

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**April 27, 2020**  
**7:00 PM**

(Approved at May 18, 2020 BOE Meeting)

**NOTICE: In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B Regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be held remotely with no in-person attendance. The meeting will be broadcast live on OGAT - Channel 79 and via YouTube live stream: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlhjJFeTgys>**

***Attendance*** Present: Chairman Kraut, Mr. Cap, Ms. Riccio, Mr. Ziman, Mrs. Browe, Mr. Flynn, Mrs. Welander, Mr. Young, Mrs. Hadlock, Mr. Vitelli

Also present: Dr. Scarpetti, Dr. Russo, Ms. Koch, Mrs. Edo,

***Call to Order*** The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman Kraut at 7:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited and the Mission Statement was read by Ms. Riccio

***Public Participation*** There was no public participation.

***Correspondence*** Opinion Essays were received from Mrs Alves' 3rd Grade Class at RBS regarding school uniforms.

***Consent Agenda*** A motion was made by Mrs. Hadlock and seconded by Ms. Riccio to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2020 BOE meeting. Unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Hadlock and seconded by Mr. Ziman to approve the minutes from the January 29, 2020 BOE Budget Workshop meeting. Unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mrs. Hadlock and seconded by Ms. Riccio to approve the minutes from the February 10, 2020 BOE Budget Workshop meeting. Motion passed 9/0/1. Mr. Kraut, Mr. Cap, Mrs. Hadlock, Mrs. Welander, Mrs. Browe, Mr. Vitelli, Mr. Flynn, Ms. Riccio and Mr. Young voted aye. Mr. Ziman abstained.

A motion was made by Ms. Riccio and seconded by Mr. Flynn to approve the minutes from the 3.3.20 Special BOE meeting. Unanimously approved.

***Superintendent's Report***

Dr. Scarpetti began his report recapping the events leading up to the announcement of school closures on the evening of March 12, 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic. He thanked the Director of the Orange Health Department Dr. Amir Mohammad, Emergency Management Committee, OPD and OVFD for their support during these unprecedented days when important decisions needed to be made for the district. Dr. Scarpetti emphasized throughout this time of constant change, the safety of the students and staff, cleanliness of our buildings and feeding our students were top priorities. He recognized the partnership with the Amity School District to distribute lunches to any students in need. He reported that 300 lunches are currently being distributed each day at Amity Middle School for Orange students. He went on to explain the process of distributing chromebooks to those students who requested one via a survey sent to all families in the district. Dr. Scarpetti noted the advisement he received from the Leadership Team and Orange Teachers League as they continued to work on meeting the needs of students from the onset of school closures, progressing forward to where we are today. He stated that he and the Leadership Team have a meeting planned with the PTO/A Presidents on Thursday, April 30th. He reiterated the feedback received from families has been both positive and constructive with regards to distant learning and encourages them to continue to reach out with any needs that may arise so adjustments can be explored to help support our students. Dr. Scarpetti asked Dr. Russo to outline the phases of distance learning that have taken place. She explained that Phase One focused on the initial resources providing opportunity to maintain skills to Phase Two that included grade specific learning targets to Phase Three which focused on teachers being able provide support to their students which then evolved to the next stage which was to get comfortable with submitting assignments using Google Classroom. Dr. Russo went on to explain how teachers are now using Virtual Classrooms for face to face interaction with their students and will continue this till the end. Dr. Scarpetti concluded his report sincerely thanking parents and guardians for their support during these challenging times and that our school staff is dedicated to help our families during the days ahead.

***Business Administrator Report***

Ms. Koch began her report expressing her gratitude for Dr. Scarpetti and the members of the Orange Board of Education for their leadership during this time along with dedication of our first responders, healthcare workers and our own BOE employees. Ms. Koch reported that we are tracking under budget this year due to slight savings not having to hire substitute

teachers and utility costs while our buildings are closed. For next year's 2020-02021 budget, a reduction of a half million dollars has taken place since we last met face to face. These reductions were achieved by lowering our healthcare liability and many of our capital items related to our IT needs would be funded by the Town. Reducing line items for municipal energy and Munis software and training. Ms. Koch continued to explain that before these reductions our budget came in 7% over the prior year and now it stands at 4.6% over the prior year and for a total of \$21,865,000. The Board of Finance has requested an additional \$450,000 to be cut which will be discussed further during this meeting under Board Business. Ms. Koch provided a Munis Update. Go live dates have been adjusted due to the COVID19 situation and the cancellation of the face to face training. The target is now June 1st for the financial module and September 30th for payroll. Ms. Koch concluded her report by thanking the food service workers at Amity Middle School and the Amity Team who helped organize this effort.

***Director of  
Special Services  
Report***

Mrs. Edo outlined the COVID-19 plan for meeting the needs of our special education students. She explained that the Special Education staff has been providing Individual Education based learning opportunities and instruction for our special education students commensurate with the general education instruction that includes individual google classrooms specific to student goals and objectives, phone calls and video instruction and counseling have been ongoing. They have been working with families to determine a plan that best meets specific challenges during this time. Our social worker, school psychologists and principals have reviewed weekly students of concern and staff have worked collaboratively to support the students and their families. A Special Education Support Center, which opened today, is monitored and is designed for some of our Paraeducators to support students who are referred to this Center by parents, students, and or staff. Our Paraeducators have been engaging in technology training with myself regarding Google Classroom, as well as a variety of other google applications that are beneficial to their knowledge whether supporting students in distance learning or when school reopens. Our Paraseducators are enrolled in Applied Behavior Analysis learning modules to broaden their understanding of different learning challenges, behavior, and legal obligations related to our special needs population. Some para educators are now working directly with students under the supervision of Special education teachers in a Remote Academic Learning Center. Our Registered Behavior Technicians are working closely with Special Education staff to set up and implement distance learning programming for students which is directly involved with providing support to students via video sessions as guided by the BCBA. Mrs. Edo called families of special needs students to determine how things are going with distance learning. She reached out to over 59

families this weekend and will continue to reach out over the coming weeks. The response was overwhelmingly positive about the special education services that are being provided. Families were encouraged to provide us with feedback as to how we can support their child during this difficult time. Mrs. Edo continued her report with the plan to move forward with the Extended School Year but is waiting for guidance from the Connecticut State Department of Education and Health Department to understand if they will continue with distance learning or if we will be able to allow students and staff to work in buildings. Mrs. Edo gave an update on the Primary Mental Health Grant Funds. She stated although the school closure interrupted our plan for this support service in school, that they are able to use the funds to pay our child associate to reach out to families during this health crisis to assist them in accessing support whether it be from our own staff or 211 services. Mrs. Edo concluded with the Special Education Student Increase Report which jumped from 122 on October 1st to 142 on April 6th.

**BOARD**  
**BUSINESS**

**1. Operational Memorandum No. 05-20 - Process for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2020-2021**

- A. In pursuant to C.G.S Section 10-215f, Chairman Kraut asked for motion that the Orange Board of Education 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 Nutritional Standards during the period of July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. 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 fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. Ms. Ricco accepted this motion, Mr. Ziman seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously
- B. Chairman Kraut asked for a motion for the Orange Board of Education to allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutritional 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 regular scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, play rehearsals, and debate

team meetings are not. The “regular school day” is the period from midnight before 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held. Mrs. Welander accepted this motion, Mr. Young seconded the motion. Motion passes 9/0/1. Mr. Kraut, Mr. Cap, Mr. Vitelli, Mr. Young, Mr. Ziman, Ms. Riccio, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Welander and Mr. Flynn voted aye. Mrs. Hadlock abstained.

## **2. Budget Update - Discussion and Possible Action on Final 2020-2021 School Budget**

Dr. Scarpetti explained that he received notice last week that the Board of Finance made the decision to cut an additional \$450,000 from the BOE budget. Since receiving this information, the team has been looking at next year’s budget and the reductions that need to be made and at the same time looking at creating a non-lapsing account agreement with the Board of Finance from this year’s budget to next year’s budget. BOE are allowed to carry over a maximum of 2% from one year to the next. The savings being looked at, due to school closures, would be in the areas transportation, payroll and utilities. As a point of information, Dr. Scarpetti shared that reductions in class sections were discussed at the Board of Finance Meeting as a possible solution for the BOE to consider now that these cuts have been made. Dr. Scarpetti proposed the Board to look at the two additional teachers that we don’t currently have that were included in the budget that was agreed upon as decisions are being made. Dr. Scarpetti stated that he is looking to the Board for direction and feedback on how to proceed with these cuts.

Mr. Flynn shared a lengthy and passionate statement regarding the Board of Finance suggestion to the BOE to reduce the number of class sections in order to meet the reductions in the budget. This would result in increased class sizes. Mr. Flynn outlined all reductions that were already made to the proposed budget and suggested other areas to look for savings such as insurance costs. Mr. Flynn feels very strongly on protecting our current class size policy. Mrs. Hadlock asked for clarification on the proposed class sections present in the board packet minus the additional two teachers and how the average class size would be affected. Ms. Riccio reminded the Board it has been a theme to keep the lower grades class sizes smaller than grades 3-6. Mrs. Welander proposed the question if we had a spike with enrollment would we be able to hire additional teachers. Dr. Scarpetti said that the Board of Finance has always cooperated in the past when faced with the need to hire more teachers. Mr. Vitelli asked the question on how a non-lapsing account would affect next year’s budget and Mrs. Riccio gave an explanation. Chairman Kraut expressed the unknown this COVID19 pandemic has caused and the great financial concern the Town has for its residents. Mrs. Browe had a point of clarification and

summarized what the Board should keep in mind before taking any action if action is necessary.

The understanding at this point in the meeting is that the \$450,000 reduction was a final decision made by the Board of Finance and Dr. Scarpetti needs direction to move forward on the areas the Board would like him to find the reductions needed. The Board unanimously feels strongly on not reducing any of the current staff. The Board continued to discuss that Dr. Scarpetti should review the efficiencies in this year's budget and leverage a non lapsing account which could add up to approximately \$300,000 and possibly target the two additional teachers positions and put them on hold. This would amount to about \$150,000.

Mrs. Hadlock made a motion to let Dr. Scarpetti find the \$450,000 that is needed to reduce the budget without the reduction of any of the current staff. Mrs. Browe seconded the motion. During discussion Mr. Flynn explained why he will not be voting in favor of this motion. He feels that there could be a better solution and he does not agree that the two additional teachers originally part of the budget not being built in. The motion passed 9/1/0. Mr. Kraut, Mr. Cap, Mr. Ziman, Mr. Young, Mr. Vitelli, Mrs. Browe, Ms. Riccio, Mrs. Hadlock and Mrs. Welander voted aye. Mr. Flynn voted nay.

### **3. 403(b) Plan Document Amendment and Restatement Resolution**

Mr. Kraut asked for a motion to accept the 403(b) Plan Document Amendment and Restatement Resolution. Mrs. Welander made the motion to accept the 403(b) Plan Document Amendment and Restatement Resolution. Mr. Vitelli seconded the motion. The motion passed 9/0/1. Mr. Kraut, Mr. Cap, Mr. Ziman, Mr. Young, Mr. Vitelli, Mrs. Browe, Ms. Riccio, Mrs. Hadlock and Mrs. Welander voted aye. Mr. Flynn abstained.

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

### ***Finance & Operations Ms. Riccio***

Ms. Riccio reported that three months worth of financials were reviewed due to meeting cancellations. All seem in line with the budget to date and we are hoping to see savings due to school closures. Ms. Riccio reported that all cafeteria workers are working to help support the distribution of lunches during the week at Amity Middle School.

***Personnel/Policy  
Transportation –  
Mrs. Browe***

Mrs. Browe shared that she received and reviewed the BOE policy audit recently completed by CABA in early March. She reports that 51 policies should be reviewed and of those 51, 41 are recommended to be reviewed and 10 are more significant since they are tied to changes in State and Federal laws. Mrs. Brown anticipates more policy changes happening due to the current situation we are facing with the pandemic.

***Building &  
Grounds / Safety  
& Security – Mr.  
Flynn***

Mr. Flynn gave a Building and Ground/Safety Update. He recognized due to the closure of schools, maintenance crews have been busy with various projects while the buildings are empty. Mr. Flynn reported that the committee had an on site meeting at RBS at the end of February. Some of the items discussed were to revisit and update our 5 year plan, review our security policies with the Orange Police Department to address areas to increase our security and the possible need for RBS bathrooms to be ADA compliant. They did a detailed tour of RBS to identify areas that need to be addressed. They had plans to do detailed tours of the other schools in the near future. Dr. Scarpetti joined the discussion with an update on the preparations being made to purchase cleaning products for the fall. He also gave an update on all the projects completed at the schools since they were closed such as office floor replacement at RBS, painting in all the buildings and the removal of a loading dock at THS to name a few.

***Curriculum /  
Instruction /  
Technology -  
Mr. Ziman***

Mr. Ziman had no update to share on Curriculum at this time

***ACES***

Mrs. Riccio reported that ACES did meet in April. She reported that due to the COVID19 pandemic, they are hoping to break even at the end of this year and all budgets for next year have been approved. The fundraising Gala held each year in the spring was postponed.

***Adjourn***

Mrs. Riccio made a motion to adjourn at 9:08 PM. Mr. Ziman seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

*Mary Shaw*

Mary Shaw

