



## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2013

Seymour Middle School

7:30 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Yashu Putorti, Chairman

Jim Garofolo

Saundra Gesek

Kristen Harmeling

Jay Hatfield

Peter Kubik

Jennifer Magri

Fred Stanek

Ed Strumello

Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Christine Syriac, Superintendent

Nancy Snopkowski, Associate Superintendent

Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent Finance & Operations

Robert Dyer, Systemwide Technology Coordinator

Virginia Bauer, Director of Special Services

Wayne Natzel, Director of Facilities

Ed Rostowsky, Athletic Director

Glenn Lungarini, Principal, Seymour High School

Roberta Pratt

Cassandra Banks

Nicole Klarides-Ditra

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Salute to the Flag**

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

**II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. Recognitions**

1. Congratulations to Ms. Jen Fasciano the Advisor for the Seymour Middle School Best Buddies Program. The Seymour Middle School Best Buddies program has won recognition as "Most Outstanding Middle School: of all Connecticut Chapters.

**B. Administrative Communications**

1. Assurance of Voluntary Compliance in the Matter of Marcus Dairy, Inc. received on August 7, 2013.

### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Cassandra Banks – 12 Minor Road, East Haven – Has joint custody of her children but has been banned from Bungay School by Mrs. Feige. She has a legal right. Last year was banned from participating in events. Not prepared to let another year go by. Mr. Stanek requested action with this parent before the start of school.

### IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

#### A. Reports

##### 1. BOE Reports

- a. Chairman's Report

None

- b. Board Members Comments

Mr. Hatfield requested at either this meeting or the next, a discussion on the hiring of coaches, the volunteer procedure, and splitting stipends. Mr. Strumello said he felt this should be discussed by the Athletic Committee first and asked that a meeting be scheduled before the September 3, 2013 Board meeting.

Ms. Harmeling said she would like a full board discussion.

Mr. Strumello asked Mr. Hatfield to email him with his concerns so an agenda for the Athletic Committee can be developed.

Mr. Hatfield asked that Mr. Rostowsky and Mr. Lungarini be invited. He feels the Athletic Director's role needs to be defined.

Ms. Harmeling spoke about the state test waiver and that she feels we should apply for the waiver because it would give the students the opportunity not to have to take two tests next year.

Mr. Garofolo spoke of the recent news articles regarding standardized testing. He said he feels we are not sure where we are going. What are our expectations? He would like clarification of what it is the Board members needs. Feels what we have been given by the State is just "one big jello bowl".

Mr. Strumello agreed with Mr. Garofolo saying he has concerns at the state and federal level.

Mr. Strumello asked if we might expect additional money from Marcus Dairy. He noted that Trumbull Schools challenged the amount they were paid. Are we confident that what we received is correct?

Mr. Hatfield commented on a book he recently read entitled Pathways to the Common Core saying it shows both the positives and negatives. He said he felt we do not know where we are headed. He also asked for an update on the High School Pool.

##### 2. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac said that with regard to Marcus Dairy, the money we received is a settlement and there is no further expectation of more money. Before the settlement, Mrs. Brooks had negotiated refunds of several thousand dollars with Marcus Dairy. Mr. Hatfield asked where the money went and Mrs. Syriac explained that it went back into the Nutrition Services budget. The Senior Citizens passes have been distributed for the new school year. Last year 22 senior citizens took advantage of this program. Mrs. Syriac will present the hiring report at the next Board meeting. She confirmed that all teachers are hired and there are a

few openings for paraprofessionals. Mrs. Syriac said Seymour was selected for the Valley United Way Back to School Backpacks Program and it will take place on Thursday, 2:00 at Chatfield-LoPresti School. She and Yashu Putorti will attend. Mrs. Syriac invited all the board members to attend the Opening Day Convocation on August 27. The professional development taking place this year will involved the Educator Evaluation Development document. Mrs. Syriac said the Mrs. Snopkowski will present the School Performance Reports during the September 3 Board of Education meeting. She noted that there are increases in grade 7 and grade 10. CAPT Scores have improved. Other results have remained level or decreased. The Board asked that the school presentations be done at a Special Meeting. Ms. Harmeling suggested the meetings be parent friendly and that no other business be conducted at these meetings. The Board felt that there should be two Special Meetings; one for the middle school and high school and one for the two elementary Schools. Mr. Hatfield suggested we invite parents to attend these meetings. Mr. Stanek expressed his concern that parents would not come to the meetings and Mr. Garofolo said we need to promote attendance at these meetings. We have several avenues of communication for parents and we should use them. Mr. Stanek wondered if we should do a joint meeting with the PTA saying he felt there needed to be a "carrot". Mr. Hatfield said the Board is trying to increase our partnership with parents and these meetings are a good opportunity to do this. He suggested the meetings be held at one of the schools that were presenting. Mrs. Syriac said regarding her email to the Board, Mr. Natzel has arranged for air quality testing on Thursday and then custodians will clean and it will be retested. If there are questions Mr. Natzel can answer them. Mrs. Syriac informed the Board that she has notified ACES that Seymour is interested in the Race to the Top Grant noting this grant is very competitive across the nation. The Commissioner has indicated districts will have a choice between CMT/CAPT and the new SBAC Field test. She indicated the decision will be made near the first week of school. CMT/CAPT has been our measure and if we stay with these tests, we can get the results in early August. If we go with SBAC Field Test, the results will not be individual results but grade level/school level and results will not be delivered until October 2014. Mrs. Syriac said the decision will impact Student Learning Objectives and it is a very difficult decision to make. She told the Board she will keep them informed. Mr. Stanek said he would like to put the State Department of Education out of business for one year. Mr. Garofolo commented that they are like the jet stream, you never know what way they are going to blow and they don't have a clue. Mr. Garofolo thanked Mrs. Syriac for her sentiments and suggested we wait for the state to be ready. Let's do what makes sense. Mr. Strumello asked if we would have someone involved for the RTTT Grant. Mrs. Syriac said she was going to the first meeting and then would decide who would be involved. Mr. Natzel did a quick update on the pool saying it looks great and will be open on Friday. The cleaning, painting, and chemistry are all done and right.

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda a discussion on CMT/CAPT transition to SBAC Assessment

**SO VOTED**

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

Ms. Harmeling said she would like to transition to the new test now. She would be happy to have a year without this testing. She feels it does not make sense to continue. Mrs. Syriac explained that Common Core ELA Curriculum will be taught this year. If we transition we will go two years without data, none for the current year. Mr. Putorti said we would have to do it at some point. Ms. Harmeling said it would be a gift to the students not to have to take two tests. Mrs. Syriac said we have the option to take CMT/CAPT, the Pilot Test, or both. Mr. Hatfield asked if we can do different tests for different levels and Mrs. Syriac said she would ask that question. Mr. Strumello spoke of the history of the CMTs and how they brought teacher accountability into play. Before CMTs teachers could teach anything they wanted. He said it bothers him that there will be no transition data. Ms. Harmeling asked why we would give a test that is not based on current curriculum. Mr. Putorti pointed out that we will have to do it next year anyway. Mrs. Syriac said Smarter Balance is slated to start in the 2014-15 school year. The State is giving us the option to start it earlier. Ms. Gesek said the State keeps changing their mind. Mrs. Syriac said the test is computerized and adaptive. Some grade levels have taken a pilot test. Mrs. Snopkowski will send a link to Ms. Gesek re: sample test questions. Ms. Magri said even if we take Smarter Balanced, we haven't taught it yet. If we decide to take both, can the data be mapped together? Ms. Harmeling reminded her that there will be no student level data so there cannot be a comparison. Ms. Magri felt we would be crazy to walk away from data. She also said she felt we would take a hit when we transition. She also said that kids are used to technology and this is how they interact. Mr. Hatfield asked Mr. Lungarini how the kids felt about the Smarter Balance Assessment Pilot. Mr. Lungarini said there were no issues; the students follow along and do what the test asks. Teachers are developing assessments based on the testing. There were no issues with the computers. Mr. Hatfield asked if the state will release more practice tests and Mrs. Syriac said yes. Ms. Harmeling said she felt the elementary students had problems with writing on the computer. She also mentioned that 17 states are pushing back against the Common Core but Connecticut is not one of them. She said she doesn't feel Connecticut will walk away from this. Ms. Magri said they will not walk away from it but they are not sure what they are doing.

## **B. Information**

### **1. School Activities and Recognitions**

#### **a. High School**

- 1) Open House – August 21, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.  
Meet and Greet with Mr. Lungarini, tours available
- 2) Freshmen Orientation – August 23, 2013

### **2. Staff Resignation - Certified**

#### **a. Heather Grover**

- Elementary Music Teacher
- Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
- Effective June 30, 2013

3. **Staff Resignation – Non-Certified**
  - a. Debby D’Amico
    - Clerical Paraprofessional
    - Special Education Department
    - Seymour Middle School
    - Effective July 1, 2013
  - b. Renee Palumbo
    - Instructional Paraprofessional
    - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
    - Effective June 28, 2013
  - c. Matthew Vayda
    - Part Time Computer Technician
    - Central Office
    - Effective July 9, 2013
4. **Staff Resignation – Appendix E**
  - a. Nick Frosolone
    - Assistant Coach
    - High School Freshman Basketball Team
    - Effective July 23, 2013
5. **Staff Hiring – Certified**
  - a. Jeffrey Gilbert
    - Language Arts Teacher
    - Seymour Middle School
    - Masters, Step 2
  - b. Cheryl Collins
    - Special Education Teacher
    - Bungay Elementary School
    - Masters, Step 1
  - c. Emily Corbett
    - Special Education Teacher
    - Bungay Elementary School
    - Masters, Step 1
  - d. Brian Webster
    - Elementary Music Teacher
    - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
    - Replacing Heather Grover
    - Bachelors, Step 2
  - e. Kristen Woods
    - Part Time Elementary Guidance Counselor
    - Chatfield-LoPresti School
    - 6<sup>th</sup> Year, Masters +30

**6. Staff Hiring – Non Certified**

- a. Kelly Baker
  - Monitor Paraprofessional
  - Bungay Elementary School
  - Step 1, Paraprofessional Contract
- b. Robert Dyer
  - Systemwide Technology Coordinator
  - Central Office
  - Replacing Roberta Pratt

Mrs. Syriac introduced Mr. Dyer to the Board.
- c. Catherine Hinckley
  - Board Certified Behavior Analyst
  - Central Office
- d. Kelly Reilly
  - Part Time Clerical Paraprofessional
  - Bungay Elementary School
  - Replacing Rita Brenchak
  - Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract
- e. Marie Sparwell
  - Monitor Paraprofessional
  - Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
  - Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract
- f. Kelli Wrogg
  - Monitor Paraprofessional
  - Bungay Elementary School
  - Step 1, Paraprofessionals Contract

**7. Staff Hiring – Appendix E**

- a. James Burns
  - Football Assistant Coach
  - Seymour High School
  - Replacing Michael Sirowich
- b. Joseph Deptula
  - Football Assistant Coach
  - Seymour High School
  - Replacing Ray Nappi
- c. Craig Prasauckas
  - Cross Country Head Coach
  - Seymour Middle School

**8. Staff Appointments – Volunteers**

- a. Jason Barker
  - Football Assistant Coach
  - Seymour High School

- b. Christopher Hebert
  - Football Assistant Coach
  - Seymour High School

**9. Senior Citizens Passes**

Mrs. Syriac discussed this in her Superintendent's Report.

**10. 2013-14 School Calendar – Discussion of December 23, Monday Date**

Mrs. Syriac explained that December 23, 1996 was a Monday and schools were open. She was told by the SEA that attendance was very low that year, only about 10% of students attended school. We were unable to verify this because attendance records do not go back this far. December 23, 2002 was a Monday and schools were closed and the belief was because of the attendance in 1996. The SEA has requested we close on December 23, 2013 which would make the last day of school June 12, 2014.

**MOTION:** (Mr. Stanek/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to add to the agenda the deletion of school on December 23, 2013 and adjust the end of school to June 12, 2014

**SO VOTED**

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

**MOTION:** (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to close school on December 23, 2013 and adjust the end of school to June 12, 2013

**SO VOTED**

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

Mr. Hatfield asked about adding the Systemwide Technology Coordinator to the agenda and also a discussion on security. Mr. Strumello pointed out that the Superintendent's Performance Evaluation has been postponed many times and needs to happen.

**11. Technology Investments to Implement Common Core State Standards and Administer Common Core Aligned Assessments, Specifically Smarter Balanced Assessments Grant 2013-14**

Mrs. Snopkowski said she was seeking Board approval to apply for the above grant.

**MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the Associate Superintendent's request to apply for the Technology Investments to Implement Common Core State Standards and Administer Common Core Aligned Assessments, Specifically Smarter Balanced Assessments Grant 2013-14

**SO VOTED**

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

**V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

**A. Minutes**

**1. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – July 1, 2013**

**MOTION:** (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the minutes of the Regular Board of Education meeting on July 1, 2013 with the corrections noted.

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti,

**ABSTAIN:** Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

**B. Intra District Transfer Request**

**1. Kylie Echevarria**

Home School: Bungay School

Transfer School: Chatfield-LoPresti School

The parent has requested her child attend Chatfield-LoPresti School because the parent babysits for a student who has to be picked up at Chatfield-LoPresti. The concern is how many other requests we might receive with the same type of request. Kindergarten enrollment at Chatfield-LoPresti School is higher. Mr. Strumello said historically this type of decision was made based on class size. Currently class size at CLS is 20 at BS it is 18-19. The child is currently registered at Bungay School. Mr. Kubik wondered what would happen if the child care situation ends. Historically, once approved the student stays in that school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

**MOTION:** (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Strumello) to deny the Intra District Transfer Request of Ms. Vanessa Cedenio to send her child, Kyle Echevarria to Chatfield-LoPresti School

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Strumello

**OPPOSED:** Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Stanek

**C. Donations**

**1. The Wichman Family**

**MOTION:** to accept the cash donation in the amount of \$235 from The Wichman Family and direct the Superintendent to use at Chatfield-LoPresti for the purchase of picnic tables.

**SO VOTED**

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

**2. Mr. Albert Allen**

**MOTION:** to accept the cash donation in the amount of \$500 from Mr. Albert Allen and direct the Superintendent to split it between Bungay and Chatfield-LoPresti for the purchase school supplies for underprivileged students.

**SO VOTED**

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

**D. Home School Notification**

**1. Ms Kathy Gardecki has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her children, Rachel Gardecki and Samantha Gardecki, for the 2013-2014 school year.**

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to acknowledge the receipt of this form and render no opinion as to the appropriateness of the planned program

**SO VOTED**

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

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

\* 1. Superintendent's Performance Evaluation

\* *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session*



**MOTION:** (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Strumello) move to enter executive session for discussion and potential action on Superintendent's Performance Evaluation and to invite Christine Syriac, Superintendent

**SO VOTED**

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

**MOTION:** (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to add to the agenda in Executive Session a discussion on matters concerning security strategy or the deployment of security personnel, or devices affecting school and public security

**SO VOTED**

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

Entered Executive Session: 8:55 p.m.

Returned to Regular Session: 10:52 p.m.

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec. Mr. Kubik) to add to the agenda discussion and possible action to extend the Superintendent's contract.

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello

**OPPOSED:** Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Gesek

Mr. Hatfield stated he is disappointed that he could not support the Superintendent at this time. He stated he is very disappointed that this topic what brought up tonight as he had a discussion with the Superintendent previously re: split board decisions and now how will it look. Mr. Stanek stated the agenda doesn't state discussion of contract extension and was not aware that was going to be discussed this evening. Ms. Gesek stated the same thing. Mr. Stanek stated that he felt it should be tabled to provide proper notice to the public that the extension of the Superintendent's contract would be discussed by the Board of Education.

**MOTION:** Ms. Harmeling/sec. Mr. Strumello) to table the discussion until next Board of Education meeting.

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Gesek

**OPPOSED:** Mr. Garofolo

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**SO VOTED:**

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Lee-Ann Dauerty  
Board Clerk