



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 2, 2013

Seymour Middle School Library Media Center

7:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Saundra Gesek
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Theodora Klarides
Jennifer Magri
Allison Sobieski-McAndrew
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Snopkowski, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Ginny Tagliatela, Director of Special Services
Rob Dyer, Systemwide Technology Coordinator
Glenn Lungarini, Principal, SHS
Jim Freund, Assistant Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Kristopher Boyle, Assistant Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Leslie Sojka, Assistant Principal, CLS
Polly Putorti
Nicole Klarides-Ditria
Themis Klarides

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

Mrs. Syriac reviewed the recognitions on the agenda.

1. Congratulations to the winners of the Lions Club Peace Poster Contest. Victoria Palumbo, Grand Prize winner, Caty Ragaini, First Place winner, Olivia Kick, Second Place winner, and Emily Fitzgerald, Third Place Winner
2. Thank you to high school students Dan Shibu, Brooke Bowns, Julie Kucsera, Ryan Rees, Vincent Lombardo, Christian Mutapcic, Andrew Zehall, Catherine Dimon, Justin Fabozzi, Griffin Gilbertie, Emily Thomas, Marissa D'Eramo, Jaymie Delnick, Matt Moran, Denae Sheahan, Connor Glenn, Eryk Skowronski, and Zach Fronterotta who participated in the iPad Exploration professional Development on November 5.

B. Correspondence

1. Letter dated November 20, 2013 to Christine Syriac from Barbara Green, *Sharing our Stories* Program Coordinator, thanking her for her attendance the Sharing Our Stories event in Seymour

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

A. REPORTS

1. **Chairman's Report**

a. Chairman's Report

Mr. Putorti reported that five Board members attended the CABA CAPSS Conference in Groton on November 15-16. He said Mr. Strumello suggested each Board member who attended plan on reporting what they learned at the conference at a future BOE meeting.

b. Board Members Comments

Mr. Stanek recognized the fine work of the Christmas Parade Committee, our students, our staff and Mr. Lang who has been the president of the Christmas Parade Committee for several years. He said Mr. Lang is a wonderful person who works hard for the Christmas parade as well as for the softball program in Seymour. Mr. Stanek also recognized the Middle School and High School Chorus who sang at the Toys for Kids program on December 1. Mr. Hatfield asked that motions be kept track of so it will be easier for the Board members to go back and research. Ms. Harmeling noted that the Poeta Family Fund has grown to \$70,000. She noted while plenty of negative things occur on social media the fact that \$25,000 was raised in one day would not have been possible without social media. She said she is proud to be part of such a giving community.

2. **Superintendent's Report**

Mrs. Syriac said January 8, 2014 and January 13, 2014 have been set as the dates for the BOE budget workshops. The budget must be reported to the town by January 21, 2014. These dates leave time for a third workshop if it is necessary. She noted there are several contract salary reopeners that will be included on the January meeting agenda. Mrs. Syriac will be meeting on December 5 with a team of teachers and administrators to develop a tentative 2014-15 school calendar. The process was postponed until we receive the preliminary information from the state regarding the development of a standard regional calendar. Mr. Strumello said this was discussed at a recent ACES meeting and they had compared the districts in their area and found there are more similarities than there are differences with district calendars which means a common calendar may be doable. Mrs. Syriac said we have not yet received the award notification for the technology grant we have been awarded and place this on the next agenda.

3. **Committee Reports**

a. Facilities Committee Minutes – November 6, 2013

b. Finance Committee Minutes – November 6, 2013

c. Curriculum Committee Minutes – November 21, 2013

B. INFORMATION

1. **School Activities and Recognitions**

a. **High School** Student Representative Report

Miss Guzzo reported that the high school held a Diversity Day on November 27. It included many programs that allowed students to learn about different cultures. She also said an Alumni College Fair was held on November 27 and students were able to hear from Seymour High School Alumni about their experiences in college. Mr. Han said the Powderpuff Football game was played on November 26 (in the rain!) and the senior class won. Mr. Han also reported that the chorus from Seymour Middle School and Seymour High School combined to perform at the TEAM toy drive in Seymour on December 1. Mr. Han noted that the fall sports have come to an end with all teams completing a successful season and the winter season sports are underway beginning on December 2.

b. **Middle School** Activities and Recognitions (see attached)

c. **Bungay School** Activities and Recognitions (see attached)

d. **Chatfield-LoPresti School** Activities and Recognitions (see attached)

2. **Explanation of Areas Dedicated in Honor at LoPresti School and Chatfield School (Handout)**
Mrs. Syriac said this information was requested by the Board at the last BOE meeting and Jen Magri, Rick Belden and Gene Coppola contributed to the report. Mr. Putorti asked if there were any questions on what was included. Mr. Hatfield said the Board may want to consider naming something at Chatfield-LoPresti School to honor Mrs. Kobasa. Mr. Stanek said this might be appropriate and something we may want to consider. Mr. Belden reported that the Kobasa Playground sign had been delivered to the family and they were quite appreciative. There was some talk of forming a committee to discuss this issue but Mr. Stanek suggested it may be a better idea to have the Facilities committee discuss this issue. Mr. Putorti agreed.
3. **iPad Exploration Professional Development (Handout)**
4. **Substitutes Update – Christine Syriac**
Mrs. Syriac distributed the result of an informal survey done to determine if we are in line with neighboring districts with regard to our substitutes' rate of pay. She spoke of the substitute shortage we (as well as other districts) are experiencing. She noted that we have advertised and continue to advertise for substitutes. Our pool of substitute teachers has decreased since the State changed the guideline that requires substitutes have a Bachelors Degree. Because of the shortage we have been forced to cancel professional development and pull teachers from other assignments to cover our classrooms. She noted that all the local districts share a pool of substitutes since a substitute will generally apply for work in several districts. Ansonia and Derby use Kelly Services for their substitutes. Mrs. Syriac asked the Board to consider changing the rate of pay for substitutes since it has not been changed in over 10 years. Ms. Harmeling asked if automating our substitute procedure has been a detriment and Mrs. Syriac said she did not believe so since so many districts use the same program. In addition to the automated system, our secretaries also call substitutes to encourage them to work. Nancy Snopkowski interviews substitutes and many have already found a permanent position before we can use them. Mr. Strumello said he felt from a teaching standpoint, Kelly Services can only offer a "warm body". Mrs. Syriac noted that the union has met with her twice on the issue and has offered assistance to this problem. Mrs. Syriac said in order to entice our retired school teachers to come back as substitutes; we have waived the formal interview process. She encouraged the Board members to spread the word that we are looking for substitutes. Ms. Magri asked about the number of days we utilize subs. Mrs. Syriac pointed out that our line item amount is over \$200,000 and explained how a substitute goes on step after 40 days of continuous work in the district. She said we also use our interns as a building substitute. Mr. Stanek asked if substitutes can specify what grade level they wish to teach and Mrs. Syriac said yes but we encourage them to try any grade level. He also asked if we bring back the same substitutes every day. Mr. Putorti asked Mrs. Syriac to bring more facts to the next BOE meeting.
5. **Tools for Schools Program – Rick Belden**
Mr. Belden briefly described the "Tools for Schools" program which is a Connecticut State recommended program for indoor air quality. The State of Connecticut is encouraging us to join the program. They look at buildings and prioritize ways to become "greener". Mr. Belden will be setting up training before February 1 starting at Chatfield-LoPresti School and eventually having all four schools involved. The goal is to have a checklist in place by the end of the school year. Mr. Belden noted this was a great benefit to the health of our staff and students.
6. **Great Northeast Shake Out – (Handout)**

7. **Staff Retirement - Certified**

a. **Bruce Deming**

- Science Teacher
- Seymour High School
- Effective at the end of 2013-14 school year

MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Ms. Magri) to accept the retirement with appreciation of Mr. Bruce Deming, Science teacher at Seymour High School effective at the end of the 2013-14 school year.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Stanek said we are losing a fine teacher who has been with us for many years. We extend our appreciation to him.

7. **Staff Resignation – Appendix E**

a. **John Johnson**

- Assistant Coach, Indoor Track
- Seymour High School
- Effective November 8, 2013

b. **Jennifer Monaco**

- Assistant Coach, Girls Soccer
- Seymour High School
- Effective November 19, 2013

8. **Winter Sports**

- a. Head Coaching Positions
- b. Assistant Coaching Positions
- c. Volunteer Positions

Mr. Hatfield noted the confusion around the hiring of volunteers; that sometimes the Board approves and as in this case the Board does not approve. Mrs. Syriac explained that all the coaches and volunteers on this list are currently in the position. If a new person who is an outside candidate is recommended then that hiring would be brought to the Board for approval.

9. **Veterans Day – Schools Open/Closed (Handout)**

10. **Matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel or devices affecting public security**

Mr. Stanek said that he and Ms. Harmeling had attended the last Board of Police Commissioners meeting and spoke under Public Comment. Ms. Harmeling said it was more of the same and the commissioners reported that they are not able to make a decision now. The commissioners said they are not interested in having beat officers and they will be pursuing a School Resource Officer instead. Mr. Stanek agreed with Ms. Harmeling and said that Mr. Kearns noted that he had witnessed an increase in police presence. The SRO assignment will be up to the BOE and this will be on the next Police Commissioners meeting on December 12. Mr. Stanek said we should attend and noted that if five or more attend we should post an agenda. Ms. Harmeling said Chief Metzler will not be in attendance at the next meeting. Mr. Stanek said they will create a line item in their budget for the SRO and said the discussion will continue.

V. **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

A. **Minutes**

1. **Regular BOE Meeting – November 6, 2013**

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling)to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education meeting on November 6, 2013 as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

2. **Special BOE Meeting – November 21, 2013**

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the minutes of the Special Board of Education meeting on November 21, 2013 as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

B. **Nutrition Services Financial Report October, 2013**

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri)to approve the Nutrition Services Financial Report for October, 2013 as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Strumello said he felt a committee member should make the motions.

C. **Staff Hiring – Non Certified**

MOTION: (Ms. Magri/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda the hiring of Mary Kelly as an Instructional Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mary Kelly

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti School
- Replacing Suzanne O'Hara (position transferred from middle school)

MOTION: (Ms. Magri/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Mary Kelly as an Instructional Paraprofessional at Chatfield-LoPresti School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

D. **BOE Meeting Schedule 2014-2015**

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri)to table to the next Board meeting the approval of the proposed BOE Meeting Schedule for 2014-2015.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Hatfield said having one meeting a month would require a change to the Board of Education bylaws. Mr. Putorti said we are fine until July 1 since the meetings were already posted. Mrs. Syriac said we would work on this and bring to the January 6 meeting. She noted that the original schedule included two meetings per month and we cancelled the second meeting of the month. Mr. Stanek reviewed the statute and said he felt we were ok but had a duty to file by January 31.

- E. **Out of State Field Trip**
1. **New England Regional Cheerleading Competition**
MOTION: (Ms. Magri/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an out of state field trip for the High School Cheerleaders to attend the New England Regional Cheerleading Competition in Providence, RI on March 21-22, 2014.
SO VOTED
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
- F. **Seymour High School Course Requests**
1. **Technology/STEM**
MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to approve the addition of the following courses for the 2014-15 school year: Engineering, Innovation, and Invention Engineering our Future Honors: A Maker Space, Applied Research Honors
SO VOTED
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
 2. **Science**
MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to approve the addition of the following courses for the 2014-15 school year: Introduction to Astronomy
SO VOTED
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
 3. **Art**
MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Curriculum and Technology Committee to approve the addition of the following courses for the 2014-15 school year: Digital Photography, Graphic Design, Advanced Pottery and Sculpture Studio, Advanced Painting Studio, Advanced Three Dimensional Studio, AP Studio Drawing
SO VOTED
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Mr. Stanek said there was good information in the documents submitted by the Curriculum Committee and encouraged the Board members to review it.
- G. **Capstone Project**
1. **Capstone Project Information**
MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the high school administration's request to develop a Capstone Project
SO VOTED
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Mr. Lungarini noted that he would like to put a committee together so that we are ready for 2018 that requires a change in graduation requirements to 25 credits. The Policy Committee and the Curriculum & Technology Committee will approve the final project. Mr. Strumello voiced his concern over the budgetary constraints saying there must be a need for a coordinator. Mr. Lungarini said they were not looking to implement anything this year.

H. Old Radios

1. Transfer of Old Radios

MOTION: :(Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Stanek)to authorize the transfer of twenty three (23) walkie talkie radios from the Seymour Board of Education to the Town of Seymour Emergency Services

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

I. Security Grant

MOTION: :(Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Magri)to authorize the Superintendent to execute the 2013 School Security Competitive grant agreement with the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$144,450.00, with the State of Connecticut funding \$90,282.00 and the Seymour Board of Education providing a local match of \$54,168.00

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

J. Ad Hoc Committee

MOTION: :(Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Putorti) to create a Community Budget Committee to chair the December 17 meeting

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Putorti asked if anyone wanted to be on the committee in addition to Ms. Harmeling and other board members declined. Mr. Putorti noted that they would report back to the full Board after the meeting.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*** A. None**

*** *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session from which the public will be excluded***

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to adjourn the meeting

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk