

**PENDING BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVAL**  
**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024**

**Order of Business**  
**7:00 PM**

**I. Convene—Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Chair Becky Tyrrell convened the regular business meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:01 PM. Rachel Buchanan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members Present:** Mesdames Buchanan, Clark, Lauria, Martinez, St. Lawrence, Tyrrell, and Messrs. Bruzas and White

**Also Present:** Brian S. Reas, Superintendent of Schools  
David Levenduski, Assistant Superintendent  
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations  
Valiantsin Kasabrukhou, Student Representative

**Absent:** Lori Consalvo, Board Member  
Maja Grabowski, Student Representative

**Late Arrivals:** None

**Early Departures:** None

**Returns:** None

**II. SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

There were no special presentations this month.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF JANUARY 8, 2024 AS PRESENTED. A MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CASSANDRA CLARK. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- B) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- C) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 23, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.
- D) A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.

**IV. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT**

Student Liaison Valiantsin Kasabrukhou reported on the following:

- ▶ The second semester will be underway. Students are focused on getting a strong start in the new semester.
- ▶ Mid-terms went generally well. There were a few snow day interruptions. Students are meeting all final grades and transcripts are being sent to all colleges. They are now awaiting the roll out from the admission offices which will take place in March. Students have also been busy applying for scholarships and internship opportunities. Students did their best to get applications in early as they are hoping to get higher level internships.
- ▶ The Counseling Department did an incredible job managing the application process, as well as ensuring that the 8<sup>th</sup> graders transition ran smoothly.
- ▶ Today, 8<sup>th</sup> graders toured Plainville High School, as well as experiencing the activities of the Q & A panel.
- ▶ The Counseling Department also hosted a FAFSA Application Filing Night to make sure any confusion about the FAFSA process was cleared up. The attendance was fairly high and a lot of families are happy with the outcome. The Counseling Department also did a great job offering two Semester 2 course selections.
- ▶ The indoor track team competed in their first meet on Friday. There were a lot of notable performances from the women's long-distance team. There were a lot of State open qualifications as well as new record settings.
- ▶ The PHS Jazz Band collaborated with the UCONN Jazz Band last week. Some juniors and sophomores attended as well.
- ▶ The Robotics team competed in their last meet on Saturday. It's been a long season, but a lot has been learned. Students worked together to create notes and diagrams for future use, to help teams get a jump on their performances. Students also made friends with a lot of the other teams, and there may be some collaboration in the future.
- ▶ The NHS is busy working on this semester's search projects.
- ▶ The Science NHS is busy working on a Science Fair Night for elementary and middle school students. There will be an organizational meeting on Thursday.
- ▶ The NHS is also working on a Blood Drive which is currently being organized, and will take place in the spring as they did last year. It is hoped that attendance will be a little higher this year.
- ▶ The general NHS Chapter is putting together a scavenger hunt Q & A panel for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade transition as well. Now that COVID restrictions have been somewhat lifted, they are looking to do more events involving interschool activities.
- ▶ The Math NHS is running a 5-day fundraiser with pies being sold for order. They are also organizing a public meal train at a homeless aid house this spring.
- ▶ The English NHS are setting up small libraries around town. There needs to be a lot of planning and coordination with the Town Council. This is a long running project that may run into next year.
- ▶ Mr. Kasabrukha also gave a shout out to Math teacher Eileen Hebert. Mrs. Hebert is a Geometry, Algebra 1 and AP Statistics teacher. Due to an unforeseen injury, she has been doing an outstanding job over the past two weeks, amidst students' most important of stats on the AP test. He stated that through a bunch of videos, academy assignments, AP courses and note packets, and without access to her writing hand, she has been able to push the students through this chapter. Come Spring, they will see how it all pans out with the AP performance. However, he stated that it has been really impressive as to what she has been able to do with the resources she's been given, under these circumstances.

**V. CITIZEN COMMENTS—No Comments  
RESPONSE TO CITIZEN COMMENTS—No Responses**

**VI. COUNCIL LIAISON**

Mr. Wazorko wanted the Superintendent to know that he has an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at home who is awaiting word on an impending snow day tomorrow.

**Middle School Renovation Project:**

Mr. Wazorko stated that the Town Council will meet tomorrow evening (02/13/24) to officially set the Middle School Renovation Project referendum date for March 19, 2024. There will be some discussion, then the motion will be made. If Council members cannot meet in person due to the impending snow storm, they are prepared to meet virtually through Zoom. The meeting will happen either way.

The Middle School Steering Committee materially wrapped up its work last Thursday. He thanked the Board Members who participated, their staff, and administration. The Consultant said that he has never been a part of a Steering or Communications Committee that has done so much work in five weeks, which is due to hard work and everyone being open-minded to get the job done. He thanked everyone who helped them get through this.

Mr. Wazorko stated that once the Town Council passes the referendum date tomorrow, they will be in the “quiet period”. Town officials can no longer advocate for or against the project. However, the Town will and can answer questions and can give factual information. If something pops up on Facebook, or somewhere on social media that needs to be addressed, the Town can correct any incorrect information but cannot advocate for the project. The Town has their own website dedicated to the Middle School project. They are taking any adjectives that may be considered advocating for the project off the website. The information will be scrubbed. Also, the one-page newsletter will be changed accordingly as well. Anything handed out after tomorrow night will not contain any advocacy for the project.

**Budget:**

Mr. Wazorko stated that the budget presentation meeting will take place on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers. The Public Hearing on the Budget will take place on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, and the Council is preparing dates for worksessions that are tentatively scheduled for March 11, 12, 13, 14, 19 and 20.

**VII. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Mr. Reas stated that the Town Council and Steering Committee has been working diligently. The Committee has done things that have never been done before and did a wonderful job. He commented that to do this in the middle of budget season (prep time) was an enormous amount of work and much of it fell on Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations. Mr. Reas stated that Mr. Adlerstein never complains. When a question comes in that Mr. Reas doesn’t know the answer to, Mr. Adlerstein says that’s not a problem. Mr. Reas also stated that part of being new means you introduce yourself to many people. He said that it’s be great to meet people in the Senior Center, Rotary Club and having something to talk about with them. He stated that he has had a number of comments regarding the virtual tour. It has been a nice opportunity to meet people as well. Mr. Reas is very appreciative of the Town Manager’s office. He stated that they have been extremely supportive. Mrs. Davis, Director of Community Relations, has made this whole process look easy. She’s been there, right along with us. The announcement in terms of what’s next, made by Mr. Wazorko, is also an important piece of the process.

Mr. Reas also thanked Ms. Roberts, Principal of the Middle School, as she will give a brief report on the symbols of the Strategic Plan and keeping everything in alignment.

These factors will be incorporated into her presentation. He hopes this will help communicate the good work being done.

#### **A. MSP STRATEGIC UPDATE**

Mr. Reas introduced Middle School Principal Aimee Roberts who gave a brief update on the MSP.

Ms. Roberts began by saying that the goal is always to focus on Students, Teaching, and Learning through the lens of Equity, Social Emotional Learning, Mastery, Systems and Operations and Community Connections.

MSP at a Glance:

Administrators look to the characteristics they want each student to be, i.e., Portrait of the Graduate to be Collaborative, Communicative, Innovative, Mindful and Resilient. Ms. Roberts stated that these are the characteristics seen at the Middle School every day. Teachers are doing an amazing job making sure students are practicing these skills, learning these skills and going into these skills.

The Middle school has:

- ▶ 509 students
- ▶ 51 Certified Staff
- ▶ 10 Sports Teams
- ▶ 12 Clubs with over 140 students involved
- ▶ Countless Points of Pride
- ▶ Renovate Like New is making progress

Ms. Roberts stated that the middle School doesn't just pinpoint core academics. There are students forming their own morning news show MSPN, students are building hydrologic systems and solving algebraic equations. They are: participating in book clubs, conducting scientific investigations, singing, cooking, presenting and creating original works of art. Students are immersed in developing themselves into the students we want them to be. Ms. Roberts stated that they are very proud of their students.

Ms. Roberts then showed a few slides regarding student highlights and things to celebrate.

The MSP team has worked hard to help students find healthy ways to have fun and enjoy being here. The PTC helps make it all happen: BINGO, Grit 'N Wit, Paint Nights, Dances and fun with friends. The Middle School is very thankful for its PTC and all that they do.

Shining a Light:

The Middle School celebrates its amazing staff:

- ▶ The Middle School staff members have multiple methods to recognize each other. This has resulted in hundreds of kind comments between staff members this school year.
- ▶ School-wide data is shared each month with staff to ensure that we are tracking and celebrating our progress, and adjusting where needed.
- ▶ The MSP staff members created a shared vision of what they "BELIEVE" students should experience during their time at MSP.

The Middle School celebrates its amazing students:

- ▶ MSP students likewise have ways to show appreciation to their peers using a new form created and facilitated by our Student Climate Committee. This has also resulted in hundreds of kind comments.
- ▶ The MSP chapter of NJHS is coming on board. A committee of teachers is finalizing the process to be up and running later this year.
- ▶ The MSP VEX team continues to be competitive and thrive on the biggest stages.

MSP is a Safe and Orderly School:  
High Reliability Schools—Marzano

- ▶ School safety has always been a priority at MSP, the Marzano program has provided ways to quantify the impact of many programs and system refinements.
- ▶ Survey data from the Marzano process is demonstrating that MSP is becoming safer through the various strategies being implemented.
- ▶ The behavioral data, supports this as well with ISS and OSS days trending down for the 2023-24 school year.
- ▶ Feedback administrative rounds at MSP highlighted a calmer and safer transition period due in part to a collective commitment and updated routines.

MSP Discipline Summary Comparison:

Ms. Roberts stated that in 2021-22, MSP came out of the pandemic and scores were fairly low, and they were not fully staffed with administrators. In 2022-23 the year was tough. However, in 2023-24 there was a trajectory to bring the numbers down, which it did, in hopes that it will continue. Ms. Roberts stated that the less discipline problems, the higher the academics will go because there's more time spent on task. This is what teachers and administrators are looking for. The numbers are high but when looking at all the data for 23-24, there are only 25 students getting the most extreme consequences which is positive as teachers are handling other incidences in their own classrooms.

Systems of Support for Students:

Ms. Roberts stated that administrators are working with teachers in collaboration to make positive changes on how to bring discipline numbers down.

- ▶ Increased use of feedback mechanisms and data analysis
- ▶ Improved MTSS process and programming
- ▶ Continued growth and mental health partnerships
- ▶ Updated and improved response to prevent chronic absenteeism

Habits of Scholarship and WINN:

--Habits of Scholarship Align to Portrait of the Graduate

- ▶ Students are now evaluated on their ability to be collaborative and innovative while program solving.
- ▶ There is a direct alignment of report cards to Portrait of the Graduate and the district Strategic Plan.

--Students Get Individual Attention and Support in WINN

- ▶ WINN stands for "What I Need Now"
- ▶ Students were thoughtfully scheduled based on data
- ▶ Students get individual and small group intervention to support work being done in classes
- ▶ Students work on advanced materials and preparation for PHS
- ▶ The MSP works with PHS to ensure students leave MSP ready for the next level

Community Feedback and Information:

The MSP leadership team seeks family and community feedback through its website and newsletter. Coffee and Conversation meets monthly for families/stakeholders, with the MSP administrative team.

#### MSP Building a Collaborative Community:

The No Place for Hate Committee is a student-led school climate improvement program that fits the needs of individual school cultures. Student leadership unites the school community and engages students and staff in active learning through assemblies and various programs.

#### MSP Community Contributions:

MSP students collected over \$2,057 for PJ Day benefiting CCMC. The Serve and Protect HQ Club organized by MSP Health teachers, organized a community donation drive of gently used winter scarves, gloves, hats, mittens and coats for local individuals who are homeless or seeking warmth. In collaboration with K.I.M (Kids in the Middle), items were tied to trees, park benches, and bus stops throughout town with an attached memo, inviting individuals to utilize the items from the Middle School.

#### Monthly Town Hall Events:

Monthly school-wide meetings are held to grow the knowledge and skills students need to be successful. The event is focused on respecting each other, celebrating diversity, signing the No Place for Hate pledge, and recognizing emotions. Students and staff feedback regarding these events have been very positive.

#### Bringing the Community in to Support MSP Students:

##### Watch D.O.G.S. at MSP:

- ▶ Watch D.O.G.S. is new to MSP but has been running in many areas of the country since its founding in 1998.
- ▶ Watch D.O.G.S. aims to engage and include male role models from the community within our school. These are primarily dads of students who mentor and help support students.
- ▶ The first set of volunteers started in December.

#### High Dosage Tutoring Grant:

- ▶ Math support specialist contracted to support students in the area of math.
- ▶ Students were selected to participate based on classroom data.
- ▶ Serves as a compliment to the SRBI program and core instruction.

#### Academic Achievements:

##### State Report Card Update: Mathematics:

- ▶ In 2021-22 the MSP re-evaluated its Math resources
- ▶ In 2022-23 the MSP fully implemented DESMOS as their new Math program
- ▶ In 2023-24 the MSP set a goal that 50% of students were to be proficient in the area of Math in accordance with Smarter Balanced Assessments

#### State Report Card:

- ▶ MSP Students are making significant progress
- ▶ In 23-24 MSP saw significant growth with High Needs students due to the appropriate resources obtained through DESMOS

#### Math Program Updates:

- ▶ DESMOS is being implemented across all grade levels

- ▶ MSP students have improved access to extra support due to the updated WINN structure and intentional rostering.
- ▶ IXL is being utilized as an additional resource for students and families.
- ▶ The MSP math department has been working with the PHS math team to find ways to improve the transition from middle school to high school.
  - Improving skill development
  - Identification of content knowledge priorities for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students
- ▶ New math support has recently started to assist students with grade level content within their math classes.
  - Funded through the High Dosage Tutoring grant offered through the State of Connecticut
  - This is newly implemented. Early feedback from teachers and students has been incredibly positive.

Math MTSS Program Updates:

- ▶ MSP Tutors have been able to assist 101 students in the MTSS program
- ▶ The focus is on assisting students early in their middle school years to foster success throughout their time at the MSP.
- ▶ Each grade level now has a specific focus
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade—Number Sense
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade—Algebra
  - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade—Geometry
- ▶ Students that have completed a MTSS Cycle are continuing to make growth in their grade level classrooms even after the cycle has ended

State Report Card Update: English and Language Arts:

- ▶ Performance indexes in both English and Language Arts are above the State average. MSP students are making significant progress.

Both Literacy Program and Literacy MTSS Program Updates were discussed.

Next Steps for MSP:

- ▶ To implement Teachers College writing curriculum in grades 6-8. Teachers are currently piloting units of study.
- ▶ Continue to improve MTSS
- ▶ Continued exploration of methods for students to leave with multiple high school credits
- ▶ Continue working to increase student attendance utilizing best practices
- ▶ Continue exploring alternative schedules and faculty assignments to maximize instructional time and learning growth
- ▶ Continue to collect, use and share data to make decisions that positively impact student learning

Celebrating Faculty at MSP:

- ▶ The MSP staff asked to be more involved in the big picture planning of the school.
- ▶ Teachers now spend time each month working within a committee they are passion about such as Data Teams, National Junior Honor Society, School Improvement, SEL/PBIS/Safety, Go Green, No Place for Hate, School-wide Reading Initiatives and Student Climate.

Discussion ensued.

## VIII. BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

**A. Finance and Finance Subcommittee Report—No Report**

**B. Policy Subcommittee Report**

Mrs. St. Lawrence reported that the Policy Subcommittee met on February 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the following policies and regulations:

Policy 4030-Personnel: Disability Accommodations--Modified

Policy 1130-Community Relations: Non-Discrimination (Community)--Modified

Policy 5145.8-Students: Non-Discrimination (Students)—Modified

Policy 4010-Personnel: Non-Discrimination (Personnel)—Modified

Policy 5112-Students: New Kindergarten Age Requirements—Modified

Policy 6146-Instruction: Graduation Requirements—Discussion only

The Subcommittee voted to bring these policies to the Board at their March and April meetings for review and approval.

**C. Curriculum Subcommittee Report—No Report**

**D. Outreach Subcommittee Report—No Report**

**E. PAC Liaison--Plainville High School Report—No Report**

The last meeting of the PHS PAC took place on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

--The PAC treasury holds \$2,894.95

--A Bottle and Can Drive fundraiser will take place on April 20 from 10 AM to 2 PM at the High School.

--Discussion: Instead of purchasing gifts for the Adopt-A-Senior program, the funds will be used to offset costs of the Senior's Annual Class Picnic Day.

--It was decided that the pins given out on Super Senior Day will not have a date inscribed, as this will lower the purchase cost. Also, so the PAC doesn't end up with a whole inventory of pins with a specific year inscribed.

--The two remaining PAC meetings will be held on March 13 and May 8 in the PHS Learning Commons at 7 PM.

**F. PTO Liaison--Toffolon Elementary School Report—No Report**

**G. PTO Liaison--Linden Street Elementary School Report**

Mrs. Clark stated that the next Linden fundraiser will take place at Puerto Vallarta Restaurant in Southington on Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup> beginning at 4 PM. 20% of the profits of the fundraiser will go to the school.

**H. PTC Liaison--Middle School of Plainville Report**

The MSP PTC last met on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. St. Lawrence reported on the following:

▶ There was an MSP Bingo night at the end of January.

▶ The PTC is getting ready for Valentine's Day. It's a little tricky with food regulations but they sold cute little Valentine ducks.

▶ The PTC is getting ready for their PHS common scholarship that they award every year.

▶ There will be a lot of Spring fundraisers coming up.

▶ There was a discussion on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion ceremony which is set for Spring.

▶ The next meeting of the PTC will take place on Tuesday, March 12 at 7 PM in the MPS Library

**I. PTO Liaison--Wheeler Elementary School Report**

Mrs. Buchanan reported that the following:

- ▶ Wheeler’s Valentine Bingo will take place tomorrow evening.
- ▶ The PTO is awaiting delivery of Stencilgrams for the Valentine Day sale.
- ▶ Mrs. Buchanan stated that she has been getting quite a few questions over the last month, regarding the DARE program. She asked Mr. Reas if he could give an update as to what is happening.

Mr. Reas stated that the High School has gone without an SRO for the first half of the year. (This SRO would also be the person who would provide the DARE services). Mr. Reas stated that the schools are already behind in services. That is one of the realities, as that person wasn’t available. He stated that he will discuss the situation with Chief Venghele, in terms of what the plan is going into the future. Apparently, the Police Department felt that given the fact that the schools were already restricted, they were not able to pull the substitute SRO out of the High School for the DARE Programs. As of right now, they have placed the DARE Program on hold, however, Mr. Reas will speak with the Chief.

- ▶ Mrs. Buchanan reported that the next Wheeler PTO meeting will be held on February 22 at 6 PM in the Wheeler Library.

**J. CREC Council Report—No Report**

**K. Chairperson’s Report**

Mrs. Tyrrell stated that the school district has a Wellness Committee that is orchestrated through the Food Service Department, which is where it gets initiated from in most cases. She stated that there are quite a few people on the committee including a Physical Education teacher, administrators, nurses, and people who talk about student wellness in the relationship of food, exercise and mental health. She stated that at the end of the last meeting, she thought this is what a Wellness Committee should be. However, most districts don’t have committees like this. It made Mrs. Tyrrell proud. She stated that this group of people working together to try to come up with solutions to some of the tricky food service questions, i.e., times where they can or cannot do certain things because of the food service regulations or what’s offered at the Recreation Department now vs. what the schools offer. She commented that there was a real comprehensive conversation about kids and at the end, the discussion turned to social/emotional learning and mental health issues. She gave kudos to the staff of that committee who are very committed and doing a nice job.

Mrs. Tyrrell went on to say that the Board will be voting on the proposed budget under New Business. The Board will be moving forward with the Budget. She stated that she appreciated everyone’s efforts. The Board had a lot of good questions for the administrators who have been building the budget since school started. She stated that it is a very difficult year. She has been watching the “asks” of communities around Plainville and everyone is coming in with a really high budget. She stated that the district has a good process and appreciates everyone’s diligence, as it is a lot of work. She thanked everyone.

Mrs. Tyrrell reminded fellow Board Members that their second Retreat will take place on Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup> in the PHS Learning Commons at 6 PM.

She also thanked the Town staff and Board staff for getting good information out to the public regarding the Middle School Renovation Project.

## **IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS--None**

## **X. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A) Board Open Forum**

*Foster White*—“Because the quiet period will commence when the Council sets the referendum date, does not mean that Board members should not be talking to our neighbors and friends encouraging them to vote on March 19 and to support this project. Being an incumbent, it is up to the Board to support the project. The Communications Committee did an outstanding job in creating the website and the information going out to the Town. But, nothing works better than an individual/concerned citizen talking to a friend and neighbor and making them aware of the issues and encouraging them to vote between 6:00 AM and 8:00 PM at the Fire House.

*Cassandra Clark* stated that she would like clarification on what Mr. White stated as to what the Board members can and cannot do. Is asking people to vote okay? But asking them to vote for the MSP Project is not okay? As someone who has never been through a renovation project, she is asking for clarification.

*Christopher Wazorko*-- “The Steering committee spent a significant amount of time talking about this. Not only can the Board tell people to vote for the MSP Project, they can actually advocate for the project. What they cannot do, is use town resources to do so, i.e., to hand out a newsletter, (they cannot use a town copier to make copies, they also cannot ask town staff to make copies to provide information). As a citizen, they can be at functions such as the Town-wide Band Concert on March 7. If they wanted to provide information and set-up a table, they can do so. They just cannot use town resources to provide newsletters or information using town equipment or staff. There is some latitude as a private citizen, they just can’t use town resources to provide information.”

*Rebecca Martinez* --“It’s a little bit easier as a Board Member, because we are not a Board outside of the meetings. So, we couldn’t as a Board, after the silent period, come out and say the Plainville Board of Education is urging you to vote yes. But, as Rebecca Martinez, Logan’s mom, I’m going to be talking to people and asking them to come out and vote for this as a parent and a taxpayer. We have that right individually, just not collectively as a Board.”

*Cassandra Clark*-- “What about as Cassandra Clark, a Republican or a part of the Republican caucus? If we are together someplace and wanted to give the information out, does it still go under the private person prevue?”

*Christopher Wazorko*—“Yes, you would have to be careful because you are not in the capacity of a Board of Education member. Whatever group(s) you belong to outside of the Board of Education, does not conflict with you as a Board of Education member in the quiet period.”

*Roberta Lauria*—“I want to make sure I understand this, Mr. Wazorko said I can go to my neighbor or from neighbor to neighbor but I cannot go to them saying I’m on the Board of Education and this is what we are encouraging?”

**Christopher Wazorko**—“Yes”

**Roberta Lauria**--So, we cannot use resources and we can also cannot use our titles.

**Jered Bruzas**—“In our formal capacity, we cannot lobby or advocate, but as others have stated, in our personal private citizen capacity we can say whatever we would like to say. It is just when we are acting on behalf of the Board of Education in a public forum such as this or on our own stating, I’m so and so, from the Board of Education, that would be allowed, but in our private capacity we should be stating that we are not advocating on behalf of the Board, but in my personal opinion this is what I think.”

**Christopher Wazorko**—“But certainly, if someone asks you a direct question, “Does the Board support the project?”, you could say yes as there was a formal vote. You can answer questions factually, that’s okay. However, you can’t write a letter to the Editor saying Roberta Lauria, Board of Education member, and send it in after the vote to set the date of referendum. That would violate the quiet period. But you can send a letter as Roberta Lauria (private citizen), that is allowed. I hope that helped!”

**Cassandra Clark** asked Mr. Reas if he would like to add anything?

**Brian Reas**—“It is different for me as a Superintendent because that is my relationship to the town. It is different for anyone on staff. Everything I do, to run the copier, or anything like that, is spending town resources. The only place the Board members, as I see it, can get into any difficulties with spending resources, is if they use their Board of Education email account. Then you would technically be using Board of Education resources to do it. If you choose to use email to express your individual citizen thoughts, I would encourage you not to use your Board email, but your private email.”

**Rachel Buchanan**—“Mr. Reas answered my question regarding his use of the SchoolMessenger system. That would be what comes to mind if we were using a town resource.”

**Becky Tyrrell**—“We could use that system to just say MSP Renovation vote tomorrow, when and where. We can’t say vote yes, we can’t say it’s really important. We cannot advocate but can use the system to put out information.”

**Brian Reas**—“We’re here to answer questions, if community members have questions, Mr. Adlerstein and myself can answer questions all day long. It’s not advocating, it is just informing. We would be happy to answer any questions. Once we are in the quiet period, certainly, we are happy to answer any questions.”

**Rachel Buchanan**—“In the spirit of what we’re talking about, Ms. Martinez brought up something important that in our individual roles as humans, we can say what it is we want to say. Keep in mind if you are seeing something from an individual’s potential social media page, that might imply that information is untrue, to source and seek the truth. I have been a bit discouraged throughout this process with some of the behaviors with some of the folks at this table, calling other people liars. I think that we need to be very careful in the words that we choose. It’s a very direct accusation about someone’s content of character. So, if you are unsure about any information to be true or not, please reach out to Mr. Reas, our Superintendent, to ensure you are getting accurate information.”

**Rebecca Martinez**—"Madam Chair, would you suggest that between the PTO meetings, we make sure that we're stating to reach out to the Superintendent for any questions? Especially with Board of Education emails and PTO meetings?"

**Becky Tyrrell**—"If you are at PTO meetings or if someone calls you in your official capacity and asks questions, you should ask them to call the Superintendent's Office, that's the best way to do it."

**Brian Reas**—"We have been working with the Consultant as well to de-advocacy the website. We're hoping a lot of those resources are there as well. If you Google *MSP Project* you get the website that was built just for this project. We've tried to clean it up so there's just information. There's no enthusiasm in there. It also has an FAQ that we've been working on."

**Jered Bruzas**—"I would advocate that it might be helpful and charitable for the staff to encourage folks to go to the website. If they have further questions after they've utilized the website then upline the FAQ's to the Superintendent's Office instead of being inundated with numerous phone calls which could otherwise be answered by the website, newsletter and other materials that have been published."

"I wanted to laud/praise and thank Joan for her support, especially with the calendar. With all of the meetings we've been having lately and juggling through emails, it is quite nice to have that one calendar where I can quickly look at our Google calendar and see all of them, even on the Town side, so it's all connected. It will encourage greater participation and will ensure that we are well informed with what's happening as well as all of the other activities that are scheduled. Thank you for helping with giving us access to all of that information."

**Cassandra Clark**—"I was able to participate in the Virtual meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>. I was very impressed and enjoyed it a lot. The presentation and seeing everyone in different spots really showing what was going on live, was great. You can sit through a lot of slideshows and presentations, but when I saw things presented from the past administration and heard about what needed to be done, it was different to see in the classroom, or Mr. Reas leading the discussion and being able to go to his team. I really love the teamwork of the administrators. It would be nice to see that teamwork in different schools. It was fun to see the Middle School showing their skills."

**Roberta Lauria**—"This is in regard to the last Board of Education meeting we had regarding the budget. I found myself a bit discouraged by some comments that were made when I requested additional detail regarding this budget. We are in very trying times, a lot of things going on. I believe as elected officials this information is expected that we get for the people of this community. That is what they expect of us. I simply asked for more detail and yet within the course of five minutes folks started using the word attrition and concern. I want to make it perfectly clear this evening, to the viewers, that at no point did I say the word, did I think the word, did I spell out the word. I was simply looking for detail, what you the voters expect me to ask for. You expect it from every single individual in this group. I did not believe we had it and for us to make the proper decision for you, it was necessary. So, I don't understand why that ended up going in that direction, it's wrong. Sadly, as I was sitting there I couldn't help but think that growing up here, Plainville had another name and it was known as Rumorville. Sadly, that was kind of the direction things were going in that evening. I sincerely hope that does not continue, because it

shouldn't, we are in trying times and there were a lot of things that had to go on regarding this budget. Trust me when I say that the voters and taxpayers were considered very seriously as it was being looked at."

**B) Quarterly Special Education Cost Report (October, January, March and June)—No Report**

**C) Turf Committee Report (September and May)—No Report**

**D) Discussion and Possible Action of FY2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget**  
**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED FY2024-25 OPERATING BUDGET PLAN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,479,436 OR 5.59%, AN INCREASE OF \$977,715 OF COSTS FORMERLY FUNDED THROUGH PANDEMIC RELIEF (ESSER) AND \$336,271 FOR AN INCREASE IN HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH 7 YES VOTES AND 1 NO VOTE. MRS. BUCHANAN VOTED NO.**

**Comments:**

**Rachel Buchanan**—"Two years ago when I was elected to this table, the tenure at the table on average might have been at least ten years. It disheartens me, Roberta, that you had that experience coming on after two years of me sitting here and that you felt asking questions was not viewed in a positive way, because I had that same experience for the last two years. The challenge that I took on before coming into this year was to insure that the right people were sitting at the table next to me, because if I'm asking a lot of questions knowing what I'm trying to uncover and answer. Someone with your skillset asks the right questions. I really want to thank everyone here for taking the time. Sam, thanks for the amount of work that you and your team and Mr. Reas do to put all of this together and the effort that goes into it also. Over the last three years, I have seen the amount of time that goes into this. This year was the least number of meetings that we have had for this budget. In the two years I have been here, the decisions I have had to come to, has not been easy. I agonized about it and it has changed from day to day. It has required a lot of time. I was discouraged over the last meeting that there was no need for additional meetings. It was, "We have the votes, moving on", and anyone who asks questions, it still seems to be a trend if you happen to vote on the other side of the aisle, that you can be made to feel badly if you ask questions and I completely agree that it is our job when spending millions of dollars. Everyone at this table knows the right questions to ask and I know that next year it's going to be better because of the team at the table. Also, because our new Superintendent who is leading the helm and who has been handed a very difficult situation in the most difficult of times. Regardless of the outcome of this vote, this was not easy, no one came to any decision lightly. Mr. Reas, we know that process will only get better moving forward with you and your staff."

**Cassandra Clark**—"I want to second the appreciation for Mr. Reas. The budget process that we've gone through has been much more comfortable and matter of fact. It kind of flowed better. I really appreciate your leadership. I really appreciate the way you're able to answer a question and to guide us as peers to the table. To be respectful to each other. It hasn't been a simple task at all taking on the MSP Project, a budget and being new to the community all within a couple of months. Those were very big shoes to fill and I want to say that you are doing a very good job.

I am also appreciative as to how the ESSER funds were utilized and the categories that were used. When it came to us there were many questions at first and there were lots of

positions and things that we all knew could not stay the same. Because we couldn't possibly fund every single need at the rate that the children needed it, when we were in the midst of COVID. But as things have settled, as the students have improved, thus the numbers have improved. For those positions that weren't filled, but those positions and the teachers that stood up, took a step forward to work as a team and worked together and those couple of positions that weren't filled knowing that you're not going to put them into the budget again this coming year and the personnel changes and the way the budget's done. Sam, you have helped tremendously. The whole administrative team has worked well together. I think the budget process would have been much harder, had those items not been able to be looked at soon. I am very appreciative!

Finally, I am very understanding to the amount of money that the budget is. I can't fathom coming home to my budget, my household, and thinking I'm in charge and helping to make these huge decisions. But, they are not made unilaterally by anyone. Everyone here, by looking at the needs of the students, the needs of the school. It's amazing! I appreciate all the efforts much more. Thank you, Roberta, for looking at the fine details. It's very important and I appreciate your help."

**Roberta Lauria**—"I'd like to say to the viewers, taxpayers, parents and Senior citizens, in addition to the four budget meetings we had, I asked for additional information which Sam and Joan were very generous in supplying. I spent a considerable amount of time looking over each and every line detail. Sam can vouch for this as we sat down together and went over things. I will be the first to say the numbers are horrible. However, they are real. I am in support of this budget because the numbers are real. Rest assured, to the voters that gave me the honor to sit here and represent them. I will not change in terms of asking the questions and asking for the detail in the paperwork to follow this through for the whole year. So, while it's not something that we want, we knew it was coming. I want to thank you, and Sam, and Joan, and Mr. Reas for allowing me to delve into this the way I needed to delve into it to feel comfortable for the people I represent." Thank you!

**Becky Tyrrell**—"As far as questions, I'm surprised that people felt they were not allowed to ask questions or felt they were treated badly because they were asking questions. Because that was not the case. As far as having more meetings, had we had more questions that we put into the process that we had, was that of an open line to add our questions into, and the administrators were answering those questions. So, had we seen a lot of questions come in, then we would have had another meeting or something like that. Obviously, Roberta did what she needed to do to get her information. I don't know how people feel they were slighted by asking questions, because I don't feel the process went that way. Maybe that's just me, but I apologize if I did anything that indicated that to anyone but that was not my intention. Questions are always good."

**E) Discussion and Possible Action on Board of Education Subcommittee List  
A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE  
AFOREMENTIONED PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE LIST, AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED  
THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

**XI. CONSENT AGENDA—Board Approval**

- (A) Budget Object Summary
- (B) Food Service Report
- (C) Check Registers
- (D) HR Report (Informational Item)

(E) Private Donation for the month of January (Informational Item)

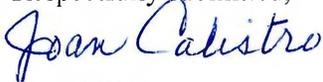
-There were no private donations for the month of January

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY REBECCA MARTINEZ TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. FOSTER WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes

**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT  
SUMMARY OF MOTIONS  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2024**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- 2605. A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF JANUARY 8, 2024 AS PRESENTED. A MOTION WAS SECONDED BY CASSANDRA CLARK. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**
- 2606. A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**
- 2607. A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 23, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**
- 2608. A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 25, 2024 (BUDGET) AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

- 2609. Discussion and Possible Action of FY2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget**  
**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED FY2024-25 OPERATING BUDGET PLAN IN THE AMOUNT OF \$45,479,436 OR 5.59%, AN INCREASE OF \$977,715 OF COSTS FORMERLY FUNDED THROUGH PANDEMIC RELIEF (ESSER) AND \$336,271 FOR AN INCREASE IN HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED WITH 7 YES VOTES AND 1 NO VOTE. MRS. BUCHANAN VOTED NO.**
- 2610. Discussion and Possible Action on Board of Education Subcommittee List**  
**A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE AFOREMENTIONED PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE LIST, AS PRESENTED. CASSANDRA CLARK SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

**XI. CONSENT AGENDA—Board Approval**

- (A) Budget Object Summary
- (B) Food Service Report
- (C) Check Registers
- (D) HR Report (Informational Item)
- (E) Private Donation for the month of January (Informational Item)
  - There were no private donations for the month of January

**2611. A MOTION WAS MADE BY FOSTER WHITE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. REBECCA MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**2612. A MOTION WAS MADE BY REBECCA MARTINEZ TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. FOSTER WHITE SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.**