

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Monday, September 21, 2015 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Board members George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, Charles Cosgriff, Michael Devine, Janet Morgan, Maryanne Van Aken, and Pamela Zmek; Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister, Director of Special Services Christina Fensore, Director of Teaching and Learning Michael Rafferty, Director of Human Resources Kimberly Culkun, Board Clerk Deb Carlton, two members of the community and one member of the press.

Absent: John Chapman

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bauer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board observed a moment of silence for Kenneth Sapack, parent of Region 14 students, husband of a valued Region 14 parent/volunteer, and well known member of the community who passed away last week.

3. Report from Student Representative

Tabled.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 8, 2015.*

Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 5-0-1** with Ms. Morgan abstaining.

5. Presentation

MES Interim Principal Holly Wrenn honored her building secretary, Renee Singley, as Region 14's Finest. She spoke of Ms. Singley's dedication and hard work and efforts to keep MES running smoothly during this summer's transition. Ms. Wrenn described her as the center of MES and she has helped her settle in at the school. Ms. Van Aken presented Ms. Singley with a certificate on behalf of the Board of Education and thanked her for her years of service to Region 14.

6. Information and Proposals

A. Committee reports

Ms. Van Aken reported for the Bylaws/Policy/Ethics Committee which met on 9/14/15 to review mandated policies. At the next BoE meeting, about eleven of these will come to the board for first read. The second packet of suggested policy revisions have also arrived from CAFE. The committee will review these and bring them to the board when ready. Next meeting is scheduled for next week.

Ms. Van Aken also reported for the ad hoc Safety Committee which met Friday to review an addendum to the SRO MoU, discuss a prescription Rx curriculum, consider the use of drug detection dogs, and hear updates on camera installation, incident response training and Social Sentinel.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard called on Ms. Fensore to update the Board on her first months leading the Special Education department. Ms. Fensore reported she is conducting monthly meetings with team leaders, psychologists, social workers, speech and language pathologists, and OT/PT staff. She is also holding building meetings. Feedback indicates what is most desired is consistency across the schools, as well as the opportunity to meet with colleagues to review cases and receive feedback. She is developing parent partnerships by attending PPTs, meeting with families, attending regular meetings of the Special Education PTO subcommittee, and by holding a recent meet and greet. She is planning parent workshops, too.

Ms. Fensore provided numbers of students placed out of district, noting that number has decreased over the past few years and crediting Ms. Culkin with that accomplishment. She is also meeting weekly with Mr. McAllister to review all financial numbers, and they will implement processes for communication between the schools and central office, which was identified as a need. She reported on the transition program, in the building phase, and whose three students have been going to Woodbury Park and Rec on Fridays, are beginning work experiences, and are utilizing a life skills curriculum. Guest speakers have shared interview skills with them, and they have participated in community outings.

Ms. Fensore concluded with a personal highlight: photos of her 2nd place finish in the hay bale throwing contest at the Bethlehem Fair!

Ms. Zmek asked for the district's total number of identified students, and asked whether that number has also decreased. Ms. Fensore will obtain that information.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard commented that Ms. Fensore's participation at the fair is an example of how the new administrators are quickly becoming part of the community and that the community is important to them. Board members expressed agreement.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard presented information regarding district improvement planning, and her vision to make Region 14 an "overnight success over the next five years." She highlighted four primary areas of focus and priority: improving teaching and learning, fostering leadership at all levels, re-engaging the community into one school community, and ensuring we have the resources and finances needed to facilitate the learning environment we are working to create.

Revising the curriculum in the core four is a major goal: English/Language Arts in 2015-16, Math in 2016-17, Social Studies in 2017-18, and Science in 2018-19. During 2015-16, the district is redesigning learning spaces, introducing Chromebooks, and working to enhance communication.

In 2016-17, Math curriculum will be revised; scheduling for learning will be addressed, a Teachers' Leadership Academy will be launched, and work will be done to build business and community partnerships.

In 2017-18, Social Studies curriculum will be the focus, as will defining the expectations for a graduate of Region 14 schools. Student voice will be explored, as well as the language of coding.

In 2018-19, the Science curriculum will be addressed, career exploration will become part of the program of studies, and enrichment will be offered to all students. This will be a year for celebration of learning.

The 2019-2020 year remains under construction, as the team assesses the progress made in prior years and adjusts to continue moving forward.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard invited the Board and community to share ideas and feedback.

Next, she shared with the Board as an FYI information regarding changes needed to the SRO MoU which have come about due to legislation. She supplied copies of the original MoU, the legislation causing the changes, and a draft of an addendum.

Lastly, she notified the Board of the potential of having drug detection dogs at some point this year come to NHS due to the number of drug related offenses at that school. Board policy allows for it, and the school would go into lockdown while the search was conducted. Only spaces and property would be involved, and no people would be searched by the dogs.

C. Board Chair's Comments

Mr. Bauer again reminded the audience of the Go the Distance for Scholars event this coming weekend, as well as the drug take back efforts at both the Woodbury and Bethlehem police facilities from 10 am – 2 pm.

7. Privilege of the Floor

Janet Morgan, Woodbury Fire Chief, thanked Dr. Cutaia-Leonard for her attendance and participation at this year's carnival, where she served food for both companies. They will want to thank her at an upcoming meeting.

Carol Ann Brown, Chair of the Historical District of Bethlehem, thanked the 2 agriscience classes who came with their teacher, Eric Birkenberger, to spruce up the green prior to the fair. March Farms and True Value donated supplies, and the students cleaned up, planted and mulched. Ms. Zmek added that they worked on a particularly hot and muggy day, and it was much appreciated.

8. Business Requiring Board Action

Mr. Bauer requested the following motion: *that the Region 14 Board of Education approve the NHS Agriscience Students trip to the National FFA Convention in Louisville, KY, Monday, October 26 – Saturday, October 31, 2015 for 55 students and 5 faculty chaperones via coach bus and financed by students' families (\$200/ea) and Agriscience budget (\$240/ea).*
Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 7-0.**

Mr. Bauer requested the following motion: *that the Region 14 Board of Education approve the WMS student trip to Quebec City, Canada, Friday, November 6 – Sunday, November 8, 2015 for approximately 45 students and 5 faculty chaperones via coach bus and financed by students' families (approximately \$500/ea)*
Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 7-0.**

9. Announcement of Future Meetings

Mr. Bauer reviewed upcoming meetings:
Monday, October 5, 2015, BoE Regular Meeting, 7:30 pm NHS LMC
Monday, October 19, 2015, BoE Regular Meeting, 7:30 pm, BES

10. Adjournment

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn*, second by Ms. Morgan. **Motion carried 7-0.** The meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Ann Brown, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 9/24/2015