

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

NEWBURY LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER

Board of Education Meeting

May 8, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED 7.10.24

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone, Ms. Lisa Fragale(C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal Mr. Fran Amara, Student Representatives: Owen Langer and Fiona Leon.

Absent: Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH).

RECEPTION FOR THE TOP TEN STUDENTS 2023-2024:

RECEPTION held for the Top Ten Students, Class of 2024. Mr. Franklin introduced and individually commended the following students for their outstanding achievements in academic, athletic, volunteer and club activities, and many contributions and accomplishments as members of both Regional School District No. 7 and within their own communities: Nikolas Bodnar- Barkhamsted, Ayla Fritz- Colebrook, Kelsey Gallaway- New Hartford, Alexia Lefkowski- Barkhamsted, Brooke Nelson- New Hartford, Siena Nguyen- Barkhamsted, Halyee Norway- New Hartford, Isabella Roepke- New Hartford, Mattea Young- Colebrook, and Meredith Zematis- Barkhamsted.

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Sexton Read called the Regular Board of Education meeting to order at 6:50 p.m.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **AMEND** the **BOE AGENDA** to reflect Ms. Angela Sabolcik's ~MS Science~ letter of resignation, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** Annual District Budget Hearing and the Board of Education Minutes of April 22, 2024, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS

STUDENT REPORTS: Mr. Langer provided the Board of Education updates pertaining to: Track- Berkshire League Championship will happen on May 18, 2024. Many track students are qualified to attend. Junior class had the Junior Prom last weekend. The feedback was the food was good, yet the D.J. was "alright." The Model UN club is hosting its first conference at RSD#7 this coming Friday, inviting Lewis Mills to participate. The issues of discussion will be the Ecuadorian Gang Crisis and Fast Fashion. Pizza will be provided by Mario's in Winsted. A/P Testing this week. A few students are holding fundraising events for their Capstone Projects- one student is holding a volley ball game at Brodie Park in New Hartford, and another student is having a trail run.

Ms. Leon provided the Board of Education with updates pertaining to: Ms. Leon expressed as the school year wraps up, more activities are happening. In past events, there was Mary Poppins presented by the theater students, and Mary Poppins actually "flew" for a moment during the play! This week's happenings- Berkshire Scholar Athletes Banquet, the Sports Banquet, and there was a Mary Poppins breakfast where the theater students all dressed up in their costumes and served breakfast. A/P testing is underway. There is the choir spring concert coming up, and the spring sports are celebrating seniors. In the future, there is a New York City field trip to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Anatomy and Physics field trip to Lake Compounce Amusement Park in Bristol where the students complete experiments about anatomical reactions to rides. The

National Honor Society is participating in Read Across America where the students will be visiting the elementary schools in New Hartford to read to the younger students. May 24, 2024, is Senior Prom at the La Bella Vista in Waterbury and the Senior Picnic.

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL FRANKLIN

Principal Franklin's report was the Top Ten Students.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AMARA

Principal Amara communicated that last week was 7th Grade Incoming Parents' Night. There was over 100 people in attendance. The actual program is approximately 25 minutes long coordinated by Amanda Cormier and Principal Amara. Discussions were about the Middle School and what to expect, and the transition process. Principal Amara opened parts of the Middle School to tour for the parents and students. The library was available to tour, the MS Science classroom, a MS Math classroom, and a MS English classroom. Two visits of the incoming 7th graders from New Hartford had occurred in the beginning of the week. Barkhamsted incoming 7th graders will visit next week, and Colebrook and Norfolk incoming 7th graders will visit the week after. Events coming up in the Middle School- Boulder Ridge Day, 8th grade class night and 8th grade promotion.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Tuition for certified staff members to attend RSD#7: Superintendent LePage shared the updated version of the proposed agreement of allowing certified staff members' children to attend RSD#7 as tuition students at a reduced rate. Brief discussion followed.

Teacher Sick Bank MOU Proposal: Superintendent LePage explained this MOU was started before he had come to RSD#7. This proposal is a sick bank for teachers who have catastrophic long term illnesses and do not have enough personal sick days. This proposal is a way to allow other teachers to donate sick days on a structured basis and tighten the process of the teachers' sick bank, record keeping and structure in this process. Superintendent LePage had met with the NTA Union Members to discuss this proposal and all were in favor.

Superintendent LePage's Evaluation: Superintendent LePage expressed that his evaluation is long, yet he completed an executive summary to highlight the positive points, and areas of improvement for himself and also for the district.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Budget Items 2024-2025: Mr. Gaskins expressed congratulations to the BOE for the passing of the 24-25 RSD#7 Budget. Mr. Gaskins expressed that the hard work on a daily basis of the Board of Education Members, Superintendent LePage, Principal Franklin and Principal Amara with the community, students, staff and parents is what supports the RSD#7 BOE Budget. Mr. Gaskins thanked the principals, Superintendent LePage and all the BOE members for the daily commitment to the students, staff, community and parents.

Vo-Ag Bus: Mr. Gaskins communicated that the bus was delivered, yet then picked back up by the vendor, due to punch list of items that did not get completed before delivery and it did not get registered. Holding payment pending this punch list and registration.

Retaining Wall at RSD#7: Analysis of the retaining wall was "no immediate concerns." Mr. Gaskins explained that RSD#7 will monitor due to a few measurements that had changed 1/100th of an inch vertically and horizontally over a year. Mr. Gaskins explained that there will be three more measurements to complete over the next year, and this will be closely monitored by Mr. Gaskins and the administration.

Grants: SVP (School Violence Prevention Program) is currently in process. They have been no updates on the State's security grant, and the Federal COPS grant is due on June 14, yet the team is planning to process by May 24, 2024. Mr. Gaskins explained that the Federal COPS grant is selected by a few factors, one being a prescreening based on community, wealth, crime rate and support systems in the area.

Gym Floor: There is an agreement between the contractor and the insurance company in place. The work is slated to begin on June 14, 2024. Mr. Gaskins thanked Principal Franklin and Superintendent LePage for all the preparation work of this process.

Food Service: Mr. Gaskins will be discussing a price increase on food service items for the 2024-2025 school year. Mr. Gaskins need to review the financials for this year before determining the increases.

OLD BUSINESS

Tuition Proposal for Certified Staff Member's Children as a Reduced Tuition to Students: Ms. Molly Sexton Read made the suggestion edit that some of the wording be updated for the special education services wording of the MOU. This edit will be pending approval via the RSD#7's attorney. Ms. Molly Sexton Read discusses that this would be a benefit to the teachers and their families. Brief discussion followed.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **TABLE** the Vote on the Tuition Proposal for Certified Staff Member's Children as a Reduced Tuition to Students until a special meeting on May 15, 2024, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Updates: None

BOE Goals: No updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Authorization to make End-Of-Year Adjustments within the 2023-2024 Budget Limits.

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **AUTHORIZE** Superintendent LePage and Director of Finance and Operations Mr. Gaskins to make end-of-year adjustments as necessary within the 2023-2024 budget limits. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Authorization to borrow \$500,000 in anticipation of receipts. **MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **AUTHORIZE** Director of Finance and Operations Mr. Gaskins to borrow \$500,000 in anticipation of receipts. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Authorization for the Superintendent to fill vacancies already approved by the Board of Education and hire grant funded positions for special purposes for the 2024-2025 school year. **MOTION** by Ms. Crone, seconded by Ms. Fragale, to **AUTHORIZE** the Superintendent to fill vacancies already approved by the Board of Education and hire grant funded positions for special purposes. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Angela Sabolcik's Letter of Resignation: Ms. Sabolcik is the MS Science Teacher. She is resigning as of June 30, 2024. The Board and Superintendent LePage wishes Ms. Sabolcik all the best moving forward.

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **ACCEPT** Ms. Sabolcik's letter of resignation, as presented. The board wishes, with much gratitude, all the best in moving forward. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

None.

MOTION by Ms. Crone seconded by Ms. Bell, to **MOVE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION at 7:48 p.m.** for discussion and possible action on the Superintendent's evaluation and performance review, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The board exited EXECUTIVE SESSION at 9:00 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Crone, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **OFFER** a 3% salary increase for the 2024-2025 School Year, with appreciation of his effective leadership. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION by Ms. Fragale, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **CANCEL** the May 22, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION by Ms. Fragale, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **SCHEDULE A SPECIAL BOE MEETING FOR MAY 15, 2024** to discuss and possibly take action on the Tuition Proposal for the Certified Staff Members' children to attend RSD#7, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Ms. Bell, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ADJOURN** at 9:03 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett
Board Clerk