 Small Group Tutoring – Pulaski Middle School (\$59,535.00)

Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner’s Network 234705310001-53320

Mr. Gay motioned to approve contract Between Varsity Tutors for Schools LLC and CSDNB for Virtual 1-on-1 Small Group Tutoring at Pulaski Middle School in the amount of \$59,535.00, seconded by Ms. Santana. Motion carried unanimously.

Academics: Approve Contract between Dr. Dee Cole and CSDNB for Consultation Services for Administrators to Improve Student Outcomes –Slade Middle School (\$13,200.00)

Submitted by Mr. Andrew Mazzei | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234805210001-53320

Mr. Listro motioned to approve Contract between Dr. Dee Cole and CSDNB for Consultation Services for Administrators to Improve Student Outcomes –Slade Middle School (\$13,200.00), seconded by Ms. Santana. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

(There were no objections and/or requests from Board Members to pull the following items off the Consent Agenda. Therefore, these items were approved):

- A. Personnel: Approve Revised Job Description – Assistant District Coordinator of Physical Education, Health and Wellness Grades PK-8

Submitted by Dr. Nicole Sanders

- B. Personnel: Approve Revised Job Description – Assistant District Coordinator of Athletics, Physical Education, Health and Wellness Grades 9-12
Submitted by Dr. Nicole Sanders
- C. Partnerships: Accept Donation from Road to Recovery Program: Community Foundation of Greater New Britain to Help Support Students and Families in the District That Identify as Homeless (\$2,500.00)
Submitted by Ms. Mayra Rodriguez
- D. Partnerships: Accept Donation from Foster Phillips, MD for Medical Furniture and Medical Equipment to the NBHS Health Academy and School Nurses (\$2,500.00)
Submitted by Mr. Mark Spalding
- E. Partnerships: Accept Donation from GHA Technologies Inc. Vice President Joshua Tate, for Music Equipment – Pulaski Middle School (\$4,940.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz
- F. Partnerships: Accept Donation of Six Lane Carpet Kits from IBC Youth Bowling to Engage CSDNB Students Through the Sport of Bowling (\$1,300.00)
Submitted by Mr. Manuel Zaldivar
- G. Partnerships: Approve Contract Between GEMS Mentoring Program and CSDNB to Equip and Encourage our Ladies to Think, Behave, Manage, Take Action, and Make Decisions Toward a Positive Future – Pulaski Middle School (\$3,500.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234705310001-53320
- H. Operations: Approve Purchase Order Between B&G Restaurant Supply and CSDNB for Kitchen Steam Boiler – Pulaski Middle School (\$19,729.19)
Submitted by Mr. Robert Smedley | Funding Source: Food Service Lunch Fund
- I. Operations: Approve Extended Contract between Dr. Dee Cole and CSDNB for Consultation Services for Administrators to Improve Student Outcomes – Smalley Elementary School (\$14,520.00)
Submitted by Ms. Andrea Foligno | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234805210001-53320
- J. Operations: Approve Purchase Order between Nutmeg Trucks (Allegiance Isuzu Trucks) and CSDNB Food Service Program for Three Refrigerated Delivery Trucks. (\$400,086.82)
Submitted by Ms. Ann Alfano | Funding Source: Food Service Account
- K. Operations: Approve Purchase Order for 15 Laptops to Support Pupil Services Staff in Completing Work-Related Duties (\$16,508.10)
Submitted by Ms. Donna Clark | Funding Source: IDEA 611 202096912001-57346
- L. Operations: Approve Contract Between Donald F. Perras, Ph.D. Behavioral Specialist/Educational Consultant and CSDNB for Implementation of a Proactive System of Strategies to Manage Students' Behavioral Maturation (\$8,000.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234705310001-53320
- M. Operations: Approve Bid Award between Major Theatre Equipment and CSDNB for New Cafetorium

Curtains – Roosevelt Middle School (\$13,870.00)

Submitted by Mr. Robert Smedley | Funding Source: HALS 260196360021-58999, Facilities 101093126000-56900

- N. Operations: Approve Contract Between Ruth Vazquez-Centenno (Consultant) and CSDNB for 6 Sessions, twice a Month to Develop Productive Relationships from Home to School – Pulaski Middle School (\$1,500.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 23470531000153320
- O. Academics: Approve Contract Between BBR Classic Beauty Program and CSDNB for Weekly Classes to Learn the Business Back End of the Beauty Industry – Pulaski Middle School (\$4,590.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234705310001-53320
- P. Academics: Approve Contract Between Master Yang's Taekwondo and CSDNB for an Additional Afterschool Program – Smalley Elementary School (\$4,500.00)
Submitted by Andrea Foligno | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 204 601210002-53200
- Q. Academics: Approve Purchase Order Between Highnoon Books and CSDNB for Non-Fiction Text and Decodable Readers to Support Literacy and Instructional Resources to Small Group Instruction and Center-Based Learning (\$19,113.05)
Submitted by Ms. Andrea Foligno | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234601210001-56110
- R. Academics: Approve Purchase Order Between Amazon and CSDNB for Non-Fiction Text and Decodable Readers to Support Literacy and Instructional Resources to Small Group Instruction and Center-Based Learning (\$19,575.31)
Submitted by Ms. Andrea Foligno | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234601210001-56110
- S. Academics: Approve Purchase Order Between Scholastic and CSDNB for Non-Fiction Text and Decodable Readers to Support Literacy and Instructional Resources to Small Group Instruction and Center-Based Learning (\$24,083.27)
Submitted by Ms. Andrea Foligno | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234601210001-56110
- T. Academics: Approve Purchase Order Between Vista and CSDNB for Newcomer Program Resource Materials Grades 2-8 (\$79,181.85)
Submitted by Ms. Wanda Lickwar | Funding Source: Academics 101096122004-56100
- U. Academics: Approve Contract Between WWYN's ParaDYM Academy and CSDNB to Implement a New Esports Curriculum – Pulaski Middle School (\$19,510.00)
Submitted by Mr. Alejandro Ortiz | Funding Source: Commissioner's Network 234705310001-53320
- V. Operations: Approve Bid Award for Firewall Support Services Through ERate Program (\$10,669.18)
Submitted by Mr. Jeffrey Prokop | Funding Source: Local MIS Budget 101092125800-57346
- W. Operations: Accept Financial Report – February 28, 2023
Submitted by Ms. Ann Alfano

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:09PM

New Britain Board of Education

Gayle Sanders-Connolly – President | Merrill Gay – Vice President | Joseph Listro – Secretary

Anthony Cane | Monica Dawkins | Anthony Kane | Matthew Marino | Annie S. Parker | Diana Reyes | Tina Santana

