

The Regular Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at Bethlehem Elementary School, 92 East Street, Bethlehem, Connecticut.

Present: Board members George Bauer, Carol Ann Brown, John Chapman, Charles Cosgriff, Michael Devine, Maryanne Van Aken, and Pamela Zmek; Superintendent Anna Cutaia-Leonard, Ed.D., Director of Finance and Operations Wayne McAllister; Director of Instruction Sue Domanico; Principals Andrew O'Brien and Susan Ruddock; NHS faculty members Pam Sordi, Sharon Gomes and Barbara Losee; Board Clerk Deb Carlton; and, following R14's Finest, about 4 members of the community.

Absent: Janet Morgan

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bauer called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bauer led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bauer requested a *motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 5, 2015*. Entered by Ms. Van Aken and seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 7-0**.

4. Presentations

Mr. O'Brien was invited to the podium to introduce Region 14's Finest for Nonnewaug High School. He promised two great recipients, but refrained from stealing the thunder of faculty who were present to do the honors. Ms. Losee spoke about student award recipient, Robert Siwik, and listed many of his scholastic and extracurricular accomplishments. Ms. Sordi was pleased to be able to speak about staff honoree, Maggie Gildea, and described how essential and valued Maggie is to the workings of the School Counseling department, and to the school.

5. Information and Proposals

A. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Cutaia-Leonard referenced a hand out the board received, a District Management Council Update, outlining five opportunities suggested by the DMC and how the district has addressed them, and plans for further work in needed areas. She suggested that an attentive listener would hear budget related priorities in these plans. After a review of the material, she took comments and questions from the board.

In the area of the third opportunity, Mr. Bauer asked about reductions or additions to paraprofessional staff. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard indicated the focus so far has been on certified staff. Mr. Bauer would be interested in a timeline for short and long term opportunities. Mr. Chapman noted the DMC had been emphatic that tackling one of these opportunities would be a lot, and all five at once would be impossible. It seemed to him that we are focusing on the first one, and going for low-hanging fruit from 2-5. He was in favor of defining leadership roles. Ms. Brown advocated using staff wisely, and having those with reading backgrounds in the right place. Ms. Van Aken expressed delight that Dr. Cutaia-Leonard has focused on following through with the DMC recommendations. Considerable funds were spent, and then we experienced a transition, and she is happy this was not dropped. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard deflected this praise to her administrators, who she said are committed to this effort and have moved the needle. Mr. Cosgriff liked the idea of direct instruction to students by our most expert staff; and, coupling that with professional learning. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard agreed that building capacity by administrators is very important. Ms. Zmek agreed it is appropriate that this be on the front burner. She asked if it is the intention to purchase the

best practice based elementary reading program for all 5 grades, and was told this would be Dr. Cutaia-Leonard's preference and priority, as phasing it in would miss the readers who need it now. Ms. Zmek asked, on page 6, whether programming is outsourced or done in district, and was told both. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard is interested in bringing home the 18-21 aged programming when possible. Ms. Zmek asked about OT/PT services and was told some are outsourced but not all.

B. Board Members' Comments

Mr. Chapman referenced the upcoming workshop, and the marked up bylaws members had been sent. He recommended reading at least the attorney's comments prior to Monday.

Ms. Brown reported her committee had met tonight with PTO leadership to share ideas about communication with parents. She also gave updates on articles in the newspapers and achievements of some of our athletes.

6. Privilege of the Floor

None.

7. New Business requiring Board action

Mr. Chapman entered a *motion that the Board of Education approve the 2015-2016 School Calendar as presented.* Second by Ms. Van Aken. Dr. Cutaia-Leonard explained changes to the calendar since the board last reviewed it. She noted that October 9, 2015 will be a full professional learning day, as this date was valued by the faculty for review of student assessments. This pushes last scheduled day to June 9, 2016. The Board expressed satisfaction with the appearance and content of the calendar. **Motion carried 7-0.**

8. Future Meetings

Mr. Bauer reviewed upcoming meetings:

Monday, January 26, 2015, BoE Bylaws Workshop, NHS LMC, 6:30 pm

Monday, February 2, 2015, Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm, NHS LMC

Wednesday, February 18, 2015, Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 pm, NHS LMC

9. Executive Session

Mr. Chapman entered a *motion that the Board of Education enter Executive Session to discuss status strategy options regarding the ongoing Nonnewaug High School renovation litigation; and, to consider written opinion from district counsel regarding the high school project.* Second by Mr. Cosgriff. **Motion carried 7-0.**

The Board moved to Executive Session at 8:25 pm. No action taken.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Van Aken entered a *motion to adjourn.*

Seconded by Mr. Cosgriff, the **motion carried 7-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 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, 1/28/15