

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Monday, October 6, 2014 at Nonnewaug High School, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Board members George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, Michael Devine, Janet Morgan, Maryanne Van Aken and Pamela Zmek; Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister; Director of Instruction Sue Domanico; Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., Director of Special Services Kim Culkin and Attorney Linda Yoder; NHS Spanish Teacher Jane Caruso; BES Principal Susan Ruddock; Student Representative Stephanie Lewis; Technology Director Paul Ciotti; Board Clerk Deb Carlton; and two community members.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bauer led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Student Representative

Stephanie reported on recent activities in the schools, including spirit days, fire prevention program, Hip Pickles musical assembly, and Halloween Dance at BES; 4th grade mile run and Mad Hatter's Ball at MES; sports update for WMS; and field trip, open house, sports and activity news for NHS.

4. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 15, 2014*. Entered by Mr. Devine and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 6-0-2** with Ms. Van Aken and Mr. Chapman abstaining.

5. Presentations

Ms. Caruso offered details of her proposed trip to Spain, a 10 day trip planned for the end of June, 2015 which will be marketed first to students in Spanish 2-4 and then, if space is available, opened up to all students.

Board members asked about such things as insurance for trip cancellation and health insurance, and Ms. Caruso confirmed these safeguards will be in place.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard offered details of her entry plan, highlighting four goals: developing a strong and collaborative working relationship with the BoE; establishing positive working relationships with administrators, teachers and staff; building positive relationships with parents and community members of both towns; and understanding the strengths, challenges and opportunities of the district's academic programs and the operational and financial processes. She spoke of establishing baseline data, outlining her priorities, the methods she'll use and the outcomes she expects.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard took questions and comments from the board, about assessment tools she will use and the importance of transparency to get the most honest input possible.

6. Information and Proposals

A. Committee Reports

For Facilities/Enrollment/Transportation, Ms. Morgan indicated that committee had met and reviewed an Eagle Scout project, heard about boiler repairs at NHS, and reviewed enrollment, transportation and the need for upkeep of schools' automated external defibrillators. Next meeting is 10/14.

For Finance, Mr. Devine reported that this committee had met and reviewed financial reports, potential transfers, savings on outgoing/incoming staff, and an accounting manual to be completed by December. They discussed policies and practices in place for spending, and what comes before the BoE for approval. Next meeting is 10/14.

For Ad hoc Safety, Ms. Van Aken reported that the safety plan is on the way to the state, background checks are up and running, cameras are being installed with a 60 day timeline, and phones will be installed in the elementary schools on Wednesday.

For Planning, she reported the committee had just met and heard of enhancements to the social/emotional curriculum at WMS; summer curriculum accomplishments; and changes to English/Language Arts curriculum at NHS.

For Public/Community Relations, Ms. Brown said parents are looking for information on NEAT TV regarding Dr. Cutaia-Leonard, and we need to get the right things on. BoE meetings and sports need to be on NEAT TV. A welcoming event for Dr. Cutaia-Leonard will be planned for the first week of November.

B. Superintendent's Report

Reporting in Dr. Sippy's absence, Mr. McAllister updated the Board on a number of items: a budget document will be available this week to administrators and the strategy will be not an incremental budget but one designed to meet goals of the Strategic Plan. October 1 enrollment figures, and a 5 year history, will inform budget preparation. On 10/1/13 the district had 1898 students enrolled, while on 10/1/14 that number is 1808. The Prowda report estimated 1809, so we are trending to his numbers.

Mr. McAllister gave staffing figures showing reductions: 296.75 in 2013-14, 290.25 budgeted for in 2014-15, and 290.7 actual staff currently in place. Class size review for 2015-16 is being done; adult ed at the agriscience center is in progress with 28 fall classes and an additional session in the spring, with payments made through Paypal; 25 requests to unblock websites were received from 7/9/14-10/6/14. Of those, 23 were approved and the other 2 will come for approval by the technology committee at its next meeting. Forty one applications to volunteer have been received and all have been approved. Only SROs can accept applications. Also, a new segment on NEAT TV (cable channel 194) is the NHS news, featuring news, sports and weather.

C. Board Members' Comments

Mr. Devine commented on the Legislative Open House scheduled for 10/23. He also thanked staff for their performance during the recent incident at BES

Ms. Brown attended the Junk in the Trunk tag sale/grad nite fund raiser on Saturday, but felt it needs a better location.

Ms. Van Aken mentioned the internet safety presentation at WMS coming up on 10/27 at 6:30 pm.

Mr. Cosgriff commented on course offerings at NHS and preparing students for jobs after high school.

Mr. Bauer commented on Art Honor Society inductions tonight.

Ms. Zmek commented on efforts by agriscience students to beautify school grounds over the summer.

Ms. Morgan thanked students and staff at NHS for accommodating the inconvenience of water hose testing.

7. Privilege of the Floor

Nancy McMillan, of the Woodbury/Bethlehem Music Foundation, expressed concern over funding the strings program in the schools. The agreement called for, by the time students reached the high school, a full time strings specialist would be hired, and this plan is not on track. Hours were to be added as students were added. She urged the Board to fund this position in the budget.

Doug Mahard, also of the Music Foundation, spoke about the feelings and emotions that are stirred through music. He read a student letter expressing what music means to her.

8. New Business requiring Board action

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to add to the agenda approval an out-of-state/overnight trip for FFA students.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 8-0**.

Mr. Bauer requested the following: *Move that the Board of Education approve NHS students to Spain, June 22-July 1, 2015, for approx. 12 students and 2 faculty chaperones, via air transportation and funded by students' families.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Ms. Zmek, the **motion carried 8-0**.

Mr. Bauer requested the following: *Move that the Board of Education approve the Region 14 Safe School Climate Plan/Policy.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Devine. Discussion followed. Ms. Domanico shared that changes made were per requirements of the General Assembly. Changes in names of personnel and forms required were included, and the list of changes, she said, was in the board packets.

Board members expressed interest in periodic follow up with both the bullied and the bully; concern in getting wider participation in the survey, how to help students feel more comfortable about reporting incidences of bullying; and the possibility of adding the SROs to the plan.

The motion carried 8-0.

Mr. Bauer requested the following: *Move that the Board of Education approve the contract between the Region 14 Board of Education and Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., for the term 2014-2017.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Devine. Mr. Bauer highlighted changes to the draft contract. The motion carried 8-0.

Mr. Bauer requested the following: *Move that the Board of Education approve NHS students to the National FFA Convention, (Louisville, KY), 10/27-11/1/2014 for approximately 51 students and 10 chaperones, via coach bus and funded by State grants.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the motion carried 8-0.

9. Future Meetings

10/16/14 Board of Education Retreat, NHS LMC, 6:00 pm
10/20/14 Board of Education Meeting, BES, 7:30 pm
Also, CABE/CAPSS Convention, Groton, CT 11/14-15/2014

10. Executive Session

Mr. Bauer requested the following: *Move that the Board of Education enter Executive Session to discuss a confidential student matter relating to written legal advice about implementation and enforcement of a hearing decision, and a personnel matter.* Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 8-0**.

The Board entered the session at 9:47 pm and concluded at 10:47 pm

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn*.
Seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 8-0**.
The meeting adjourned at 10:50 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, 10/10/14