

From: Barbara Meyer-Mitchell <meyer-mitchellb@norwalkps.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 3:39 PM
To: Bruce Kimmel <kimmel@norwalkps.org>; Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org>; Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>
Cc: Heidi Keyes <keyesh@norwalkps.org>; Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org>; board <board@norwalkps.org>; Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>; Scott Hurwitz <HURWITZS@norwalkps.org>; Reginald Roberts <robertsr@norwalkps.org>; Johanna Zanvettor <zanvettorj@norwalkps.org>; Frank Costanzo <costanzof@norwalkps.org>
Subject: Re: Briggs

Thank you.

Member, Norwalk Board of Education
Member, Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Member, Facilities Committee
Council Representative, Cooperative Education Services
Liaison, Norwalk Acts
Liaison, Norwalk PTO Council

From: Dr. Steven Adamowski
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 3:27:12 PM
To: Barbara Meyer-Mitchell; Bruce Kimmel; Michael Lyons
Cc: Heidi Keyes; Mike Barbis; board; Brenda Wilcox Williams; Scott Hurwitz; Reginald Roberts; Johanna Zanvettor; Frank Costanzo
Subject: RE: Briggs

Barbara,

The Transit Authority is an independent, state-chartered entity, controlled by state and federal regulation relative to the subsidies it receives. Unlike most Transit Authorities, Norwalk's receives a financial contribution from the City, but it is not a city agency.

This year we have had several meeting with the TA's new leadership which is much more open to providing school services than in the past. Next year they will be providing a dedicated shuttle service from the train stations to CGS and a shuttle between PTECH Norwalk and NCC. They are also willing to put on a dedicated shuttle between the two high school campuses. For the shuttles we are purchasing tickets at the discounted rate of \$1.00 per ride.

Thus far the Transit Authority has been unwilling to make general ridership bus stops at any school. You may recall that there happened to be a general ridership bus stop in the commercial area in front of Briggs. At the request of the former principal, Dr. Allen, Briggs students received Yellow Bus Services, so it was rarely used by students.

We will keep working on this to find a low cost solution.

Steven

From: Barbara Meyer-Mitchell <meyer-mitchellb@norwalkps.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 2:17 PM
To: Bruce Kimmel <kimmel@norwalkps.org>; Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org>; Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>
Cc: Heidi Keyes <keyesh@norwalkps.org>; Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org>; board <board@norwalkps.org>; Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>; Scott Hurwitz <HURWITZS@norwalkps.org>; Reginald Roberts <robertsr@norwalkps.org>
Subject: Re: Briggs

Given how much we saved by closing Briggs, could we consider at least working out a deal with the city for bus tokens?

Member, Norwalk Board of Education
Member, Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Member, Facilities Committee
Council Representative, Cooperative Education Services
Liaison, Norwalk Acts
Liaison, Norwalk PTO Council

From: Dr. Steven Adamowski
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 2:12:32 PM
To: Barbara Meyer-Mitchell; Bruce Kimmel; Michael Lyons
Cc: Heidi Keyes; Mike Barbis; board; Brenda Wilcox Williams; Scott Hurwitz; Reginald Roberts
Subject: RE: Briggs

Several have "open end" schedules. However, to receive transportation students would need to follow the regular school hours.

From: Barbara Meyer-Mitchell <meyer-mitchellb@norwalkps.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 1:58 PM
To: Bruce Kimmel <kimmel@norwalkps.org>; Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org>
Cc: Heidi Keyes <keyesh@norwalkps.org>; Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org>; Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>; board <board@norwalkps.org>; Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>
Subject: Re: Briggs

Dr. Adamowski,
Do the former Briggs students have a flexible schedule? I remember that before I was elected, several came to a meeting and said during public comment that they needed a 9:30 start time in order to stay in school, for a variety of reasons, including child care and mental health. Did we arrange for that, or are they required to start at 7:30am?
Many thanks,
Barbara

Member, Norwalk Board of Education

Member, Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Member, Facilities Committee
Council Representative, Cooperative Education Services
Liaison, Norwalk Acts
Liaison, Norwalk PTO Council

From: Michael Lyons

Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 9:13:53 PM

To: Bruce Kimmel

Cc: Heidi Keyes; Barbara Meyer-Mitchell; Mike Barbis; Dr. Steven Adamowski; board; Brenda Wilcox Williams

Subject: RE: Briggs

I'm only surprised when the comments on Nancy DON'T reflect a 'nosedive in debate quality', not when they DO. This degradation is practically universal in social media these days. As the nastiness ratchets up (particularly when people can hide behind fake names), most of the reasonable, well-meaning people withdraw, and thus the chats usually get taken over by the nastiest participants. Quite a mix of comments. Sherelle speaking up for Shirley et al, a group of BoE members who probably did more to hold back minority student achievement than any other three BoE members in its history. Then we have the 'blame the immigrants' comments. Then the 'you're killing the taxpayers' folks (who'd seemingly be happier if we shut down NPS entirely). Then we have Joe Giandurco (who posts under a variety of fake names) extolling the good old days when 'the middle schools worked and students enjoyed coming to school' (even though middle schools showed consistent nosedives in student achievement, all for \$2,000 per year per student more than we spent at the high schools). Then Marj (hard to tell if this is Lynne Moore or Tony Daddona), with the usual attacks on evil Lyons and evil Barbis. Then Darlene Young (speaking for the reliably anti-education District B Democratic Committee), with a meandering condemnation of the only people who have actually tried to help the kids of South Norwalk she purports to care about. [How much did the gap close while Rosa Murray, Shirley Mosby et al ran the BoE? Zero. How much did any District B Dem complain about that state of affairs then? Zero.] Then the rambling comment from Ernie Dumas, whose view of the Board is so nuts that he once publicly accused the Board of lighting a brush fire that happened in the woods around Ely School in an effort to convince people that the new school should be built there (no lie – there was press coverage of this statement, which he meant seriously).

The good news – take away District B Dems, disgruntled NPS union reps, and a few other naysayers, and what do you have? Nothing. These comments are not representative of Norwalk at large (which is why I only made one comment and haven't dignified any of the other comments with a response.

Mike

From: Bruce Kimmel <kimmel@norwalkps.org>

Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 8:00 PM

To: Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org>

Cc: Heidi Keyes <keyesh@norwalkps.org>; Barbara Meyer-Mitchell <meyer-mitchellb@norwalkps.org>; Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org>; Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>; board

<board@norwalkps.org>; Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>

Subject: Re: Briggs

Mike L: Thank you, one of my favorites, Mr. Swift. But sometimes, dealing with liars is an impossible-to-win situation, especially since the lies keep on coming. Anyway, my concern is we try to remain calm and avoid micro-managing; we'll wear ourselves down and possibly lose sight of the important stuff. When the press is involved — or it is clearly something the press will smell out and pursue — then we need prompt notification and should respond.

To be candid: Some of the comments in NON on the board statement has me somewhat depressed. The quality of debate in Norwalk has taken a nosedive in recent years. Bruce

Sent from my iPad

On Feb 13, 2019, at 7:29 PM, Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org> wrote:

Just to be clear, Bruce, I wasn't calling for an immediate Board response. But I do want the Board to have the requisite information. Unfortunately, our local 'journalists' will provide front page coverage to whatever false allegations the naysayers give them (then attack the Board chair for not 'respecting' them). Not over-reacting is a good principle. But I can tell you from the corporate world, in the age of social media, that sluggish or weak responses to attacks can be just as bad - lies repeated often enough become viewed as the truth (witness the absolute nonsense accepted as truth by many parents on local Facebook sites). "Besides, as the vilest Writer has his Readers, so the greatest Liar has his Believers; and it often happens, that if a Lie be believ'd only for an Hour, it has done its Work, and there is no farther occasion for it. **Falsehood flies, and the Truth comes limping after it; so that when Men come to be undeceiv'd, it is too late; the Jest is over, and the Tale has had its Effect...**" - Jonathan Swift. And he wrote that 280 years before the Internet went live ...

Mike Lyons
Chair, Negotiations and Personnel Committee
Norwalk Board of Education
5 Raymond Lane
Norwalk, CT 06855
(203-866-4101)
[linkedin.com/in/mlyons1](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mlyons1)

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 13, 2019, at 7:17 PM, Bruce Kimmel <kimmel@norwalkps.org> wrote:

Dear All,

I do not believe we should over-react whenever the proponents of the status quo and other naysayers run with a rumor or partial truth. If there is a fight in a high school and it is handled

appropriately, I do not feel it is necessary to inform the board. However, I believe Steven did the correct thing when he informed us that the local media was involved. At that point, always, we should be notified. Also, I am pleased that Brenda W. issued a response. If I remember correctly, we are scheduled to receive a comprehensive update on this issue at our next meeting.

Regarding the quote in the minutes from Brenda M: We decided we would not pursue this issue until the March committee meeting, but then we found out that the full board would address it sooner.

We need to be careful how and when we respond to provocations. If we don't, the public will eventually wash their hands and blame everyone. Bruce

Sent from my iPad

On Feb 13, 2019, at 6:35 PM, Michael Lyons <lyonsm@norwalkps.org> wrote:

By the way, just caught this lunacy from the bottom of NON's email - "Also, Bruce Morris and Brenda Penn-Williams suspect that the reason NPS is seeing big improvements in the achievement gap is that the African American families are being forced to leave Norwalk." Others suspect it's because Martians are beaming rays into kids heads - each theory having precisely the same amount of supporting evidence. I sure do see why the head of the local NAACP chapter deserves our respect.

Mike Lyons
Chair, Negotiations and Personnel Committee
Norwalk Board of Education
5 Raymond Lane
Norwalk, CT 06855
(203-866-4101)
[linkedin.com/in/mlyons1](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mlyons1)

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 13, 2019, at 6:29 PM, Heidi Keyes <keyesh@norwalkps.org> wrote:

Agreed with everyone's concerns. I think that was one of the reasons why I had wanted a follow up regarding NHS (which we received from Mr. Singleton) and BMHS. It's always best to stay ahead.

