

Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Monday, October 18, 2021; 7:00 p.m.
Flanders Room
Mitchell Elementary School
Live Stream Available:
<https://vimeo.com/event/353466>

Present:

George Bauer
Jim Crocker
Michael Devine
Carol Ann Brown (*arrived 7:08)
Chris Matta
Jonathan Kapstein
David Butkus
Tikva Rose

Absent:

N/A

Also Present:

Wayne McAllister, Acting Superintendent
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations

School Administration/Staff Presenting

Donna Marcinek, Director of Student Services
Sandra Rogozinski, Transition Teacher, Special Education

Patricia Paige, Board Recording Clerk

I. Call to Order

Board Chairman, George Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

III. Introductions

Board members and central office staff introduced themselves

IV. Approval of the Minutes

A. Regular Meeting, Monday, October 4, 2021

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Dave Butkus to accept/approve the minutes as presented; Michael Devine abstained; motion carried.

V. Acting Superintendent's Report

A. **Special Education Report**

Grant Funding

More funding, by way of grant dollars, has been apportioned to Special Education; three grants specifically. An ARP IDEA grant, in the amount of \$71,000, will be used to extend the IDEA grant proposed in the spring. No allocation has been allotted as of yet for the ESSER II Special Education Recovery Grant, but funding will be calculated based on population. Lastly, special education grant dollars have been earmarked for students who are receiving services under the primary classification of dyslexia at \$650 per student.

Special Education Programs

A pre-school summer program was offered this past summer; Ms. Marcinek would like to continue the program again in 2022.

The Region 14 Transition Program has been re-established in the district and is headed by faculty member, Sandra Rogozinski. The biggest challenge for the curriculum is transportation; there are not enough drivers to transport students out into the community.

Students enrolled in the program are between the ages of 18-22. New legislation has increased the age limit from 21 to one's 22nd birthday. While in the program, students practice and learn social and communication skills with the goal of increasing their independency in the community and securing employment.

Social and Emotional Well-Being of Students

Grant monies have allowed for a BCBA position, which is helping to support the social and emotional well-being concerns of students. Additional grant funding also permitted the employment of a SEL Coordinator, Julianne Morin, who is facilitating K-8 services with the Ruler Program and bringing continuity across the district.

Public Act 21-25

Public Act 21-25 mandates that districts put in place a means to screen students for social and emotional difficulties. The state is supporting the use of Aperture as a screening device by districts. Parental permission will be required for students to participate. Staff training will commence in January 2022. Members of the Board requested a copy of the survey questions in advance.

B. **Covid 19 Update**

District wide there is currently one positive staff member isolating; 12 positive students isolating; and 18 in quarantine due to close contact, for a total of 31.

Executive Order 13 G Vaccine Compliance: Region 14 has 100% staff compliance, which represents those who are vaccinated and those who are being tested weekly.

VI. Committee Reports

A. FFA Advisory

Committee members Chris Matta and Carol Ann Brown reported.

Mr. Matta was very impressed with the involvement and passion of the committee members. The Vet Science room has been assembled to replicate an actual veterinary animal hospital, however insurance risks negate the ability to provide dog grooming and daycare.

B. Public Relations

Ms. Brown highlighted a few events including the next meeting for Grad Nite, which is scheduled for the 27th and a clothing drive fundraiser anticipated for the 30th. She also spoke to the K-5 next generation program at Flanders Nature Center and gave a shout out to the principals for their Weekly Update efforts.

VII. Board Chair's Comments

The Board will be acting as the Superintendent Search Committee

VIII. Privilege of the Floor

Paul Zulpa, Woodbury, CT

Mr. Zulpa echoed the sentiments regarding FFA; it was nice to have school and student representation at the Big E and Fall Harvest; very supportive of the program; noticed that the overall population of the program has very low Region 14 student enrollment.

Casey Rushin, Woodbury, CT

Regarding the FFA program, Mr. Rushin inquired if it would be feasible to secure a veterinarian to volunteer for a day and operate out of Nonnewaug under their own insurance; thanked Mr. McAllister for assisting Ms. Yatsenik, the principal at Bethlehem Elementary, with her needs; asked if SEL for Special Ed could be merged with the FFA.

IX. Old Business

None

X. New Business

A. A motion was made by Dave Butkus and seconded by Jonathan Kapstein to add an item of New Business to the agenda, "Speaking to the Press on Behalf of the Board"; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

A discussion was had on the decorum of Board members, speaking independently with the press regarding matters of the Board. It is the responsibility of the Board Chair, in their position and acting as a representative of the full Board, to share such matters.

- B. Discussion and possible action on secretarial union grievance/termination arbitration decision.

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Dave Butkus to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a secretarial union grievance/termination arbitration; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously. The Board entered into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. and invited in Attorney Mark Sommaruga, Tina Tanguay, and Wayne McAllister.

Public Session

The Board returned to Public Session at 8:54 p.m.

Motion

Mr. Bauer moved to authorize the Board's council to take legal action including, but not limited to, appeal the arbitration award and/or resolve the matter as per discussions in Executive Session; seconded by Tikva Rose; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

XI. Other Business

None

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Tikva Rose to adjourn the meeting at 8:55pm; all in favor; none opposed; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Paige". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

*Patricia Paige
Board Clerk*

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk