

SEYMOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Seymour High School
Cafeteria
February 5, 2024
7:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Stephan Behuniak
Kristen Bruno
Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Jay Hatfield
Shannon Levey
Lori Nespoli
Ed Strumello
Sophia Motyl, Student Representative
Kaitlin Hamilton, Student Representative

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Kristen Harmeling
Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent of Schools
Salvatore A. Bucci, Business Manager
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Mary Sue Feige, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Derrick Martin, Technology
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Keith O'Rourke, Principal SMS
Lauren Reid, Principal, BES
Stacey Albertson, Assistant Principal, BES
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Alison Brett

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Champagne called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:02 p.m.

B. Moment of Silence

1. Rick Belden – Former Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Seymour Champion Recognitions

1. Bungay School
 - a. Levi Miller
 - b. Faith Murcko
 - c. Thea Reid
2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - a. Denis Kliuchkovskyi
 - b. Mackenzie Levey
3. Seymour Middle School
 - a. Juliana Hostos
4. Seymour High School
 - a. Lily Moir (January)
 - b. Noah Nagy

B. Superintendent Student Recognitions

1. Dr. Compton talked about how proud she is of the Champion Program and how much she values the program. She also honored Alison Brett as she is leaving Seymour Public Schools to begin a new position in Weston. Ms. Brett has been with the Seymour Public Schools for 17 years. She thanked Ms. Brett for all of her contributions and said Weston is getting a jewel. Ms. Brett said her heart will always be in Seymour. Her kids went through the system. She said our teachers are special. She concluded by saying once a wildcat, always a wildcat. Dr. Compton also honored Ms. Linda Bellavance who is retiring after 45 years of service. Ms. Bellavance started in 1978 and has served in numerous roles over the years, most recently as the secretary of the special education office. Thank you for your service, Ms. Bellavance, you will truly be missed.
Mr. Champagne called for a break at 7:27 pm.
Reconvened: 7:30 pm

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment provides the opportunity for the public to make a comment. It is not a dialogue between the Board and the public. Based upon what is heard during Public Comment, the Board may choose to add a topic to the agenda. If questions are posed that the Chairman is able to answer, those questions may be addressed under the Chairman's Comments portion of the agenda. The Board will not discuss personnel matters. Comments should be respectful and no longer than 3 minutes in length so that all who wish to comment may have the opportunity to do so. All the public wanting to comment will need to state their name and address for the record prior to addressing the Board.

None

IV. REPORTS

A. HS Student Representative Report- Sophia Motyl, Kaitlyn Hamilton National Honors Society -

- The NHS is planning a dance for March- a black and white semi-formal.
- The NHS and student council are also in the works of putting together a spring spirit week inclusive of: A volleyball tournament on April 10th, a Decathlon on April 11th and a Powder Puff Game on April 12th.

Newspaper Club -

- The newspaper is beginning to look into a project where they team up with Bungay Bee 5th grade reporters. Details are in the works. Also, the newspaper will release their next edition on Feb 14th. So Stay tuned!

Student Council -

- The Crush It Challenge led by Kayenat Asif (sophomore rep) had resulted in the recycling of over 1200 cans and \$245!
- Working with national honors society for the spring spirit week our main event being the powder puff game

Sports -

- Boys basketball is currently 10-5 with 5 games left in the regular season. They have their Seymour pink game Thursday. Girls are 9-7 with 4 games left, they have their Seymour pink game tomorrow night and their senior night is this Friday.. Both will participate in the NVL tournament and have qualified for the state tournament. Ice hockey is doing well this season at 9-5. Cheer and dance have started competitions. Dance will participate in NVL's on Thursday at Woodland and Cheer will compete on 2/17 for NVL's. Indoor track had a strong performance in NVL's with a 6th place finish for girls and a 9th place finish for boys. State competition begins on Friday for them.
- Boys swim is 5-3 with some strong swimmers leading the pack. Britain Calvert for wrestling will be competing in NVL's at Derby on Saturday.

Yearbook -

- The yearbook staff have just completed tallying the votes for senior superlatives, unsung heroes and their dedication. We will be trying to capture these images this upcoming week. Furthermore we are collecting all seniors' quotes and images.

Art Club -

- The Art Club is finishing up their painting and preparing for their next artistic endeavor.

Spanish Club -

- We will be starting to make piñatas tomorrow and continue for the next few weeks, as it takes several sessions as they have to dry in between steps.

Environmental Club -

- Students are planning some Earth Day events (4/22/24) that the club would like to introduce during and after the school day to promote environmental awareness and literacy. We are open to suggestions!

Debate Club -

Seymour sent teams to CT Debate Association Tournaments in January and February. Sophomores Anuhya Shah and Alyssa Vergati placed 3rd (out of 37) Novice entries and Alyssa earned a 5th place (out of 74) speaker award at the January debate held at Fairfield-Warde High School. These wins qualify the novice team for the state tournament in March. Elizabeth Eng & Tasneem Jara made a strong showing in the Varsity debate. In February, the debate tournament was held at Pomperaug High School.

Alyssa & Anuhya debated in the varsity division for the first time, getting ready for next year. Alex Gliford & Tristan Takara represented Seymour in the Novice division. Ariel Zedek entered the tournament alone and was paired with another debater from Greenwich. They finished 7th out of 44 teams in the Novice division.

Chemistry Club -

- Meeting on Thursday to create storage solutions for the electronic pH meters used for titrations in chemistry classes.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Special Organizational Meeting Minutes Revised – December 11, 2024
2. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – January 8, 2024
3. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2024
5. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – January 22, 2024
6. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – January 29, 2024

B. Staff Hiring

1. Certified

a. Moir, Brian

- Teacher, Business
- Pending DSAP Certification
- 2023-2024 School Year
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Harvey Catlin

b. Moir, Brian

- Teacher, CADD and Technology
- Pending Approval to ARC (Alternative Route to Certification) Program
- 2024-2025 School Year
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Joe Perrucci

c. Catanese, Michael (Rehire)

- Teacher, Business
- 2024-2025 School Year
- Seymour High School
- Replacing Michael Catanese

C. Out of State Field Trip

Mr. Pagliaro and Mr. McCasland would like to take Grade 11 and 12 AP US History Classes to the Tenement Museum in New York City, New York on May 20, 2024

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

ABSTAIN: Mr. Garofolo,

MOTION PASSES: 7-0-1

VI. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

VII. DISCUSSION and POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Building Substitutes – Bungay, Chatfield-LoPresti, Seymour Middle School

Dr. Compton made a recommendation to hire three permanent building substitute teachers for Bungay, Chatfield-LoPresti, and Seymour Middle School. Compensation for these positions will be \$170 a day plus single health coverage. After a discussion by the Board the motion was made

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Mr. Behuniak) to approve the hiring of three permanent building substitute teachers for Bungay School, Chatfield-LoPresti School, and Seymour Middle School to include single health coverage and five sick days for the 2023-2024 school year.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

B. Substitute Teacher Rate of Pay

The Board discussed the current pay for substitute teachers and the financial impact of using current teachers and Delta T staff as substitutes.

MOTION: (Ms. Bruno/sec., Ms. Levey) to change the rate for the substitute pool \$170 per day for certified teachers and \$140 for non-certified teachers

AMENDED MOTION: (Ms. Bruno/sec., Ms. Levey) to change the rate for the substitute pool \$170 per day for certified teachers and \$140 for non-certified teachers as of March 1, 2024

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

C. Policy Revision - Food Services Charging Policy

Dr. Compton encouraged the Board to pass this policy revision and said it will be sent to CAFE to become part of the policy manual. This revision is based on USDA guidelines.

MOTION: (Mr. Behuniak/sec., Ms. Bruno) to accept the recommendation of the Director of Nutrition Services to approve the revision of the Districtwide Food Services Charging Policy.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

D. Donation

1. Ms. Patricia Ptak

The Superintendent recommends the approval of the donation from Ms. Patricia Ptak for approximately 50 beautiful handmade crocheted scarves for the students of Chatfield-LoPresti School and direct that the Superintendent determine the placement of this donation.

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Levey) to approve with gratitude the donation from Ms. Patricia Ptak for the approximately 50 beautiful handmade crocheted scarves for the students of Chatfield-LoPresti School and direct the Superintendent determine the placement of this donation.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

E. Seymour Board of Education Budget 2024-2025

After a lengthy discussion regarding the proposed budget that was sent to the Town after the last Board of Education meeting on January 29, 2024, the Board agreed to revise the proposed budget.

MOTION: (Ms. Bruno/sec., Mr. Strumello) I move to amend the motion adopting the 2024-2025 budget at the Board's meeting of January 29, 2024, and modify the amount from \$40,295,077 to \$39,968,781 which represents an increase of 4.7%

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

VIII. INFORMATION

- A. Special Education Enrollment Report – Kristopher Boyle
- B. School Activities and Recognitions
 - 1. Bungay School
 - 2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - 3. Seymour Middle School
 - 4. Seymour High School

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vk5MHy9-xycZxIX4Q-CopxvTILzFhT8q5hUlfGJNgU/edit?usp=sharing>
- C. Staff Resignations
 - 1. Certified
 - a. Brett, Alison
 - Elementary Inclusion Facilitator
 - Bungay/Chatfield-LoPresti Schools
 - Effective February 23, 2024 (Possible earlier date of February 12, 2024)
 - 2. Non-Certified
 - a. Kearns, Michael
 - Head Coach, Football
 - Seymour High School
 - Effective January 10, 2024
 - b. Nowotny, Toni
 - Instructional Paraeducator
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Effective October 13, 2024
 - c. Willadsen, Lisa
 - Secretary
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Effective July 5, 2024

IX. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS/SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- A. Board of Education Comments
 - 1. Chairman's Comments

Mr. Champagne reminded everyone that the Board's Budget presentation to the Board of Finance and the Budget deliberation will be on February 28, 2024 in Town Hall.
 - 2. Board Member Comments

Mr. Strumello reported regarding the CAFE Board of Directors Meeting. Ms. Levey thanked Ms. Brett for her many years of service to our students and said this is a huge loss. We wish her the best. Mr. Strumello also reported on the Bungay School Building committee.

B. Superintendent Report

Dr. Compton talked about the CAGE Legislative Breakfast that was held at the middle school. She said they are looking at Special Education. She said she was able to attend the football banquet and thanked Ms. Amber Burton for her dedication and service to the Wildcat Kickoff Club. She reported that she attended the Griffin Hospital Annual meeting and thanked Mr. Lucke for the amazing work he did on the video that she and Mr. Lucke participated in and the hospital produced. She said work has begun on the Diversity Plan which is a state mandate. A committee has been formed and has some work to get done before the deadline in March. Dr. Compton also said she hopes the Board of Finance knows that this budget is what we need to educate the students of Seymour. This is for our survival, please don't come back to us as we have done our due diligence.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Ms. Bruno/sec., Ms. Levey) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 8-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm

To watch this meeting in its entirety, please use the link below.

YouTube Link (02/05/2024): <https://youtube.com/live/tDvomEiErPo?feature=share>

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk