

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Monday, December 1, 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; Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister; Director of Instruction Sue Domanico; Data Administrator Jeff Turner; Elementary Principals MaryLou Torre and Susan Ruddock; NHS faculty and administrators Andrew O'Brien, Robyn Apicella, William Nemec, Pamela Sordi, Taryn Fernandez, Christopher York, Katherine Aseltine, Ray Robillard, Bill Davenport, Katie Yocis; Student Representative Stephanie Lewis; Clerk Deb Carlton; 1 member of the community and one member of the press.

1. **Call to Order**

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Bauer led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. **Student Representative**

Ms. Lewis updated the Board on recent activities in the schools, including holiday shops and parent conferences at the elementary schools; book fair and the start of basketball season at WMS; and a win for the football team, a senior citizen prom, blood drive, holiday plant sale and fall sports banquet at NHS.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 18, 2014*. Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 8-0**.

5. **Presentations**

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard previewed the high school presentation on changes to scheduling by saying this type of proposal typically starts with the Planning Committee; however, changing the structure of the high school schedule was something the full board would need to hear, review for 2 weeks and ask questions, and then vote on the changes at the next meeting.

She introduced Mr. O'Brien and his staff.

Mr. O'Brien spoke of the scheduling changes as an opportunity for change, enhancing professional learning, and improving student achievement. The scheduling changes align with BoE goals, and they address concerns made by the District Management Council, as well as allowing for enrichment and real world applied learning experiences. His team, he said, worked hard to bring the plan to completion for tonight.

Ms. Sordi described the current schedule, with 7 periods and a lunch, acknowledging all students don't get a lunch, and that a 45 minute lunch for those who do is too long. Extended class lengths are important in all classes, but currently only happen in science (labs) and agriscience.

Mr. York added that the faculty wanted to see less study halls and more flex time with faculty, which is important for enrichment. The committee wanted a plan that would accommodate more credits.

Ms. Fernandez said organization of time needed to be addressed, extended learning opportunities, authentic tasks, and these are enabled with extended time.

Ms. Sordi reported the committee had reviewed all 19 CT agriscience schools, and visited many, surveying teachers on how their schedules work.

The committee took questions from the board, confirming that increased credit requirements could be accommodated as well as a capstone type project; and that all 4 schools would switch to an early release on Wednesdays. It was discussed that some classes would work better for the split class-lunch-class block; culinary, for example, would work better with lunch at the start, while PE would work better with lunch at the end. Ms. Morgan requested the school check with the fire marshal for max

capacity in the lunchroom. Mr. Devine asked if holidays were considered and was told the block schedule would hold. Flex time is 2x per month, rotating between flex and advisory, and there will be a yearlong calendar for both.

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard previewed the discussion of progress reports by saying there had been numerous changes to the progress reports to equip them with more information.

Ms. Domanico said the administrators asked themselves whether the report cards accurately represented the teaching and learning that was going on in class and realized the progress report needed tweaking, subjects not taught needed to be removed, and consistency between the two schools needed to be created and standardized progress reporting is more helpful in capturing the existing curriculum.

Ms. Ruddock commented the new report gives rich information on the students.

Ms. Torre said it allows the teachers to speak with confidence with parents.

The principals and Ms. Domanico heard comments and took questions from the board, and were urged to include information in Friday folders, too, and not to assume all parents will look online.

## **6. Information and Proposals**

### **A. Committee Reports**

For Public/Community Relations, Ms. Brown encouraged viewers to watch BoE meetings on cable channel 194; encouraged parents to visit the district website; and pointed out the "people aspect" of the board's work. She thanked Dr. Cutaia-Leonard for attending the needs assessment meeting in Bethlehem, and encouraged people to attend the Grinch pancake breakfast next Sunday. She spoke of the upcoming Hall of Fame event, and expressed delight that the Chiefs won a football game.

### **B. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard reported she awaits enrollment projections next week and will send those along or offer them at the next meeting. She is looking outward for agenda priorities; has mapped out important topics through June of 2015, in areas such as technology, teacher evaluation, climate, MAP, and team teaching, as one way to illustrate the use of budget funds. If there are topics of interest, she asked the board to let her know.

### **C. Board Members' Comments**

Mr. Chapman likes the year-long agenda planning concept; also, he will plan to schedule a Policy Committee meeting for 12/9 at 6:30 pm

## **7. Privilege of the Floor**

None.

## **8. New Business requiring Board action**

Mr. Chapman entered the following motion: *that a special committee is hereby established as the building committee with regard to the Nonnewaug High School renovation project, with John Chapman serving as its Chairman, with said committee consisting of not less than 7 members and not more than 11 members, with the members to be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Education, and with each member to serve until such member's successor is appointed and qualified or the committee is disbanded.* Seconded by Mr. Cosgriff.

Mr. Bauer reviewed the 2 court cases, and that both validated the district's ability to move forward with the project. Members, timeline, whatever work can be done at this point to move the project forward, needs to be started.

Ms. Van Aken expressed concern over the wording of the motion; she believes Mr. Chapman needs to be involved in the decision making of who is on the committee. Ms. Brown agreed, commenting it is he who needs to work with them.

Mr. Chapman felt that, operationally, the building committee chair makes his recommendations to the board chair for appointment.

An amendment to the original motion was proposed: that the Building Committee Chair make recommendations to the Board of Education Chairman to be appointed by the Board of Education Chairman.

Ms. Zmek expressed concern for amending the motion, asking if the board could wait to ask board counsel if there is no urgency to act tonight. It was agreed there is urgency in getting this committee going again. The amendment still requires appointment by the chair.

Ms. Morgan entered a *motion to amend the motion as proposed*. Second by Ms. Van Aken. **Motion carried 8-0.**

**The motion previously entered and amended to appoint the chair of the Building Committee carried 8-0.**

Mr. Bauer urged those wishing to serve on the committee to contact him, or Mr. Chapman or Mr. McAllister.

**9. Future Meetings**

Mr. Bauer reviewed upcoming meetings:

Monday, December 15, 2014, BoE Meeting, NHS LMC, 7:30 pm

Monday, January 5, 2015, BoE Meeting, NHS LMC, 7:30 pm

**10. Adjournment**

Mr. Devine entered a *motion to adjourn*.

Seconded by Ms. Van Aken, the **motion carried 8-0.**

The meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

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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, 12/9/2014