

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021 – 6 p.m.
Newbury Library Media Center

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Mary Duran (6:05) (B), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Superintendent Dr. Judith Palmer, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal Mr. Fran Amara
ABSENT: None.

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, to **APPROVE** Board of Education Minutes of February 10, 2021, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: Ms. Kenneson. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT’S BUDGET OVERVIEW 2021-2022

Dr. Palmer began her Proposed 2021-2022 Budget Presentation thanking Board members for their continued support, administration and support staff for their hard work, teachers for their work and dedication, students for their resilience, and families for their efforts and support during this challenging time. Her recommended budget, representing the goals and mission of enabling all students to achieve academic and personal excellence, in the amount of \$22,469,181, is an increase of \$407,694 and 1.85% over the 2020-2021 budget.

Dr. Palmer’s recommended budget reflects continuing COVID-19 health and safety concerns, extra cleaning and PPE supplies, staffing changes and reductions, additional academic support for the 2021-2022 school year supported by CARES Act II Grant, preparation of graduates for the future with additional electives to meet CSDE graduation requirements and opportunities for students to discover their passions and strengths, and continuing opportunities for social and emotional learning literacy.

Dr. Palmer outlined District achievements, awards and recognitions, accountability index, PSAT/SAT State of Connecticut and Berkshire League data comparatives, AP year-to-year scores, and the District’s net current expenditure rankings in the State and within the Berkshire League exhibiting collaborative, strategic efficiencies and effective cost containments within the budget.

She provided an Object breakdown overview of the budget increases and decreases in salaries, benefits, purchased professional and technical services, purchased property services, supplies, property, other objects, and debt services.

Dr. Palmer explained the major budget drivers, excess cost expenditure offsets reflected in special education, revenues, changes in average daily membership by town, and provided a historical perspective on member town assessments. She concluded that Regional School District No. 7, the Pride of the Northwest Corner, with exceptional teachers, strong administrators and support staff, and outstanding custodial staff, provides a rigorous and comprehensive educational program for all learners, and students that graduate with exceptional academic achievement results.

Questions and brief discussion followed including member town presentation dates, with in-person or virtual meetings to be determined, current and future enrollment numbers reflected in town assessment rates, revenue clarification, and special education costs. Ms. Saxton Read advised and reviewed expectations of Board members, and provided thanks and grateful appreciation for the work involved in presenting a reasonable and responsible budget during unprecedented and unpredictable times and which has, historically, been represented with broad community support.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADJOURN** at 7:12 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa H. D'Aprile
Board Clerk

**Next Board of Education Meeting: March 3, 2021, 6:00 p.m., Special Meeting Budget Workshop,
Newbury Library Media Center**