



Seymour Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

February 3, 2025
Seymour High School Cafeteria
7:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Champagne, Chairperson
Kristen Harmeling
Lori Nespoli
Ed Strumello
Kristen Bruno, Vice Chairperson
Stephan Behuniak, Secretary (7:45)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Jay Hatfield
Pete Kubik

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent of Schools
Salvatore Bucci, Business Manager
Dr. Kris Boyle
Keith O'Rourke
Stephanie Ciccone
Paul Lucke
Fred Stanek
Antinozzi Associates Architect Firm
Shannon Levey, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance - Mr. Champagne called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:04 PM
- B. Introductions

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Bungay Building Committee Update

Mr. Stanek provided an update on the project process. The committee is requesting that the Board of Education approve the educational specifications for the state reimbursement application. Mr. Loasso and Ms. DeFiori emphasized that the educational specifications were developed to be applicable for either option (building new or renovating).

MOTION: Move up item 7D on the agenda (Ms. Harmeling / sec. Ms. Bruno)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno

PASSES: 5-0-0

(VIII D) [Educational Specifications](#) prepared for the Seymour Board of Education by Construction Solutions Group, LLC for Bungay Elementary School

MOTION: to accept and approve the Educational Specifications for the Seymour Board of Education by Construction Solutions Group, LLC for Bungay Elementary School (Mr. Strumello / sec. Ms. Bruno)

Discussion: Ms. Bruno inquired about the state reimbursement process, specifically regarding bonding. She asked if the town would be responsible for the entire bonded amount. The town is required to commit to the full amount, but several factors must be considered for bonding. Ms. Bruno also questioned if there are any state restrictions regarding eligibility for reimbursement. It was clarified that the state reimbursement applies to priority districts, and Seymour is not currently one of those. A request has been submitted to our state representative to explore the possibility of additional reimbursement based on the educational needs of the preschool program, which aligns with the needs of priority districts. Our state representative is working on this. Mr. Stanek noted that Beth Nesteriak has been working collaboratively with the architectural firm. Dr. Compton expressed gratitude to the committee, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Kubik, and Mr. Strumello for their efforts.

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno
PASSES: 5-0-0

B. Seymour Champion Recognitions – “Perseverance”

1. Bungay School
 - a. Colton McMurray – “Motivation” from last month’s meeting
 - b. Olivia Nunez
 - c. Matthew Rice
2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - a. Fredrick Dlugokenski
 - b. Elizabeth Santerre
3. Seymour Middle School
 - a. Olivia Saunders
 - b. Evangeline Gonzalez
4. Seymour High School
 - a. Tyson Voloshin

C. Recognitions

1. [Naming the Park Essay Contest Winners](#)
 - a. First Place – Aleksandra Czerwony, SHS – presented with award certificate
 - b. Second Place – Mackenzie Blood, SMS - presented with award certificate

D. Student Reports

1. SHS Student Representative Report – Kaitlyn Hamilton, Jeremy Tomasheski
 - The National Honor Society is organizing several initiatives, including creating Valentine's Day cards for local nursing homes and hospitals. They also plan to host a blood drive and have a "Super Friday" event where students wear merchandise to support the football team.
 - The KinderCATS program worked on enhancing reading and logic skills with students through snowman-themed activities.
 - Sports Update: basketball, swimming, ice hockey, indoor track, cheerleading, and dance team
 - The Yearbook Club is currently inputting superlatives and senior quotes.
 - The Art Club is working on clay projects and stage decorations for upcoming events.
 - The Spanish Club, Environmental Club, and Debate Club are all actively involved in various school activities.
 - The Newspaper Club is preparing its second issue, scheduled to be released at the end of February.
 - The FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) participated in a competition and made gift baskets for local emergency services.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment provides the opportunity for the public to make a comment. It is not a dialogue between the Board and the public. Based upon what is heard during Public Comment, the Board may choose to add a topic to the agenda. If

questions are posed that the Chairperson is able to answer, those questions may be addressed under the Chairperson's Comments portion of the agenda. The Board will not discuss personnel matters. Comments should be respectful and no longer than 3 minutes in length so that all who wish to comment may have the opportunity to do so. All the public wanting to comment will need to state their name and address for the record prior to addressing the Board.

- Public comment called 3 times, no public comment.

IV. REPORTS

A. [Enrollment Report](#)

B. [Special Education Report](#) – Dr. Boyle

1. Dr. Boyle will present a detailed report next month on special education needs

C. [Financial Report](#) – Salvatore Bucci

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. [Finance Committee Meeting](#) – January 13, 2025
2. [Regular BOE Meeting](#) – January 13, 2025
3. [Special BOE Meeting](#) – January 14, 2025
4. [Special BOE Meeting](#) – January 27, 2025

B. Hiring – Appendix D

1. [Kayla Resto](#)
 - a. Assistant Softball Coach
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. Replacing Megan Condo

MOTION: move to approve the consent agenda as presented (Mr. Strumello / sec. Ms. Harmeling)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno

PASSES: 5-0-0

VI. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

VII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. [School Security Officer](#) – Seymour High School

1. Our School Resource Officer (SRO) recently received a promotion with the police department, and there has been no replacement despite the existing MOU between the police department and the board of education. As a result, the district is currently left with only one security officer. Dr. Compton is recommending the creation of an additional School Security Officer (SSO) position to address the gap, as there is no longer an SRO at Seymour High School. This position will be filled immediately. Ms. Harmeling expressed concern, noting that funding for this position was not planned, and the town's decision not to fill the SRO position will result in a cost savings for the town, but not for the Board of Education. The district will bear the cost of approximately \$40,000.

2. **MOTION:** to approve the hiring of a second school security officer at Seymour High School (Ms. Harmeling / sec. Mr. Strumello)

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno

PASSES: 5-0-0

Ms. Bruno pointed out that the district is now unexpectedly left with only one SRO. The police chief has jurisdiction to assign officers to specific locations, and the district cannot mandate the current SRO to relocate. Dr. Compton suggested inviting the Chief of Police to discuss the situation and collaborate on security measures moving forward now that the SRO position is unfilled. Mr. Strumello emphasized the importance of discussing security plans in executive

session to maintain privacy and confidentiality, as portions of the safety plan cannot be disclosed in public session.

B. [SMS Cheer Booster Club](#)

Dr. Compton stated that she is not recommending the creation of a booster club at this time. The district has already provided several fundraising opportunities, and there is more to establishing a booster club that needs careful consideration. Mr. O'Rourke explained that there is an established mechanism for fundraising and bookkeeping through the school, ensuring that it is done properly. He emphasized that he has never rejected any fundraiser proposals from the cheerleaders. Dr. Compton reiterated the importance of providing all fundraising opportunities to the teams. She also noted that if a booster club is ever created, it would need to support all sports at the middle school level. Ms. Melanie Danka spoke in favor of a booster club, explaining that the SMS cheer program is an 8-10 month sport, requiring substantial funds to support the athletes. Last year, the athletes raised \$6,000 for the program's needs. Dr. Compton acknowledged that SMS cheerleading has been taken to the next level, and Ms. Danka mentioned that it would be easier for coaches to fundraise with fewer limitations. Dr. Compton assured that there would be no restrictions on fundraising throughout the year. Mr. O'Rourke clarified that historically, middle school cheerleading has been a winter sport, but both the coaches and athletes want it to be extended to 8-10 months. He expressed his full support for the cheerleading program. Dr. Compton added that the creation of a booster club would require legal counsel's guidance. She emphasized that teams are not prohibited from raising funds, but they must adhere to board policies. Dr. Compton also mentioned that while booster clubs do exist at the middle school level in larger districts, they are not common in smaller districts. She thanked Ms. Danka and the coaches for their dedication and excellent work. Mr. Strumello inquired whether SMS cheerleading falls under CASS or CIAC, as it should be aligned with one organization. He noted that coaching certification follows CIAC guidelines. Ms. Nespoli expressed appreciation for the support the school has given to the cheerleading program, noting that it has expanded. She also highlighted the need for clear protocols, particularly regarding deadlines and up-front payments, to ensure that funding does not delay the teams. Dr. Compton agreed to work with Mr. Bucci to address these concerns.

C. [FBLA Sponsorship](#)

Dr. Compton stated that no action will be taken on this matter tonight. The district needs to work with CAFE to create a policy. It is hoped that a policy will be ready by next month. The Policy Committee will meet in the next few weeks to discuss further.

~~D. [Educational Specifications](#) prepared for the Seymour Board of Education by Construction Solutions Group, LLC for Bungay Elementary School~~

E. Assistant Principal Hiring – Seymour High School (may be discussed in Executive Session)

Dr. Compton stated that the process was successful and recommended that the Board act on the superintendent's recommendation. She presented the candidate's vision for consideration.

