

Seymour Board of Education



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES (revised)

February 5, 2018
Chatfield-LoPresti School
7:30 pm

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 3/9/18
TIME: 9:00am
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Edward Hendricks
Jennifer Magri
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello
Sukhman Singh, Student Representative
Paulina Karwowski, Student Representative
Peter Kubik

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent
Vonda Tencza, Assoc. Superintendent
Rick Belden, Asst. Super. Fin & Op
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Rob Dyer, Sys. Technology Coordinator
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Bernadette Hamad, Principal, SMS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Kathleen Freimuth, Asst. Principal, CLS
Brandt Schneider
Savannah Nido
Darlene Keeffe
Amanda Dingle
Wasilfewska Patrycja
Kimberly Farmer
Kimberly Opotzner
Dawn Judimick
Sandy Valente

Diane Reilly
Heather McCluskey
James Hink
Felini Gashi
Monika Siudryga
Aurora DeToto
Dibran Trepeca
Melyssa Gagliardi
Kaitlyn Esposito
Molly Adamo
Joshua Magri
David Bouzolin
Nicole Fearon
Robin Masotta
David Masotta
Glen and Melissa Rodrigue
Abby Rodrigue
Emily Rodrigue
Lindsay Commune-Browning
Colleen Maguire
Alison Brett
Deirdre Sponheimer

Jennifer Batterton
Jennifer Peterson
Katelyn McQuillan
Dawn Adams
Alison Shay-Hogan
Gracie Shay-Hogan
Kaelyn Sabatini
Jeff Sabatini
Kate Sabatini
Tom Sabatini
Thomas Demers
Meagan Krushinski
Craig Prasauckas
Courtney Leahy
Stacey D'Agostino
Jeff Mockler
Jeanette Brito
Alisha Spearburg
Carl Spearburg
Andrea Melnick
Sam Buck

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Magri called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions at 7:33 p.m.

Ms. Magri asked Samuel Rodrigue, Gracie Shay-Hogan, Kaelyn Sabatini, and Jerren Farrison to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Seymour Middle School Glee Club

1. "Somebody that I used to Know"

2. Slide Show of December 5, 2018 Field Trip
Opening Act of Sound of Christmas Show
The slide show was unable to be viewed due to a technical glitch. Ms. Magri asked the students about their experience at Radio City Music Hall and they were very enthusiastic in their responses. "Third year going three performances, amazing!" "This was a dream come true, Mr. Dobas made it happen.", "Amazing to perform on such a large stage in front of a large audience". Many spoke about the strong bond in the Glee Club. "I have made many new friendships in Glee Club" "It feels like we are all one grade", "The Glee Family brings people together", "I'm a new student, Glee made me feel like it was a little piece of home". Ms. Magri thanked them for coming and performing for the Board of Education.

II. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations and thank you to Samuel Rodrigue (Grade 5 Chatfield-LoPresti School) who conducted his second annual Sam's Kids Food Drive in December – Mr. Wilson, Mr. Olechna
Mr. Wilson and Mr. Olechna honored Samuel Rodrigue with a certificate.
2. Congratulations and thank you to Gracie Shay-Hogan and Kaelyn Sabatini (Grade 5 Chatfield-LoPresti School) who conducted their second annual Toy Drive for the Yale Children's Hospital in December – Mr. Wilson, Mr. Olechna
Mr. Wilson and Mr. Olechna honored Gracie Shay-Hogan and Kaelyn Sabatini with certificates.
3. Congratulations and thank you to Jerren Farrison (Grade 4 Chatfield-LoPresti School) who conducted a coat drive to benefit St. Vincent De Paul Thrift Shop in December – Mr. Wilson, Mr. Olechna
Mr. Wilson and Mr. Olechna honored Jerren Farrison with a certificate.

B. Correspondence

1. Email dated January 15, 2018 from Ms. Julie Nintzel to Ms. Jen Magri regarding the participation of Chatfield-LoPresti School in the GreatSchools.com ratings

C. Media Coverage

Ms. Magri pointed out this is a new section of the Board of Education agenda.

1. Cell Phone Ban at Seymour High School - NBC CT
<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/news/local/Seymour-High-School-Reports-Positive-Results-After-Cell-Phone-Ban-472029253.html>
2. Cell phone Ban at Seymour High School - FOX61
<http://fox61.com/2018/01/31/seymour-high-school-students-are-no-longer-permitted-to-use-cellphones-in-school/>
3. Cell Phone Ban at Seymour High School – Valley Independent Sentinel
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_principal_cell_phone_ban_is_good_for_the_community/
4. Schools Talk Sharing Services with Ansonia and Others
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_schools_talk_sharing_services_with_ansonia_others/
5. Parents Worry about Impact of Seymour School Layoffs
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/parents_worry_about_impact_of_seymour_school_layoffs/
6. Valley Youth Making a Difference – Seymour's Jerren Farrison
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/valley_youth_making_a_difference_seymours_jerren_farrison/
7. Seymour Students Perform at Festival
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_students_perform_at_festival/
8. Fire Prevention Post Winners
http://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_announces_fire_prevention_poster_winners/
9. Seymour Approves 33.4 Million Budget
<http://www.nhregister.com/news/article/Seymour-BOE-approves-33-4-million-budget-12525581.php>
10. School Cell Phone Ban See Success
<http://www.nhregister.com/news/education/article/School-cell-phone-ban-sees-success-12543306.php>

III. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. Special BOE Meeting Minutes Revised – January 22, 2018
- B. Financial Management Summary – Ending January 31, 2018

MOTION: (Dr. Hendricks/sec., Ms. Harmeling) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Motion Passes: 8-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. INFORMATION

- A. Activities and Recognitions
 - 1. Seymour Middle School
 - 2. Bungay Elementary School
 - 3. Chaffield-LoPresti School
- B. Special BOE Meeting Minutes (Revised) – December 12, 2017
- C. High School Fall Season Report – Ms. Tara Yusko
- D. Special Education Monthly Enrollment Update – Dr. Kris Boyle
Ms. Magri noted this is a new monthly report for the agenda so the Board can keep informed.

VII. REPORTS

- A. HS Student Representative Report – Miss Paulina Karwowski and Mr. Sukhman Singh
Ms. Karwowski and Mr. Singh reported on the Debate Team and the Math Competition. They noted that the girls swim team broke a school record.
- B. Committee Reports
 - 1. Curriculum and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2018
- C. CABE Conference – Mr. Jay Hatfield
Mr. Hatfield attended the CABE CAPSS Conference in November, 2017. He said he attended the Delegate Assembly and found it to be a very interesting process. CABE presents their position statements. He found it interesting how the big cities have an interesting level of influence. He said they did not put anything forward this year. He also attended the State Board of Education meeting and found what other districts talked about was interesting. He went to the Nutmeg BOE which presents a comical take on things such as mistakes and FOI issues. He attended the policy workshop because he is very interested in policy and how it affects our district. He talked about the CT Literacy Seal that can be placed on diplomas and transcripts and he said hopefully our district will move toward a policy regarding Narcan. Ms. Magri said that Mr. Strumello will present about the CABE CAPSS Conference next month.
- D. High School Schedule – Mr. Paul Lucke
Mr. Lucke did a follow up on some questions from the January 22, 2018 Board of Education meeting.
How will the 8 drop 2 demonstrate balance with extracurricular activities and people are concerned about how are we going to monitor teachers not giving double amount of homework? Mr. Lucke said work will be spread out amongst the days and increased frequency of meeting will allow for more feedback to be given in a more timely manner. This will increase the understanding and decrease independent research time needed to complete homework. In addition, students in 9th and 12th grade will be assigned study halls in with teachers that can help them in their areas of weakness. This will address homework issues prior to bringing them home and decreasing time on homework. He said there is no loss of class time overall in the 8 drop 2 schedule. Department chairs will meet with administration to develop a plan for distribution of homework. He said they will work with teachers to pre-post assignments for a four block rotation. This will allow students more flexibility in planning with the understanding that snow days, unannounced drills, early dismissals or late arrivals may alter the due dates of materials. He addressed the anxiety and stress setting in and met with student council a second time on February 8, 2018 to address their concerns. Scheduling - ECA wanted to know if it is considered and if they would be missing classes. In order to present a true rotation with equal opportunity for all students ECA students may have to miss some classes either at ECA or SHS. Ms. Harmeling asked them to look at first/last rotation as a possible solution. Question regarding AP - and loss of time with AP exams ending early so they really don't get the same amount of time in class. The 8 drop 2 actually offers more class time prior to the exam. In the 8 drop 2 there would be 156 days and the class would meet for 117 days x 56.5 minutes or 6611 minutes or an additional 257 minutes of class time prior to the exam. How do we now mimic AP class tests in 57 minutes when tests are longer than that? Mr. Lucke said that as it currently stands each exam has different time frames with all being 2-3 hours long. We do not have any classes that run 2 hours long, which is the minimum time an AP exam is. Some exams are split into multiple sections. How we will measure if it is successful and find if it's not working what will we do with

that if it is unsuccessful? Mr. Lucke said they will be holding quarterly meetings with student council, have monthly department chair meetings, and monthly staff meetings to monitor how things are going.

At these monthly staff meetings they will look at attendance, tardies, AP, failures, and graduation rate. If it is not successful administration will meet with staff and students to first look at classroom practices and modify practices to meet students' needs. Ms. Harmeling voiced some concern at varying times of classes and suggested they all be the same length of time. She also suggested more time in the cafeteria.

E. School Improvement Plans Update/Q&A

Ms. Tencza distributed the School Improvement Plans to all Board members by email. There was no formal presentation but each administrator was in attendance to answer any questions. No Board members had questions. Ms. Magri said she read the reports and said they were very well done, very informative and she loved the format so much so that she did not have any questions.

1. Chatfield-LoPresti School – Mr. Olechna
2. Bungay School – Ms. Mary Sue Feige
3. Seymour Middle School – Ms. Bernadette Hamad
4. Seymour High School – Mr. Jim Freund

F. Winter Assessment Report, February 2018 – Ms. Vonda Tencza

Prior to reviewing the district winter student performance data Mrs. Tencza did a brief explanation of how the data is reviewed. There is a data team at each building which meets regularly to review school-based achievement data and a district data team with teacher representation from each school-based data team. She said the district data team had a meeting today and they looked at this winter achievement data and made some observations of patterns and developed a few recommendations. The winter data summary confirmed that fall to winter growth was evident in most grade levels in math and ELA. Each building level team will research any performance dips. Mrs. Tencza praised the data team saying it is a good team who work together well, have great conversations and view their charge as one to develop and support four great schools in one excellent district.

G. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments

Ms. Magri noted the addition of Media Section to highlight the press coverage that we are receiving. She let the Board know that at last the meeting it was mentioned that the approval of the new graduation requirements would be on this agenda. This will go through the Policy committee in March first. Additionally the approval of the elevation of certain high school classes to Honor Level will not be addressed until March as well since the administration has not yet come to a conclusion on the outstanding question regarding awarding quality points to enrolled students who already took the courses. Ms. Magri said that moving forward the Board will be moving away from pre-formed motions on the agenda to allow motions to be articulated more naturally. She asked the Board if there was any desire to start meetings earlier and if so, can Board members accommodate an earlier start time? The Tom Hennick FOIA Session is set for Thursday March 29th at 6:30 pm and the location will be announced. She reminded the Board that the presentation of our budget to the Board of Finance is on Wednesday, February 7 at 7 pm in Town Hall. Ms. Magri added under Discussion "Parent/Public concerns" because while there was some good discussion at our last meeting that addressed many of the concerns and questions that were heard during public comment, due to the last meeting being a special meeting some things were not able to be discussed. She felt that it was important for the Board to acknowledge the concerns of the people that came to speak before them last month. This will allow for the opportunity to discuss items such as the impact of para layoffs on lunch and recess/workload, scheduling and the cell phone policy.

2. Board Member Comments

Mr. Strumello informed the Board that we have a player, Jaylen Crawford, on the Boys Basketball team who is 3 point away from 1000 points. He said it has been 10 or 15 years since a young man has done this. The game against Ansonia.

Ms. Harmeling spoke of her concerns with elevating the CTE courses to honors level and making it retroactive for students who have already taken the course. She said she felt it was too much of a game changer with regard to the Top 10. Mr. Freund and Mr. Lucke informed the Board that they have been fielding a number of calls from school districts across the state and even further interested in what we have done with cell phones in Seymour High School.

H. Superintendent Report

On behalf of the Administrative Team as well as the BOE, Mr. Wilson congratulated the High School Debate Team for another job well done. Their hard work is to be commended. We had several students make it very far in their most recent competition.

As of this afternoon, the district Facebook page has 830 followers. This past January 10 through 12, Mr. Wilson attended the District Administrators Leadership Institute where he was able to hear and share BEST practices with 87 Superintendents from around the country. Topics included: Paradigm Shift: Changing the Culture of Mathematics and Learning, Maximizing the Elementary Student Experience During Non-Instructional, What Districts Are Learning About Improved Access to Digital Curriculum; Budget concerns and strategies, Promoting a STEM curriculum that includes manufacturing, Expecting the Unexpected—School Safety Solutions Before You Need Them, Essential for College Readiness: Fostering Academic Integrity in K-12, Too Many Data Silos? How to Turn Your Data into Actionable Information, the New School Rules: 6 Vital Practices for Thriving and Responsive Schools and Branding your District to Connect your Education Community. As has been the case, Vonda, Rick, and I have continued to be visible in all of the buildings this past month and we will continue to visit the buildings in order to witness the hard work being done by all of our teachers and Administrators.

VIII. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Parent/Public Concerns

Ms. Magri said this item was put on the agenda so there would be an opportunity to discuss the concerns regarding the high school schedule, find out more about the middle school schedule, the cell phone ban, the reduction in force of the clerical paraprofessionals. Ms. Harmeling said with regard to the clerical paraprofessionals, it's the recess and lunch coverage and the nurse's office being closed that is of concern. She asked how this is being handled. Mr. Wilson said the Administrative Team has met and before the reduction in force, the nurse had a clerical paraprofessional to do the checking in/out which is no longer the case, however, the nurse's office is not being closed and the Administrator at each school has worked out coverage for the times when the nurse needs to be out of the office (for lunch and breaks). Mr. Stanek said he had grave concerns about the special education required work is not being met after hearing Mrs. Bellavance speak at our last meeting. Mr. Stanek said he felt the Board should try to bring clerical paraprofessionals back based on the budget and we should look at next year's budget also. Mr. Strumello said an option was to use lunch paraprofessionals which are less expensive. He said we cannot bring back clerical paraprofessionals but should look at hiring more recess paraprofessionals. Ms. Harmeling said she thought the clerical paraprofessionals were being used at lunch and recess because we have an attendance issue with the monitor paraprofessionals and we need to look at how we can cover absent paraprofessionals. Mr. Wilson assured the Board that he will continue to monitor activities and that he is willing to hire monitor paraprofessionals to cover lunch and recess if that is what the Board chooses to do. He will continue to watch and listen. Administrators are welcome to meet with Mr. Wilson at any time to discuss their concerns. Ms. Harmeling asked what the solution is to coverage when monitor paraprofessionals call in absent. Mr. Wilson said the building Administrators are monitoring the needs and as of right now, it has not be voiced. Ms. Harmeling said we will lose creditability if children tell their parents that they did not get to have recess because a paraprofessional was absent. Ms. Magri said we can extend the pool of monitor paraprofessionals or we can bring back clerical paraprofessionals who can cover lunch and recess and do other things. Mr. Wilson said it is up to the Board if the need arises he will come to the Board with a request. Mr. Hatfield said he had a problem with paying Administrators to be Administrators not to cover for paraprofessionals. Mr. Strumello said he took exception to what Mr. Hatfield was saying. As a former principal, he dispensed medication, did first aid, did lunch duty and more; it's just what Administrators do. Mr. Champagne asked how often we take the pulse in the schools. How often are we taking a look? Mr. Wilson said we have formal meetings with our principals once a month and our assistant principals once a month. He said he also visits the schools frequently and has a Superintendents Meeting every other week. Mr. Strumello brought up the comment that was made at a BOE meeting about doing more publicity of student athletics with the Voices. He said we don't have control over what they publish, the Voices has not requested this type of information. He also noted that the Waterbury Republican does not cover anything in Seymour. Mr. Hatfield said he was at a banquet and the speaker was a Waterbury Republican reporter. He gave the students a lot of props; really spoke well of our students. He said it is different in the print world. Ms. Harmeling said that she has concerns about the middle school schedule. The high school has done a good job articulating the reasons behind the change. But at the middle school she feels we should slow down. She feels the parents need to be more involved. She said she is not sure not having math every day is the right thing to do. At this age, kids need consistency. She asked what problem is being addressed. How will 8 drop 2 benefit the students? She noted that we are talking about little kids, some as young at 10 years old.

IX. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Out of State Field Trips

1. High School Dance Team

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the field trip request of Coach Katelyn McQuillan to take the High School Dance Team on an out of state field trip to the New England Dance Competition in Bellows Falls, VT on March 10, 2018

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

2. High School Indoor Track Team

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools to approve the field trip request of Coach John Johnson to take the High School Indoor Track Team on an out of state field trip to the New England Indoor Track Competition in Roxbury Crossing, MA on March 3, 2018

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

B. Awards Advisory Committee

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Stanek) to accept the recommendation of the High School Principal and the High School Student Council to appoint Amber Recine and Dibran Trezca as the student representatives on the Awards Advisory Committee for the 2017-18 school year

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

C. Shared Services with Other Local School Districts

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Dr. Hendricks) to approve the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Board of Education to create a special Shared Services Committee for discussion and brainstorming with other local school districts and the Town of Seymour on common challenges and solutions and to appoint Ms. Magri, Dr. Hendricks, and Ms. Harmeling as members of the committee

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

D. Curriculum and Technology Committee

1. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the revision of Yoga to be titled "Health and Wellness" which would include Eastern vs Western Medicine, Holistic Medicine as well as meditation and yoga

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

2. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the revision of the curriculum for Injury Care to include more in depth training on why we use certain methods to treat injuries and to make the instruction more of an introductory course for those interested in the Athletic Training or Physical Therapy fields after high school

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

3. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Champagne) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the alignment to state standards for Physics and World Civilization

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

4. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to approve the change of Makerspace from a half year credit to a full year credit for the 2018-19 school year

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

Motion Passes: 8-0

5. **MOTION:** (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to accept the recommendation of the Curriculum & Technology Committee to combine all Portrait Studio classes into one class entitled Enhanced Portrait Studio

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Motion Passes: 8-0

X. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Meagan Krushinski, SEA President – voiced her concerns regarding the proposed 8 drop 2 schedule and felt that it was a violation of the teachers' contract.

Jeffrey Mockler, CEA – said that the proposed change is overwhelming for faculty based on a survey he did. He said there were concerns about the impact on homework, that teachers have not seen a sample schedule and that there was a lack of faculty input. He said he thinks there is enough time for the Board and faculty to meet and work things out.

Meagan Krushinski, SEA President – She said teachers did not have much say, there were not given the opportunity to visit some of the schools that currently have 8 drop 2 schedules, they are concerned with the reason for the change, the high school and middle school begin and end at different times so the schedules do not align, they are concerned that class size will decrease which could result in a reduction of staff in future years, they feel students should have math and language arts daily, and a curriculum will have to be written. She said the Board and Mr. Wilson should not rush and they should form a committee. She said they should take another year.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello
Motion Passes: 8-0

The meeting adjourned at 9: 41 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk