

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER
BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
January 11, 2023 – 6 p.m.

APPROVED

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone (N), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Superintendent Dr. Judith Palmer, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal Mr. Fran Amara, Student Representatives: Ms. Morgan Plitt and Ms. Fiona Leon. **Absent:** Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Theresa Kenneson (C), Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the regular Board of Education meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **APPROVE** the December 14, 2022 Annual Organizational Board of Education Meeting Minutes as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the December 14, 2022 Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Leon provided Board of Education updates pertaining to: The students are back from winter break and the climate has been quiet. The students are preparing for midterm exams. The Swim Team is currently 5-0. Capstone presentations are coming up at the end of the semester, and most juniors and seniors are preparing. SAT Exam prep is currently happening. Band and Chorus are currently experimenting with different pieces. Brief discussion followed.

Ms. Plitt provided Board of Education updates pertaining to: The students are preparing for midterm exams. In senior news- those who have applied to colleges have begun to receive their letters of acceptances. In sports news- the girls' basketball team is 8-0. As a high school, the students are focusing on their studies. Brief discussion followed.

PRINCIPAL REPORTS

Mr. Amara provided Board of Education updates pertaining to: The transition process from 6th to 7th grade and 8th to 9th grade is in full swing. Teachers will make recommendations for particular courses, for students and families to review. Feb. 9 is Highlander Welcome Night, where parents and students of incoming 9th graders will learn about the high school and course offerings. In math news, George Mitesser is doing a great job and working with the students-grades 7 to 12. Liz Wilcox, the Math Interventionist, is completing mid-year benchmark assessments to monitor the math progress. The 8th grade honors Algebra students- currently 34 students taking this course- are also taking the high school midterm to obtain the experience. The Illustrative Math curriculum is going well, and engaging the students by working in groups, and having students become more interactive with the live instruction. High school students are participating in an independent study and are assisting students in math. Jim Mann -SEL Support Interventionist- offers an academic, emotional, and social assistance and averages 30 students a day. Questions and brief discussion followed.

Mr. Franklin provided the Board of Education updates pertaining to: Student activities - there are over 20 extracurricular clubs currently running. The process of adding clubs are as follows- a student/students would come to the assistant principal and suggest a club. The student would then complete a form describing the club, provide a rationale or purpose for the club itself, and also the level of interest, estimated time commitment, and the cost of getting the club up and running (estimated budget). The administrative team would begin the club as a pilot for a year and record the data and observe student participation. Next, the administrators complete an assessment audit to see if the school should move forward with this club. Lastly, the administrators will approach Dr. Palmer to explain that this club has gone through the process, has completed a pilot year, and this club is sustainable, so a discussion progresses to move forward with this club the next year. This is the process that Robotics completed. This club includes 8 students and a few students that join in when they can. This club is registered for 3 competitions. One club that is currently a pilot club is the art and pottery club. Questions and brief discussion followed.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Palmer provided Board of Education updates:

SEL Interventionist:

Jim Mann- SEL Interventionist- salary is currently funded by a grant. This position will only be funded through June 30, 2023.

EdAdvance Grant: EdAdvance submitted a school-based mental health services grant to the federal government on behalf of all the regional school districts in Litchfield County. EdAdvance was awarded \$8.7M to supply mental health counselors to all schools in Region 1, 6, 7, 12, and 14 for a five year period. The grant will cover the costs to provide 14 part-time (50%) mental health counselors in 28 schools. Jim Mann could be covered through this funding and shared between the Middle School and High School over the next five years.

Special Education: NWR7 special education costs are increasing in the middle school for the 2023-24 school year due to additional outplacements. The needs in high school have significantly increased. The high school is in need of an additional special education teacher. This special education teacher will serve students in grades 9-12. This program will emphasize social emotional skill development for students with an emotional disability or other impairments such as ADD/ADHD. This classroom will be a place for students to receive academic support, executive functioning support, as well as social emotional skills development. One teacher will be added to the 23-24 budget to support this new program. Brief discussion followed.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS REPORT

Dr. Palmer presented in Mr. Gaskins absence. Dr. Palmer provided the Board of Education updates:

2021-22 Financial Audit: The audit is complete and was sent out to all four towns. Mr. Gaskins has copies in his office for review. There were no findings. Thank you to the hard work of the business office- Hope Carfiro, Lisa D'Aprile and James Gaskins.

2023-24 Budget Timeline: Dr. Palmer passed out this year's DRAFT Budget Calendar for planning purposes.

Budget Transfers: Dr. Palmer reviewed the quarterly Budget Transfer Report request.

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the Quarterly Transfer Report (10/1/22- 12/31/2022) as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

OLD BUSINESS

Adoption of Policy 5141.4 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:

MOTION by Ms. Fragale, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the adoption of **Policy 5141.4 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect** as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Discussion and process of BOE GOALS: Ms. Molly Sexton Read suggested a workshop to discuss the goals and engage a moderator from CABE to assist. After a lengthy discussion between all board members, an agreement was made to have a BOE Goals Workshop on 1/17/2023 at 6:00 pm.

NEW BUSINESS:

Adoption of the 2023-24 School Calendar.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **APPROVE** the **adoption of the 2023-24 School Calendar** as presented: **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Mr. Gauthier, **TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION** to review the Superintendent's Performance Review and to invite Dr. Palmer at 8:02 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Mr. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Entered into Executive Session: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Crone, and Dr. Palmer.

Exited Executive Session at 8:25 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ADJOURN** at 8:25 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett
Board Clerk