Minutes
Regular Meeting of the Region 14 Board of Education
Monday, June 2, 2025; 6:00 p.m.
Mitchell Elementary School
Flanders Room

Present:
Jim Crocker, Chairman
Chris Matta
Carol Ann Brown
Alice Jones (via phone)
Michael Carbonneau
Caren Lipinski
Tikva Rose

Absent:
Chris Griffin

Also Present:
Brian Murphy, Superintendent
Tina Tanguay, Director of Finance and Operations
Maia Colavito, Student Representative
Addison Bushka, Student Representative

I. Call to Order
Chairman Crocker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and acquaintances were made

II. Approval of Minutes

A. District Meeting on Budget, Monday, May 5, 2025
A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the minutes as presented, Tikva Rose abstained, motion carried.

B. Regular Meeting Monday, May 5, 2025
A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the minutes as presented, Tikva Rose abstained, motion carried.

C. District Meeting (BoE Nominations) Thursday, May 8, 2025
A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the minutes as presented, Tikva Rose abstained, motion carried.

D. Special Meeting, Friday, May 9, 2025
Jim Crocker made a motion to accept/approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Michael Carbonneau, no vote occurred, approval incomplete. The minutes will be brought back to the board at their next scheduled regular meeting.

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The Regional School District 14 Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, national/ethnic origin, age, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or disability in its programs, activities, and employment practices as set forth in compliance with the Office of Civil Rights, Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. Any person having inquiries concerning Regional School District 14 Public Schools' compliance with Section 504, Title VI or Title IX should contact Dina Ericson, Director of Student Services, Regional School District 14, 5 Minortown Road, PO Box 469, Woodbury, CT 06798 (203) 263-6356

E. District Meeting on Budget, Monday, May 19, 2025

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the minutes as presented, Caren Lipinski abstained, motion carried.

III. Superintendent's Report

A. Student Representatives' Reports: (Maia Colavito and Addison Bushka)

Maia and Addison gave reports on happenings throughout the school district and included staff appreciation week, Memorial Day Parade, PTA Carnival, and DARE Graduation to name a few.

Superintendent Murphy presented Maia and Addison with a certificate of appreciation for their participation and efforts as a student representative on the Board of Education.

B. Litchfield County Superintendent Award Recipients

Superintendent Murphy introduced 4 award winners honored at the Litchfield County Superintendent Association banquet at the Grand Oak Villa, Sadie Nichols, Ryan Patterson, Chelsea Davis and Micah Tracht. Mr. Murphy read a brief summary of their accomplishments and presented each student with a certificate and a group photo from the evening.

C. Mitchell Elementary School Resource Officer Update

Superintendent Murphy announced the hiring of Officer Ron Pruchnicki as the permanent school resource officer at Mitchell Elementary School

Tina Tanguay, the Director of Finance and Operations, explained the hiring process with Principal Pinho participating in interviews

Officer Pruchnicki served as interim during the 2024-25 school year and became a valued part of the school community.

D. Discussion/possible action on 2025/2026 Budget

1. Discussion/possible action on revised budget for 2025-2026

Discussion:

- Budget already reduced by over $470,000
- Five positions eliminated, one position from full-time to part-time
- Superintendent Murphy proposed eliminating one full-time elementary teacher position teaching both social studies and science to elementary school students for $103,000 savings
- Proposed $150 pay-to-play fee per sport with maximum $450 per family, affecting 540 student athletes at NHS and WMS and generating $80,000 savings (Not including Students under Free and Reduced Meal Services)

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- Proposed $150 fee for after school activities affecting 917 students across the district and generating $100,000 savings (Not including Students under Free and Reduced Meal Services)
- Multiple board members opposed pay-to-play implementation, citing insufficient time for proper research and community input

Motion

A motion was made by Michael Carbonneau to eliminate the proposed teaching position for a budget reduction of $103,000, seconded by Jim Crocker, Tikva Rose and Caren Lipinski (No), remaining were (Yes), motion carried.

Pay-to-Play has been tabled.

Jim Crocker moved that the Region 14 Board of Education approve and adopt the Superintendent's proposed amended budget for the fiscal year 2025/2026 in the amount of $42,773,215 as presented to the Board, seconded by Carol Ann Brown, Tikva Rose (No) All Others (yes), motion carried.

2. Discussion/possible action on calling of District meeting and referendum on revised budget

Jim Crocker moved that the Board of Education schedule and warn a District Meeting for Monday, June 9, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the Flanders Room at Mitchell Elementary School, 14 School Street, Woodbury, CT concerning the amended 2025/2026 budget, with said meeting to be adjourned to a referendum on Tuesday, June 10, 2025 from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury, CT, seconded by Tikva Rose, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

3. Discussion/possible action on authorization and approval of explanatory text/materials and notices

Jim Crocker moved that the Secretary of the Board of Education is authorized, in such official's discretion, to prepare and cause to be printed and distributed explanatory text and other neutral materials and notices regarding the 2025/2026 budget referendum scheduled for June 10, 2025, with such explanatory text and materials and notices subject to the review and approval of the District's legal counsel and to be prepared and distributed in accordance with Section 9-369b of the Connecticut General Statutes, seconded by Michael Carbonneau, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

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4. Community Notification System (Action Anticipated)

Jim Crocker moved that the Chairman of the Board of Education is authorized, in such official's discretion, to request and cause the Superintendent of Schools to use the District's community notification system to provide notice of the referendum, in accordance with Section 9-369b of the Connecticut General Statutes, seconded by Tikva Rose, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Curriculum Committee

On a recommendation by the Curriculum Committee to accept/approve the following:

1. Curriculum Documents for Approval
   a. Human Anatomy and Physiology
      A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   b. World Languages - Year 1
      A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   c. World Languages - Year 2
      A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   d. Advanced Culinary Arts
      A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   e. Ag Production 11/12 - Integrated Food Science and Production; Livestock Science and Agricultural Sustainability
      A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Tikva Rose to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

   f. Veterinary Science 11/12 - Animal Anatomy and Physiology; Business and Hospital Management, Reproduction, Genetics, and Animal Behavior and Training

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Tikva Rose to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

g. 10th Grade Nursery Landscape
A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to accept/approve the curriculum as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

2. Textbook Proposal for Approval (Action Anticipated)
   a. Financial Algebra: Advanced Algebra with Financial Applications
   A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Tikva Rose to accept/approve the textbook as presented, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

B. Finance Committee
1. Technology Lease Request for $350,000 for school year 2025-2026 (Anticipated Action)
   Discussion

- Tina Tanguay requested a $350,000 technology lease for 2025-2026 school year as part of 5-year replacement plan
- Lease covers replacement of end-of-life laptops, desktops, and Promethean boards throughout district
- Windows 10 support ending in October necessitates equipment upgrades
- Lease payment commences 2026/2027

Jim Crocker made a motion to accept the Technology Lease of $350,000 as presented to replace end of life technology equipment to be paid annually commencing with the 2026-2027 school year, seconded by Michael Carbonneau, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

C. Policy Committee
On a recommendation by the Policy Committee to accept/approve the following policies: (First Read, No Action Anticipated)
A. Policy 6141.3273/4118.53/4218.53 Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence)

- The policy is intentionally general to adapt as AI technology continues to evolve rapidly
- Dr. Fernandez developed guidelines for ethical, responsible, and effective use of AI in teaching and learning

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V. Board Chair Comments

Two open issues that need to be resolved with the first being the Region 14 budget and the second, Vo-Ag out-of-district funding. Region 14 is effective and efficient.

VI. Privilege of the Floor

Becky Trzaski/Concerns regarding budget cuts

- Spoke as social studies teacher and teachers association president expressing concern about budget cuts
- Highlighted that 4 counselors held over 3,100 student meetings this year and led more than 60 college visits
- Emphasized mental health crisis affecting 40% of teens according to CDC, representing 10% increase in last 10 years
- Argued that cutting positions reduces personal attention and ability to meet diverse student needs
- Urged board to find creative solutions rather than cutting essential positions

VII. Old Business

There was none

VIII. New Business

A. Field Trip – National FFA Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 26, 2025 through November 2, 2025 (Action Anticipated)

Jen Jedd provided a brief summary of the trip.

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Michael Carbonneau to accept/approve the field trip as requested, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried unanimously.

IX. Other Business

There was none

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Jim Crocker and seconded by Caren Lipinski to adjourn the Meeting, all in favor, none opposed, the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Patricia Paige
Board Clerk
Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Patricia Paige, Board Clerk
Minutes created with assistance of Circleback AI"

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