

Regional School District No. 7
Newbury Library Media Center
Board of Education Minutes
June 23, 2021

APPROVED 7-14-2021

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kimberly Crone (N), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Superintendent Judith A. Palmer, Director of Finance and Operations, Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal, Mr. Fran Amara.

Absent: Ms. Lisa Ann Fragale (C), Ms. Mary Duran (B)

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

RECOGNITION: Mr. Andrew Bakulski, High School Assistant Principal and NWR7's COVID-19 Liaison was recognized for his outstanding performance and service to Regional School District No. 7 as its COVID-19 Liaison. The Board of Education expressed appreciation for his dedication to the health and wellbeing of students, staff, and families throughout the pandemic. Dr. Palmer acknowledged his work in creating an on-site vaccination clinic and his ongoing work with the school nurses and local health departments. Mr. Bakulski expressed his gratitude for the recognition and stated that he was pleased to play this role for the District, staff, students, and families.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Denise Wells (Riverton) voiced concerns about a book used in Honors English, How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram Kendi.

Rebecca Welsh (New Hartford) raised concerns about students wearing masks and referenced the letter she sent to Board members.

Maureen Wishart (Winsted) voiced her displeasure with students wearing masks.

Kristina Geraghty (Barkhamsted) voiced her displeasure with students wearing masks and health related issues.

Jennifer Iacino (Barkhamsted) voiced her concerns about students wearing masks, other COVID mitigations, and health related issues.

Richard Milczanowski (Barkhamsted) inquired about the District's Social Emotional Learning work.

APPROVAL OF MINUES:

MOTION: by Mr. Jerram seconded by Mr. Gauthier to APPROVE the Board of Education Minutes of May 12, 2021, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: Ms. Kenneson. MOTION PASSED.

PRINCIPAL REPORTS:

Mr. Amara provided the Board of Education with an overview of the District's various Summer School programs and courses, including student participation. Mr. Franklin provided the Board of Education with an overview of the 2021 Northwestern High School Graduation at Dunkin Donuts Park. Ms. Sexton Read expressed her appreciation for a job well done and for providing the students with a very special graduation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Palmer provided the Board of Education with an overview of the Safe Return to In-Person Learning Instruction and Continuity of Service plan that is required by the Connecticut State Department of Education for funding through the American Rescue Plan Act. The three components of the plan are; Health and Safety Strategies, Continuity of Services, and Public Comment. Regional School District No. 7's return to school plan will be completed when the CDC, DPH, and the CSDE provide updated guidance to superintendents. The plan is due to the CSDE on August 16, 2021. An overview of the feedback from the Google Form Community Survey was provided and will be used when creating the Back to School Plan. Next steps in the process were described and discussion followed. Dr. Palmer spoke about the various Kindness in Motion projects that were completed this year and expressed gratitude for the students who completed projects during the pandemic.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS:

Mr. Gaskins provided the Board of Education with an update of expected summer work including; replacing the maintenance storage building, painting projects, updating the high school science labs, and replacing some flooring in the Middle School. He expressed his appreciation for Keith Boyle and the maintenance crew. Ms. Sexton Read also shared her gratitude for their work over the past year.

OLD BUSINESS:

The superintendent presented the New Hire Report:

Jeanne Ettanji was hired as an Italian teacher.

Linda McCartney was hired as a Business Teacher.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Superintendent's Office has confirmed the reappointment of Board of Education Members Deborah Bell (N) through 6/30/25, Kimberly Crone (N) through 6/30/24, and Theresa Kenneson (C) through 7/1/25. Ms. Sexton Read thanked them for their continued service and noted that stability is a key factor in the Board's success.

Ms. Sexton Read spoke about seeking input from the Region 7 elementary district Board chairs and superintendents to examine K-12 efficiencies.

CORRESPONDENCE:

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson seconded by Mr. Gauthier to ACCEPT Kristin Hall's Letter of Retirement with appreciation of her service to NWR7 students. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Kenneson. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED**

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson seconded by Mr. Gauthier to ACCEPT Patricia Severson's Letter of Retirement with appreciation for her professionalism and for doing all that was asked of her to ensure the health and safety of our staff and students. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Kenneson NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED**

Rebecca Welsh's (NH) letter was acknowledged. Ms. Sexton Read expressed appreciation for the thoughts shared in the letter and acknowledged that it has been a long, hard year. She affirmed that the District will continue to make decisions in the best interest of staff and students.

OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **ADJOURN** at 7:21 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Next Meeting: July 14, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

Judith A. Palmer, Ed.D.