

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 – 6 p.m.

APPROVED 10/13/2021

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. 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, Student Representatives: Ms. Alexa Carroll and Ms. Morgan Plitt

ABSENT: Ms. Duran (B), Ms. Kenneson (C), Ms. Fragale (C)

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sexton Read called the regular Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:02, with opening remarks to the public in attendance pertaining to Governor Lamont’s Executive Orders and mask mandates with regard to the welfare of students and staff at Regional School District No. 7, and the rationale for mask wearing and protection of our community. Ms. Sexton Read advised that the Board of Education is listening, and that any public participation must be in a calm, respectable manner and anyone exhibiting disruptive behavior will be asked to leave.

PUBLIC PORTION

Rose Yacawych (B) cited several studies on environmental air quality, ventilation, COVID transmission process, and level of mask protection.

Mark Mahoney (B) thanked Board members and administration for their work and requested information pertaining to Governor Lamont’s Executive Orders and mandates.

Andrea Roy advised that he is looking forward to the future when COVID mandates end, and requested that the Board of Education provide information on plans being discussed to unmask students.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, to **APPROVE** Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2021, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION by Ms. Bell, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, to **APPROVE** Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes of September 8, 2021, as presented. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS

STUDENT REPORTS

Mr. Franklin enthusiastically introduced Ms. Morgan Plitt as the Board of Education Junior Representative for the 2021-2022 school year, and Board members welcomed Ms. Plitt as the Junior student representative.

Ms. Carroll updated Board of Education members on the following topics: school year start-up and the excitement of being back with lockers, tables in the cafeteria, and huge success of the ping-pong table in

the senior courtyard. She also provided an update on the new class schedule, and the positive feedback received from fellow students who are very much looking forward to this school year in-person learning.

PRINCIPAL AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Mr. Amara welcomed and commended Morgan for her many contributions to date, and provided Board of Education updates pertaining to: school year start-up, enthusiastic and connected students who are happy to be back in the building. Transition went smoothly with a focus on the Northwestern Middle School Charter with a plan for weekly check-ins. Additionally, Mr. Amara advised on the success of the Middle School Open House; parents very excited to see staff and each other. Mr. Amara advised of action steps for student achievement results in ELA and Mathematics.

Mr. Franklin and Dr. Palmer happily shared the exciting news that Northwestern Regional School District No. 7 has the distinct honor of being selected to receive **The National Blue Ribbon Award** for high performance, and she and Mr. Franklin provided a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key indicators, accomplishments, and achievements necessary to receive such a terrific honor. Dr. Palmer, recognizing that there are very few high schools that have achieved this recognition, provided sincere thanks to the Board of Education, Town and Elected Officials, Middle and Elementary School member communities, staff, students and parents for their continued support, dedication and hard work, all of which is critical to the success of the school and becoming National Blue Ribbon Award winners.

Additionally, Dr. Palmer provided a brief update pertaining to Teacher Evaluation requirements and flexibilities for this school year.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Mr. Gaskins provided an update pertaining to Transportation, anticipated bus driver shortages, and contingency plans put in place to address the potential shortages. Mr. Gaskins advised that all students and parents affected by the contingency plans have been contacted, and brief discussion followed on how athletic transportation and sports teams may also be affected.

OLD BUSINESS UPDATES

Ms. Sexton Read advised of a meeting held with Town Officials and member town Board of Education Chairpersons pertaining to regionalization cost saving opportunities. Ms. Sexton Read also commended Dr. Palmer on her leadership abilities in achieving the distinct honor of receiving **The National Blue Ribbon Award**. Board members and public in attendance acknowledged the commendation with applause and sincere appreciation of Dr. Palmer's achievements for the District.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Public member in attendance commended Dr. Palmer on the great honor of receiving The National Blue Ribbon Award, and is looking forward to a plan for unmasking students, and Mr. Gaskins addressed a question pertaining to bus transportation.

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, to **ADJOURN** at 7:02 p.m. AYE: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Gauthier, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. NAY: None. ABSTAIN: None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa H. D'Aprile
Board Clerk