



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 6, 2016
Seymour Middle School
7:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Cassandra Quintiliano, Student Representative

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Eric Laurentus, IT Department
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Tara Yusko, Assistant Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Roxanne Melaragno, Assistant Principal, CLS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:30 p.m.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Thank you to our team of custodians who worked throughout the summer to make our schools beautiful for the first day of classes!

B. Correspondence

1. Email dated August 27, 2016 from Anna DeJarnette asking the district to allow access to field lighting for the general public
2. Email dated August 29, 2016 from Mrs. Christine Syriac in response to the email from Anna DeJarnette regarding field lighting

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2016

B. Financial Management Summary - Ending August 31, 2016

C. Acknowledge the receipt of homeschooling notifications and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program

1. Jude and Travis Savino
Mr. and Mrs. Trevor Savino have informed the Board of Education of their intent to home school their children, Jude and Travis Savino, for the 2016-2017 school year

D. Staff Hiring – Certified Staff

1. Wandel, Chiara
 - Speech & Language Pathologist, Part Time
 - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
 - Replacing Marissa Zou

E. Staff Hiring – Non Certified

1. Dockery, Kathy
 - Part Time Clerical Paraprofessional
 - Bungay School
 - Replacing Haley Dauerty
2. Salcido, Autumn
 - Food Service
 - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
 - Replacing Susan Savino
3. Schutte, Thomas
 - Night Custodian
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing Steve Orfiss
4. Stec, Benjamin
 - Part time Custodian
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing Frank Frosceno
5. Veilleux, Paul
 - Night Custodian
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing Brian Zowadney

MOTION: (Mr. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. REPORTS

A. NEASC Report Update – Jim Freund

Mr. Freund presented an overview of the NEASC Report, which was last done in 2005, a ten year evaluation with a one year extension. Mr. Freund began his presentation by reviewing the Seymour High School Core Values and Beliefs statement and the Learning Expectations saying NEASC looks at this and then looks for how it is incorporated into the culture of the school. Mrs. Syriac asked Mr. Freund to explain what the next step is in the process. Mr. Freund said we are in a holding pattern until the New England Association of Schools and Colleges meeting in October. We will be given a list of priorities to work on.

Mr. Freund shared the list of Commendations and Recommendations for each section beginning with the Core Values and Beliefs about Learning.

In addition, he reviewed the commendations and recommendations for curriculum, instruction, assessment of and for student learning, school culture and leadership, school resources for learning, and community resources for learning. When asked how he feels about the overall results, Mr. Freund said he was very proud. He indicated that they had a feeling about what the results would be. Ms. Harmeling pointed out that the integration of technology came through. There was some discussion on the rubrics and how NEASC found them somewhat cumbersome. There will be work to do on the rubrics. As far as school culture and leadership, Mr. Freund said he was most proud of the faculty participation. Mrs. Syriac said the report also pointed out what a strong leader Mr. Freund is. Ms. Magri said she feels good about the school and this report says a lot. Mr. Freund said he shares the success with his assistant principals who work very hard. Mr. Stanek asked about the Parent Council. Mr. Freund said he currently has a Principal Advisory Council which has about four or five parents who participate. He would like to see this participation expand. He would like to attend the middle school parent council meetings so parents can get to know him before they reach the high school level. When addressing where we go from here, Mr. Freund said first the teachers will have the opportunity to review the report. Once the report is received and the recommendations are reviewed, a plan will be developed to review the core values and beliefs. These will be reviewed annually. Mrs. Syriac explained that there is a concern that this is only reviewed when a NEASC evaluation is happening. The NEASC committee said they felt it within the population of the schools during their visit. They do not expect it to be changed each year. Mr. Garofolo asked how the recommendations will be approached. Mr. Freund said they would be two-year and five-year recommendations but it is hard to answer until we see the recommendations. One thing he assured the Board is they will not be working in isolation on the recommendations, they will definitely increase participation. Mr. Garofolo asked how the Board would receive status reports and Mrs. Syriac said they would present to the Board at whatever frequency the Board wishes. Ms. Magri asked about the financial implications and if the accreditation would be affected if we are unable to meet some of the recommendations. Mr. Freund confirmed that he was confident that we would be accredited.

B. Capstone Project – Jim Freund

Mr. Freund spoke about his vision for developing a Capstone Project in Seymour High School. In the fall of 2016, he will establish a Capstone Committee of all SHS administrators, two BOE members (Mr. Stanek and Mr. Garofolo), two parents from the Principals Advisory Committee, two students, and five teachers. This committee will meet and research how other schools implemented their Capstone Projects and review their experiences with Capstone. In the winter and spring 2016-17, the committee will work to develop a proposal of the program. He hopes to be able to present to the Board of Education Curriculum Committee in the spring and summer of 2017 for recommendation to the full Board. In the fall of 2017, a presentation to the full Board would take place and if approved, a plan in place for the Class of 2021. Mr. Freund said he would like the plan to allow students to explore personal interests and or career opportunities. The Capstone presentations would take place in the second semester of the students' junior year and conclude in the first semester of their senior year. Mr. Freund reviewed the components of Capstone for each year of high school and concluded with some examples of Capstone projects. Mr. Garofolo asked how a transfer student would be accommodated and Mr. Freund said he felt they could participate unless they transferred in the senior year. Mr. Garofolo suggested this be considered in the overall planning.

C. Smarter Balanced Assessment Results – Vonda Tencza

Mrs. Tencza presented a summary of the Smarter Balance Assessment Results and noted that this is the first time we can look at student growth. She said the overall big message is that we grew. She reviewed some of the results and what the district's next steps would be. She noted that the School Improvement Plans would be changing and the presentations would be more of a question and answer process. The School and District Data Teams would be doing analysis on the data. The district message is that we need to do better, we cannot accept average. We know we can grow more. The state will be developing a Commission on Council of Mathematics in the fall of 2016. Mr. Strumello asked if the council will be providing free training for our faculty. Mrs. Tencza said it will always come at some cost to use because we will have to hire substitutes. She said our faculty will go after whatever information is provided.

Ms. Magri asked when the reports will be released and Mrs. Tencza said she thought it would be mid-September. Mrs. Syriac confirmed that the reports will be sent to parents.

D. Arbiter Pay/Pay K-12 – Tara Yusko, Rick Belden

Mr. Belden and Ms. Yusko spoke about the Arbiter Pay program that will be used by the high school beginning in the 2016-17 school year. Mr. Belden said this program will eliminate a lot of paper. It will schedule referees to work games in variety of sports including soccer, football, volleyball, swimming, basketball, softball, and baseball. An additional part of the program will provide for the payment of officials electronically and the issuance of 1099 forms.

Pay K-12 is a cloud-based ticketing program that will help with the selling of tickets for events within our district. It also creates the ability to sell season passes. Tickets, passes, or a barcode from a phone would be scanned at the event. At this time, we will begin using Pay K-12 solely for athletic events for the 2016.17 season.

E. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – August 22, 2016

F. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments
None

2. Board Member Comments

Ms. Harmeling thanked Christine Syriac for her convocation speech. She said she can tell that teachers really appreciate a speech from her rather than from an outside speaker. Mr. Hatfield gave a report on the Softball Field saying the committee met on 9/1 and they are in the process of wrapping things up. A press box is a possibility for the future. They are looking at Columbus Day weekend as a possible opening day. He asked Mr. Belden about the signage and Mr. Belden responded that Mr. Adamo is taking care of it. Mr. Hatfield asked on behalf of the Turf Committee what happened on the issue with upper level parking. Mr. Putorti said this was inappropriate to discuss under Board Member Comments and told Mr. Hatfield that he should add to the agenda if he wants information. He also reminded Mr. Hatfield that if he has items for the agenda that he gives them to us during the preparation of the agenda so people can be prepared to discuss the topics. Mr. Hatfield asked that the Softball Committee Report be put back on the agenda and said he would like to have the pizza party with the student council again in November.

G. Superintendent's Report

1. Curriculum Work Proposal

Mrs. Syriac said that she needed more time to prepare before she reports to the Board on the Curriculum Work Proposal and she did not have any additional items at this time.

VII. INFORMATION

A. School Activities and Recognitions

1. Seymour Middle School
2. Bungay School
3. Chatfield-LoPresti School

B. Staff Hiring – Appendix E

1. Sorge, Daniel
 - Head Coach
 - Boys Basketball
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing Michael Oberdick

C. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Carlson, Peter
 - Monitor Paraprofessional
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective 08/29/16

D. Staff Resignations – Appendix E

1. Tallcouch, Tyler
 - Assistant Coach, Boys Swim Team
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective 08/30/16

VIII. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Employee Compensation Analysis – Rick Belden

After meeting with the Finance Committee regarding the Employee Compensation Analysis, Mr. Belden was asked to discuss this with the full Board to come to a conclusion about what, if anything, we wanted to give to the Town for posting on their website. Mr. Hatfield asked what the catalyst was for this and Mr. Putorti explained that the Town requested this information as they have already posted their information on the Town website and would like to include the Board of Education information as well. Ms. Harmeling said that the Finance Committee had reviewed the spreadsheet that Mr. Belden compiled but the committee felt the full Board should discuss it. Mr. Belden distributed a copy of the spreadsheet and said that it was the same format as the Town's. The Town has populated every heading on the spreadsheet. Our attorney has reviewed the spreadsheet and has advised there are many pieces of information that are not appropriate for publication so in some areas instead of individual information, a summary of information is included. Many of the Board members felt the time off information was very misleading as this is compensation that is already included in the salaries of our employees. Mr. Hatfield asked what the purpose for this is. Mr. Putorti explained it is part of their effort to be more transparent. Many Board members pointed out that this information is already included in our budget. Mr. Garofolo expressed his concern that this could have a negative impact on us during budget voting. Mrs. Syriac also said that the Board attorney recommends that we give advance notice to all bargaining units before this is given to the Town for publication if the Board decides to go forward with this.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) not to release the information.

There was discussion regarding the ramifications of not doing this. The motion was rescinded by Mr. Hatfield. Ms. Harmeling thanked Mr. Belden for all of the work he has put into this project. Mr. Belden thanked the members of Central Office who helped him with this project. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to direct Mr. Belden to rework the spreadsheet with several items removed and bring it back to the Board for discussion at the next BOE meeting.

B. BOE Members Retreat

Mr. Strumello said he contacted CABA regarding having a BOE members retreat. He offered the following dates October 3, October 10, October 31, November 7, and November 28. Mr. Nick Caruso from CABA gave Mr. Strumello several topics that the Board members can choose from. Many Board members were interested in Strategic Planning; however this is not a topic Mr. Caruso offers. After discussing many of the dates, it was decided November 28 was the best date. While he does not offer Strategic Planning as a topic for retreats, Mr. Caruso said he could present some ideas if the Board wanted to choose that topic. Ms. Harmeling suggested the topic be Board Goals since they would not be in a place to discuss our Strategic Plan. It was suggested that the meeting be limited to two hours. Mr. Strumello said he would take care of working with CABA to set it up.

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to set the first Board retreat on November 28, 2016

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk