

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES – Approved 10/17/18
OCTOBER 10, 2018 – 6 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Superintendent Dr. Judith Palmer, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Ken Chichester, Middle School Principal Mr. Fran Amara, Student Representatives Ms. April Ruopp and Ms. Madeleine Giaconia

ABSENT: Ms. Mary Duran (B), Mr. Ben Nadeau (N)

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** Board of Education Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2018, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell. NAY: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS:

STUDENT REPORTS:

Ms. Ruopp and Ms. Giaconia provided updates pertaining to: National Honor Society event “Track or Treat” fundraiser for Water for Sudan, Student Council Committees, Student Senate Project, PSAT’s, theater rehearsals with “visual” set and show dates, homecoming, pep rally and dance, and New Hartford Day where band played. Ms. Sexton Read reviewed project and/or initiative that Student Representatives are encouraged to take on in order to expand their experience as Board representatives in addition to their updates, thanking them for their contributions.

PRINCIPALS’ REPORTS:

Mr. Amara provided Board updates pertaining to: Grade 8 Boston Field Trip, Teacher Evaluation status and goal setting process, ongoing and positive parent communication, and Professional Development Day within the Middle School.

Mr. Chichester’s updates included: Professional Development Day at the High School level, World Language Honor Society he’s very excited to be initiating, the McCall Foundation program, and “Insights Program”, which is a proactive group helping to keep at-risk students talking. Questions and discussion followed, and Mr. Chichester advised of the alarming trend, not only in our school but across the state and country, of student “vaping” practices. Mr. Chichester displayed the tools/instruments used for the practice of vaping. Further discussion and questions were addressed. Also, Mr. Chichester advised of PSAT’s administered to the Junior Class.

Additionally, Mr. Chichester thanked and commended Board members for their support during this extremely difficult time for everyone. He credited support personnel within the building for their dedication and superb monitoring, making themselves available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day for all students and staff members. Sincere and heartfelt appreciation was expressed.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Dr. Palmer began her report with grateful thanks at this very difficult time to the Board members that came to her home, as well as all other Board members that helped with and supported the decision to close school on the 25th of September, in order for staff and students to attend the funeral arrangements of a

beloved member of Regional School District No. 7's community. The Board acknowledged the tragic event and effect within the entire RSD community, and graciously accepted Dr. Palmer's heartfelt thanks.

Dr. Palmer's Board report included the following topics: FFA Welcome Back to School Night with total enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year at 100; Mathematics Consultant, Sue Palma of EdAdvance, met with MS Mathematics Department and provided information on best practices to help students move forward along with resources for teachers; attendance at a New Hartford Board of Education meeting to confirm that New Hartford students are well prepared for Regional 7 entry—questions and discussion followed. Additionally, Dr. Palmer advised of an unanticipated influx of Special Education students in both the Middle and High School, and reassignment of staff to accommodate student needs, however, additional staff may be needed, and she will advise if that will be necessary. Total enrollment is in the process of being calculated and confirmed by the State of Connecticut, and she will provide those numbers when available.

Dr. Palmer concluded her update by commending Mr. Gaskins for his diligence and fiscal responsibility in always seeking and investigating cost effective solutions for the many needs within the building, and continually searching and researching for efficiencies in order to save the district money.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS REPORT:

Mr. Gaskins distributed a printout to Board members with information pertaining to an integrated energy opportunity he's been working on in partnership with Power Point Energy. Mr. Gaskins described the objectives, project scope and benefits resulting in positive cash flow, without capital cost outlay or budget impact. Questions and discussion followed. Board members responded very positively with the objectives of the project along with the benefits, and thanked Mr. Gaskins for providing a comprehensive solution to energy sustainability with operational cost reductions.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Sexton Read advised that the Subcommittee formed to discuss budget line item/favorable budget variance will be meeting in the near future.

Community Conversation will take place on October 17, 6:30 p.m. in the Little Theater.

Run Like a Deer being held on Saturday, November 3, 2018.

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, **TO MOVE** the second Board of Education meeting in October from October 24, 2018, to October 17, 2018, immediately following Community Conversation in the Little Theater. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale. NAY: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Dr. Palmer provided a brief Community Conversation agenda plan outline advising that high school students will begin, followed by Middle School students providing STEM club activities and Civil Rights stories. Mr. Gaskins will then present to community members his comprehensive energy plan. Brief discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of New School Lunch Agreement which outlines the responsibilities of both the CSDE (Connecticut State Department of Education) and the SFA (School Food Authority) as they pertain to the CNP (Child Nutrition Program). All SFA's that wish to continue their sponsorship of the CNP's must enter into a new Agreement with CSDE.

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Fragale, that the Board of Education agrees to **ENTER** into an Agreement with the Connecticut State Board of Education in order to effectuate the programs of the

National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751) and the Child Nutrition Act (42 USC 1771). The Board is subject to all legal rights and duties as provided in Agreement together with any Amendment that shall become a part of this Agreement.

The Board of Education **CERTIFIES** that on October 10, 2018, as shown in the Minutes of their Meeting, that they authorize Dr. Judith Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, to sign the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs and to sign claims for reimbursement. In her absence or incapacity, Mr. James M. Gaskins is designated to sign claims for reimbursement.

AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale. NAY: None.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

CORRESPONDENCE:

In response to student letter received pertaining to Jewish holidays and the promotion of equal representation of all religions, Ms. Sexton Read advised that although she admires and encourages all students to continue with their advocacy and passion of finding ways to acknowledge events that have occurred and has a great appreciation of their efforts, the school calendar is not a vehicle for that kind of work. Ms. Sexton Read encourages the use of other avenues, perhaps fund raisers or Kindness in Motion projects, to promote equal representation for all religions. Regional School District's current policy is that any Jewish student has an excused absence from school for religious purposes, and teachers are asked not to assign projects/homework over the Jewish high holy days. Ms. Sexton Read very much appreciates student learning and advocacy, and will additionally respond with a personal note. Discussion followed, and Board members were in agreement with Ms. Sexton Read that the Regional School District calendar is not a vehicle for this type of work.

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ADJOURN** at 7:15 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale. NAY: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa H. D'Aprile
Board Clerk

Community Conversation: October 17, 2018, 6:30 p.m., Little Theater immediately followed by Board of Education Meeting