

Seymour Public Schools



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2012

Seymour Middle School

7:30 p.m.

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 10/23/12
TIME: 9:22 AM
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman
Jim Garofolo
Saundra Gesek
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Jennifer Magri
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Monica Mordowanec, Student Representative
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Snopkowski, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Roberta Pratt, Systemwide Technology Coordinator
Glenn Lungarini, Principal, Seymour High School
David Olechna, Principal, Chatfield-LoPresti School
Leslie Sojka, Asst. Principal, Chatfield-LoPresti School
Darlene O'Callaghan
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, Bungay School
Harvey Catlin
Allison Cunningham
Allison Brett
Richard Rossik
Elizabeth White

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:34 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Salute to the Flag

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Christine Syriac read the recognition congratulating 8th graders Brittany LaChance, Brooke Seymour, Brianna Gee, and Meagan Meyer who took first place and medal winning achievements for the Fall Science Olympics. The girls participated in the competition last year as seventh graders and took third place. The Science Olympics is for girls of middle school age. A team of 4 participates in team problem solving

activities during the course of the day. They are scored on the teams' ability to solve the problem which is based on a real world problem.

A. Recognitions (continued)

Using the scientific method; the students used inquiry based practices to solve the problem. Laurelton Hall sponsors this activity and 40 teams participate in the event.

B. Correspondence

1. None

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. None

IV. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

A. REPORTS

1. Chairman's Report

a. Mr. Putorti reported that the Chatfield-LoPresti Opening went very well and that he thought approximately 200 people were seated with another 240 standing. He said the speeches were good. He said that people were just driving by and deciding to stop in. Fusco presented framed prints to the committee members and offered his to anyone who had a good place to display it. He noted the Public Works meeting was being held tonight. He mentioned that the second student representative had been chosen and we may want to make a motion to add that to the agenda. He reminded everyone that the next BOE meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, November 7, 2012.

b. Board Member Comments

Mr. Stanek said he felt the Chatfield-LoPresti Opening went very well. The program was very well done and he complimented the Building Committee on how it went. He also thanked those people who organized the event.

2. Superintendent's Report

Mrs. Syriac distributed the CAFE survey for BOE members to complete and asked that they return it before the deadline of October 26, 2012. She also distributed updated BOE Members contact information. Mrs. Syriac reported that 181 parents visited Chatfield-LoPresti in the morning and 124 visited in the afternoon. Bungay School had a total of 244 parents visit the schools with many coming for both sessions. She said she would report on the Middle School and High School parent visitations at the next BOE meeting. She noted that October 22nd was Bus Safety Day and the Commissioner and the media would be present at Bungay School. Parents have knowledge of the event and will have the opportunity to opt out if they do not want their children photographed. On October 23, 2012 8th graders will have the opportunity to visit Seymour High school during the day and parents will visit in the evening. Mr. Lungarini suggested this program be moved to earlier in the year so we are more aligned with what private schools in the area do. Mrs. Syriac distributed a copy of the Citizens Academy brochure and said she would be sending them a list of the people who are invited. She also asked Athletic Committee members suggest the best date to meet and November 12, 2012 was chosen.

3. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee Agenda – October 15, 2012

Mrs. Harmeling reported that the Finance Committee has asked for more information regarding the Adult Education program that we partner with. The committee would like to have the numbers of Seymour residents that participate in this program noting that we contribute \$90,000 toward the program. The Committee wants to make sure we are getting our money's worth. Mrs. Syriac informed the board that she was attending a meeting at the Adult Education office on October 29th and would be able to get this information and report back to the board at the November 7th meeting. The committee also asked that we elicit bids for the landscaping of the schools and we look into getting the bids based on a project basis rather than an hourly basis.

b. Policy Committee Agenda – October 11, 2012

Mrs. Harmeling thanked Fred Stanek and Yashu Putorti for attending the Policy Committee meeting. She described briefly what was discussed at the meeting and noted that no motion was put forth for this meeting but hoped there would be something after the next Policy meeting. She said that the advertising policy was also discussed and they are making some minor adjustments to the policy. Mrs. Harmeling said she was currently working on a schedule of standing meetings. She noted that the committee would be discussing Technology next. Mr. Strumello asked if we are aligning our policies with CAFE's suggestions and noted we pay for this service. Mrs. Syriac said she was in the process of summarizing our policies now and noted the audit was done about five years ago. She said it is difficult to accomplish as much as we need to get done but with the Policy Committee's plan to schedule regular meetings she felt we would be able to move forward. Mr. Hatfield asked if the Policy Committee could have a hard copy of the policies. Mrs. Syriac noted that she is doing an audit of the online policies and will make them current. Once her audit is done, we will be able to have a hard copy of all the policies. He also asked if there was a better way to organize the policies and Mrs. Syriac said she felt the index she is creating should make it easier to negotiate the online policies. Mr. Garofolo noted he thought the online policies would be kept up to date. Mrs. Syriac felt confident that she would have the online policy manual up to date by the end of her audit.

B. INFORMATION

1. Student Representative Report – High School

a. Home Coming Update

The Homecoming Dance will be held on Saturday with the Spirit Week to be held the week after. This is change from the past. Ms. Mordowanec has worked hard to get the dance organized and is happy to report everything is in place except for getting a policeman to be there. Mr. Kearns is helping her with this.

b. Pep Rally / Pink Day

On Wednesday there will be a Pep Rally and a staff vs. students flag football game.

1. **Student Representative Report – High School (continued)**
 - c. **Assessment Update**

The Benchmark Assessments are currently being taken. These tests will be used to develop strategies to improve student skills.
2. **Student Activities and Recognitions – Bungay School**
 - a. Thank you to our wonderful PTA for providing Bungay Elementary School with another fun and educational program. “Stronger than a Bully” was presented on Friday, October 5th for grades K – 5. The program was based on techniques aimed at empowering the victim and learning a lesson while interacting with children through audience participation, magic, ventriloquism, role playing, comedy and FUN!
3. **Student Activities and Recognitions – Chatfield-LoPresti School**
 - a. In a school wide vote on October 3rd, , our students selected the mascot name for Chatfield-LoPresti School to be the Cheetahs!
4. **Staff Resignation – Non Certified**
 - a. Zorena, Joan
 - Clerical Paraprofessional
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Effective October 12, 2012
5. **Staff Resignation – Appendix E**
 - a. Cheney, Lisa
 - Student Council Advisor
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective October 11, 2012
6. **School Improvement Plan, Chatfield-LoPresti – David Olechna**

Mr. Olechna and Ms. Sojka presented the School Improvement Plan for Chatfield-LoPresti School. They noted that they had many discussions on how to present the material since there were two schools’ results to consider. It was decided to blend the results for the presentation with certain information being presented as separate schools. Mr. Olechna went through the CMT scores and noted for the most part the trend was positive. However, he noted areas where a “dip” occurred and addressed the typical dip that occurred in the 4th grade. He noted that Science will be a focus this year. They have had grade level meetings and will be reviewing the curriculum for Science. They have added more Science kits for each classroom. Reading is also a focus. SPI Targets have not been established for Chatfield-LoPresti School yet. It has been requested of the state on a couple of occasions but they have not yet received it. Mr. Olechna noted he was very pleased to report that all staff have been trained in Readers Workshop, Running Records, and Word Study. He has increased Science resources. He noted continuing collaboration with the Special Education department and technology integration. He noted that Kindergarten has an IPAD cart dedicated to them and another IPAD cart moves throughout the school. Mr. Olechna reviewed the Indicators of Success and concluded his presentation by saying “We hope to Seymour Success at CLS!” Mr. Kubik said he was bothered that goals are set and then not met. He questioned whether we were setting our

goals too high.

6. **School Improvement Plan, Chatfield-LoPresti (continued)**

He noted that we are not discussing why the goals are not being met. He said this was a concern of his across the board, not just at Chatfield-LoPresti. Mr. Olechna said the goals are not meaningless to him and noted that teachers use the goals to establish strategies. He felt that some goals were not met due to the combining of the two schools. Mr. Kubik felt this was not relevant. Mr. Olechna mentioned the Readers Workshop professional development and stated that he honestly felt they are on the right track. Mr. Kubik said he thought maybe we should set goals that are achievable and maybe add stretch goals instead. Mrs. Magri asked Mr. Olechna if he felt the scores for the 2nd grades were in direct correlation to the fact that they had the use of IPADS for the whole year. Mr. Olechna said there was no data to support this and that both 2nd grades did very well. He noted that both Chatfield-LoPresti and Bungay students were struggling with the same strands. He was asked if CLS and BS coordinate their instruction and Mr. Olechna noted that as of right now they have been unable to meet regarding this. Mr. Strumello noted that writing scores are good and hopefully we can analyze the success in writing and move it over to reading. He noted some confusion with regard to the Special Education Collaboration goal and Mr. Olechna said that goal was referring to Mrs. Bauer's goals. Mrs. Harmeling asked when looking at the data, do we look at each individual student? Mr. Olechna noted that each teacher is given the student data from the previous year. She asked if outreach is done to the parents when a student loses ground and are there one on one meetings with the parents. Mr. Olechna stated that if the student is part of the PMT process the teacher calls the parent to discuss the child's progress. Student progress is also discussed at the conferences in November. Parents are given comparison data from year to year. Mr. Hatfield asked about collaboration between the staff of CLS and the staff of BS. Mr. Olechna said there are plans for collaboration between the schools this year. Ms. Syriac noted that Bungay was about a year behind CLS with Readers Workshop training but noted that the two schools will be aligned within two years. Mr. Hatfield asked if there had been discussion regarding adding additional conferences. Mrs. Syriac responded that she hoped to incorporate spring conferences into next year's calendar. There was a brief discussion on the use of IPADS in the kindergarten classrooms. Mr. Garofolo thanked Mr. Olechna and Mrs. Sojka for their presentation and for answering the questions and concerns of the board members. He went on to say he wondered about the decrease in Science scores and questioned what the strategy is to beef up in Science. What will the strategies be to have a positive effect? Mr. Olechna noted that they are currently having grade level meetings every 4-6 weeks. He said Mrs. Sojka is on the Science Committee and she works hard to make sure teachers know how to use the resources that are available to them. All the work will be reviewed at the end of the year to establish what worked and what did not work. Mr. Garofolo asked if instruction at CLS needed to be delivered differently due to the blending of the two schools. Mrs. Sojka said they started looking at this last year, aligning with current resources. She said she felt they needed a year or two of working together to see what works and what doesn't work. Ms. Gesek asked if there is a correlation between the Science scores and the Reading scores and if the Foss Science kits helped. Mrs. Sojka felt there was a correlation between the Science and Reading scores and she noted what is most important is that we needed to make sure our students are receiving the right instruction in each area.

V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Minutes – Special BOE Meeting – October 1, 2012

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to accept the Special BOE meeting minutes for October 1, 2012 as presented

SO VOTED

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

ABSTAINED: Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Stanek

B. Minutes – Regular BOE Meeting – October 1, 2012

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to accept the Regular BOE meeting minutes for October 1, 2012 as presented

SO VOTED

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

C. Financial Management Summary

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the Financial Management Summary ending September 30, 2012 as recommended by the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent, Finance & Operations and approved by the Finance Sub-Committee

SO VOTED

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

D. School Nurses Contract

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Magri) to accept the recommendation of the Liaison Committee to ratify the contract for the School Nurses

SO VOTED

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

E. Staff Hiring – Certified

1. DeSimone, Justine
 - Special Education Teacher
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Step 4, Bachelors
 - Replacing Lindsey Kent

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Kubik) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Justine DeSimone as a Special Education teacher at Seymour Middle School

Ms. Magri noted two different names were in the application packet and surmised this must be due to marriage. Mr. Hatfield questioned whether we should be making the salary step part of the motion. It was agreed by the board that this was not necessary.

V. **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS (continued)**

SO VOTED

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

F. **Out of State Field Trip**

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an out of state field trip for the 8th Grade Choir to perform (for the third year in a row) at Radio City Music Hall in New York City, NY on December 1, 2012 and December 8, 2012

Mrs. Syriac noted the need for two trips is because the program director at the Radio City Music Hall limits the number of students who can perform so two trips are planned so all students will have the opportunity to perform.

SO VOTED

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

G. **Out of State Field Trip**

MOTION: to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an out of state field trip for select 11th and 12th grade students to visit Washington DC on March 10-15, 2013

Mr. Hatfield asked how many students went last year and Mr. Lungarini responded that six students went last year. Mr. Strumello expressed concern that students may have the academic ability to attend this trip but be prohibited by the cost. Mr. Lungarini confirmed the cost of the trip for a student is \$1600 and at this time nothing is in place for those students who cannot afford the trip. Mr. Strumello asked him to consider fundraisers and also contacting the Fathers Club for assistance. Mr. Lungarini felt fundraisers would be looked at once the trip has been approved by the board. Mr. Garofolo questioned how we would know if a student is in need and everyone agreed that the student would need to express this concern to the teacher. When asked how the students are selected to attend this trip, Mr. Lungarini said they are chosen by the Close Up Committee.

SO VOTED

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

H. **Out of State Field Trip**

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Mr. Kubik) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to approve an out of state field trip for 8th grade students to visit Washington DC on May 1-3, 2013

Mr. Catlin confirmed that the trip is the same trip as last year but may do some fine tuning as the date draws near. The cost is \$400 to students and they do fundraising to defray the costs and also use any funds left over from last year's trip. Mr. Strumello asked if the students will meet elected officials and Mr. Catlin confirmed they would be meeting Senator Blumenthal again this year.

V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS (continued)

Mr. Strumello suggested he ask for help from the Democrats on the board to encourage participation from Congresswoman DeLauro. Mr. Catlin said he would be appreciative of any help. Mr. Hatfield asked about fundraising and Mr. Catlin confirmed that any student who wants to go will go. In fact, if a student says they are not going, the parent is called to make sure the reason is not financial.

SO VOTED

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

- I. MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to add to the agenda a discussion regarding the establishment of email addresses for board members.

SO VOTED

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

Mr. Strumello asked about the possibility of making email addresses through the school district email available to each board member so they did not have to use a personal email address. He felt this would be a good way of reaching out to the community because the email could be available through the website and would give the public a way to communicate with our board members. Ms. Harmeling agreed this was a good idea. Mrs. Syriac said she would look into this and report back at the next board meeting.

- J. MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling /sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda the appointment of a second BOE Student Representative

SO VOTED

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

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint Katherine Acquavella as the second BOE student representative for the 2012-13 school year

Mr. Stanek noted that according to the Board bylaws we are to have one student representative and one alternate student representative and that they are called BOE student members. Ms. Harmeling rescinded her motion and made the following motion:

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling /sec., Mr. Strumello) to add to the agenda the appointment of Katherine Acquavella as the alternative BOE Student Representative for the 2012-13 school year

SO VOTED

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

VI. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE ASTERISKED ITEMS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

◆ 1. None

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

VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk