

Ashford Board of Education  
**Regular Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2023**  
**7:00 pm**

**Meeting Held in Person and Electronically Via Zoom**

*Note: Per CGS 10-218, Board of Education Meeting Minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exceptions of motions and votes recorded, the minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote by the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.*

**Call to Order**

Vice-Chair Marian Matthews called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present were members Jennifer Leszczynski, Kim Kouatly and Al Maccarone. Unable to attend were members Tess Grous, Meghan Smith and Jane Urban. Also present was Superintendent Cynthia Ford, Principal Polly Borysevicz, Asst. Principal David Eichorn, teachers Michael Young, Christopher Busse, Jack Champagne and guest teacher Katja Baumgartner. Students Louise C. and Jonathan M. were also present.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

All present recited the pledge.

**Academic Presentation (Travel to Germany)**

Mr. Young and Mr. Busse expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to travel with our students to Germany. He spoke of the importance of this program and its positive effects. Students Jonathan and Louise proceeded to describe their trip to Germany via a Power Point presentation and they each spoke of activities they took part in such as a trip to the Berlin Wall, a German McDonald's visit, a scavenger hunt, great food and a German soccer match which Mr. Busse equated to an NFL football game kind of atmosphere. Board members proceeded to ask the students a few questions.

Katja Baumgartner has been at Ashford School since October. She is one of 15 teachers/education majors placed in eight-month internships in American schools. She spoke to the importance of German language instruction. There are 130 million people in the world who speak German. Ms. Baumgartner is a biology major in Germany and is currently working with students in Grades 4, 6 and 7 and with Grade 8 science students one half day. The board asked Ms. Baumgartner some questions, thanked her for sharing her presentation with the board.

**Opportunity for Public Comment**

There were no communications received and no public comments.

**Consent Agenda:**

**a. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Bylaw: Meeting Date, Place and Time**

**b. Approval of Minutes: 01/05/2023**

**c. Facility Update/Capital Planning Update**

**d. Distribute 2023-2024 Ashford School Calendar (1<sup>st</sup> Draft)**

The board held a brief discussion concerning the consent agenda items. The school calendar will be reviewed with the unions, and the capital list was reviewed for accuracy as per discussions held at the 1/5/23 meeting.

***Motion made by Kim Kouatly to accept the consent agenda items.. Motion seconded by Jennifer Leszczynski and carried unanimously.***

**Old Business**

**1. FY 24 Budget Work Session (if necessary)**

Mrs. Ford noted there are no changes to the FY 24 budget document shared at the last meeting. She asked that the board consider seeking a half time school psychologist in lieu of a half time library media specialist. We advertised all year for a school psychologist and these are difficult positions to fill. There are several reasons to consider this – for example, only a school psychologist can administer cognitive testing; which is required for a referral to special education. Mrs. Ford noted that we are currently outsourcing these services, and our provider is wonderful, but it would be best for students and staff if we employed a school psychologist. Mrs. Ford will have more information forthcoming and the board will revisit the request at its next meeting.

## **New Business**

### **a. Bicknell Trust Scholarships**

#### **1. Number and Denomination of 2023 Scholarship Awards**

The current statement of the trust was included in the board's agenda packet. Jennifer Leszczynski noted that she and Al Maccarone were on the Bicknell Trust Scholarship committee last year, and most recently the board has awarded four scholarships in the amount of \$1,000.

***Motion made by Jennifer Leszczynski to offer up to four Bicknell Trust Scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each or up to \$4,000 in total. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.***

#### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

Mrs. Ford noted that she and Marian Matthews met with Bill Falletti, Jim Rupert and Mark Robbins of MHR Solar to review the status of the Ashford school roof project. Every effort will be made to get the roof project started in the summer of 2023 which may or may not be feasible. There is still a need for an architect and structural survey of the roof before solar options can move forward. The current roof needs to be replaced, there are frequent leaks and only so many repairs can be made without damages to equipment and the building. This is a very important project for safety, energy savings and in order to move forward with solar plans and needed window replacement. Mrs. Ford noted a town meeting is being planned for February to address the roof and solar project. The UST has been secured, and she is awaiting word on the insurance claim for our existing generator failed and a quote on a replacement generator.

#### **Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items**

Next meeting date is 02/02/2023. Items for discussion: FY 24 Superintendent Budget presentation; facility update, approval of 2023-2024 Ashford School calendar.

#### **Adjournment**

***Motion made by Al Maccarone to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Motion seconded by Jennifer Leszczynski and carried unanimously.***

Recorded by: Jennifer Truax

Zoom Recording Link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/ya1Tc540DIldr\\_D6AVBpQjws\\_UDi1LAjr6WgSXeiRZHjAkRI4GD-H-DkNZnkHBkA.5ELCCtM4ZZsqr1\\_p](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/ya1Tc540DIldr_D6AVBpQjws_UDi1LAjr6WgSXeiRZHjAkRI4GD-H-DkNZnkHBkA.5ELCCtM4ZZsqr1_p)

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