

**PLAINFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION
LIVE STREAMING VIDEO MEETING
February 10, 2021 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Christi Haskell, Kathleen Barry, Mike Broughton, Peggy Bourey, Heather Smith, Nick Easton, Steve Boettcher, Kenneth Di Pietro, Superintendent; Ronald Lussier, Business Manager; Courtney Langlois, Sterling Representative

1. CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Minutes of the Meeting of January 13, 2021:

MOTION: Ms. Barry moved to approve the minutes of the January 13th meeting.

SECOND: Ms. Bourey

VOTE: Passed with abstention from Mr. Boettcher and Ms. Haskell.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS:** Mr. Di Pietro shared an article with the Board regarding Ms. Makayla Barstow. She is being recognized as the Division 1 Young Marine of the Year.

4. PERSONNEL:

- a. Resignations & Appointments: None received.
- b. Appointments: None

5. PUBLIC FORUM:

- a. Public Forum/Agenda Items: Ms. Haskell reminded everyone that although public forum is difficult to do during a virtual meeting, any questions or concerns that are sent to the BOEquestions@plainfieldschools.org will go directly to her for review and response.
- b. Student Representatives: Jake said that next week will be Spirit Week with a different theme each day. College acceptances are beginning to come in.

Olivia said that the new semester is beginning with new classes. She said that some of the winter sports have begun.

- c. Audit Report FY 2020: Mr. Kyle Connors from Marcum Accountants review the audit report with the Board. He said that the Board ended the fiscal year under budget and has \$658,000 as a set aside for future education expenditures.

6. **STANDING COMMITTEES AND INDIVIDUAL REPORTS:** Ms. Haskell said that with new members on the Board, she will review the committees and get back to everyone with assignments.

- a. Superintendent's Search: Ms. Haskell said that the consultants have completed the community survey and focus groups and also met with the First Selectman. They are presently waiting for the application deadline to come to a close on February 18th.
- b. Superintendent's Report: Mr. Di Pietro said that there have been questions as to why Plainfield is not in full classroom learning as some other districts. He noted that several of those districts are much smaller than Plainfield and have the ability to distance the students per CDC guidelines. Plainfield does not have that ability. He also noted that staffing has been a concern at time due to teachers placed on quarantine.

7. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. FY21 Budget & Facilities Report: Mr. Lussier said that there are no unusual or excessive expenditures posted for the month of January. He said that transportation costs continue to run under plan. He noted that the tuitions account is currently over-expended, but that will change once the excess cost money is received.
 - i. COVID Funding: Mr. Lussier said that to date we have expended \$792,479 against the CARES and Coronavirus Relief fund grants.
 - ii. Federal/State Grants: Mr. Lussier informed the board that we have received \$1.571 million in grant revenue to date this year.
 - iii. ECHIP Status: Mr. Lussier said that the current balance for the ECHIP account is \$1.906M.
- b. FY22 Budget Process: The Budget Workshop that was scheduled for February 13th has been cancelled and rescheduled for February 20th at 8:30 at Plainfield Central School.
- c. COVID Status Update: Mr. Di Pietro said that he provided the board with a review of what the schools have accomplished this past month. He also said that he gave them copies of some reflections about the impact of COVID from three students. Mr. Di Pietro would like to have a summer academy this year. It would be more of an enrichment program to provide students with a voluntary opportunity to take part in some project-based learning to refresh and strengthen their skills for the new year.
- d. Transportation Bid Update: Mr. Di Pietro said that DATTCO was the only bidder for the transportation services. He said that they will now meet with them to review the specifics of the contract.

8. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. PHS Differentiated Diploma: Dr. Bitgood said that they are presently in the second year with the academies in place. At the moment there are three academies to choose from,

and that will increase to four next year. The Academic Differentiation seeks to combine existing practices and state expectations. Students who will earn the added line on the diploma stating: “With Academic Distinction”

- Will need to meet ‘Proficient’ or higher on the State test in Math and English
- Have no grade in core subjects lower than a B+
- Earn honor chords in two (2) areas (to be affirmed 2 or 3)
- Students may not have been suspended, expelled or absent in excess of 10 days per year
- A student who is in good standing in the National Honor Society is eligible
- Note: These criteria attempt to allow for academic achievement distinction not exclusively for only the top 10 or 25 students or only NHS students.
- We seek to honor this graduating class with the first pilot Academic Differentiation due to the challenges of COVID – understanding that students will not have targeted the criteria.

- b. PHS Athletic Program Update: Dr. Bitgood said that Boys and Girls basketball has begun. He also noted that the Color Guard has been practicing with masks and distancing and the cheerleaders are doing some exercises.
- c. Summer Programs: Mr. Di Pietro said that they are working on plans to provide some enrichment learning this summer. It will be STEM based and geared toward some reinforcement for students. He would also like to have a three-day program the week before school starts for those students that did not participate in PreK. This will give them a head start on developing the social skills for attending kindergarten. The district will still provide the ESY program that is required for some students per their IEP.
- d. 21/22 School Calendar Discussion: Mr. Di Pietro presented the Board with a proposed draft calendar for next school year. He suggests that the school year begin the week of August 30th. This would allow for two PD days and school to begin on Sept. 1. He said that he is not looking for approval today, but would like the Board’s thoughts on the schedule for next year. He will develop a calendar and present it to the Board next month.

9. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Mr. Broughton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

SECOND: Mr. Boettcher

VOTE: Passed unanimously.