

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman William Blake, Mr. John Belfonti, Mr. Christopher Browe, Ms. Sue Cohen, Ms. Diane Crocco, Mr. Steven Demaio, Mr. Thomas Hurley, Ms. Tracey Lane Russo, Mr. James Stirling and Ms. Diane Urbano.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Patricia Cardozo, Ms. Rita Gedansky and Ms. Sheila McCreven.

Staff members present: Dr. Charles Dumais, Mr. Jack Levine, Ms. Terry Lumas, Mr. Shawn DeRosa, Mr. Kevin Keller, Dr. Marie McPadden, Ms. Lisa Lassen, Ms. Vicki Fielosh, Ms. LeeAnn Browett, Dr. Charles Britton, Ms. Mary Raiola, and Ms. Anna Mahon.

Also present: Mrs. Ruth Natzel, Mr. R. J. Kaoud and other members of the public.

A regular meeting of the Amity Regional Board of Education (BOE) was held on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the presentation room at the Amity District Offices.

1. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chairman Sue Cohen called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by those present.
3. **Approval of minutes.**

A. Regular BOE meeting, September 21, 2015 (enclosure)

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Ms. Crocco to approve the minutes as submitted.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Chairman Blake arrived at 6:40 pm.

4. Public Comment

A male parent from Bethany, who is the parent of two special needs students, spoke to the Board regarding his experience with special education in the district and made suggestions for changes to improve the process of getting assistance for students.

5. Student Report

Mr. R. J. Kaoud gave an update on events at Amity High School over the past month as well as informing the Board of upcoming events. He highlighted senior activity, sports, and progress on the Senior Lounge. Mentioned especially were the very beneficial activities for seniors that took place on PSAT Day, which in past years has been a day off from school.

Mr. Browe arrived at 6:45 pm.

6. Report on 2015 Testing Results (Enclosure)

Dr. Dumais gave some background regarding the new testing, Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA, formerly SBAC) before Dr. McPadden presented the 2015 testing results. Ms. Lassen, Ms. Fielosh and Ms. Browett also joined Dr. McPadden in the presentation. There were questions and much discussion regarding the performance of the Amity students on the various standardized tests. Of note, Mr. Kaoud commented from the audience on the test results from the perspective of an Amity High School student. The Standardized Test for the Assessment of Reading (STAR) is now being used as a universal assessment tool in the region (high school and middle schools) as well as at the elementary level in Bethany and Orange, and it aligns with Common Core standards. The staff is making good use of the data to track students' progress and develop more individualized instruction. It should be noted that these test results are not a true reflection of Amity students' performance, but that the students in fact are doing well.

7. Discussion and action on Teacher and Administration Evaluation Plan.

Dr. Dumais asked Dr. Mc Padden to present the revisions to the Teacher and Administration Evaluation Plan (page 15, pages 23 through 27 and page 28). This evaluation plan is closely tied to the STAR universal assessment. The Committee unanimously agreed to this revision.

Motion by Mr. Stirling, 2nd by Mr. Browe to approved the Amity Teacher and Administration Evaluation Plan and presented by Dr. Dumais and Dr. McPadden.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

8. Discussion and Possible Action on 2016 Board of Education Meeting Calendar (Enclosure).

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Ms. Cohen to approve the 2016 Board of Education Calendar.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

9. Correspondence - None**10. Superintendent's Report****A. Personnel Report – (enclosure)****B. Other**

Dr. Dumais highlighted items in his enclosed reports and noted that today was the first day of instructional rounds and there was one "problem of practice" successfully addressed.

11. Chairman's Report -**A. Committee Reports**

- 1. ACES** - Ms. Cohen reported on the decision to have all the schools in the region begin school on the same day as well as aligning some of the school vacations. This is now required by State statute; previously, this had been a "suggestion" only.
- 2. CAFE** - Mr. Stirling mentioned Professional Development days on November 20-21, 2015 and encouraged Board members to register.
- 3. Curriculum** – The Curriculum Committee met on September 24, 2015.
- 4. Facilities** – The Facilities Committee has not met.
 - a. Facilities Department monthly report, September 2015 (enclosure).**
- 5. Finance**
 - a. Discussion of October 1 Enrollment Report** – Mr. Levine highlighted the numbers on the enrollment report. There was some discussion of these numbers and what future population trends might be.
 - b. Discussion of Monthly Financial Statements** – Mr. Levine highlighted the bullet points on pages 103 and 104 and cautioned the Board that the numbers here can change very quickly. Mr. Levine also mentioned that over \$100,000 in savings has been realized through the staff.
 - c. Director of Finance and Administration approved transfers under \$3,000.**
 - d. Other**
 - 1. Update on Financial Audit** – Mr. Levine reported that the audit went very well.
 - 2. Information on Third Quarter 2015 Executive Summary**

Review of Amity Pension Fund, Sick and Severance Account and OPEB Trust

Mr. Levine noted that some of the funds decreased in value due to the downtrend in the stock market. Mr. Stirling made note that the investments still met the benchmarks, even though the value decreased and that the funds performed better than average.

6. Policy**a. Policy 7551 – Naming of Amity Facilities - Second Read (Enclosure)**

Motion by Ms. Cohen, 2nd by Ms. Urbano to approve the revision to policy 755, that the Amity Regional School District will not name any school facilities or properties after individuals.

Statements and discussion followed from the members of the Policy Committee present regarding how they arrived at the formation of this motion. There was much further discussion by all Board members regarding the intent of the Board in sending this policy back to the Committee.

Mr. Blake relinquished the Chair to Ms. Cohen at 9:02 pm so that he could comment. Mr. Blake stated that his opinion was that each case for honoring someone with the name of a facility should be handled on a case-by-case basis and that the three member towns would be unhappy with this new policy. Ms. Cohen returned the Chair to Mr. Blake at 9:06 pm. Mr. Blake called the question.

Vote in favor 5 (Mr. Browe, Ms. Cohen, Mr. Hurley, Mr. Stirling, Ms. Urbano,) against 4 (Mr. Belfonti, Ms. Crocco, Mr. DeMaio and Ms. Lane-Russo) Tie vote, motion failed

Motion by Ms. Urbano, 2nd by Mr. Browe to recommend that Policy 7551 be revised to include "IV (f) no longer be, or have never been employed by the Amity Regional School District" and "V...Requests will rest for four (4) years before being vetted by the Superintendent."

There was further discussion regarding the new motion. Mr. Blake relinquished the Chair to Ms. Cohen at 9:15 pm so that he could comment Ms. Cohen returned the Chair to Mr. Blake at 9:17 pm.

Vote in favor 7, (Ms. Crocco and Ms. Lane-Russo abstained)

Motion carried

Mr. Hurley requested that a "cleaned up" copy of the new policy be on the agenda and part of the packet for the November meeting for final Board approval.

7. Personnel

12. Items for next agenda – please forward any items to Dr. Dumais or Mr. Blake.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Cohen, 2nd by Mr. Hurley to adjourn at 9: 25 pm.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk

Thomas Hurley, Secretary