MOTION: to follow the recommendation of the superintendent and the high school principal to appoint Stephanie Ciccone as the Assistant Principal of Seymour High School. (Ms. Harmeling / sec. Mr. Behuniak)

DISCUSSION: Ms. Ciccone shared that her vision builds upon Mr. Lucke's, with a focus on increasing student participation at the Board of Education. She emphasized the valuable lessons she has learned at Chatfield-LoPresti, such as SRBI, which she looks forward to bringing to the high school. She expressed her love for her time at CLS and the opportunity to work with great people. Ms. Ciccone's long-term focus is on higher education, and she is eager to collaborate with Mr. Lucke. Dr. Compton recommended that Ms. Ciccone finish the school year at Chatfield-LoPresti, as pulling her mid-year

would not be ideal. However, she can begin collaborating with Mr. Lucke while still fulfilling her responsibilities at CLS. Ms. Harmeling thanked Ms. Ciccone for her dedication and perseverance. Mr. Strumello acknowledged his role in hiring Ms. Ciccone as the SHS cheerleading coach. Ms. Harmeling praised the interview process, expressing her gratitude for Ms. Ciccone's commitment and perseverance in staying with the district. She added that, with only four schools in Seymour, it is commendable that Ms. Ciccone held out and put herself forward for this opportunity. Ms. Harmeling also noted that the candidates were extremely impressive during the interview process and expressed her happiness in hiring someone from within the district.

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0

- F. Interim Assistant Principal – Seymour High School (may be discussed in Executive Session)
MOTION: to enter Executive Session to discuss the interim assistant principal for Seymour High School and interim assistant principal for Seymour Middle School, and to invite into executive session Dr. Compton, Mr. Lucke and Mr. O'Rourke (Mr. Strumello / sec. Mr. Behuniak)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0
- G. Interim Assistant Principal for March & April – Seymour Middle School (may be discussed in Executive Session)

Entered executive session at 8:15 PM

Exited executive session at 8:35 PM

DISCUSSION: Mr. Champagne stated the board does not need to take action and can leave it to the superintendent to make the decision

VIII. INFORMATION

- A. [Unified Sports Grant](#) – Seymour Middle School
Ms. Bruno asked about the Unified Sports Grant. Mr. O'Rourke explained the grant and the monies offered per the schools needs.
- B. [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Grant](#)
Mr. Champagne acknowledged the AI Grant for Seymour Middle School and urged both principals, Mr. Lucke and Mr. O'Rourke that this would be a great transition to the high school for computer science teacher if the budget is approved for FY 2025-2026.
- C. Hiring – Appendix D
1. Matthew Maisto
 - a. Assistant Baseball Coach
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. Replacing Brian Moir
 2. Jacob Callahan
 - a. Assistant Tennis Coach
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. Replacing Emily Jepson
 3. Steven Marinaro
 - a. Assistant Baseball Coach
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. Replacing Jim Vartelas
 4. Dan Dunaj
 - a. Head Coach Outdoor Track

- b. Seymour High School
 - c. Replacing David Willadsen
- D. Hiring – Certified
 - 1. Meredith Indorf
 - a. Long Term Substitute – Grade 3
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Substituting for Brianna Perricone
- E. Hiring – Volunteer
 - Meredith Barton
 - a. Softball
 - b. Seymour Middle School
- F. Resignations
 - 1. Deana Osborne
 - a. Food Services
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Effective 1/8/2025
- G. School Events
 - 1. [Chatfield-LoPresti School](#)
 - 2. [Bungay Elementary School](#)
 - 3. [Seymour Middle School](#)
 - 4. [Seymour High School](#)

IX. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

- A. Board of Education Comments
 - 1. Chairman’s Comments
 - HR899: bill introduced for the Federal Department of Ed removal
 - 2. Board Member Comments
 - Mr. Strumello acknowledged the process of the interviews and how well it went
 - Ms. Harmeling thanked Mr. Champagne for the budget process and how well it went
- B. Superintendent Report
 - Dr. Compton acknowledged Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Strumello, and Ms. Harmeling for their participation during the interview process. She also acknowledged Ms. Bruno and Ms. Nespoli for attending the CABE Legislative breakfast as well. Dr. Compton noted that Dr. Conway is coming to Seymour’s Central Office, along with other surrounding valley superintendents, to discuss special education and the associated costs.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting (Ms. Bruno / sec. Mr. Behuniak)
AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM

Prepared by Shannon Levey,
Board Clerk

YouTube Link (2/3/2025): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CRQ71bjNY_Y

Note: The next Regular Board of Education meeting will be held on **Monday, March 3, 2025, at 7:00 pm in Seymour Middle School.**