

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022 – 6 p.m.
Newbury Library Media Center
APPROVED 3/10/2022

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Mary Duran (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

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 09, 2022, as presented. 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.**

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT’S BUDGET OVERVIEW 2022-2023

Dr. Palmer began her Proposed 2022-2023 Budget Presentation thanking Mr. James Gaskins, Ms. Mary Paganini, and Ms. Lisa D’Aprile for their assistance, 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. Dr. Palmer’s recommended budget, representing the goals and mission of enabling all students to achieve academic and personal excellence, for \$22,958,724 is an increase of \$603,878 and 2.7% over the 2021-2022 budget.

The Proposed 2022-2023 Budget reflects Special Education increases of 7.19 percent due to six new student outplacement programs, the CSDE 25 credit requirement for all 2023 graduates allowing opportunities for students to discover their passions and strengths, increased STEM electives, AP Chemistry, staff changes due to retirements, and additional academic support for the 2022-2023 school year supported by both the ESSER and ARP Grants.

Dr. Palmer presented District achievements and recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School as a School of Distinction with four years of academic growth, Northwestern High School’s Accountability Index, AP District Honor Roll and student AP score percentage comparison, PSAT/SAT State of Connecticut and Berkshire League data comparatives, 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.

Additionally, Dr. Palmer 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. Explanation was provided of the major budget drivers, Excess Cost expenditure offsets reflected in special education, revenues, Connectivity Grant, roof projects, changes in average daily membership by town, and a historical perspective on member town assessments.

Dr. Palmer 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 discussion followed pertaining to: grant funded teacher salaries, Connectivity Grant, straight line ADM for member towns, special education outplacement programs, enrollment numbers, and revenue clarification. Further discussion pertaining to Mr. Gaskins' Level Funding Model for roof projects followed, and the Board requested an adjustment be made without any increase/decrease for line item clarification from Interest on Bonds and Serial Bond Retirement to a Cap Outlay Roof Account.

Ms. Sexton Read provided thanks and grateful appreciation for the work involved in presenting a reasonable and responsible budget during unpredictable times and which historically has been represented with broad community support.

OLD BUSINESS

Policy 9110: Number of Members, Plan of Representation and Terms of Office, will be taken to vote at the next regular Board of Education meeting since it was not included in the Agenda today.

Discussion followed pertaining to live streamed/recorded for public viewing of the Board of Education meetings, and it was decided that additional investigation was needed on the financial impact for the Board to consider further.

Ms. Sexton Read reviewed the timeline for future budget workshops.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADJOURN** at 7:16 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 2, 2022, 6:00 p.m., Special Meeting Budget Workshop,
Newbury Library Media Center**