



# Seymour Board of Education

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 16, 2025  
Seymour Middle School  
7:00 pm

- Board Members Present:
- Chris Champagne, Board Chairperson
  - Kristen Bruno, Board Vice Chairperson
  - Stephan Behuniak, Board Secretary
  - Lori Nespoli
  - Ed Strumello
  - Jim Garofolo
- Board Members Absent:
- Kristen Harmeling
  - Pete Kubik
  - Jay Hatfield
- Others in Attendance:
- Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent
  - Annmarie Drugonis, First Selectwoman
  - Mary Sue Feige, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
  - David Olechna, CLS Principal
  - Stephanie Ciccone, CLS Vice Principal
  - Paul Lucke, SHS Principal
  - Keith ORourke, SMS Principal
  - Lauren Reid, BES Principal
  - Salvatore Bucci, Business Manager
  - Shannon Levey, Board Clerk

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

- A. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Champagne called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM
- B. Introductions

### **II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**

#### **A. Bungay Building Committee Update**

- 1. Mr. Strumello - things are looking positive, now our next challenge is to get it passed at the next referendum.

#### **B. Seymour Champion Recognitions – “Seymour CHAMPIONS”**

- 1. Bungay School
  - a. Oliver Moore
  - b. Peyton Blackwell
- 2. Chatfield-LoPresti School
  - a. Aylin Arslan
  - b. Cora Willox
- 3. Seymour Middle School
  - a. Mackenzie Browning
  - b. Thomas Halligan
- 4. Seymour High School

- a. Nevaeh Cruz

**C. The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) Recognitions**

1. "2025 Challenge to Educational Citizenship Award" – Seymour Snow Brigade, SMS
2. "2025 CAS Distinguished Friend of Education Award" – Seymour Fire Department

**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 three times, no public comment.

**IV. REPORTS**

- A. Nutrition Services Report – Cindy Brooks
- B. Special Education Report – Dr. Boyle
- C. Financial Report – Salvatore Bucci
- D. Enrollment Report

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Intra-District Transfer Requests 2025-2026**

**B. Approval of Minutes**

1. Regular BOE Meeting – May 5, 2025
2. Regular BOE Meeting – June 2, 2025
3. Finance Committee Meeting – May 5, 2025
4. Finance Committee Meeting – May 29, 2025

**MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Kristen Bruno)** move to approve the consent agenda as presented

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Mr. Champagne, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Nespoli

**PASSES:** 6-0-0

**V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA**

**VI. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

**A. Cell Phone Procedure - SHS, Paul Lucke and John McCasland**

Mr. Lucke reported on a proposal developed by a working committee, incorporating feedback from the Student Council and board members. This initiative is aligned with **House Bill 7009**, which has passed the House and is currently under consideration in the Senate. If enacted, the bill will require all Boards of Education to adopt a formal policy on cell phone usage in schools. In response to this potential mandate, Mr. Lucke outlined the school's **proposed phased approach** to managing cell phone use:

- **Phase I** (First Marking Period): Students will have increased advisory time, as requested by the Student Council. This period will also be used to introduce a **digital etiquette curriculum**. Goals will be set for student behavior and engagement.
- If students successfully meet the established goals, they will advance to **Phase II**, where limited cell phone use will be allowed during **lunch and specific educational activities**, contingent upon teacher and administrative approval.

Some academic departments, such as English, Math, and Social Studies, have indicated that cell phone use will **not be necessary** during their classes. Additionally, **earbuds and headphones** will not be permitted during instructional time. Mr. Lucke detailed the **disciplinary process** for students who violate the procedure. A review of the implementation's progress is scheduled for **May of next year**. In response to a question from Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Lucke confirmed that the **entire school will begin in Phase I**, regardless of grade level. Dr. Compton referenced **CABE's policies** on student cell phone use and recommended the district's **Policy Subcommittee** review and potentially revise any current policy to reflect both the procedural and legal expectations. While Mr. Lucke is authorized to

implement procedures without formal board policy, a policy may soon become mandatory if House Bill 7009 is passed. Mr. Champagne emphasized the need for **consistent enforcement** of the policy and noted the school's role in teaching students responsible use of technology. Ms. Bruno highlighted **Digital Citizenship**, a nonprofit organization that offers K–12 digital literacy curriculum, which could support the initiative. Mr. Strumello reiterated the importance of consistency, suggesting that in **Phase I**, cell phones should be stored in a designated location (e.g., a box or desk) without exceptions. