

## REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

RSD#7 Little Theater

### Board of Education Meeting

July 10, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.

**APPROVED 8.28.24**

**PRESENT:** Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Kim Crone, Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins.

**Absent:** Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Lisa Fragale(C).

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Sexton Read called the Regular Board of Education meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **AMEND** the BOE AGENDA to include a possible motion under Mr. James Gaskins's report for Food Service Meal Pricing Increases. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

**PUBLIC PORTION:** None.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**MOTION** by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **APPROVE** the May 6, 2024, District Budget Meeting Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Kenneson. **MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION** by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **APPROVE** the May 8, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as amended. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Crone. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran. **MOTION PASSED.**

**MOTION** by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Jerram, to **APPROVE** the May 15, 2024, Special Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as amended. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

### REPORTS

#### SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Policy Progress: Superintendent LePage communicated that RSD#7 purchased the Shipman and Goodwin Policy Service at a reasonable cost. He explained that he has been working with Shipman and Goodwin to determine a process to update RSD#7 policies. He hopes to work through each series in a timely manner.

Staffing Updates: Superintendent LePage informed all that RSD#7 hired Barbara Beebe for the Director of School Counseling position on July 8. She is a Torrington veteran counselor and experienced department leader. She is the recipient of the 2024 Comprehensive School Counseling Program of the Year, and was the CSCA 2022 School Counselor of the Year. She is familiar with the area and the community and will be a vital leader as RSD#7 looks to expand and transform RSD#7's comprehensive school counseling services in grades 7-12. The STEP Program Coordinator position (hired through Shared Services) hired Francesca Daniele, former Gilbert School Department English Chair with certification in Special Education.

Middle School Principal Search Updates: Currently, there are 27 applicants. Superintendent LePage communicated he is familiar with some applicants. He expressed there are some excellent candidates in the pool. The process is as follows: Tuesday, 7/16/24, the job posting closes and all applications will be reviewed to narrow the pool; Thursday, 7/18/24, calls will be made to the candidates to schedule interviews. The first round of interviews will be on Thursday, 7/25/24 in person with the first interview committee consisting of Middle School Leadership team members and one or more administrators. The goal will

be to send 2-3 semi-finalist candidates forward to interview with the district team, board members and also a panel of students tentatively on 7/30/24. Ultimately, Superintendent LePage will make the final decision based on all of the insights gathered throughout the interview process. Hopefully, a new principal will be named in the early days of August.

Middle School Science: Hiring process is in the final stages and hopefully to hire a finalist next week.

Hiring Practices Overview: Superintendent LePage communicated that costs are being reduced in some areas of the hiring process and some positions of new hire are breaking even due to the nature of the position and the need for more expertise and experience in some positions over others.

Technology Insights: There was a discussion about students' use of technology devices and policy. Some districts are moving towards no technology devices among students during the school day. Superintendent LePage expressed that the BOE should review policy on this topic.

Teacher Leader Requested Book Study: Superintendent LePage met with Kim Pershmann, HS English Department Chair, and Nancy Wiecking, HS English Teacher to discuss offering a book study on *The Anxious Generation*, by Jonathon Haidt. The findings of the research of this book align well with the policy of technology devices by students in the classroom/school.

## **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**

23/24 Budget: Mr. Gaskins explained that the most impactful key in the budget is the assessment offset for the next budget cycle. In this year's budget, the assessment offset came in at \$819,700.00 which is higher than usual. Where the offset landed as of June 30, 2024 is at \$743,654.00. Between the two, there is an approximate \$80,000.00 shortfall. This shortfall will be a reduction in next year's budget process, which is a .33% increase built into next year's budget. This was handled through the budget freeze and deferred expenses.

Summer Projects: HVAC State Mandated Indoor Air Quality legislation. There are two reports that have to be completed: one report is an annual report that can be completed internally. The other report is a five-year report that has to do with the study of the complete HVAC system. RSD#7 has to hire an outside company to complete this study by January 2025. This expense is coming out of the 24-25 budget. The cost is approximately \$92,000.00. Other projects include the roof leak repairs which will cost approximately \$20,000.00. Another project is the fire alarm system which needs to be upgraded. Other projects include track repairs, parking lot repairs, and the baseball field hill drainage project, to name a few.

Food Service Program: Mr. Gaskins have communicated that the cost of breakfast and lunch pricing has been the same since 2015. He expressed that the cost of food and the cost of labor have increased over the years, and the equipment in the RSD#7 kitchen needs repairs and possible replacement. The current pricing for breakfast is \$1.90 and lunch is \$3.00. Reviewing pricing in other districts, the districts have been currently charging between \$3.75 to \$4.50 for lunch. Mr. Gaskins proposed that RSD#7 move the lunch pricing from \$3.00 to \$3.75 and move breakfast pricing from \$1.90 to \$2.25.

**MOTION** by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **INCREASE** the RSD#7 breakfast price to **\$2.25** and lunch price to **\$3.75** for the 24-25 School Year. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Updates: None

BOE Goals- Ms. Sexton Read proposed to have a BOE Professional Development Workshop for all BOE members possibly in August or September. This workshop will entail the responsibilities of board members and the process of strategic planning. She will ask CABE to perform this workshop and discuss the topics at hand. Brief discussion followed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NEW HIRE REPORT 2024- 2025**

#### **LAURA BROCHU – 1.0 High School Technical Education Teacher – HS Grades 9-12**

Replacing Kurt Dougan- retired teacher and educator at NWR7 for 3 years-allowable by CSDE  
Former 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Thomaston Public High School (2018-2024)  
Received Tech Ed Certification in March 2024  
BA Science Salve Regina University  
MA Arts University of St. Joseph  
Level III Step 8

#### **TERYN GOULET - 1.0 Agricultural Education Teacher – HS Grades 9-12**

Replacing Erick Wildes who resigned on 6/30/24  
Former ASTE Intern for Wamogo Agriscience (2023-2024)  
Former Intern at Litchfield County 4-H Extension Office (2022)  
Farmhand at Geer Family Farm (2019-present)  
MA Vocational Agriculture Instruction and Curriculum University of Connecticut  
BA Agriculture and Natural Resources with Minor Agriculture Learning/Outreach University of Connecticut  
Level III Step 1

#### **JACOB GREEN – 1.0 Science Teacher – HS Grades 9-12**

Replacing Kelsey Leach who resigned after a 1 year extended leave on 6/30/24  
Long -Term Substitute for Ms. Leach for 2023-2024 school year  
BA Health Science/Pre-Physical Therapy, Minor in Health Care Management Springfield College  
Doctoral Studies in Physical Therapy Springfield College  
Level V Step 2

#### **DANIEL PORRI - 1.0 Music Teacher - MS Grades 7-8**

Replacing Jim Lesieur who retired on 6/30/2024  
Former Music Educator and Band Director at Litchfield Public MS/HS and Wamogo MS/HS since August 2007  
Former Instrumental Music Director for Litchfield MS/HS (2010-2022)  
MA Music Education Boston University  
BA Music University of Connecticut  
Level III 12

#### **AMANDA SOLTIS – ATHLETIC TRAINER**

RSD#7 Graduate – basketball, soccer and softball player  
BA Science in Athletic Training Central Connecticut State University (May 2019)  
Intern Athletic Trainer Newington High School  
Head Athletic Trainer for Hartford Health Care – Litchfield High School (March 2020-  
Present

#### **BARBARA BEEBE- 1.00 DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL COUNSELING**

Replacing Lori Foote who resigned 6/30/24  
Former Torrington High School School Counselor Department Coordinator ( been at  
Torrington High School since 2007)  
2022 School Counselor of the Year (CSCA)  
BA of Arts in Psychology Gordon College  
Master of Education in Psychology- School Counseling Springfield College  
Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study University of New England  
Level V Step 12

Technology Devices by Students: Ms. Sexton Read communicated that Superintendent LePage should reach out to his colleagues in terms of what other districts are currently doing about the use of technology devices by students in

classrooms/school. Ms. Sexton Read will reach out to the BOE Chair colleagues to also determine how other districts are handling this topic. Brief discussion followed.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### J. Lesieur's Letter of Retirement as of 6/30/24

Mr. Lesieur was the MS Music and Band Teacher for 26 years at RSD#7. He retired as of June 30, 2024. The BOE wished Mr. Lesieur all the best in his retirement and thanked him for the wonderful years and years of service and dedication the district, students and staff. The BOE wished Mr. Lesieur all the best in the next phases of his life.

### Lori Foote- Director of School Counseling- letter of resignation as of 6/30/24

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ACCEPT** Lori Foote's letter of resignation, as presented. The BOE wished, with much gratitude, all the best in moving forward in Ms. Foote's new position and thanked her for the four years of service to the students, staff, and district. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

### Fran Amara- MS Principal- letter of resignation- 8/23/24

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Crone, to **ACCEPT** Principal Fran Amara's letter of resignation, with sincere gratitude, as presented. The BOE wished Principal Amara all the best with his new position and thanked him for eleven years of dedicated service to the students, staff, district and community. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

### Approval of Girls' Volleyball Camp – RSD#7 Gymnasiums 8/12/24 to 8/15/24

**MOTION** by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **APPROVE** the use of the RSD#7 gymnasiums for the Girls' Volleyball Camp on 8/12/24 to 8/15/24, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

## **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Duran, to **ADJOURN** at 7:22 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Crone, Ms. Bell and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The next BOE Meeting is scheduled for August 28, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Barrett  
Board Clerk