It's important to get updates on our former Briggs students who are now immersed at our two high schools.

Best,
Heidi C. Keyes
Chair-Policy
Facilities member
NECC liaison
BoE member since 2009
Email:keyesh@norwalkps.org

On Feb 13, 2019, at 6:23 PM, Barbara Meyer-Mitchell <meyer-mitchellb@norwalkps.org> wrote:

Agreed, Mike. I thought last year we had a request from the board to at least get a heads up on things like this so we can be prepared with facts and messaging.

Member, Norwalk Board of Education
Member, Curriculum & Instruction Committee
Member, Facilities Committee
Council Representative, Cooperative Education Services
Liaison, Norwalk Acts
Liaison, Norwalk PTO Council

From: Michael Lyons
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 6:21:57 PM
To: Mike Barbis
Cc: Dr. Steven Adamowski; board; Brenda Wilcox Williams
Subject: Re: Briggs

Unfortunately, when these things happen it's the Board that gets hammered in public. We really should find out about them internally, not because NON is doing an article on them. Can we discuss in executive session on Tuesday?

Mike Lyons
Chair, Negotiations and Personnel Committee
Norwalk Board of Education
5 Raymond Lane
Norwalk, CT 06855
(203-866-4101)
[linkedin.com/in/mlyons1](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mlyons1)

Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 13, 2019, at 5:40 PM, Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org> wrote:

Steven

I've seen this question a few times but have never seen an answer ... were there any expulsion hearings (last week)? If so, how many students? Were any of the students former Briggs students? Were any of these students with hearings minority?

We need to address these questions if we want to put this story to rest.

Thanks,

Mike

Mike Barbis

Chair, Norwalk Board of Education

Chair, Facilities Committee

Member, Finance, Policy and Negotiation Committees

Representing District E

203-838-7887 Land

203-434-6577 Cell

From: Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>

Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 5:21 PM

To: board <board@norwalkps.org>

Subject: FW: Briggs

Board members,

Just a head's up that there is another story planned by Nancy Chapman containing additional, unfounded allegations regarding students and staff from Brenda Penn-Williams.

Please see the response from Brenda Wilcox Williams below.

Steven

From: Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>

Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 3:44 PM

To: Nancy Guenther Chapman (nancy@nancyonnorwalk.com) <nancy@nancyonnorwalk.com>

Cc: Bob Welsh <rlw14@yahoo.com>; Dr. Steven Adamowski <adamowskis@norwalkps.org>

Subject: Re: Briggs

Here it is again, in case you cannot find it.

Regards, Brenda

Brenda Wilcox Williams

Chief Communications Officer
Norwalk Public Schools
Williams@norwalkps.org

On Feb 11, 2019, at 4:59 PM, Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org> wrote:

No, that is not accurate.

There was a brief altercation last week that was handled by administrators in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Characterizing it as anything else is divisive, and does a disservice to our diverse student body and to the good work going on at the school.

For the record, former students from Norwalk Pathways Academy are now part of the Brien McMahon and Norwalk High School communities, with access to credit recovery programs and to additional supports to help them be successful. While not everyone may reach the finish line at the same time or in the same way, NPS's recent graduation rate speaks for itself.

Regards, Brenda

From: Nancy Guenther Chapman <Nancy@NancyOnNorwalk.com>
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>
Cc: Mike Barbis <barbism@norwalkps.org>; Bob Welsh <rlw14@yahoo.com>
Subject: FW: Briggs

Brenda,

Brenda Penn-Williams said there was a mini-riot last week in the BMHS cafeteria, leading to expulsion hearings on 12 minority students, most of them Briggs kids. Is that true?

Nancy

From: Nancy Guenther Chapman <Nancy@NancyOnNorwalk.com>
Date: Friday, February 8, 2019 at 4:14 PM
To: Brenda Wilcox Williams <williams@norwalkps.org>
Cc: Bob Welsh <rlw14@yahoo.com>
Subject: Briggs

Brenda,

Brenda Penn-Williams said some things last night about Briggs students. I plan to post a story next week, maybe Tuesday.

There was a mini-riot this week in the BMHS cafeteria, she said. Expulsion hearings were held Thursday on 12 minority students, most of them Briggs kids, she said.

Was there a mini-riot, with ensuing expulsion hearings, and most of the participants Briggs students?

I also found this in the minutes for the most recent Curriculum meeting:

“Dr. Myers stated that when the decision was made that Briggs would close, students were under credited when they moved to the high schools. She stated that they’ve added description and naming opportunities and requirements. Mr. Singleton stated that there were eight active students, that some were lost because they’d stopped coming to school. He stated that the most exciting development is that one of the students would be taking two honors classes.”

Some of whom were lost? How many? How does this compare to previous years?

Also, Bruce Morris and Brenda Penn-Williams suspect that the reason NPS is seeing big improvements in the achievement gap is that the African American families are being forced to leave Norwalk. Any response to that?

Nancy Chapman, editor, publisher
NancyOnNorwalk.com