REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

Newbury Library Media Center
Board of Education Meeting
August 28, 2024 – 6:00 p.m.
APPROVED 9.18.24

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.

MOTION by Ms. Kenneson, seconded by Ms. Bell, to **AMEND** the BOE AGENDA to include the New Hire Report and Electronic Device Policy. **AYE**: Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, Ms.Fragale 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 July 10, 2024, Regular Board of Education 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, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **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 "believe" 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: Informed the Board that our new junior rep will be Amaya Washington and that she and our returning senior rep, Owen Langer, will attend our next meeting. 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 current Electronic Device Policy was briefly spoken about during orientation. 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 of how our students behaved and were a good representation of our school.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT
MR. STEVEN LEPAGE

Policy Progress: Superintendent LePage shared that there will be a focus on implementing the current policy about personal electronic devices with fidelity this year. He also mentioned several additional steps that may be considered in the future. 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. 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 the RSD#7 is considered 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: Convocation was held on August 25, 2024, where breakfast 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 and the teaching staff from last year. The full survey results will be shared with the BOE members 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. Discussion was held around different approaches being taken. Superintendent LePage explained the ways in which the current policy is being applied across all classrooms. The possibility of establishing a subcommittee and issuing surveys to gather data was discussed.

Smart Pass: Superintendent LePage shared his plan to implement a program called Smart Pass. This enables teachers to regulate the number of students leaving classrooms during class time. It is being used effectively in the middle school and will now be expanded to the high school.

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 that these reports are not due until 2026, RSD#7 has already had this testing done 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 found. 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:

BOE Workshop- Date Change

BOE Meeting Date Change

BOE Workshop- Ms. Sexton Read proposed to have a BOE Professional Development Workshop for all BOE members for September 18, 2024. This workshop will entail the responsibilities of board members and the process of strategic planning. CABE will be asked to perform this workshop. Brief discussion followed.

BOE Meeting Change: Meeting scheduled for September 25, 2024 has been cancelled.

NEW BUSINESS

NEW HIRE REPORT 2024- 2025

~Hired after 7.10.24 BOE MEETING~

RYAN CORNELIUS - Middle School Principal

Replacing Fran Amara- resigned his position 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 /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. A Position Statement was also provided to the BOE by the State of CT. All parties were advised to review and provide any feedback in regards to the suggestions listed. Thorough discussion followed. Repercussions for students who break the electronic device policy are still being discussed.

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, 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. Duran, Ms. Kenneson, 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. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS
None.

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. Bell, Ms. Kenneson, 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