AGENDA –Wednesday, September 11, 2024

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7
BOARD OF EDUCATION
6:00 p.m.
Newbury Library Media Center

Regional School District No. 7 Board of Education Mission Statement:

We believe the public education is an essential component of a free and democratic society. In a partnership of family, school, community, and local and state government, our mission is to enable all students to meet high standards, make productive choices in their personal lives, contribute to a diverse global society and act as responsible citizens.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

2.0 PUBLIC PORTION

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- 3.1 August 28, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting

4.0 REPORTS
- 4.1 Student Representatives Report – Amaya Washington, Owen Langer
- 4.2 Principal's Reports – R. Cornelius, G. Franklin
- 4.3 Superintendent's Report: Steven K. LePage
- 4.4 Director of Finance and Operations - J. Gaskins

5.0 OLD BUSINESS
- 5.1 Updates
- 5.2 BOE Goals
- 5.3 BOE Workshop: date confirmation
- 5.4 Discussion of RSD#7 Cell phone policy ~ Policy # 5131.81 Electronic Devices Use of Private Technology Devices by Students

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE
- 7.1 A. Roberts's Letter of Resignation ~ HS Special Education

8.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

Enclosures: August 28, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes
A. Roberts's Letter of Resignation

Next Meeting: September 18, 2024 BOE WORKSHOP ??
September 25, 2024 BOE MEETING CANCELLED
October 9, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m.- Newbury Library Media Center
October 23, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m.- Newbury Library Media Center

We welcome the public to share their comments via publicinput@nwr7.org.Your emails will be considered during the Public Comment session of the meeting. Thank you for your participation.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

Newbury Library Media Center
Board of Education Meeting
August 28, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.
DRAFT

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Ms. Deborah Bell (N), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Ms. Mary Duran (B), Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Superintendent Steven K. LePage, Director of Finance & Operations Mr. James Gaskins, HS Principal Gary Franklin, MS Principal Ryan Cornelius.
Absent: Ms. Kim Crone (N).

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

PUBLIC PORTION: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION by Ms. Bell, seconded by Ms. Kenneson, to **APPROVE** the July 10, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Fragale. **MOTION PASSED.**

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **APPROVE** the July 31, 2024, Special Board of Education Meeting Minutes, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Mr. Gauthier. **MOTION PASSED.**

REPORTS
PRINCIPAL REPORTS

MS PRINCIPAL MR. RYAN CORNELIUS

Transitioning to NWR7: Communicated his gratitude for the opportunity to be the new Middle School Principal replacing former Middle School Principal Fran Amara. He expressed how excited he is to work with all of the incoming students as well as the staff. He distributed his "beliefs" board to the BOE to show his guidelines for consistency, treatment of students and staff alike, and mottos he plans on following during the 2024/2025 school year. He visited each classroom on the first day of school to make himself familiar with the personnel as well as the student body.

HS PRINCIPAL MR. GARY FRANKLIN

Opening of School Updates: Discussed there will be two new Student Representatives joining the BOE for the next meeting, Owen Langer and Amaya Washington. The 9th grade orientation was scheduled for Monday August 25th 2024 at 5pm. Link Leaders were awesome and were able to get the incoming Grade 9 students excited for this coming school year. The new Electronic Device Policy was briefly spoken about during orientation and will be followed up. It was an absolute priority that Principal Franklin visited classrooms and greeted both students and staff to the 2024/2025 school year.

Europe Trip Summer 2024: Discussed that this year's trip was successful and he was very proud for how our students behaved and were a good representation of our school. Brief discussion followed.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
MR. STEVEN LEPAGE

Policy Progress: Superintendent LePage communicated that RSD#7 will be testing multiple ways to effectively and responsibly follow the new Electronic Device Policy. These methods may include mobile devices being left in lockers, placed in a secure location in the front of the classroom at the beginning of class (to be given back to students at the end of class) or a backpack rule. These methods will be practiced to see which is most effective in keeping the students engaged in class and off of their mobile devices during their instructional periods. Brief discussion followed.

Staffing Updates: Superintendent LePage communicated that this summer has been a busy but successful season for hiring. As of the August 28, 2024 meeting ,RSD#7 is fully staffed. The New Teacher / Certified Staff Orientation scheduled for August 21, 2024 was successful and showed that this school year is going to be wonderful.

Middle School Principal Search Updates: Superintendent LePage has made the decision to hire Mr. Ryan Cornelius as the new Middle School Principal to replace former Middle School Principal Fran Amara. Mr. Cornelius is the former Assistant Principal of Plainville Community School, as well as former 6th Grade Math Teacher and former 5th Grade teacher at Consolidated School District in New Britain. He has a BA in Social Studies from Adrian College in Michigan, MA of Instructional Technology from Northern Arizona University, and Educational Leadership from Central CT State University. Mr. Cornelius had a wonderful first day visiting each classroom to familiarize with the middle school students and staff alike.

Convocation and Professional Development: was held on August 25, 2024 where breakfast and lunch for the staff was provided. Superintendent LePage brought forward the building "BRIDGES" theory to have the staff give back feedback to where they would like to take their careers and what their goals are, as well as how they will all handle change in the upcoming year leading to the development of the School Climate Task Force / Faculty Advisory Committee. Superintendent LePage communicated that Administrative Instructional Rounds will be starting sometime in October 2024. Overall the day was a positive and productive day.

School Climate Task Force / Faculty Advisory Committee: Surveys were provided to families of the students in regards to if the students feel they have a safe learning space with trusted adults. Overall results show a score of approximately 94% Middle School and 93% High School. House Master Andy Bakulski is taking the lead with this new task force RSD#7 has established, to help with the tightening of district policies and practices; as well as improve communication on all levels. The full survey results will be shared with the BOE members when they are in as communicated by Superintendent LePage.

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. Multiple prompts of classroom no electronic device rules have been enacted and will be tested to see which policies and/or rules are the most effective to keep students engaged during their instructional periods. Surveys have been sent out to families, staff, and administration by Principal Gary Franklin to see the statistics of the new instilled Electronic Device Policies to help better understand what is or is not effective. Results are to be determined.

Smart Pass: In lieu of the Electronic Device Policy being put in place there will be a SMARTPASS enacted. This electronic pass tracks how many times the student is using their bathroom pass a day. Administration plans on utilizing a 3 bathroom pass a day limit to each student. The staff has been made aware that students have been using bathroom passes every class to use their devices throughout the day. This pass system has been utilized by Lewis Mills for a handful of years and Ms. Fragale emphasized how effective this pass system works. Brief discussion followed.

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. There have been approximately 47 books given to RSD#7 staff members to read and give their feedback.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

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. An update has come in from the CSDE that these reports are not due until 2026. RSD#7 has already had this testing completed and is considered to be ahead of schedule. 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. This project has been slowly but surely in the works and leaks are being patched as they are located. The baseball field clay was replaced in later summer due to the extreme amount of rain we have received this year and the grounds being too soft to bring in the equipment needed to complete replacement. The groundskeepers will be watching over this project as this was done later in the season than past years.

OLD BUSINESS

Updates: None

BOE Workshop- Date Change

BOE Workshop- Ms. Sexton Read proposed to have a BOE Professional Development Workshop for all BOE members for September 18, 2024 or September 30, 2024. Dates to be confirmed by Ms. Sexton Read after discussion with the instructor on his availability those dates. 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

~Hired after 7.10.24 BOE MEETING~

RYAN CORNELIUS – Middle School Principal
Replacing Fran Amara- resigned his positon as MS Principal~ last day of work 8/23/24
Former Assistant Principal of Plainville Community School since 2021
Former 6th Grade Math Teacher and Former 5th grade teacher at Consolidated School District of New Britain
BA in Social Studies from Adrian College in Michigan
MA of Instructional Technology from Northern Arizona University in Arizona
Educational Leadership from Central CT State University

KYLIE BENTON - 1.0 High School English Teacher – HS Grades 9-12
Replacing Lexi Munger who resigned on 7/22/24
Lead Teacher at Birch Mountain Day School in Manchester from 2023-2024
Program Director, Senior Unit Director at YMCA Camp Mohawk since 2019
BA in Secondary Education from University of Vermont
Level 1 Step 1

STEVEN ROES – 1.0 Middle School Science Teacher – MS Grades 7-8
Replacing Angela Sabolcik who resigned on 6/30/24
Grade 7 Science Teacher at West Hartford Public Schools from 2023-2024
Science Teacher at Granby Memorial High School from 2017-2023
Science Teacher at the Master's School in Simsbury from 2012-2017
BA in Biology & Adolescence Education from Houghton College in New York
MA in Curriculum and Instruction from University of Saint Joseph
Educational Leadership from Central CT State University
Level V Step 12

EVE MOLEY - 1.0 Middle School English Teacher - MS Grades 7-8
Replacing Lesley Sullivan, veteran English Teacher at RSD#7 who moved from Middle School English to the High School English for the 2024-2025 school year
Student Teacher at Torrington High School from Nov. 2023 to June 2024
BA and MA of English Education from University of Connecticut
Level III Step 1

LESLEY SULLIVAN ~ Veteran Middle School English Teacher moved to High School English for 2024-2025 school year
Replacing Gabrielle Robertson who resigned effective 8/25/2024
Veteran English Teacher at RSD#7 since 2000
Level V Step 12

Technology Devices by Students: Ms. Sexton Read and Superintendent LePage communicated to the BOE their findings after speaking with colleagues and other districts in regards to the Electronic Devices Policies in schools. It was noted that multiple forms of enacting these new policies are being tested amongst their classrooms. A Position Statement was also provided to the BOE by the CSDE. All parties were advised to review and provide any feedback in regards to the suggestions listed. Brief discussion followed.

CORRESPONDENCE

Gabrielle Robertson- HS English Dept.- letter of resignation- August 25, 2024

MOTION by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **ACCEPT** Ms. Gabrielle Robertson's letter of resignation, with sincere gratitude, as presented. The BOE wished all the best with her new position and thanked her for her service to the students, staff, and district. **AYE**:
Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Duran and Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

Lexi Munger- HS English Dept.- letter of resignation – June 22, 2024

MOTION by Ms. Duran, seconded by Mr. Jerram, to **ACCEPT** Ms. Lexi Munger's letter of resignation, with sincere gratitude, as presented. The BOE wished Ms. Munger all the best with her new position and thanked her for her service to the students, staff, and district. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Fragale, and Ms. Bell. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS
None.

MOTION by Ms. Duran, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **CANCEL** the September 25, 2024 Regular BOE Meeting, as presented. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Gauthier, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **ADJOURN** at 7:19 p.m. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, and Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

The next BOE Meeting is scheduled for **September 11, 2024.**

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Vacila
Board Clerk

September 3, 2024,

Dear Dr. Cavahlo,

It is with sadness that I must send this letter of resignation from Northwestern High School with the Region 7 School District. This weekend I suffered a major medical event. As a result of this diagnosis and the urgency to prioritize my health I am unable to return to full time work effective immediately.

It has indeed been my immense pleasure to have been part of the district and the special education team.

Sincerely,

S. Ashley Roberts