

STONINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING December 13, 2018 - Page | 1

Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m. in the Stonington High School Commons. Members present were, Deborah Downie, Jack Morehouse, Farouk Rajab, and Craig Esposito.
Member Absent: Alisa Morrison and Candace Anderson

Also, present were Dr. Van Riley, Superintendent of Schools, Ana de Oliveira, Recording Secretary, Caroline Morehouse, Student Government Representative, members of the staff, and interested citizens.

Presentation – Google Expedition – SHS Junior Class

Rachel Limberakis, Integrated Technology Specialist, gave a short demonstration on the Google Expedition. The Board had hands on experience of this project.

Communications & Recognitions

Jack Morehouse communicated he recently attended the band concert at the high school, and added that it was phenomenal and thanked all the band students and Mrs. Gottlieb.

Comments from Citizens

No comments from citizens.

AP District Honor Roll

Mark Friese shared that Dr. Riley received a letter from the College Board, which stated Stonington district is one of 373 schools in the United States and Canada who have been placed on the College Board District Honor Roll for AP performance. He explained this award is based on the students in AP courses and their success over a three-year period that has shown an increase. We have increased the number of students in the past three years who take AP courses from 120 students to 155 students presently. In Stonington 85% of our students who take AP courses, pass with a three or higher. Mr. Friese thanked the Board and teachers for their support, and guidance so that students can get this type opportunity. He ended by saying how he could not be prouder of our students.

Board Goals

Mary Anne Butler, Assistant Superintendent shared with the Board the Accountability Matrix of Board Goals, which she also presented at the Teaching and Learning Committee, and lists goals that were developed at the Board retreat. She stated it is color coded to show which items have been completed, those still being worked on and those needing more information. She explained this would help in keeping track of the progress of each goal. Mrs. Butler invited the Board to email questions or concerns regarding the goals.

Curriculum and Instruction Update

Mary Anne Butler gave an update on curriculum and instruction. She shared a PowerPoint presentation while reviewing changes in curriculum and instruction development for the past six years to present. She explained curriculum is linked to standards. She shared what is presently being done in curriculum development. Mrs. Butler explained the district is doing trend visits so we can monitor that the curriculum is actually being used, curriculum meetings are being held, and outside organizations are coming in to speak on curriculum. She added every time new curriculum is developed and approved it is dated and then reviewed again within five years. She reviewed the next steps in curriculum development. See attached presentation. Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman asked when curriculum is developed is there a spot on our websites to access it. Mrs. Butler explained the two areas where one can search curriculum on the district website. Curriculum can be searched by subject or grade level.

Middle School Consolidation Report/Update

Tim Smith reported on the middle school consolidation update and explained the primary focus has been on communications. We have held two informal parent coffee meetings, to give parents an update and an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns. On Tuesday, December 11, we had a parent night and some presentations on safety and vaping and had almost 40 people in attendance. We created two new sub committees to focus on climate and communications. The goal is to support both schools in current buildings and primarily to start planning activities to involve students from both schools together. Mr. Smith shared students now use google docs to co edit and work on the google documents across schools, which has helped make solid connections. We will continue to do online opportunities, and will plan activities to bring students together. We have also had joint faculty meetings. We had people from Safe Futures come in and work with staff to speak about how and what they are feeling about the consolidations and have done the same thing with the parents. Mr. Smith reported the big item of concern for parents with the consolidation is bus rides. We will be working with the bus company sooner than later on bus runs. Parents suggested doing a dry run of the bus runs in the last month of school to put fears aside of bus runs. There was also a consensus from parents to get kids together to do activities before the consolidation. Mr. Smith will share as much as possible of the logistics before the end of the school year. He also added there will be a collaboration with Ms. Houle's class at the high school and students at the middle school to create a better middle school experience.

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Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman commented she noticed that the website has the link for the middle school updates but there is no updated info on the link. Mr. Smith shared that Mr. Jones in the Technology Department is creating a new Stonington Middle School website page where all the information will be shared and will be ready for the fall.

CIP Review /Approval

Dr. Riley explained the CIP is the first budget action by the Board. He explained the list of items for approval and the changes made to the format of the CIP summary spreadsheet. He explained what each column represents on the spreadsheet, why the items are being requested, and how the item's expense is spread out over ten years and some financed over five years. He gave a brief descriptive of each item, where the item is needed, and future needs of specific items. He reviewed which items on the CIP are related to the consolidation. Dr. Riley added if approved the request will be \$1,999,391.00. Deborah Downie asked about the difference between item one and three on the CIP spreadsheet. Jason Jones explained item one is for existing leases and will pay for future replacement of teacher laptops, robotics, high school laptops and audio visual and for one massive update across grade levels. Item three is to achieve a one to one computer model for grades 2-12 on a continuous rollover. Craig Esposito asked about the roofing cost and if the estimate takes into account what the state will give us. Dr. Riley noted we used that at Pawcatuck Middle School and Deans Mill School and will take a look at this when it comes into play. Deborah Downie questioned the purchase of bobcats and asked if the plowing of the schools is the schools job. Peter Anderson, Director of Operations and Facilities said bobcats are an all season tool not just for the snow. This tool will include a forklift, bucket, and plow. Jack Morehouse asked about parking at the middle school and how do you determine if we will have enough. Dr. Riley reported the plan is to add thirty more spaces in the back of the school and noted it will be better than it is now. Mr. Morehouse voiced his concern of the parking when there are events, people are parking down the road and walking while the lighting is not good. Dr. Riley added when we have events rather than splitting the event times and days, we will have the event at the high school instead.

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 1: To approve the 2019-2020 CIP as presented.

All: Aye

Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes – November 1, 2018 (Special Meeting)
November 8, 2018 (Regular Meeting)
November 27, 2018 (Special Meeting)
- B. Checks and Bills
- C. Transfers
- D. Personnel Report
- E. Resolutions of Stonington Board of Education to Flexible Benefits Plan (Section 125 Plan)

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Jack Morehouse:

Motion 2: To approve items A - E on the Consent Agenda as presented.

All: Aye

Report of the Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Riley shared a report that answered the Board's questions regarding the proposed educational programs at the new district office. He explained we will have a high school alternative ed., program for students that are expelled and special alternative program. We had a retreat with the Leadership team and had discussions on the consolidation and alternative programs. The alternative programs will help with out of district tuitions. He added when we present the budget to the Board in January it will be with more detail based on our new configuration. Dr. Riley added the Board approved the retiree incentive program. Teachers need to submit their incentive form to us by January 2nd and as of this afternoon we have seven teachers taking advantage of this program. Dr. Riley said Peter Anderson and Gary Shettle have found a program with Eversource that will help the district have a significant savings by replacing the existing lights with LED lights.

Second Read - Graduation Requirements Policy 6146

The Board had no questions or comments regarding Policy 6146.

The following motion was made by Farouk Rajab and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 3: To approve the Graduation Requirements Policy 6146 as presented.

All: Aye

Second Read – Personal Finance I and Broadcast Journalism Curriculum

The Board had no questions or concerns.

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 4: To approve the Personal Finance I as presented.

All: Aye

The following motion was made by Craig Esposito and seconded by Farouk Rajab:

Motion 5: To approve the Broadcast Journalism Curriculum as presented.

All: Aye

Monthly Reports

The Board had no questions on the monthly reports.

Committee Reports

The Board had no questions on the monthly reports.

Building Committee Update

Deborah Downie gave an update on the building projects. She reported they are moving along on the renovated buildings, but there is still a punch list of things in the new buildings and landscaping, West Vine Street School has some heat issues, drainage issues, still having issues with furniture, significant issues regarding the height of the sinks; sinks are too high. She also reported students have to stand on plastic stools, and added it cannot be a good standard to have children stand on a stool because sink is too high. The playground is still not approved for the West Vine Street School.

Comments from Citizens Relative to Board Action on this Agenda

Matthew Ferrier asked about GPS tracking systems for the buses. He would like the district to have a system so parents can keep track of the bus schedule, especially for Deans Mill School. He added that Westerly and New London schools have now approved this type of system. He would like to see this issue added as an item for discussion on the next Board agenda and would rather see this happen earlier than later. Mr. Ferrier asked that the district fund this system or create a "Go Fund Me" type of site for parents that are interested. He would love to see parents involved in the test run. Dr. Riley commented he would have staff try the system out first and hope to have an answer on how this will work by the end of January.

Bruce Yarnall commented on the ductless AC item on the CIP. He had questions on the parking at the new middle school and what it will look like as far as pickup and drop off. He added students would lose the basketball area they use during lunch if parking is in the back of the building. He spoke of classes that were offered in the past like automotive, tech, Chinese, and home economics that no longer exist. He also spoke on the choices and options students have available outside of Stonington, and wants to make sure that we are offering students good experiences, going forward. He would like the district to keep what we have and does not want to see things get cut.

Items for Future Agendas

Alexa Garvey, Chairwoman reminded the Board will have their self-evaluation meeting on January 14th with Nick Caruso from CAFE. She will be sending a link to the members in which they will need to fill out and send directly to CAFE. She also noted there would be Board meetings every Thursday in January related to the budget.

Board Comments and Concerns

There were no comments or concerns.

Adjournment

The following motion was made by Deborah Downie and seconded by Craig Esposito:

Motion 6: To Adjourn at 8:20 p.m.

All: Aye

Candace Anderson, Secretary