

Coventry Board of Education
Coventry, Connecticut

Regular Board of Education Meeting Agenda
Approved Minutes of Thursday, March 25, 2021
Remote/Electronic

Board Members Present:

Jennifer Beausoleil, Chairman
William Oros, Vice Chairman
Eugene Marchand, Secretary
Mary Kortmann
Christina Williams
Robert Williams

Also Present: Emma Murphy, Student Board of Education Representative

Administrators Present:

Dr. David J. Petrone, Superintendent of Schools
Robert Carroll, Director of Finance and Operations

Audience Members Present: William Trudelle, Director of Physical Plant and Facilities; Cathie Drury, Director of Educational Technology; Ronda Carrie, CGS Principal; Michele Mullaly, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jennifer DeRagon, GHR Principal; Joseph Blake, CHS Principal; Dena DeJulius, CNH Principal; Beth Giller, PSSS Director; Board Candidates John French, Frank Infante, and Mike Sobol; and Students and Parents.

I. Call to Order

J. Beausoleil called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. Salute to the Flag

J. Beausoleil led the salute to the flag.

MOTION: Allow the Chairman to shift the agenda as necessary to accommodate those who need to sign in to the meeting.

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: 6-0

III. Audience of Citizens

J. Beausoleil read the audience of citizens' submissions from the following citizens: Howard Haberern, Matt O'Brien Jr., Nicole Bingaman, Robert Chipkin, Robyn Gallagher, Matt O'Brien Sr., Julie Blanchard, Angela Rejman, Richard Williams, Emma Eaton, Kathleen Breitenwischer (those submissions are attached to these minutes).

IV. Information: Board of Education Recognition

Dr. Petrone announced that March is Board Appreciation Month. Each Board Member was presented with an original piece of art created by a student. The theme of the commission was "What Does Coventry Public Schools Mean to Me."

The following students submitted artwork that was presented to the Board members:

Eleventh grader Alyssa Traska - Jennifer Beausoleil

Second grader Morgan Luginbuhl - Bill Oros

Twelfth grader Brianna Calve - Gene Marchand

Tenth grader Eliana Linarez - Christina Williams

First grader Melissa Pascino - Mary Kortmann

Fifth grader Andrew Reynolds - Robert Williams

There were thank yous from the Board of Educations.

V. Old Business: Information and VOTE - Fill the Unexpired Term of Barbara Pare

J. Beausoleil reviewed the procedures for filling the vacant seat.

A. Statements by Candidates

Mr. John French began by giving a statement. He thanked the Republican Town Committee for their support. He talked about his experience working in the public while he was in Windham and how he would like to move forward in Coventry.

M. Kortmann asked about Mr. French's vision for education. Mr. French said, getting past COVID-19 and focus on the students and make sure the teachers have what they need.

C. Williams asked about one of Mr. French's most difficult decisions. Mr. French talked about the new middle school for which he developed the plan and how he fought for it in Windham.

E. Marchand talked about Coventry's low ranking in the DRG in funding. He asked how the candidates would address community opposition to the budgets and would they support the budgets presented. Mr. French explained that he would support a budget if it is presented appropriately and makes sense.

R. Williams asked Mr. French what the most challenging aspect will be for students next year, post COVID-19. Mr. French said we need to focus on a harder but achievable system so the students, specifically in third and fourth grade, can advance. He said we have to be aware of where we need to focus.

W. Oros thanked Mr. French for stepping up and wanting to be involved.

J. Beausoleil asked Mr. French about his service on union negotiation committees. Mr. French noted, when he was a Board member there was a team that was hired for that.

E. Marchand said with regard to educational matters, what is the difference between the elected Board members and the Town Council. Mr. French said he would be a Board Member first and would support the Board's positions.

J. Beausoleil asked Mr. French about the three SDE educational learning models that are in place due to COVID-19. Mr. French said he was not familiar with the three different models, specifically.

C. Williams asked Mr. French for his top three priorities in a Board of Education. Mr. French talked about catching students up due to COVID-19 and doing what is best in the community as far as education goes.

J. Beausoleil introduced Mr. Frank Infante.

Mr. Frank Infante said he is happy to help if he can.

M. Kortmann asked for Mr. Infante's vision. Mr. Infante said you are on a great track and he does not think much needs to change.

C. Williams asked about the top three priorities for Mr. Infante. Mr. Infante said the budget, the schools' facilities themselves, and quality teachers. He said we have good teachers and we need to keep them.

E. Marchand talked about Coventry's low ranking in budget spending and how will Mr. Infante will address people in his party who keep saying the budget has to be cut. Mr. Infante said the taxpayer is the most important. He said the new people moving in are more influential and have more dollars to spend. He said his party is always concerned with how much money is being spent and if money can be saved it should be.

R. Williams asked what will be the most challenging aspect for children in the coming year. Mr. Infante, said it will be the interaction of the students with each other after not interacting for a year. He said keeping them focused could be a challenge.

W. Oros thanked Mr. Infante for stepping up and volunteering to serve.

J. Beausoleil asked Mr. Infante how many union negotiation teams have you been on during your time on the Board. Mr. Infante said two.

C. Williams asked what Mr. Infante's greatest achievement and challenge was while serving. Mr. Infante said he enjoyed being with the people on the Board.

E. Marchand said with regard to educational matters, what is the difference between the elected Board members and the Town Council. Mr. Infante said the schools are the responsibility of the Board and the Town Council has to keep it all in the same budget. He said the Town Council has to answer to the taxpayer; having two branches is good, it keeps everything in check.

J. Beausoleil asked Mr. Infante about the three SDE educational learning models that are in place due to COVID-19 and which is the most expensive. Mr. Infante said he did not know.

J. Beausoleil introduced Mr. Sobol.

Mr. Mike Sobol talked about his previous experience serving on the Board of Education. He said he will have value because he can step right in. He talked about his cognitive abilities and beliefs. He added that he is a father of two current Coventry students and noted he is a graduate of Coventry schools. He said he has been recognized professionally for his work. He added that Coventry is fortunate to have a Board of Education that has supported the

students during the pandemic and it is amazing that Coventry students have been full in person since September.

M. Kortmann asked for Mr. Sobol's vision for education in the community. Mr. Sobol said to keep pressing forward. He said we have come a long way and he supports the current administration and they need our support to keep moving forward.

C. Williams asked for Mr. Sobol's top three priorities. Mr. Sobol said setting students up to be productive members of society; school safety and security; and communication - listening to teachers and the administration.

E. Marchand asked what Mr. Sobol would do differently this time, if he came back. Mr. Sobol said he thinks how he worked previously worked well for the four years he served. He said he would listen to the new members of the board and would focus on building a relationship with them.

R. Williams asked what Mr. Sobol believes the most challenging aspect will be for students next year. Mr. Sobol said the transition back to a society. He added, addressing any knowledge gap that might be recognized.

W. Oros thanked Mr. Sobol for his interest in serving again.

J. Beausoleil asked Mr. Sobol to explain the 1% account. Mr. Sobol explained what the 1% account is and how it is used; could be up to 1% of the budget and could be accessed for emergencies or CIP items. He said it is an invaluable asset for the Board.

C. Williams asked how Mr. Sobol differs from the other candidates and why he fell out of favor with the Republican Town Committee. Mr. Sobol said it boils down to the current state of the Republican Town Committee and he said he represents himself and other republicans in town.

E. Marchand said with regard to educational matters, what is the difference between the elected Board members and the Town Council. Mr. Sobol said he did serve on the Town Council as well. He said it is a delicate balancing act with funds available. He said the Town Council has not taken a popular stance in funding education in town. He said there is a responsibility here and it should be taken without bias.

R. Williams talked about the recent acts of violence in Atlanta, and asked, how does he expect Coventry to react. Mr. Sobol said he is fully invested in supporting all affiliations and supporting diversity and inclusion.

J. Beausoleil asked about the three SDE educational learning models that are in place due to COVID-19 and which has the biggest impact to social emotional health and academics of students. M. Sobol said the three models are - fully remote, hybrid model, and full in-person. He said those students in full remote mode would probably be the biggest group at risk and have more academic gaps. He added, fortunately, Coventry has been full in person since September.

C. Williams talked about advocating for the needs of the community and the students. Mr. Sobol said it is the Board's job to do this advocating and the Town Council is a layer removed.

There were no further questions.

B. Nominations and VOTE

J. Beausoleil asked for nominations.

MOTION: To nominate John French to fill the unexpired term of Barbara Paré
By: R. Williams

MOTION: To nominate Frank Infante to fill the unexpired term of Barbara Paré
By: C. Williams

MOTION: To nominate Mike Sobol to fill the unexpired term of Barbara Paré
By: W. Oros

W. Oros added a statement: He said he feels Mr. Sobol will be able to fill the position quite well; he is a parent of two children in our schools; he is a successful business man understanding the meaning of cost vs benefits; is a product of the school system; and he has shown his commitment to the town.

C. Williams added a statement for Mr. Infante saying this is a very difficult decision, as all candidates are qualified. She continued noting, regarding Mr. Infante - she thanked him for his previous experience and noted that he advocated for the children. She added that he collaborated with the Town Council and Republican Town Committee and he supported her as a parent, while he was on the Board.

R. Williams added a statement regarding Mr. French noting his appreciation for his experience. He also said Mr. French received more votes than others nominated during the last election.

J. Beausoleil asked if there were any further comments regarding the vote.

C. Williams said she is really struggling with this decision. She spoke on behalf of Mr. French who has assisted her as a new Board member. C. Williams talked about her respect for Mr. Sobol as a parent and thanked him for coming back to the table.

R. Williams thanked the candidates for showing their support of Coventry.

J. Beausoleil said we are fortunate that we have three members of the community who are willing to step forward for this job. She noted the unusual times we are in and she noted her concern that there were candidates who were not aware of what the schools have been facing this past year. She said she is appreciative of having three candidates and her vote will be for the person who will have the shortest learning curve.

J. Beausoleil called for a roll-call vote.

M. Kortmann voted for Mike Sobol; he will ramp up the fastest and he is a parent.

E. Marchand thanked all three candidates again. He voted for Mike Sobol.

R. Williams voted for John French.

W. Oros thanked all who came out. He voted for Mike Sobol.

J. Beausoleil thanked all three who came out. She voted for Mike Sobol.

C. Williams said she was still struggling, but has to look at the whole package. She voted for John French.

Result: 4-2 in favor of Mr. Sobol

J. Beausoleil said Mr. Sobol has four votes and will be the new member on the Board of Education.

She thanked the other two candidates.

C. Information: Committee and Liaison Vacancies

J. Beausoleil said she would review the vacant committee spots with Mr. Sobol and she would let the Board know of any new assignments.

VI. Report of Superintendent

Dr. Petrone reported on various items, events, and meetings taking place locally, regionally, and around the state.

R. Williams requested a statement be made on behalf of the Coventry school system to support the Asian community due to the recent events.

A. Information: Student Board of Education Representative Report

Miss Murphy said winter sports are dying down and spring is starting up. She mentioned the success of portfolio night. She said it is exciting to see where seniors are going to school after CHS.

B. Information: Superintendent Goal Achievement Report 2020-2021

J. Beausoleil acknowledged the amount of work that is done in association with the goals throughout the year.

Dr. Petrone shared his goal achievement presentation with the Board. [This report is available on the district's website.]

E. Marchand verified that there has been positive community support for the Open Choice program. Dr. Petrone said yes.

Dr. Petrone finished his presentation and thanked the administrative team and all staff for their hard work. He also thanked the Board for their support.

C. Williams asked about the Chinese enrichment and if it will move back to in person. Dr. Petrone said, next year.

R. Williams asked about a curriculum report and specific to technology. Dr. Petrone said a presentation will be forthcoming regarding the new three year technology plan.

C. Williams talked about the positive Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons and asked about the applicants for Open Choice. Dr. Petrone said we have declared seven seats for kindergarten, he said we are hoping for one to two students.

J. Beausoleil noted the outstanding job done this year, especially because we have been full in person since September 28. She said she is surprised that many districts are not planning for COVID-19 for next year. She said she is glad we are planning and having foresight.

C. Williams thanked Dr. Petrone for his work this year.

R. Williams gave kudos for having Coventry schools full in person all year.

M. Kortmann said she liked the thoughts for focus for next year.

VII. Report of Chairman

J. Beausoleil said she participated in the Portfolio Night and noted how awesome it was. She gave kudos to the high school staff and students.

J. Beausoleil said we are still in budget season and thanked everyone for their efforts.

J. Beausoleil thanked the staff for the school based vaccination clinic and those who are supporting EHHD at the community clinic.

J. Beausoleil said it is the goal to go back to full in-person Board meetings on April 29.

E. Marchand also spoke positively about Portfolio Night

IX. VOTE: Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of February 25, 2021

MOTION: To approve the minutes of February 25, 2021

By: C. Williams

Seconded: R. Williams

Result: Motion passes unanimously

B. Approve Minutes of March 11, 2021

MOTION: To approve the Minutes of March 11, 2021

By: R. Williams

Seconded: C. Williams

Result: Motion passes unanimously

X. Old Business

A. Information: COVID-19 Update

Dr. Petrone provided a brief update including the current percentage of remote learners: 28% remote at CHS; 14% at CNH; 8% at GHR; and 6% at CGS.

Dr. Petrone mentioned the vaccination clinic for the community being held at the complex.

C. Williams asked how the remote CHS students are doing compared to those in person. Dr. Petrone said the students who we were concerned with before the pandemic are the ones who are still struggling. He said he would gather more information and follow up with the Board.

C. Williams asked about testing. Dr. Petrone said the SATs will proceed. He added that the State standardized testing will take place, but will pause learning for something that may not be of value.

B. Information: FY2022 Budget

J. Beausoleil said this item is here as a placeholder, and there is nothing new for tonight.

XI. Report of Board Members

A. Information: Fiscal Committee Report Meeting of March 11, 2021

W. Oros reviewed the meeting of March 11 including that the Board got a first look at the Town Manager's Capital Improvement Plan proposal which was significantly reduced from the original proposal; the cyber insurance will no longer be carried by CIRMA; and that the Management Report showed a deficit of -\$30,000. He said the money needed for a recent network issue of about \$75,000 will effect that figure. He continued and talked about transportation and that the payment issue with M&J has been resolved. Last, W. Oros commented that Mr. Carroll and Dr. Petrone did a great job presenting at the Town Council meeting on March 15.

C. Williams asked for clarification on the deductible. Mr. Carroll said the Board's share of the \$100,000 deductible is \$75,000 and the Town's share is \$25,000.

The Board continued to discuss the ESSER funds and related projections and expenses.

XII. Possible VOTE: Executive Session (Bargaining Unit Negotiations and the Superintendent's Evaluation)

MOTION: Pursuant to CGS-1-200(c)(6)(A), the Board of Education will go into Executive Session for discussions related to Bargaining Unit Negotiations and the Superintendent's Evaluation with the Director of Finance and Operations and Superintendent present at 10:44 p.m.

By: C. Williams

Seconded: M. Kortmann

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XIII. Open Session

The Board left Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 10:52 p.m.

A. Possible VOTE: Approve the Agreement between the Coventry Board of Education and the Coventry Educational Secretaries Union July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2023.

MOTION: To Approve the Agreement between the Coventry Board of Education and the Coventry Educational Secretaries Union July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2023.

By: E. Marchand

Seconded: W. Oros

Result: Motion passes unanimously

XIV. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 10:53 p.m.

By: C. Williams

Seconded: R. Williams

Result: Motion passes unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberlee Arey Delorme
Board Clerk

Approved: April 8, 2021

From: [Howard Haberern](#)
Cc: [Howard Haberern](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please read at the next meeting for the AOC
Date: Thursday, March 18, 2021 1:24:05 PM

As a long time, Coventry resident and town observer I would like to encourage the Coventry Board of Education to carefully and thoughtfully weight the qualification of any interested citizen who wishes to fill the position on the Board that was vacated recently by one of its members. Over the last ten year the Board has successfully operated in a nonpartisan, inclusive manner, without personal bias or ideology. Its focus has always been on doing what is best for the children of Coventry. As a result, our school system has blossomed into one of the outstanding schools districts in the state.

As you consider the qualification of the candidates that have come forth I hope you will select the one candidate that:

- Provides a balance of representation for all segments of our school system. (Should there be more parent representation on the Board than there is now?)
- Shows a serious commitment in time and effort to the work that has to be done by the Board.
- Can make decisions on the basis of data and existing laws rather than personal ideological and political views.
- Can respect and support work done by our administrators and staff.
- Can work with others and “model” those behaviors that represent the “best” of our Coventry Community.

Finally, I want to thank you for all your efforts especially during this most changeling time. Keep up the good work.

Howard Haberern
80 Cassidy Hill Rd. Coventry

From: [Matt O'Brien](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BOE Vacancy: RTC Endorsements
Date: Saturday, March 20, 2021 9:07:05 PM

Dear Madam Chairwoman, Dr. Petrone, and Members of the Board of Education:

It is with great pride that I formally report to you the unanimous endorsement of Mr. Frank Infante & Mr. John French by the Coventry Republican Town Committee as choices to fill the recently vacated seat of Mrs. Barbara Pare. While we usually endorse a single candidate, the Committee felt that providing you with more than one candidate would allow you greater options as you carefully deliberate this important decision. Both candidates are heavily qualified to serve on the Board, and we believe that their unique skillsets will provide exemplary support to you, especially during this budget season.

Mr. French has held numerous elected positions: 8 years on the Windham Board of Education, 13 years on the Board of Finance, and 9 years as its Chairman. His financial experience is impressive. He also ran for the 29th District Senate seat in 2014 and 2016. Mr. French stated that, "As an elected official, I worked hard to bring together all parties to make Windham the best it could be." I have every confidence that he will do the same for his new home, Coventry.

Mr. Infante has served 2 full terms on the Coventry Board of Education from 2015 to 2019. He would have liked to have run in the last election but was unable to. He is now eager to get back to work for our citizens. Mr. Infante has been a Coventry resident for 45 years, and has truly invested his time, his heart, and his soul into our town. He believes in always putting students first when it comes to difficult decisions and pushes for collaboration with his colleagues.

The Committee has found both of these candidates to be fair, professional, community oriented, of sound judgement, committed and focused. As a lifelong Coventry resident, I am positive that the District will greatly benefit from their collaboration as you move forward to meet the difficult challenges in education, both during and after COVID-19.

We strongly urge you to support one of these two tremendous candidates to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Sincerely,



[Matthew D. O'Brien Jr](#)
[Chairman](#)
[Coventry Republican Town Committee](#)

From: [Nicole Druley Bingaman](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Mike Sobol
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 1:36:48 PM

Dear Members of the Coventry Board of Education:

I'm writing today to pledge my support for Mike Sobol to fill the vacant Republican seat on the Board.

Mike is an experienced businessman with a heart of serving our community. He would be an incredible asset to the Board of Education as he brings many years of town government experience to the table. In addition, he has children in the school system which gives me confidence knowing that he will have the best interest of the school system in mind when making important decisions as a Board member.

I hope that you will take this into consideration when deciding who is the best person to fill the vacant seat on the Board of Education.

Sincerely,
Nicole M. Bingaman

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Robert Chipkin](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BOE vacancy
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 4:11:41 PM

To the Members of the Coventry Board of Education:

Regarding the open position on the Board of Education that has occurred due the resignation of Mrs. Pare, I would like to endorse consideration of both Mr. Frank Infante and Mr. John French as excellent replacements for the vacant position. I have known both gentlemen for several years, and recognize that both have admirably served in a similar Board of Education position in the past. Their experience and sound judgment are qualities that are always needed to guide the BOE to make responsible decisions concerning the education of our children. Either candidate would be a sterling addition to the existing Board.

Sincerely,

Robert Chipkin

454 Cassidy Hill Road, Coventry

From: [Gallagher, Robyn E.](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Cc: [Robert Williams](#); [Christina Williams](#); [Mary Kortmann](#); [Gene Marchand](#); [William Oros](#); [Jennifer Beausoleil](#); [Kimberlee Delorme](#); [CPS](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Board of Education Seat - Mike Sobol
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2021 9:18:39 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Dr. Petrone and Respected Board of Education Members:

My name is Robyn Gallagher and I live at 984 Main St. I am writing to express my support for Mike Sobol to fill the open Republican Board of Education seat. Mr. Sobol is a proven public servant, having served on both the Board of Education and the Town Council in the past. As such, he brings a unique perspective having been on both sides of the table. This unique perspective is especially invaluable as the Town of Coventry continues to wrestle with the multitude of demands placed on it by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the very real additional challenges facing our schools.

Mr. Sobol also brings another unique perspective; he is a parent of two children attending Coventry schools. As a parent, Mr. Sobol has direct insight into the very real impacts that COVID-19, and the measures taken to prevent its spread, have had on students – including the way the many changes to the learning environment have impacted students. Mr. Sobol has a vested interest in ensuring the continued success of our schools and watching our students continue to thrive. In particular during these unprecedented times, it is imperative that our Board of Education include parents of current Coventry students.

Mr. Sobol is fiscally responsible. I have every faith that he will ensure school spending is appropriate to the situation – carefully balancing the needs of the schools with the needs of Coventry's citizens during a challenging fiscal time.

Last, but certainly not least, is Mr. Sobol's character. He is willing to fight to do the right thing, even when that fight is unpopular. He will bring that same grit to his defense of Coventry's schools. He is willing to listen to anyone, regardless of political affiliation. He genuinely cares about, and is invested in, the town of Coventry.

For the above reasons, please consider Mr. Sobol for the board of education seat.

Thank you,

Robyn

P.S. My apologies for the tardy submission. I have copied each of the Board members in the hope that my letter reaches you in time for your consideration. Thank you.

Robyn E. Gallagher

Wiggin and Dana LLP

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Hartford, Connecticut 06103

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Coventry Board of Education Members,

I want to thank Barbara Pare for her service on the Board of Education over since November 2019. She has demonstrated her strong commitment to working with the School administration and the other Board members to provide a quality education to all of our children. Barbara has been willing to do the hard work, ask the right questions and help impact the process and the outcomes of the Board and the schools in a very positive way. Barbara will be missed on the Board of Education.

The good news is the Coventry Republican Town Committee has unanimously endorsed two very strong candidates for the Board to choose from to replace Barbara: Frank Infante and John French. We wanted to give the Board a choice of two very strong candidates.

Frank Infante is well known to all of the Board members. Frank has lived in Coventry for 45 years and is a successful small business man having helped hundreds of families in Coventry and the surrounding area. Frank served for four years with this Board from 2015 to 2019. Frank did not run for a third term in 2019 because of some personal issues but he has since resolved those issues and is very happy to consider serving out the rest of Barbara's term. The Board is in the middle of the budget process, which Frank has gone through for four years and could step right in and be an asset to the Board, if chosen.

John French moved to Coventry with his wife in 2019. John has a long history of service to the town and Board of Education in Windham. John served on the Town Board of Finance for 13 years and served as chairman for 9 of those years. John then went on to serve for 8 years on the Board of Education including serving two years as their Finance Chairman. John is a very successful small business man and John knows and has worked with hundreds of Coventry families. John ran for office in the Coventry election in 2019 and was narrowly defeated. John received far more votes than any other republican or independent candidate who was not elected. John has the complete support of the Republican Town Committee and the last Republican caucus. He would be a tremendous asset to the Board. He is very knowledgeable and will work tirelessly to ensure our children receive an excellent education and that we make the best use of all of our available resources to do that.

I remind you that the Voters of Coventry supported the Republican majority on the Board in the last election and that all of the Republican Board members including Barbara received the endorsement and support of the Coventry Republican Town Committee leading to their election. The Board should replace Barbara with one of these 2 Republican endorsed candidates. Both would be effective and a great addition to the Board while honoring the will of Coventry voters.

Matthew O'Brien Sr.
Treasurer, Coventry Republican Town Committee
98 Timber Trail
Coventry, CT 06238

From: [Julie Blanchard](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BOE Candidates
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 9:39:51 AM

Dear Coventry Board of Education:

I write today to express my support of either John French or Frank Infante to fill the vacancy of Barbare Pare, Republican Board of Education member who recently resigned. The Republican Town Committee has met and recommend that the Board replace Barbara with one of these citizens.

John French has served in various capacities such as this and will bring his experience, knowledge, and level headed thinking to the table if chosen.

Frank Infante has served on this very Board from 2015 through 2019 and would bring his experience, knowledge, and thoughtfulness to the table if chosen.

I understand and appreciate your service to our Town. Either of these candidates also has first-hand experience as to what is required of their time and are willing to step up and fill this vacancy.

Julie A. Blanchard
763 Wrights Mill Road

Chairwoman Coventry Town Council

Vice Chairwoman Republican Town Committee

From: [Angela Rejman](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Board seat recommendation
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 11:48:17 AM

I would like to take a moment to recommend Mike Sobol to the Board of Education. Mike is a past member and quite familiar with all committees that will be the candidates responsibility. As a republican here in Coventry, I prefer knowing that an experienced, responsible, and familiar member to the education community would be a part of the board. I trust Mike would do an incredible job of making sure our Board of Education is fiscally responsible while keeping us successful for years to come.

Thank you,
Angela Rejman
122 Judd Rd, Coventry, CT 06238

March 23, 2021

To: Town of Coventry Board of Education

RE: Board of Education Vacancy

First, I would like to thank Barbara Pare for her service to the Town of Coventry. Barbara was a newly elected Board of Education member, her enthusiasm and passion for the community, Coventry students and their families was visible from day one. She will be very much missed.

Barbara's vacancy creates an opportunity to fill the seat and it is my hope that it will be filled with a Republican Town Committee endorsed candidate. The committee has endorsed John French and Frank Infante. Both of these candidates bring years of experience and service to their communities and in my opinion, will be a great asset to the Board of Education.

Speaking from experience, a few years back when my name was put up to fill Board of Education vacancy, I was not selected, although I was the RTC endorsed candidate and had served the town on both Board of Education and the Town Council. I was the Vice Chair of the Board of Education and the Chair of the Finance Committee. Even though we say the outcome is never predetermined, in our town it is. So this time, let's give both John French and Frank Infante the consideration they deserve and not turn this into a political football.

Respectfully,

Richard Williams

508 Wrights Mill Road, Coventry

From: [Emma Eaton](#)
To: [audienceBOE](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AOC 3/25/21
Date: Thursday, March 25, 2021 1:33:40 PM

Good evening Dr. Petrone and Board of Education members,

First, I'd like to congratulate the CPS staff on receiving their first vaccine doses recently at the clinic held for them here in town, and thank Dr. Petrone and EHHD for all of the hard work and coordination that went into making this possible. Our district's incredible and dedicated staff are at the core of our success and having them better protected from COVID-19 is of vital importance.

I'd also like to extend gratitude to Barbara Paré for the time she served on the Board of Education. Her contributions are appreciated and I wish her success in her next pursuit.

I'm writing today to ask the Board to support Mike Sobol to fill the seat vacated by Ms. Paré. Mr. Sobol brings a host of applicable experience to this position, including sitting on both the Board of Education and the Town Council.

Mr. Sobol grew up in Coventry and went through the same school system he now seeks once again to advocate for. He is a fiscally conservative choice for the position, and arrives having experienced both "sides" of the budgeting process firsthand in his previous roles on BOE and Council. This wider view of the process will prove valuable as considerations on this year's budget continue.

Mr. Sobol has also proven that he is willing to work in a wholly bipartisan way, prioritizing the good of Coventry's school system in his deliberations and decision making.

Lastly, and to me most crucially, Mr. Sobol has a vested interest in our school system as the father of two students currently enrolled. In a time when so many things are fluid and changing, and the way schools function both for staff and families is in near constant motion, having the voice of another current parent on the board is of the highest importance.

Mr. Sobol is a strong and well-qualified candidate for this seat and I hope that the board will support his bid to serve Coventry's schools for the remainder of this term.

With thanks as always,
Emma Eaton
41 Sean Circle

My name is Kathleen Breitenwischer, 61 Barbara Drive.

I am writing tonight in support of Mike Sobol to fill the vacancy on the Board of Education. All 3 candidates that have applied, have qualifications that would help them succeed in this position. However, Mike stands out in that he is the only one that has children currently in our school system. Mike has eyes and ears in our schools daily and has a vested interest besides just how our taxes are being affected. Mike has served on both our Town Council and Board of Education in the past and will certainly be able to hit the ground running during this challenging budget season.

While this position needs to be filled by a Republican, there is nothing anywhere that says it should be filled by an endorsed candidate of the Coventry Republican Town Committee. I would argue that our current RTC does not actually speak for the majority of Republicans in this town, but only a select few. When I checked this afternoon, there were a total of 39 members listed for the Coventry Republican Town Committee. 39 people is hardly a majority of registered Republicans in town.

I for one am a Republican in town that tries very hard to stay actively engaged in what is going on within our town, offering my suggestions and opinions, but has never been approached by anyone on the RTC. Playing political football as some may suggest would be to pick the candidate that the Republican led majority on our Town Council may want, but not who is best qualified.

As a current parent of two children in our schools, I have been at PTO meetings with Mike present as a liaison with the Town. He has always been there to listen to our concerns and offer any support he can. We currently only have one other Board member with children in our schools. This is the perfect opportunity to expand that even further with a more than qualified candidate. Therefore, as a Republican who lives in Coventry, I am endorsing Mike Sobol to be our next Board of Education member.

Thank you.