

A Meeting of the Regional School District 14 Board of Education was held on Monday, June 6, 2011, in the Nonnewaug High School Library, 5 Minortown Road, Woodbury, Connecticut.

Present: Board Chair Stephen Sordi, Board members Scott Baider, George Bauer, Linda Bulvanoski, Charles Cosgriff, Gary Suslavich and Pamela Zmek; also, Interim Superintendent Greg Little, Interim Director of Finance/Operations Ed Arum, administrators Alice Jones, Lori Ferreira and Jose Martinez; Athletic Director/Dean of Students William Nemeč; faculty members Bill Davenport, Carol Tomkalski, Mike Murphy, Tammy Platt, and Sarah DePolo; NHS students, including Mary Harrison; Elise Uberti, Sarah Kaelin, Jackie Nicholas, Abby Ray, Summer Churchill, James Whyte, Tom DiSarro, Chris Keane, Zach Jasensky, Max Bourgeois, and Carolyn Michener

Absent: Board member Deborah Corsico

Audience members included: incoming Board of Education members Sophieazane Bartlett, John Swendsen and Maryanne VanAken, one member of the press, and several members of the community.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Sordi called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Sordi led the Pledge of Allegiance

III. Presentations- Student and Community Recognition/Gifts

Dr. Little explained his desire to recognize some of the many student accomplishments of which he has become aware since beginning his tenure in Region 14. He called on various individuals and groups.

Ms. Platt and Ms. DePolo spoke about the unified sports program at NHS, registered with Special Olympics and initiated through grant money 3 years ago. Regular education students compete alongside special education students in track and basketball, and the program is so successful that there are often shortages of uniforms. Mr. Nemeč added that student essays on what the program means to them were recognized at the all-star banquet recently and essays by Taylor Garre, Lara Hawley, and Carolyn Michener were singled out for excellence. Also, NHS received the Ted Alex award for sportsmanship at the banquet. Mr. Nemeč was thrilled to accept this prestigious and sought after award in his first year at NHS.

Students Robert Peterson and Jericha Olson explained how Halo awards are earned for theatre arts. This year, NHS received 10 nominations and Ms. Olson won for best actress and NHS won for best play – Pride and Prejudice. The students praised the direction of their advisor, Ms. Lucia Dressel, and expressed pride in having been recognized by the theatre community for excellence.

Ms. Ferreira introduced the top three students at NHS this year: Valedictorian Mary Harrison, who is heading to Stanford U. to study political science; Salutatorian Elise Uberti, who will attend Boston College; and Sarah Kaelin, Class Essayist, whose post graduate plans include travel and study abroad.

Mr. Davenport introduced students Abby Ray, President of the NHS FFA, and Summer Churchill, FFA Vice President. The students described the chapter's "domination" at the state competition level. Fourteen students were state winners and will move on to national competition this summer. Board members were also gifted with FFA yearbooks, as well as a copy of the spring newsletter and other handouts describing accomplishments in detail.

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Mr. Nemec spoke in detail about the cumulative accomplishments of Jackie Nicholas in the sport of track. Jackie was named, by the Gatorade Company in collaboration with ESPN, the CT girls cross country runner of the year. She set course records at the state open, Nonnewaug Invitational, Windham Invitational and Berkshire League Championships. She took third in the New England Cross Country Championship, ninth at the Foot Locker regionals and was the only CT qualifier for the national Foot Locker championships, where she finished 35th overall.

Jackie maintains an A+ average, and will attend Princeton U. in the fall.

She received an enthusiastic standing ovation, and thanked her teammates, coaches, teachers, and family.

Mr. Murphy called upon the senior members of Team Beta to describe their success this year. James Whyte, Tom DiSarro, Chris Keane and Zach Jasensky spoke of their pride in earning, at the team's recent competition, the Imagery Award which, in addition to the building of a successful robot, takes into account how the team presents itself. They also expressed gratitude to ebm-papst, Inc. for the opportunities they have had through robotics due to their support. The financial support, as well as the guidance of the ebm-papst mentor, Hogan Eng, has been central to their success. Mr. Murphy echoed the importance of financial assistance in keeping this program viable, good naturedly likening it to public television. Chris Keane also added that the middle school Beetlebots program, of which he was a member, is a scaled down version of the high school robotics program. He spoke of the merits of that program as both motivating and great early preparation for the high school one, and both he and Mr. Murphy expressed appreciation to the middle school advisors, Elaine Peck and Millie Hauser, and to the parent volunteers, some of whom were present. Three of the seniors will attend Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the fall, and the fourth will attend Rochester Institute of Technology.

IV. Report from Student Representative

Mary Harrison reported that the season for state student advisory on which she served has concluded as of June 1st. She said finals at NHS would be given from 6/16-22. Graduation will be held on 6/25 at 10:30 am; rehearsals will be held on 6/21-22 and 6/24; parking for graduation will be at MES and WMS with shuttle service to the school.

V. Review of the Minutes

The minutes for 4/15/11 continued to be tabled.

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of 5/2/11*, second by Mr. Baider.

Motion carried 7-0.

Ms. Bulvanoski entered a *motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting of 5/9/11*, second by Mr. Baider.

Motion carried 6-0-1 with Mr. Baider abstaining.

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the minutes of the special meeting of 5/24/11*, second by Mr. Cosgriff.

Motion carried 6-0-1 with Mr. Bauer abstaining.

Minutes of the district meetings of 5/2/11, 5/12/11 and 5/17/11 were accepted as presented.

VI. Correspondence

Mr. Sordi reminded the board and audience that a letter had recently been received by a group of parents who asked that Dr. Cronin be invited to this year's high school graduation. Mr. Sordi reported that he had contacted Dr. Cronin, who said he was honored by this request but would be unable to attend.

Dr. Little referenced an anonymous parent letter regarding dissatisfaction with the region's dress code. He will refer the matter to the Policy Committee.

VII. Report from Chairman

None

VIII. Report from the Interim Superintendent

Dr. Little asked Ms. Ferreira to speak on the topic of high school reform, credits, and building needs. She distributed handouts to the board and audience to illustrate how high school reform, and increased credit requirements, impacts building needs. Enrollment projections were discussed, and classroom use, class sizes and number of study halls.

IX. Privilege of the Floor

Privilege of the Floor was offered, but no one spoke.

X. Report from (Interim) Director of Finance and Operations

Mr. Arum reported that bids for the track and drainage were being accepted; bids for out of district special education transportation will be received until 6/13; as of 5/30 there is a small surplus in food service of \$12,000; the May newsletter for our energy savings program is on our website, as is information for home savings.

Dr. Little added that a meeting was held with day care providers to see what can be done regarding before/after school care next year.

XI. Committee Reports

Mr. Suslavich reported that the Finance Committee met and reviewed the budget. There is no deficit and even a small surplus that could be used to make small purchases now to offset next year's budget.

Mr. Bauer reported for the Building Committee, which met with Antinozzi Associates and O&G, reviewed prior work on building plans, and discussed updates to educational specifications. Enrollment projections were discussed, as was scope of work and community support.

XII. Old Business
None.

XIII. New Business

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the request for family medical leave for Tricia Dannenhoffer, grade 1 teacher, from approximately 11/2/2011 and continuing for the remainder of the 2011-12 school year.*

Second by Mr. Baider. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the resignation of Lucia Dressel*, second by Mr. Baider.

Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Bauer entered a *motion to accept the resignation of Kevin Clemente*, second by Mr. Baider.

Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to accept the resignation of Sarah DePolo*, second by Mr. Cosgriff.

Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Cosgriff entered a *motion to accept the resignation of Sharon Zguzenski*, second by Mr. Bauer.

Motion carried 6-0.

XIV. Announcements
None.

XV. Privilege of the Floor

Mr. Martinez asked for clarification on effective dates of the resignations accepted earlier.

XVI. Executive Session

(Executive Session occurred earlier in the evening due to the availability of legal counsel)

Ms. Bulvanoski entered a *motion to move to executive session for discussion regarding pending litigation involving a special education student, and to include the board, Dr. Little, Mr. Arum, Kim Culkin and, by phone, legal counsel.* Second by Mr. Suslavich. **Motion carried 7-0.** The session lasted from 8:25 pm until 9:25 pm when the regular meeting resumed.

XVII. Adjournment

Mr. Suslavich entered a *motion to adjourn*, second by Mr. Baider. **Motion carried 6-0.**
The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Zmek, Secretary
Regional School District #14 Board of Education

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk, 6/7/11