



## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

April 6, 2015

Bungay Elementary School

Cafeteria

7:30 p.m.

### BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Yashu Putorti, Chairman  
Saundra Gesek  
Kristen Harmeling  
Jay Hatfield (arrived 8:18 pm)  
Theodora Klarides (arrived 8:18 pm)  
Allison Sobieski-McAndrew  
Fred Stanek  
Ed Strumello  
Chris Falcioni, Student Representative  
Daniel Robinson, Student Representative  
Jennifer Magri

### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools	Cameron Szuch
Nancy Snopkowski, Assoc. Superintendent	Ty Sirowich
Rick Belden, Asst. Super., Finance & Op	Alex Massie
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk	Andrew Satkowski
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator	Robert Findley
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS	Chris Bogardus
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS	Paul Roy
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS	Madeline Lynch
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS	Vincent Conte
Kristopher Boyle, Assistant Principal, BS	Ruben Caiza
Roxanne Melaragno, Asst. Principal, CLS	Jennifer Fusco
Allison Imperio	Ryan Oliwa
Rebecca DeAngelis	Karen Fusco
Jamie Yakushewich	Brian Cusano
Vonda Tencza	CJ Falcioni
Hailey Slotter	Victoria Babson
Stefanie Ellsworth	Austen Searles
Brittany Hicks	Marissa Merithew
Cassie Tilton	Matt Cociello
Myranda Williams	Ashly Hermance
Brandon Otero	Miran Zygmunt
Peter Allen	Alyssa Hernandez
Austin Schelente	Amy Carlson
Austin Fraser	Nicole Klarides-Ditria

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Putorti called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions at 7:31 p.m.

## II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

### A. **Recognitions**

1. Congratulations to DECA members Scott Walkinshaw, Liam Flannery, Janet Collins, and TJ Fauci for winning the LifeSmarts State Competition. The team beat three time defending champions Crosby High School by a score of 217 to 203 to qualify for nationals in Seattle.
2. Mr. Stanek recognized Julian Falcioni for being named as one of the National Football Foundation scholar athlete award recipients.
3. Mr. Stanek recognized Dan Robinson for his participation in the Decades Music Program at Seymour High School as well as his participation in the Mr. Seymour Contest.
4. Mr. Stanek recognized Paul Sponheimer, former Seymour Football Coach who was named as an Outstanding Coach by the National Football Foundation.

## III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Austin Fraser, 43 Canfield Road – representing senior class who feels graduation should be on DeBarber Field. We feel as a class developed an identity on the field from “The Wild”, sports games to Nina’s vigil. We came together as a class there. Graduation ultimate recognition of success and feel this is being taken away from us.

Peter Allen, 12 Ajello’s Farm Road - as someone who has been involved in many aspects in Seymour High School DeBarber field means a lot to us. It means a lot to us because of Nina. For many of us this was the last place where we saw Nina on Senior Day. It means a lot to us.

Karen Fusco, 24 Sagamore Drive – very important that students graduate at the high school, please don’t take it away from the high school.

Victoria Babson, 30 Bryson Avenue – This is where we have grown up for the last four years. We have supported each other through a lot this year. Everyone was involved in everything. As an ending, DeBarber field is the place where we should be.

(11<sup>th</sup> Grade Student) - you guys have talked about all the great things and memories you have had on DeBarber Field, you are going to take that away from us next year and that would not be fair to us.

Chris Bogardus, 832 South Main Street – many of us have been involved with that field for the four years in high school but also many years prior in Pop Warner I know many other students as well. Graduating on the main field at the high school campus would be the most rewarding thing for us.

Hailey Slotter, 14 N. Benham Road, we have always been told academics come before sports. You have to get a certain amount of good grades in order to play sports. I think education should be coming before athletics.

Madeline Lynch, 21 Briarwood Drive – if games are not played at home the Fathers club will not make enough money to fund our scholarships and we won’t get them next year.

Cassie Tilton, 82 Great Hill Road – Part of sports all four years, would rather sacrifice home games and have graduation on the field. That is what everyone looks forward to all four years. Should be at the school where the memories are.

Austin Searles – Big stands for everyone. It’s a good place for everyone to see us graduate.

Brittany Hicks, 4 Lakeview Avenue – been involved in lots of activities not sports. Coming from that angle, not everyone is an athlete forfeiting where we want to graduate favoring athletes.

Cameron Szuch, 52 Brookfield Road – point out snack shack not open during soccer games. It’s so important for us to graduate on this field. If they have to sacrifice a few home games, it doesn’t matter. If they were in our position they would want the same thing. I feel like Nina would want us to graduate here.

## IV. CONSENT AGENDA

### A. **Approval of Minutes**

1. Regular BOE Meeting – March 2, 2015

### B. **Finance Committee Meeting** – April 6, 2015

1. Financial Management Summary - ending March 31, 2015

To approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee meeting to accept the March 31, 2015 Financial Management Summary as presented

### C. **Nutrition Services Financial Report** – February, 2015

**D. Homeschooling Notification**

1. Sherwood, Austin (Grade 10)

Ms. Kimberly Sherwood has informed the Board of Education of her intent to home school her child, Austin Sherwood, for the remainder of 2014-2015 school year

**E. Staff Hiring – Non Certified**

1. **Johnson, Suzanne**

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Ivy Fleming

2. **Weber, Mark**

- District Data Technician-Part time
- Central Office
- Grant Funded Position

**F. Staff Hiring – Appendix E**

1. **Deptula, Joseph**

- Assistant Coach, Baseball
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Kyle Georgia

**G. Staff Appointment – Volunteer**

1. **Burns, James**

- Volunteer Assistant Coach, Baseball
- Seymour High School

**MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew)** move to approve the consent agenda as presented

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

**V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

None

**VI. REPORTS**

**A. Chairman's Report**

1. Chairman's Report

None

2. Board Member Comments

Mr. Stanek asked about Item G regarding setting the location of graduation. Mr. Putorti said we should wait until that item is discussed. Mr. Strumello talked about the Mentoring Program he and Mr. DiStasi have been working on and said their first meeting with mentors and mentees went well. He reported we currently have 8 mentors which is short of the goal but hope to meet the goal soon. He said they would like to add 9 mentors each year. Mr. DiStasi confirmed it went well and will continue at both elementary schools. He thanked the Board of Education and Mr. Strumello for their support. Ms. Harmeling reported that three budget presentations have occurred and the webinar went very well. There were 118 people listening live and another 100 listened by Wednesday morning.

**B. Superintendent's Report**

None

**C. High School Student Representatives Report – Julian Falcioni, Daniel Robinson**

Mr. Falcioni reported since the beginning of March the high school has had the Through the Decades show, weightlifting competition, and Mr. Seymour. Spring sports have started. The 4<sup>th</sup> marking period is starting. Mr. Falcioni would like to comment on the graduation topic. Graduation is a major stepping stone in our lives; we have been in school 13 years beginning in kindergarten.

High School graduations have many rituals and one of our rituals is to graduate in the place where all of it happened, athletically and academically. As an athlete, I have a lot of participation on the field. We

deserve to graduate on the field; we are the class with the highest scoring CAPT scores in the last two years. We have a lot of special memories on the field, including the vigil for Nina and the class picture in the shape of a heart with Nina in the middle. If there is any way possible we would like to graduate on DeBarber Field. We would like to graduate on the field; we have lots of memories not only of high school but memories for life. Mr. Robinson followed with his report. He said the Spread the Word to End the Word culminated with over 120 signatures on March 4. He feels the use of the word has been reduced. The campaign went really well. Speaking for the junior class, he said if the turf field gets pushed back it will cost more money and could possibly push back the installation of the track due to weather. It would hinder fall sports season and the spring season also. We would lose 51 games and have to take buses to games if it was not finished in October. I do understand if I was in the same position as the senior class I would be fighting for it too. Our senior class wants to have the same kind of memories that the current senior class has experienced. No one can take your memories away. Regardless of where you are, as long as you are with the people who you grew up with and who made the memories with you that is the important part of graduation, not where the graduation takes place.

**VII. INFORMATION**

**A. Mystery Skype – Allison Imperio, Rebecca DeAngelis**

Mrs. Imperio, Technology Integration teacher and Ms. Rebecca DeAngelis, teacher presented a class activity called Mystery Skype. This activity helps students with geography which is a difficult subject for elementary students. Classes Skype with classes in other states and through a process of questions and answers, the students collect clues about the state they are Skyping with. Students have different roles such as greeters and mappers. The students question each other back and forth until they have enough information to figure out the state they are talking to. Ms. DeAngelis said the students are very engaged and she said she has never seen them so excited about geography. Ms. Imperio showed a video showing our students doing a Mystery Skype. This video is one that Ms. Imperio sends to teachers to introduce them to the activity. She said she also does one with the younger students using numbers instead of geography. Mr. Putorti thanked them for the presentation.

**B. School Activities and Recognitions**

1. Middle School (see attached)
2. Bungay School (see attached)
3. Chatfield-LoPresti School (see attached)

**C. Committee Reports**

1. Finance Committee – March 2, 2015
2. Community Advisory Committee – March 10, 2015
3. Policy Committee – March 16, 2015

**D. Staff Resignations – Appendix E**

1. Diaz-Hennessey, Teresa
  - Head Coach, Dance Team
  - Seymour High School
  - Effective March 6, 2015

**E. Staff Hiring – Appendix E**

1. Goldstein, Zachary (teacher)
  - Head Coach, Baseball
  - Seymour Middle School
  - Replacing Steve Tilki

**F. Discussion and possible action - Last Day of School for 2014-15 School Year – Christine Syriac**

Mrs. Syriac said she is hopeful that we will not need to close any further days due to weather and we are in good position as far the closing date of school which is earlier in the year than in the past few years.

The high school and middle school closed six times, the elementary schools closed seven times. Due to the imbalance between the high school and middle school and the elementary schools Mrs. Syriac asked that the Board do what has been done in the past when this has happened. She

asked the Board to consider having all students end school on June 17 and the elementary teachers come back on June 18 for professional learning. If she would have to close school again, she proposes that the graduation date stay as June 17. Ms. Harmeling asked about the middle school students being there if graduation were to move there due to inclement weather. Ms. Syriac said it would not be a problem since graduation is at night.

**MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to set the last day of school for students as June 17, 2015, provided there are no further school closings and the elementary school teachers report on June 18, 2015 for professional learning

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Mr. Stanek noted that one of the participants in the Mr. Seymour focused on Mrs. Syriac and her school closings which was quite entertaining.

**G. Set Graduation Date for Class of 2015 – Christine Syriac**

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to set the 2015 Seymour High School graduation date as June 17, 2015

**SO VOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Ms. Gesek, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

**H. Turf Committee Report – Ed Strumello**

Mr. Strumello noted two members of the Turf Committee, Paul Roy and Nicole Klarides-Ditria, Chairman were in the audience. He reported that they are going to be able to do the track, the shot put area, the javelin area and are hoping to also have a new press box. New bleachers will be handicapped assessable. Some seats will have backs and will be donated/dedicated. We have had wonderful cooperation from the coaching staff. We have decided to have a big "S" in the middle of the field. Wildcats and paws at the end of the field. We are able to add some things such as the track. Handicapped accessibility for the football field and will also be assessable to the tennis courts. The wash-out problems will also be addressed. The Snack Shack will be handicapped assessable. This is all able to happen within the scope of money because of being able to start soon. Nicole Klarides-Ditria said we would like to start the day after track season ends, which she believes is May 11. If we start earlier, we get a better price; she reminded the Board that the money coming from a grant from the state. The goal is to keep graduation on campus and outside. The turf committee proposes using the softball field for graduation. The most important thing is that you are all together. We have to get the track down before the weather turns. Hopefully, fall sports can start the middle of September. Mr. Strumello said it is important to get started as there is a possibility that the track team will not miss any games in the fall or the spring. The bleachers can be done quicker and if we miss the window, we would have to postpone the whole project. We can get things done in a smaller window but that means they will charge us more due to overtime in order to meet the deadline. The add alternates would disappear. For the visitors' side, the area is not real sturdy, that pad needs to be done. We need the visitors' side to be handicapped assessable. Mr. Strumello said it is going to be beautiful but I understand your feelings about graduation. Mr. Stanek asked if there were any solid numbers if the project was delayed four to six weeks. Mr. Strumello described how it would work with the add alternates. A shorter window will cost more due to overtime. Mr. Belden said he attended the turf committee meetings and explained that everyone is competing for that resource during the summer months. Ideal situation is to not be bidding at the same time as everyone else. This is why they are doing what they are doing as far as the start date. It keeps the cost down during the bidding process. Mr. Stanek asked about when it is going out for bid and is the sufficient time for the materials to be delivered. Bids will be going out soon especially important for the bleachers. Mr. Stanek asked what period of time does it take for the bleachers to be erected on site? Ms. Klarides-Ditria said she believed it was two months.

Mr. Strumello said if everything goes alright, we may be able to buy the protective covering for the turf so future graduations can be held on it. They are also hopeful to be able to purchase the necessary equipment to maintain the field. Mr. Strumello said this field is the safest field available with regard to concussions. We have had tremendous cooperation from outside teams that use our field. Mr. Putorti asked about starting the project in May. Mr. Strumello said all the site work would have to be done before the work can get started such as breaking down the bleachers, taking up the field, etc. Mr. Putorti said his opinion is if we postpone the project and have graduation on DeBarber field it will cost us more and if it rains you end up moving graduation to the middle school anyway. "I think moving graduation is the best interest of everyone involved" stated Mr. Putorti. Our thoughts were to move it to the softball field and the visitors' bleachers would be facing the school which would be a nice backdrop for the graduation. Mr. Stanek said he would like to add to the agenda. The board has the legal authority to decide where graduation should be held and we should exercise our legal right to decide. Mr. Putorti said we have not gotten involved in graduations issues in the past. Mr. Stanek said we have heard from the senior class and they took the time to come out and talk to us and he feels we should take the time to discuss and decide this issue. Mrs. Syriac said she and Mr. Freund have had discussions and feel the softball field would make a good alternate location. Mrs. Syriac praised the students in attendance saying they were very respectful toward the Board and to each other. She spoke of how traditions are so important. She said she heard there is a tradition where people stand at the top of the bleachers and have a certain way of exiting. The turf committee was very respectful of keeping that tradition. You may look back and say we were the first class who graduated on the softball field. I would like to see their request honored but understand that it is not all about the heart. Mr. Putorti also commended the students on their behavior tonight.

**MOTION:** (Mr. Stanek/Ms. Gesek) to add to the agenda the location of the Seymour High School graduation on June 17, 2015.

**SOVOTED**

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Mr. Stanek and Ms. Gesek

**OPPOSED:** Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Klarides, Mr. Putorti, Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew, Mr. Strumello

The motion failed.

Mr. Putorti said the Board would not be choosing the location for the graduation and that decision would be made by the Administration. He asked Mr. Freund for his thoughts. Mr. Freund said they have looked at alternative locations. Seymour High School is a beautiful school and if he has to have another location for graduation he would be okay with having it on the softball field. He said he really feels he should have a committee of seniors who can be part of the process of choosing the alternative sight. Mr. Putorti said the town will pick up the expense of renting bleachers for the alternative location since there is no money budgeted for this. Mr. Freund said it might be the best graduation ever and hoped it was. Mr. Putorti thanked the students again for coming out.

**I. Summer School Program – Jim Freund**

Over the years we have had kids who were less than successful and it's been a struggle to find alternative education so they can try to recover those credits. It occurred to me that it would be beneficial to have our own summer program for credit recovery. It would be project based and kept in small groups. This would involve an initial meeting with the student to develop a project that would culminate in a project presentation at the end of the program. I strongly support moving forward with this project. Mr. Freund would like to start this program this summer. We would like to keep it to \$100 fee for the students which is less than surrounding programs which charge about \$300. What is really important is to have teacher buy-in as well as student buy-in. Mrs. Syriac said this is a great opportunity. We have done this for 8<sup>th</sup> graders transitioning to 9<sup>th</sup> grade which began a few years ago. Now we want to expand at a cost that is much more reasonable. We would not offer this program to students from other districts. Teachers and students would know each other. Ms. Strumello asked if this is only for credit recovery or will there be an opportunity for extra credit. Mr. Freund said no plans for extra credit at this time.

Mr. Putorti called for a five minute recess at 8:50 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 8:55 pm.

## VIII. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

### A. Appointments

1. Attorney Dan Murphy, Kainen, Escalera and McHale  
**MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the appointment of Attorney Dan Murphy, from Kainen, Escalera and McHale as an impartial hearing officer to decide a possible expulsion matter on April 7, 2015 as permitted in policy #5114, VIII B – Hearing Panel

Mr. Stanek asked if Mr. Murphy was comfortable in this role since he is an attorney for the Board. Mrs. Syriac said he was comfortable in this particular case. If it was a more complicated case, he would have recommended two attorneys. Mr. Stanek said in some districts a hearing officer is hired to determine expulsion cases. Mrs. Syriac said this was being done because not enough Board members were available to attend the hearing.

**SO VOTED**

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

2. Lisa Dadio  
Ms. Harmeling explained that Ms. Ashbrook was president of the Seymour Middle School PTA but had to resign. Ms. Dadio volunteered to take her place on this committee.  
**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Ms. Sobieski-McAndrew) to approve the appointment of Lisa Dadio to the Community Advisory Committee to replace Diane Ashbrook

**SO VOTED**

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

### B. Policy Revisions

1. 6146.2 Instruction – Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations  
**MOTION:** (Mr. Putorti/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to accept the revisions to Policy #6146.2 Instruction – Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations

**SO VOTED**

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

2. 5121 Students – Examination/Grading/Rating  
Mr. Hatfield noted that Social Studies is not listed. He understands it is not listed anywhere but as a Social Studies teacher he just had to mention it.  
**MOTION:** (Mr. Putorti/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to accept the revisions to Policy #5121 Students – Examination/Grading/Rating

**SO VOTED**

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

3. 5131.911 Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy  
**MOTION:** (Mr. Putorti/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to accept the revisions to Policy #5131.911 Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy

**SO VOTED**

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

### C. Fixed Asset Write Off

Mr. Strumello asked for an explanation. Mr. Belden said they maintain fixed assets inventory in Excel and the auditors suggested the process be formalized as it is transitioned into Sungard. We write off equipment we know longer have or use. Mr. Strumello said he was concerned that people

may misinterpret this and if he has anyone who is questioning this, he will send them to Mr. Belden for an explanation. This is an accounting process that will be done every two years.

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Putorti) to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the write off of the equipment in the attached Fixed Asset Write Off listing totaling \$502,451 in original cost and \$502,451 in accumulated depreciation due to obsolescence and no longer in use by the Board of Education

**SO VOTED**

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

\* D. **\*Appointment of Associate Superintendent**

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

**MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) move that the board enter Executive Session for discussion and possible action on the appointment of an Associate Superintendent. The Board invites Christine Syriac and the candidate into the Executive Session

**SO VOTED**

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

Into Executive Session: 9:12 pm

Out of Executive Session: 10:00 pm

**MOTION:** (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to hire Vonda Tencza as the Associate Superintendent to replace Nancy Snopkowski

**SO VOTED**

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

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

**SO VOTED**

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

The meeting adjourned at: 10:02 pm.

Submitted by:  
Lee-Ann Dauerty  
Board Clerk