

THOMPSON BOARD OF EDUCATION

Thompson Middle School Media Center Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 15, 2019
7:00 PM

Attending Members:

William Witkowski
Linda Jarmolowicz
Shawn Brissette
Donna Godzik
Kathleen Herbert
Jody Houghton
Thomas Angelo
Valentine Iamartino
Matthew Polsky

Absent Members:

Also in attendance:

Melinda Smith, Robert Gentes, Christopher Jones, Noveline Beltram, William Birch, Steve Knowlton, Megan Parrette, Ian Polun, school employees, members of the public.

I. Call to Order

William Witkowski called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Christopher Jones led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Citizens' Comments

None.

IV. Committee Update

Communication Sub-Committee Meeting Update: Donna Godzik updated the Board on a recent Communication meeting which discussed ways of reaching out to the public to highlight the school.

Finance Sub-Committee Meeting Update: Kathleen Herbert stated that the committee reviewed the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 budgets.

Motion by Kathleen Herbert seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to add to Action Item E, a vote to approve the budget as presented and the current cuts recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

TMHS Alumni Update: Thomas Angelo stated that Career Day is October 25th, and Alumni weekend events will be held on October 26th. Cow plop tickets are still available for October 27th.

V. Educational Up-Date

A. Student Spotlight

➤ Student Liaison Report:

Upcoming Events:

- 10/16/19- PSAT/NMSQT
- 10/22/19-Staff Leadership
- 10/25/19- Weekend Warriors First Delivery, Career Day, Homecoming Dance
- 10/26/19- Alumni Games and the Alumni Concert 6:30
- 10/29/19- Celebration of Life Hospice event 5:30pm Danielson- Modern Music Ensemble

- 10/31/19- Costume Parade
- 11/1/19- 1st Q Report Cards Go Home
- 11/6/19- Student Leadership - Early Release
- 11/10/19- Turkey Trot- National Anthem Singers
- 11/16/19- CMEA Auditions- Manchester High School

Student Voice Forms:

- **A student wrote in that more climate control is needed in the building**
Students were reminded that temperatures were raised during the past winter but also reminded that the more bodies in a room, the more the air circulates which makes it feel colder.
- **A student wrote in that there is a need for more efforts towards promotion of the school through social media**
The district Facebook page was mentioned to the Student Council members but the idea of an Instagram page was brought up. An Instagram page had previously been run by TMHS News club but it has since been shut down but could always be reopened.
- **Multiple voice forms were written in asking for more vegan and vegetarian options in the cafeteria**
A student volunteered during the last Student Council meeting to write an email to Mrs. Durand asking about vegan and vegetarian options. Olivia Lubomirski drafted and sent an email to Mrs. Durand. Mrs. Durand and Mrs. Murphy met with Olivia Lubomirski, Cole Coderre and Mrs. Ouillette on 10/9 and vegetarian and vegan options were discussed. Cole and Olivia are planning to follow-up with the student body.
- **At the end of last year, a student wrote in concerned about a lack of recycling in the building**
Mr. Polun approached Mr. Joyce and Mrs. Ouillette with an opportunity to invite a couple of students to the CT Greenleaf School Recycling Workshop being held on 10/23 at Central CT State University. Cole Coderre, Channing Boss, and Mr. Joyce will be attending this workshop that aims at “helping schools understand the magnitude of recycling and how they can improve.”
- **At the end of the school year last year, a student wrote in asking if there was a way to put announcements on the school website. The Student Council at the time decided to take this up to start the 2019-2020 school year.**
Mr. Joyce has spoken with Mr. O’Brien about the possibilities of videoing the announcements. A Student Council representative said that KHS has just begun doing video announcements once a week. Mr. Joyce suggested that this may be a good idea for us to either wrap up the week or start the week. Robert Terrell is looking into an official social media platform for announcements on Instagram.
- **A student voice form was written in asking for students to have more opportunities to take the classes they choose originally:**
Ashley Morin met with Mrs. Canney to discuss the access to different types of electives. Mrs. Canney explained that for students taking Honors/Advanced/AP classes scheduling options are very limited because most of these classes only happen once a day, compared to other college prep classes which can have up to five class offerings in a day. These college prep class schedules have more flexibility and tend to allow for greater choice in electives. Finding electives for students who take many Honors classes is more difficult therefore because elective choices are limited to certain periods. Virtual High School course offerings can allow students who take honors classes greater elective and core choices since VHS can be taken during any period of the day. Mrs. Canney also said that seniors do indeed get first choice when it comes to electives because they need the art and tech credits to graduate and other classes to ensure enough credits for graduation. For Freshman, choices are limited because they need 4 “core” classes (English, Science, Math, Social Studies) along with PE and Health. Mrs. Canney further explained that core classes take precedence over electives when school counselors create student schedules. Counselors schedule core classes first then fill in electives where they can. The scheduling of electives is also limited by the fact that there are a lot of “singleton” electives, or electives that are only offered once a day. So, for example, if a student signs up for AP Government (singleton core class) and Creative Writing (singleton elective) is offered during the same period, the student would not be able to take both courses.
- **A student wrote in concerned that our school website was out of date and missing several “key things.”**
Ms. Parrette commented that the Technology Department is comprised of only three people who have to support the entire district. With the many new initiatives in recent years (such as the Chromebook and new Student Information System rollouts), the Tech Department has had its hands full. Administration is aware of some of the out-of-date materials and has been working with the Technology Department towards replacing old documents on the website.
 - Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) Recognitions: EMR Course Director Amber Axtel gave an update on the EMR course and introduced the students who passed the and received certification in EMR over the summer.

- B. Superintendent Update
- Enrollment Update – The district enrollment is at 973 students as of October 1, 2019.
 - Food Services Update – Robert Gentes gave information on the universal breakfast for the district and an update on the number of school lunches purchased monthly in each school. Discussion was held.
 - TMHS Leadership Presentation – Postponed.
 - High School Graduation Date – Melinda Smith is recommending to the Board that the high school graduation date be Wednesday, June 10, 2020. Discussion was held. A survey will be sent to parents of seniors to find out if they prefer a weekday or weekend graduation.
- C. Administrator Reports - The administrators gave an update on events that have happened or will be happening in their school or departments.

VI. Action Items

- A. *Minutes*
Regular Meeting, September 9, 2019
Motion by Shawn Brissette, seconded by Linda Jarmolowicz, to accept the minutes of the September 9, 2019 Regular meeting.
Motion – Passes. Jody Houghton abstained.
- B. *2020 Board of Education Meeting Dates*
Motion by Matthew Polsky, seconded by Jody Houghton, to accept the 2020 Board of Education Meeting Dates as presented.
Motion – Passes. Unanimous.
- C. *Eastconn Board of Directors Appointment/Approval*
Tabled.
- D. *High School Graduation Date*
Tabled.
- E. *2019-2020 Budget and Recommended Cuts*
Motion by Kathleen Herbert, seconded by Jody Houghton, to accept the 2019-2020 revised budget as presented by superintendent with recommended proposed cuts which includes field trips, supplies, and middle school spring sports for a total of \$50,000.
Roll call vote was taken: Thomas Angelo – No; Jody Houghton – Yes; Donna Godzik – No; Linda Jarmolowicz – Yes; Kathleen Herbert – Yes; Shawn Brissette – No; Valentine Iamartino – abstained; Matthew Polsky – Yes; William Witkowski – abstained. Motion passes.

VII. Correspondence

None.

VIII. Old Business

Shawn Brissette asked if school restructuring can be revisited. Melinda Smith is currently looking into it.

IX. Citizens' Comments

None.

X. Adjournment

Motion by Linda Jarmolowicz, seconded by Shawn Brissette, to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm.
Motion – Passes. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by,
Danielle Pederson
Recording Secretary to the Board

Minutes Approved: November 12, 2019