Seymour Board of Education

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES (revised)

January 22, 2018
Seymour Middle School
7:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Jennifer Magri, Chairperson Kristen Harmeling Jay Hatfield Edward Hendricks Peter Kubik Fred Stanek Ed Strumello Sukhman Singh, Student Representative Paulina Karwowski, Student Representative
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:	Christopher Champagne James Garofolo
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services Jim Freund, Principal, SHS Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS Tara Yusko, Assistant Principal, SHS Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal, BS David Olechna, Principal, CLS Kathleen Freimuth, Assistant Principal, CLS Adrienne Tomlinson Eileen Nelson Eric Nelson Robin Masotta Rebecca DeAngelis Dawn Adams Jennifer Karpovich Cynthia Dion Alisha Speanburg Andrea Melnick Laura Stec Linda Bellavance Holly Zuraw Tara Petrino Cheryl Michaud Jennifer Cabreia Michele Rossi Gabinelli Theresa Conroy Natalie Moir Elizabeth Anderson Mary Ellen LoGiudice Melissa Gonzalez

Suzanne Garman
Collen Maguire
Karen Leeper
Jack Halligan
Kate Halligan
Jennifer Edwards
Alyson Waldron
Peter Mansfield
Alison Brett
Jennifer Batterton
Julie Nintzel
Jeannette Brito
Helen Garcia
Emily Elliott
Diane Corfello
Lou Costello
Tania Smith
Kate Halligan

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Ms. Magri called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions at 7:34 p.m.

B. Moment of Silence

1. Alyce Sapko – BOE Secretary, September, 1979 to November, 2001
2. Pauline Lounsbury - a former BOE Member
3. Mable White - a former lunch program employee

Mr. Stanek spoke fondly of the three Seymour residents who had ties to the Seymour Public Schools.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations and thank you to all of the students and staff across the district who took time to do fundraisers to benefit those in our community who need love and support during the holidays. Our very generous school community make the holidays a bit better for many people in need.
2. Though the generosity and support from the community, the Bungay School staff, students and their families raised over $1000.00 per family through a school-wide dime collection. Mrs. Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent, Mrs. Mary Sue Feige, Principal, Ms. Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal, and Ms. Stephanie Rush, School Counselor were present to greet the fire victim families with gifts on Thursday, December 21, 2017: Carter and Layla Dickens (Sandra Dickens); Caitlin Lee (Paulette Haines). Families also received gift cards and clothing from staff. Presenting the family with additional monetary gifts were: Mrs. Bernadette Hamad, Seymour Middle School Principal and Ms. Fran Marsala, PTA President. Community organizations planning to reach out to help the family included: the Boys and Girls Club, Valley United Way, Wage Works, and Go Fund Me. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with these families.

B. Correspondence

1. Letter dated December 5, 2017 to Ms. Paula Burton from Superintendent Michael Wilson on behalf of the Seymour Board of Education congratulating her on her retirement and thanking her for her many years of service to the children of Seymour

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Magri welcomed the people in the audience and said it was nice to see lots of new faces. She explained that there are two opportunities to speak in Public Comment; one in the beginning of the meeting and one at the end of the meeting. She explained that Public Comment is for people to have the opportunity to make comments only. This is not the time for conversation or getting answers; the Board will take your comments under advisement. She also reminded everyone that the meeting tonight is a special meeting and therefore, items cannot be added to the agenda. Also, not all items are actionable by the Board; the Board sets policy and oversees how allocations of funds from the town are used. School administrators are charged with school management issues. She asked all people making public comment to state their name and address and keep their comments brief so all who wish to speak will have the time to do so. She thanked them for attending the meeting.

1. Lindsay Commune-Browning, 54 Skokorat Street – Spoke on behalf of the paraprofessionals that were let go, students, staff and parents. Since the layoffs 1-1 instructional paraprofessionals are being taken away from their students to cover other duties and fill gaps in the day to day operations which is not acceptable. Recently there were 47 children in a classroom for indoor recess in a classroom set up for 23 students. Schedules have had to be changed because CLS still severely understaffed. Report cards are being done and people are being tasked with picking up other responsibilities. What is the plan? How is this going to be absorbed? Several things are being impacted, recess and security. They are no longer at the door to greet people. Our principals are having to do things where their time can be better used. She feels these cuts should have come from other places. Buy supplies for elementary schools but not middle school or high school. Secretaries are having to take on more; they don't have the time or facilities. Concerned about safety of her daughter outside on recess where there are only two monitors. She wants to know what the plan is; how are the gaps going to be filled?
2. Tara Petrino, 18 Woodcrest Road – She works as a teacher in another district where we do not have clerical paraprofessionals and it does not work well. I work at a school where we are forced to do more with less to the point of being ridiculous. Just getting through the day without someone getting hurt is not good enough. Children move quickly and things happen; I would be hesitant to place blame the people on recess duty when there are not enough of them. Think of safety of students as well as spreading people too thin. The staff is phenomenal but they should not be piled on because they are good at what they do. Instructional and Clerical paraprofessionals are phenomenal and that is part of what makes it special in Seymour.
3. Brooke Anderson, 210 Mountain Road – Spoke about the possible changes being considered at the High School. She is hoping to hear the reasons for the change. Block schedule working so well for students. It prepares them for college, helps students with heavy course loads, AP courses, Honors classes, and it helps to balance work load and extracurricular activities. Curious to hear what is not working. Why the change might benefit students? How will students be able to manage the schedule and extracurricular activities?
4. Cindy Dion, 18 Carriage Drive – As a parent of a student in 9th grade who is already stressing about the amount of homework he may have if they switch from the block schedule, I'm wondering why we fought so hard to get the block schedule in place and now want to go back. Anxiety is setting in already with the students and she am concerned. She is hoping the high school will give explain why the change is being considered.
5. Jennifer Edwards, 48 Third Avenue. – My daughter goes to ECA and she is wondering if that was taken into consideration when making the decision to move from the block schedule. She will miss classes if there is a change.
6. Melissa Gonzalez, 3 Stony Creek – Regarding the paraprofessionals; we have started a petition for the clerical paraprofessionals. Also as a parent with a child with a medical 504, I find it unacceptable that the nurse's office is going to be closed during certain times of the day. Recently diagnosed with arthritis and needs access to the nurse at all times; her teacher should not have to take care of her needs. Kids need a cool down space or need to go to the nurse's office rather than go outside for recess. It was disheartening to find out that the paras would be losing the jobs at Christmas. She felt it was a little rude and kind of unprofessional. They just don't answer the phones, they do security; they know the kids. They know when a kid just needs to talk. They are there to help the kids in the cafeteria, they do attendance. It was disappointing the way it was done so quick. I was told that some people did not know all of the jobs that they did and I think they should have known before they made this decision. Ms. Magri said this many people here to attend a Board meeting is unusual; that should tell you just how important this is to us. She has concerns that her daughter will not have access when she needs help. She said she is in the school all the time and she never saw anyone there to see what the paras did during the day. It is sad. Kids were sad, they were crying. I hope you take into consideration how the quick decision made the kids feel.
7. Allison Brett, 11 Stanley Drive – Regarding the high school, she feels it's important to recognize the work that's been done at the high school and Jim, Paul, and Tara should be commended. A lot is going on at the high school, smoking, cell phones, locking the bathrooms, drugs; they have done everything they can to keep our kids safe. Mr. Lucke has been very open with her as a parent why the decisions are made. However, moving to the everyday schedule she is not sure how this will benefit the students. She wants to listen to the items on the agenda before she speaks and she is happy there is another opportunity to speak at the end of the meeting.
8. Cheryl Michaud, 52 Greenwood Circle – She has a daughter that graduated and was on a block schedule worked really well. She has a concern of what will happen with the homework load if it is changed to an everyday schedule. How to make sure the teachers are monitored so the kids are not overwhelmed with homework. Not sure if the change is going to be best for the students. How will they be able to juggle their class load and she wonders why we are changing something that is working.

9. Alyson Hartshorn, 22 Birchwood Road – On behalf of the clerical paras, she has been part of the CLS family for six years and is the PTA president. Also she is a recess monitor at BS. I have one of those students who wanted to say goodbye and was very upset. Many kids are upset at the sudden loss of the paras. I have some contact with the office on a daily or weekly basis and it's a huge change, it's overwhelming. It was noted that things went smoothly last week and everything got done; it didn't. I'm a recess monitor at Bungay, it's not good. People are running around like chickens with heads cut off. Clerical paras did recess and lunch; we are left with three monitors at Bungay. Recess schedules have changed, lunch has changed; kids don't have time to finish lunch. One person was out and that left two monitors watching for four classes outside; that is impossible. If I needed to use the bathroom, I can't. I walk in at 10:45 and leave at 1:45. Only Sharon is in the office. The system is now chaos. The worst week ever; everyone couldn't wait for it to be over. It is imperative to get the clericals back. There is now one nurse with no help. The paras were not just someone who worked in the office; they were everywhere. The kids are super impacted by this. She works in one school and associates in the other. Holly and Karen cannot get done what needs to get done because they are trying to do the work of the clerical paraprofessionals in addition to their normal work. They are not the happy family that they have always been. It's not working. Couldn't you have saved them by doing a furlough day? It seems like something else could have been done. These ladies are important to the schools. It is affecting the good people that are left.
10. Theresa Conroy, 177 Skokorat Street – She said she was speaking on behalf of the parents who have contacted her. She said she felt the process is what shook the community. She said it was done at a special meeting and no one knew what was going on. There is a strong sense of community in this town and people want the best education for their kids. We have strong family relationships in this district. These women were so important and vital to the schools; it was appalling that the decision was so quick. They are the face when you go to schools, she knows it is a tough budget time and we have a new superintendent in town. I hope the Board will seriously reconsider what was done and try to figure out a way to bring them back. Also, I would like to suggest the Board do something about the acoustics at these meetings. People in the back cannot hear a thing that is being said; she said people have said that is the way the Board likes it so people cannot hear what is being said in the meetings. I think better acoustics or a microphone would be very helpful.
11. Jennifer Karpovich, 10 Hemlock Road – She also has a daughter with severe anxiety and she is in honors classes. She is very concerned about the amount of homework that may be given if we move away from the block schedule. Also about the cell phones, she has concerns about cell phone use in the high school but her daughter was attacked in the cafeteria by a teacher who thought she was pulling out her cell phone when she was actually pulling out her lunch. She thinks it's a little ridiculous and we are going overboard. She feels they should have some access to their phone. They should be able to use them for classes.
12. Julie Nintzel, 50 Briarwood Drive – She is wondering about the change to the middle school schedule. What is the plan with this? Curious as to what additional cuts will be happening and why are we looking at shared services with Ansonia. She asked if we looked at other regions around us as she feels Ansonia may not be the best fit for Seymour.
13. Kelly Maguire, 33 High Street – Has three children in the Seymour Schools. She has always been very happy with the schools; the teachers are amazing and the activities that are offered are good. She is worried about the homework load with the new schedule. She wondered how the elementary schools are going to do it.
14. Linda Bellavance, 7 Molsick Road – Secretary in the special education department. It is overwhelming to lose 50% of the staff in her office and still be expected to get 100% of the work done. There used to be two people in the office and now there is only her. It is impossible to get what needs to get done at the end of the day, many things are required by State statute. PPTs, IEPs and all of the paperwork associated with them cannot get done; she cannot do what parents expect them to do. She said it will affect us in the long run. Last week she was out sick and Dr. Boyle was at PPTs all day so the office had to be closed because no one was there. Then even though she was still not feeling well, she dragged herself in because there was again no one in the office. Please keep in mind that this situation is overwhelming.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes
   1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2017
   2. Special BOE Organizational Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2017
   3. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – December 12, 2017 (removed from consent agenda by Mr. Strumello)
   4. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2018

B. Nutrition Services Operational Report
   1. November, 2017
   2. December, 2017

C. Staff Hiring – Certified
1. Williams, Victoria
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Districtwide
- New Position

D. Staff Hiring – Non Certified
1. Leeper, Karen
- Secretary
- Rehired former Clerical Paraprofessional
- Bungay School
- Replacing Dorie Neary

F. Acknowledge the receipt of homeschooling notification and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program
1. Elizabeth Oris
Ms. Rebecca Wilkin has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her child, Elizabeth Oris, for the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year
2. Gianna Padillo
Ms. Michelle Padillo has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her child, Gianna Padillo, for the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Kubik) move to approve the consent agenda with Item A3 removed

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

1. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – December 12, 2017 Mr. Strumello indicated that he had not abstained from the vote but had instead disqualified himself.

VI. INFORMATION

A. Activities and Recognitions
1. Seymour Middle School
2. Bungay Elementary School
3. Chatfield-LoPresti School

B. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes (Revised) – November 8, 2017

C. Staff Retirement – Certified Staff
1. Bachyrycz, Jayne
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Seymour High School/Seymour Middle School
- Effective June 30, 2018

2. Leoni, Kim
- Guidance Counselor
- Seymour High School
- Effective June 30, 2018

D. Staff Resignations– Certified Staff
1. Adams, George
- Language Arts Teacher
- Seymour Middle School
- Effective June 30, 2018

E. Staff Resignations– Non-Certified Staff
1. Chase, Teresa
- Monitor Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Effective December 22, 2017

2. Weber, Mark
   - District Data Technician
   - Central Office
   - Effective March 30, 2018

F. Job Elimination – Non Certified

1. Adamson-Moulton, Sheron
   - Clerical Paraprofessional, Part Time
   - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
2. Deptula, Sandra
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Seymour Middle School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
3. Diaz-Ballaro, Diana
   - Clerical Paraprofessional, Part Time
   - Bungay Elementary School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
4. Filipowich, Sharon
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Bungay Elementary School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
5. Garman, Suzanne
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
6. Geloso, Betty
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
7. Leeper, Karen
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Seymour High School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
8. Lionetti, Jocelyn
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Seymour High School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
9. Moir, Natalie
   - Clerical Paraprofessional
   - Seymour Middle School
   - Effective December 31, 2017
10. Parks-Betts, Sandra
    - Clerical Paraprofessional
    - Seymour Middle School
    - Effective December 31, 2017
11. Reilly, Kelly
    - Clerical Paraprofessional, Part Time
    - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
    - Effective December 31, 2017
12. Stec, Laura
    - Clerical Paraprofessional
    - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School (Spec. Ed)
    - Effective December 31, 2017

VII. REPORTS

A. HS Student Representative Report - Paulina Karwowski and Sukhman Singh

Miss Karwowski and Mr. Singh reported on the recent activities at the high school.

The Hope Club decorated the Post 10 Tree and held a coat drive. FBLA held a toy drive for Yale New Haven Hospital and decided to distribute the toys after the Christmas rush. The Faith Club held a toy drive. The Guitar Class visited Shady Knoll to perform music. The Faculty and all clubs did a giving tree, providing gifts for needy students and their families. The debate team had one team that went 2-1 out of 3 rounds. Mid-term exams were 1/10 through 1/16. The Winter Concert was on 1/11 and on 1/20 the Snowball Dance was a complete success with nearly 200 attendees.

B. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes – December 18, 2017

Mr. Strumello said that the Curriculum and Technology Committee meeting was very fruitful and the new courses at the middle school and high school are very exciting. Computer courses at the middle school are being revamped to focus on personal finance. The construction class at the high school will allow students to earn hours toward an apprenticeship.

C. Out of State Field Trip

Five members of the Middle School Glee Club along with Mr. Dobas were on hand to talk about the field trip to Hershey, PA. Mr. Dobas said the Hershey Festival is a regional festival and will allow the Glee Club "to kick it up a notch". Mr. Strumello asked about the venue and Mr. Dobas said he believed in was in the park. Dr. Hendricks asked Mr. Dobas to get back with the venue details as he felt there may be some people who might want to attend.

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the field trip request of Mr. Nate Dobas to take grade 6, 7, 8 Glee Club students on an out of state field trip to Hershey, PA on Saturday, May 19, 2018

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSED: 7-0

D. Cell Phone Policy and Discipline – Jim Freund

Mr. Freund said that early this year, they recognized that the use of cell phones was rampant in the school. Students were using ear buds and not hearing people. He shared his research:

- Smartphones are checked an average of 150 time per day, or every six minutes
- Young people send an average of 110 texts per day
- Many young people use their digital device communicating with friends rather than being active
- Extensive use of Social Media makes people less social.
- Exam scores climbed by as much as 6% in schools that imposed strict bans on cell phones
    - Equivalent of an additional hour a week in school, or increasing the school year by five days.
    - The strongest gains were made by underachieving and disadvantaged students.
    - The group of students without smartphones performed 70% better than the students allowed to use the smartphone, note-taking improved by 50% without smartphone

Mr. Freund reported that since the cell phone ban was instituted, most kids have done well. They have found that they are witnessing more conversation in cafeteria. Kids are playing board games. The cafeteria is loud again. Mr. Freud said what we are seeing is the beginning of a trend. The State of Maryland is banning cell phones in secondary schools. Other schools in our area are waiting to see how this goes in our school. There are still some bumps in the road. Ms. Harmeling said she hears what is being said. She hopes that things will eventually settle down. She emphasized that students can still use their cell phone with teacher direction. She said she hopes over time, some cell phone privileges will be given back. The Board asked the student representatives how they felt. Miss Karwowski said for her it has been four years of using cell phones all that she wanted to.She feels the cell phone ban is beneficial because it has improved social interactions; she said she has talked more in the last few months than she has in the last four years. Mr. Singh said he did not like it at first. He said in the past he used his phone for study purposes and now he cannot do that. But he understands how annoying it must have been to have kids on cell phones all the time and he understands why they were banned. He said he hopes it will change to allow kids time on their cell phones during lunch or in class. Mr. Freund said work is being done to address the use of cell phones in study hall.

E. Schedules

1. High School – Paul Lucke, Tara Yusko

Mr. Lucke touched briefly on the proposal to change the graduation requirements with a change to the number of credits needed. He said the State Legislature has changed the requirement to 23 credits for class of 2023. He reviewed what is currently required in Seymour High School. Class of 2022 will move to a required 26 credits as dictated by the Legislature. The high school is proposing a change to go from the 4x4 block schedule to an 8 drop 2 schedule. Mrs. Tencza, Mr. Lucke, and Ms. Yusko along with teachers, school psychologists have visited Greenwich, Amity, Berlin and Cheshire Schools to observe how their 8 drop 2 schedules work. Currently there are 87 minutes in the current block schedule class and they are finding many kids cannot handle this length of time. The new schedule will provide for 56 or 57 minutes per class. 4x4 classes are meeting 2 or 3 times a week; 8 drop 2 will meet 3 out of 4 school days, this will provide for more consistency and continuity. The proposed 8 drop 2 schedule allows for rotating throughout the day; students will mix through the rotation. With the 4x4 block schedule, they are seeing kids drop classes in order to take advantage of senior privileges; the proposed schedule will allow for seniors with a study hall to come in late or leave early at least one day a week. The block schedule provides for 83 days that classes meet, the 8 drop 2 schedule classes meet 136 days. More meetings will happen, more consistency, more opportunity to get their questions answered by the teacher. As far as the amount of minutes 8 drop 2 schedule students will have 75 minutes more over the course of the year. They are finding some situations where because of snow days or assemblies, kids are not seeing teachers for up to six days. In order to meet the needs of the students they will be creating a structured study hall that students will be matched up with based on their weaknesses. Mr. Lucke and Ms. Yusko will host a joint meeting with the parents and later a meeting to roll out the schedule details to the public so they can see what this will look like. The 8 drop 2 schedule will be published by Mr. Freund in the Program of Studies, in bulletins, and texts to parents all to publicize the change. We will be working with the middle school to coordinate schedules and this may allow for shared services. We have had meetings with staff and we have met with student council. Mr. Kubik asked Mr. Lucke to address the concerns regarding the amount of homework that will be given. Mr. Lucke said he they will be working with the department chairs and teachers so that kids will be receiving an acceptable amount of homework. There will be a clarified plan on paper. Ms. Harmeling said it would be enormously helpful if the homework schedule would be planned in advance and posted on google classroom. This would allow kids who want to do their homework in advance to do so. She also asked about the students that attend ECA. Mr. Lucke said they did take into consideration the students who attend ECA. The schedule would have a more consistent rotation in the morning. Students may be missing one class which is what they saw at the schools they visited. Mr. Hatfield asked a question about World Language, Mr. Lucke said this is the requirements from the State. The graduation requirements will be voted on by the Board on the February 5, 2018 BOE meeting agenda. Mr. Hatfield said he would like to see the requirements broken down for each year. Mr. Strumello asked what the impact on staffing would be with the State requirements. Mr. Wilson said no additional staff is required. When we look at the model we are looking at the minimum number of credits required. Mr. Stanek asked if the 4x4 block schedule cannot accommodate the new state requirements. Ms. Harmeling said the State requirements do not have anything to do with the change to an 8 drop 2 schedule. They are disconnected. Mr. Hatfield asked for more clarification. Mr. Singh said he was pretty sure in order to get 32 credits, you would need to drop the study hall. Teachers should give students advance homework to the students to give students the opportunity to get it done. Homework is the only issue I have with the new schedule. Ms. Harmeling asked about the impact to students who have to work. Mr. Lucke talked to many students and not one came to see him about a conflict with work. Ms. Magri asked how does this impact teachers? Do they get enough prep time? When you look at the schedule you see the loss time and gained time in the schedules. Preparation time is equal to what they have currently. Impact on preparation is they will get the same prep as now. Block schedules were put in place in 2011 and we were told there were many advantages to going to a block schedule including preparing students for the college experience. She said she would like to hear why you feel we have to move away from the block scheduling. Mr. Lucke said the long class time is just too much time to be sitting in a classroom and especially with our special needs students we may have been doing a disservice to them. Possible shared services will allow a solution to some of the fiscal problems we are experiencing. Ms. Magri asked about NEASC and if we needed to notify them and do they feel NEASC would take issue with this. Mr. Freund said there is a substantive change report that is submitted annually at the end of the year and he would be in contact with them to confirm if this qualifies as a substantive change. Mr. Singh asked how tests and labs would be handled on the 8 drop 2 schedule.

Mr. Lucke said some classes that require labs would be double block classes that would occur back to back with the class once every four days. Ms. Karwowski said AP classes mimic what it would be like to take the AP tests and that takes the full 87 minutes. She feels like this would be a disadvantage because you would not be able to mimic AP tests. Mr. Lucke said he would go back to the visited schools to see how they handle this.

2. Middle School – Bernadette Hamad

Mrs. Hamad said the middle school is on a rotation basis so this is not new and the students are used to this. But we do have concerns. She said she met with Mr. Freund and Ms. Yusko to see if we can make this work as it would solve a lot of problems. She said the middle school periodically reviews the schedules and it is that time of year. They have been able to come up with a schedule that includes a full rotation for unified arts classes. The reviewed the 8 drop 2 schedule and we have been able to make it work. The schedule includes classes that are an hour long and includes unified arts classes which the current schedule does not include. Currently, students in all three grades are on difference schedules. With the 8 drop 2 schedule they would be on the same time rotation. This schedule would allow for more time for teachers to work with students on their goals and to challenge them. This also makes it possible to add a course in 6th grade using the writers' workshop model. PE would meet every day for two quarters and Music and Band will meet three out of four days and it will be a yearlong class. We want to have similar schedules so more services can be shared. Ms. Harmeling did not think having PE for only two quarters would beneficial, she feels it should be treated like music/band. Ms. Hamad said they would continue to look at this. Ms. Magri asked if math and language arts meet every day. Classes on the 8 drop 2 schedule would not meet every day and she has a problem with this given where we are with our test scores. Ms. Hamad said she had the same concerns but she found that teachers will have more time to spend with each student dealing with student weaknesses and goals. Mr. Strumello asked what would happen to a child who is having trouble in let's say a math class but the student is assigned to a Social Studies class. Ms. Hamad said this provides for students to be pulled from their assigned class and moved to the class in which they are struggling. Ms. Magri said there has been a lot of time put into this and said she would be interested in how we will be able to measure success with this change. Maybe this can be discussed at our next meeting.

F. Special Education Enrollment – Kris Boyle

Dr. Boyle did a brief overview of the Special Education enrollment and it was presented by Mr. Wilson during the Budget meeting. He said our enrollment is growing at a predictable rate. We are experiencing the same growth as the rest of the state. There is a spike but that has to do with our overall enrollment. We experienced lower enrollment so the same numbers look higher. We are continuing at a similar linear trajectory. The average placement cost is $77,000, some being higher and some being lower. Transportation costs are about $18,000 a year but we have been successful with consolidated transportation which helps to keep the costs lower. We have successfully integrated one student back into the general population and will continue to try and bring other students back to Seymour. Ms. Magri said that many of the outplaced students were ones that came from other districts and Seymour took the recommendation of the former district so as to not disrupt the students' education. She asked if we review and re-evaluate this on an annual basis. Dr. Boyle said yes, every student is looked at multiple times during the PPT process. If it is possible, they are transitioned back in. Mr. Strumello spoke about the differences between CES and ACES and asked if Special Education Directors meet with each other. Dr. Boyle confirmed that Special Education Directors meet monthly to discuss current topics and ACES representatives are in attendance. Dr. Boyle said that when a child is recommended for outplacement, he does not apply to only one facility. He sends staff on facilities tours with the parents. Parents choose what program is best for their child. He noted that we have roughly the same number of students at ACES and CES. Mr. Stanek talked about the proposal to hire an additional Special Education teacher with the goal of bringing some outplaced students back to Seymour. He wondered how optimistic he is that students will come back. Dr. Boyle said there are some kids who may be a good fit for the Special Education elementary program and therefore he was cautiously optimistic.

G. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments

Ms. Magri said upon Mr. Stanek's suggestion and after speaking with First Selectman Miller, she will be engaging with Rory Burke to arrange a meeting with Tom Hennick who is the FOIA expert for CT to present training for any BOE board members or others that wish to attend. This is important information that Board members we need to understand. She thanked Mr. Stanek for his suggestion. Dates will be shared once they are known and typically there is no cost for these meetings. As a reminder we will be adding to our February agenda a report from our members that attended the CABE conference. Mr. Strumello and Mr. Hatfield will present. Ms. Magri said she had the opportunity to attend the Radio Play – It's a Wonderful Life at the high school in December and it was wonderful.

She encouraged all board members to try to attend the next production of the Wizard of Oz which will be held the weekend of March 16-18. Bungay School students will also be participating in the production. Tickets are on sale now. In late December, Ms. Magri and Superintendent Wilson met with Bill Nimons, Chairman of the Ansonia BOE and Ansonia Superintendent Carol Merlone. Ms. Magri previously served alongside Mr. Nimons on the Valley Community Foundation Board so it was natural for them to chat since both were Board of Education chairs. Mr. Nimons requested that we meet to talk about the possibility of brainstorming and working together to address common school system challenges. At that time Ms. Magri shared with our counterparts in Ansonia that this would need to be brought before this Board before proceeding further which is why you see a proposed motion relating to this later in the agenda. Ms. Magri wanted to make it very clear that this was driven by her conversation with their Board Chair not by Mr. Wilson. The hope would be that we might be able to partner on items such as busing, professional development, expelled student tutoring or items of that nature. This is not in any way related to the regionalization plans with Ansonia and Derby that you may have recently read about in the press. This proposed conversation with Ansonia is with Ansonia because she had a prior relationship with Mr. Nimons that was leveraged. She has no issue with having similar conversations with other local districts in the Valley if that is also the Board's pleasure. At the end of the day all of us are trying to provide the best education to our students and best environment and support to our staff that all of our limited funds can provide. This can be discussed further prior to the motion later in the meeting if needed.

2. Board Member Comments

Mr. Hatfield asked about the Narcan training Mr. Kearns is providing and felt that it was a good time to look at a policy on the use of Narcan in the schools. He said he wished we had a policy in place before the training took place. He wanted to put this on the agenda of the next policy committee meeting. He said he once again would like to suggest changing the committees since there are some that have not met in some time. He suggested this be discussed at a committee level and then brought to the full Board. He also mentioned that he was at a recent TEAM meeting and they were quite complimentary of our kindergarten orientation/registration process and it was nice to be recognized by TEAM. Mr. Stanek would like to assess our budget again in two months and see if we might be able to bring back some of the clerical paraprofessionals.

H. Superintendent Report

On behalf of the Administrative Team as well as the BOE, Mr. Wilson wanted to congratulate the Debate Team for a job well done. Their hard work is to be commended. He was very happy to report that as of this afternoon, we have over 815 followers on our new Facebook page. Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Tencza have conducted walkthroughs with our building Administrators in order to calibrate our observational practices. He reported that our Administrators have been working very hard on holding their mid-year conferences with their teachers. Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Tencza have also started to schedule the mid-year conferences with all of the Administrators. On Friday, January 19 Mr. Wilson moderated the Bungay School Geography Bee. All of the students worked very hard and Ryan Saddick was the winner. She will have the opportunity to compete at the next level. As has been the case, Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Tencza, and Mr. Belden have continued to be visible in all of the buildings this past month and we will continue to visit the buildings in order to witness the great things taking place within our schools.

VIII. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. BOE Committees

Ms. Magri had Mr. Wilson confirm with Attorney Dorsey that the Board Chair is not an ex-officio member of any standing committees, only special temporary committees that are created. The Board Chair makes the standing committee assignments and the Board needs to approve them which is on the tonight's agenda. Ms. Magri said that she was not able to grant all the requests that were made. She said she believes what she recommended as committee assignments represents what is in the best interest of our district and may align with Board Members expertise or areas in which Board Members may benefit from additional exposure and learning. She respectfully asked that the Board Members support what has been proposed.

MOTION: (Dr. Hendricks/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Board of Education for the appointment of members for the standing BOE Sub Committees

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

B. Shared Services with Ansonia Public Schools

Ms. Magri said she wanted to make sure everyone understood that this was just to talk and we may find that we have nothing in common but she feels it would be fiscally irresponsible not to talk. Ms. Harmeling said she thought this was a good idea but would like to see more districts involved right from the start. Mr. Hatfield said he felt it should include sharing with the Town as well. Ms. Magri said we can try and reach out to other districts. She said she would like to see Ms. Harmeling and Mr. Hendricks serve on this committee. After further discussion it was decided to table this motion.

MOTION TO TABLE: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to table the motion to approve the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Board of Education to create a special Shared Services Committee for discussion and brainstorming with Ansonia Public Schools on common challenges and solutions and to appoint _____as members of the committee and move it to the February 5, 2018 meeting agenda

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

IX. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the adoption of the Elementary ELA, MS Math, and HS ELA as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

B. **MOTION TO TABLE:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to table the motion to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the revisions to the curriculum as presented and move it to the February 5, 2018 meeting agenda

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

C. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the formatting of curriculum for AP Macroeconomics, AP Art, Music/Choir, French 1-3, and Health/PE as to allow completion of the curriculum by 10.1.18.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

Ms. Harmeling wanted to let everyone know that this is truly a formatting change only.

D. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the SMS Personal Finance class for grades 6-8 as well as the SHS Robotics class contingent on grant funding

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

Contingent on grant funding applies to SHS Robotics class only.

E. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the elevation to the honors level for Accounting II, Entrepreneurship, CADD II, Alternative Energy III, Construction Systems II, and Personal Finance II

Ms. Magri had a concern saying she didn't see where there is any change to the rigor of the current classes to make it be at the honors level. Is the curriculum going to change? Mr. Lucke indicated that they were tested and did well but the State is not going to be continuing to do the tests. All courses have stood the test of time. The curriculum is not going to change. Ms. Magri asked if this from this point forward or will past students who have taken the course get the quality points. Ms. Harmeling said this was not discussed. Mr. Wilson suggested this needs to be revisited.

MOTION TO TABLE: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to table the motion to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the elevation to the honors level for Accounting II, Entrepreneurship, CADD II, Alternative Energy III, Construction Systems II, and Personal Finance II and move it to the February 5, 2018 Board meeting agenda.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

F. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve Seymour High School Construction Systems 1 (Intro to Constructions Systems) and 2 (Construction Systems)

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

This is exciting as this allows some students to get apprentice hours before leaving high school. This allows them to get a leg up over other people leaving high school. Great for kids who are not going to college, this is a no brainer. This is an update to the curriculum utilizing the curriculum of the United Carpenters Union and the textbooks that they utilize ($25 each). Mr. Lucke said this is a win, win, win, win. This program will get these students into high demand, high paying jobs.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Colleen Maguire, 33 High Street – Question for Mr. Lucke about the schedule for AP classes, you said you would talk to other districts when will you be coming back to this. What is the plan?
2. Cindy Dion, 18 Carriage Drive – A large group of parents who are looking for answers on a variety of topics I would like to suggest you move your chairman's report to the beginning of the meeting so people can hear before they make public comments. Many people left before your chairman's report and they did not get to hear what you said that was pertinent to why they came to the meeting tonight.
3. Jennifer Batterton, 37 Bunting Road – She said she has a unique perspective because she is a parent and a teacher. Mr. Lucke presented that the high school to 91 to 136.5 days; the middle school went from 182 to 136.5 days. As a parent this bothers me. Thankful that Ms. Magri brought up the language arts and math that has been on my mind. I cannot imagine having the first day and not meeting two of my classes that day. Math students need consistency, they need to see everything every day. The middle school is a different atmosphere; needs different rules. The curriculum that was just approved is not designed for 136 days. We need to explore other options.
4. Allison Brett, 11 Stanley Drive -The kids need consistency; I am a 5th grade special education teacher and I see the kids transitioning to the 6th grade. Kids need consistency in their schedules so they can be able to close the gap and get these kids to succeed.

Ms. Magri thanked everyone who attended tonight's meeting. She said she thinks we had great dialogue and would like to see people attend more often; it is important for all of us to be involved in the education of our children.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
MOTION PASSED: 7-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty