Seymour Board of Education
Regular Board of Education Meeting
March 1, 2021
Zoom
7:00 PM

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:
Ed Strumello, Chairman
Kristen Bruno
Jim Garofolo
Jay Hatfield
Beth Nesteriak
Karyna Weaver, Student Representative
Zachary Braca, Student Representative

Chris Champagne
Kristen Harmeling
Peter Kubik
Fred Stanek

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:
Michael Wilson, Superintendent
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Jim Freund, SHS Principal
Jodie Roden, SMS Principal
Lauren Reid, BES Assistant Principal
Elizabeth White (public comment)

Sherry Holmes, Business Manager
Derrick Martin, Network Administrator
Paul Lucke, SHS Assistant Principal
Kris Boyle, Director of Pupil Services
Stacey Albertson, CLS Assistant Principal

Pat Boyle, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER
A. The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance

II. REPORTS Part 1
A. HS Student Representative Report-Zach Braca, Karyna Weaver

Ms. Weaver says a date of May 15 has been set for the prom to be held at the Aquaturf. She also stated that SATs have been set for March 24. The student council is in the process of picking a Senior Day and will be painting the rock. Mr. Braca told the board that March 2 and March 5 have been designated “Red Day” at SHS as a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. The yearbook committee has finished the Superlatives for the year. Winter sports are in full swing, girls’ basketball team is 4-1 and the boys’ basketball team is 5-0. Golf and outdoor track are getting ready to start. Cheerleading has a virtual competition on March 13. Mr. Freund wanted the board to know that Dion Perkins has scored 1000 points, the eighth boy in school history to make this milestone.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT
Elizabeth White, 49 Sagamore Drive. I’d like to begin by commending: The BOE for their time and thoughtful discussions leading up to this point. The teachers my children have this year. They are taking action without waiting and have provided the best learning environment given the circumstances. I am continually impressed by SMS admin and their anticipation of what is to come. They problem solving in advance of the situation which has been a trend whether it is curriculum, SEL, or procedural. This seems in contrast to the lack of planning in other areas. When I had to report that members of my family had Covid on Superbowl Sunday, I was astonished that our district was unprepared to contact trace. How do we NOT have seating charts on buses? How do we NOT have access to seating charts in any classroom in district? The fact that the district was notified as soon as I had results at 10:45 in the morning, it is inexcusable that two buildings had to be shut down the next day. This should have been a given for a district that touts safety as its number one priority. I am looking for members of our administrative teams to start being proactive. Stop making
a laundry list of excuses. Stop with the reports and building updates and begin finding solutions. I urge the BOE to create a hiring committee to include all stakeholders when it comes time to hire the next superintendent. Parents should be included. Our voices have been largely ignored this year. Finally, what is the number of positive cases of students and staff during distance learning versus while in person? Do they support an eventual return for SHS?

IV. CONSENT AGENDA
A. Approval of Minutes
   1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes-February 1, 2021
   2. Special BOE Meeting Minutes-February 25, 2021
B. Financial Management Summary-ending February 28, 2021
C. Nutrition Services Report-January 2021
D. Staff Hiring-Non-Certified
   1. Ahern, Jesse
      Part Time Custodian
      Seymour Middle School
      Replacing James Davies

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

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor
MOTION PASSES 9-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA
None

VI. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
A. Non-Renewal of Long Term Substitute Teachers
   The Superintendent of Schools will recommend the non-renewal of two non-tenured teachers, Violetta Knopoka and Tyler Mowers, at the end of the 2020-2021 school year in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes section 10-151. This recommendation has been made because these teachers covered as a long-term substitute for vacancies caused by retirements.
   
   MOTION:(Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) move that, pursuant to Connecticut Statutes 10-151, the Seymour Board of Education will non-renew the teaching contracts of Violetta Knopoka and Tyler Morrow at the end of the 2020-2021 school year as recommended by the Superintendent. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action in writing to Violetta Knopoka and Tyler Mowers and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any request, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statutes, Section 10-151.
   
   SO VOTED

   AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor
   MOTION PASSES 9-0

B. Non-Renewal of Distance Learning teachers
   The Superintendent of Schools will recommend the non-renewal of nine non-tenured teachers, Margaret Bruce, Lynn Emra, Maureen Fox, Lisa Goodfellow, Suzan Kalloz, John Lavorgna, Sara Lucuk, Melissa Marini, and Stephanie Pelliccio, at the end of the 2020-2021
school year in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes section 10-151. This recommendation has been made because these teachers were hired as Distance Learning Teachers through the end of 2020-2021 school year.

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Hatfield) move that, pursuant to Connecticut Statutes 10-151, the Seymour Board of Education will non-renew the teaching contracts of Margaret Bruce, Lynn Emra, Maureen Fox, Lisa Goodfellow, Suzan Kalloz, John Lavorgna, Sara Lucuk, Melissa Marini, and Stephanie Pelliccio at the end of the 2020-2021 school year as recommended by the Superintendent. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action in writing to Margaret Bruce, Lynn Emra, Maureen Fox, Lisa Goodfellow, Suzan Kalloz, John Lavorgna, Sara Lucuk, Melissa Marini, and Stephanie Pelliccio and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any request, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statues, Section 10-151.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor
MOTION PASSES 9-0

C. Non-Renewal of Permanent Building Substitutes

The Superintendent of Schools will recommend the non-renewal of three non-tenured teachers, Deborah Ricard, Jack Rocco, and Max Salazar, at the end of the 2020-2021 school year in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes section 10-151. This recommendation has been made because these teachers were hired as Permanent Building Substitutes through the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mrs. Nesteriak) move that, pursuant to Connecticut Statutes 10-151, the Seymour Board of Education will non-renew the teaching contracts of Deborah Ricard, Jack Rocco, and Max Salazar at the end of the 2020-2021 school year as recommended by the Superintendent. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action in writing to Deborah Ricard, Jack Rocco, and Max Salazar and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any request, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statues, Section 10-151.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor
MOTION PASSES 9-0

VII. REPORTS Part 2 and DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Committee Reports

1. Curriculum and Technology Meeting Minutes-February 22, 2021

Ms. Harmeling states that it was an in depth meeting. Assessments both paper and pencil and online were discussed. Failures rates were analyzed. Policy 6161-Textbook requests was discussed. The current CABE policy was shared after the meeting and the committee would like to move it to the Policy Committee for review. The middle school schedule for next year was discussed and Ms. Harmeling is very excited that every teacher will see every student every day in the core subjects.
B. Updates

1. Superintendent Vacancy
   Mr. Strumello reports that as of Friday only one proposal was received. The board instructed Mrs. Holmes to revise the RFP to extend the date. Mr. Strumello has reached out to four other search companies and is expecting proposals from them.

2. Business Manager Vacancy
   Mr. Wilson shared that five applicants had applied and interviews were being scheduled. He will report to the board when they have a candidate and depending on their availability, we may need to look at an interim business manager.

C. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman’s Comments
   Mr. Strumello suggested we start looking for a full time legal firm, as our current firm was a temporary hire. In addition, he wanted the board to know that he was hoping that they could do training at CABE. He felt that ongoing training was helpful for everyone.

2. Board Member Comments
   Mr. Stanek thought we should start planning now for both middle school and high school graduation. He would like to see at least the immediate family members be able to attend graduation. He wanted to thank Mr. Champagne for taking on the task of doing Public Comments. He stated that some schools are allowing athletes to stay home and do remote learning but participate in sports. He asked about the ESSER funds and how we were planning to spend them. Ms. Harmeling would like to see as many children re-engaged as soon as possible. She feels we should let the student athletes that are doing remote learning participate in sports. She would also like to see the weight room open back up and the honor roll for Quarters 3 and 4 revisited. Ms. Bruno would like students to have a choice to do extracurricular activities while staying fully remote, as well as recognizing those students that are excelling. She also asked what plans were being made for summer school. Mr. Hatfield thanked the administration for their presentations the other night; it was very informative on what is going on in the schools. He was in agreement with starting graduation discussion.

D. Superintendent Report

Mr. Wilson wanted to let the board know that March was BOE appreciation month. On behalf of all students and staff, he wanted to thank the board for all of their hard work and the efforts they put forth for the students of Seymour. Mr. Wilson has been in discussion with Naugatuck Valley Health District and the NVL Athletic Directors about the reopening of weight rooms. He has met with Mr. Freund and Mrs. Roden about honor roll and recognitions. A meeting has been completed with our Director of Safety, Mr. Freund and Mrs. Roden about graduation. The outside event state guidelines right now calls for a max of 200 people. They would like to see graduation outside even if we have to do two or three groups. Mr. Wilson will report to the board when these topics are more fully developed.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Champagne) move to add to the agenda for discussion and possible action to allow fully remote students to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor
MOTION PASSES 9-0
The consensus of the board was to allow fully remote students to participate in extracurricular activities. They felt this would allow some students to re-engage in school. Extracurricular activities help with anxiety and depression in students.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Bruno) to change the decision of the reopening committee to allow participation in extracurricular activities by fully remote students as long as all other criteria is met.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor

MOTION PASSES 9-0

VIII. INFORMATION

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

B. Special Education Monthly Enrollment Update-Dr. Kris Boyle
   Dr. Boyle states that the number of outplaced students are unchanged. Teachers are in the process of conducting annual reviews for their students. The expectation at this time is for the ESY program to run in July in person four days a week from 9:00 A.M. -12:00 Noon. There are plans in place in case this is not practical.

C. Staff Hiring-Appendix E
   1. Avena, Michael
      Head Coach
      Seymour High School
      Replacing Dan Sorge

D. Staff Resignations-Appendix E
   1. Newman, Stephanie
      Assistant Coach, Spring Outdoor Track
      Seymour High School
      Effective February 17, 2021
   2. Avena, Michael
      Head Coach, Outdoor Track
      Seymour High School
      Effective February 17, 2021

E. Staff Resignations-Certified
   1. Drozd, Melissa
      Teacher, Physical Education
      Chatfield-LoPresti school
      Effective June 30, 2021
   2. Holmes, Sherry
      Business Manager
      Central Office
      Effective March 12, 2021

F. Staff Resignations-Non Certified
1. Kubik Nicholas  
   Custodian  
   Seymour High School  
   Effective March 25, 2021  
2. Souza, Linda  
   Instructional Paraprofessional  
   Seymour Middle School  
   Effective February 17, 2021  

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT  
   None  

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Champagne) move to add to the agenda to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a potential administrative claim and possible litigation and invite in Sherry Holmes, Business Manager; Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent; Mr. Wilson, Superintendent.  

SO VOTED  

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Strumello  
OPPOSED: Mr. Stanek  
MOTION PASSES 8-1  

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Champagne) move to enter into Executive Session to discuss a potential administrative claim and possible litigation and invite in Sherry Holmes, Business Manager; Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent; Mr. Wilson, Superintendent.  

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Strumello  
OPPOSED: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Stanek  
MOTION PASSES 7-2  

Entered into Executive Session 8:55 P.M.  
Entered into Regular Session 9:35 P.M.  

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION  

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Champagne) move to enter into Executive Session to discuss the employment of Mrs. Sherry Holmes, Business Manager. The board invites Mrs. Holmes into the Session:  

SO VOTED  

AFFIRMATIVE: All in favor  
MOTION PASSES 9-0  

Entered into Executive Session 9:45 P.M.  
Entered into Regular Session 10:00 P.M.  

X. ADJOURNMENT  

MOTION: (Mr. Champagne/sec., Garofolo) to adjourn meeting at 10:13 PM.  

SO VOTED  

AFFIRMATIVE: All in Favor  
MOTION PASSES 9-0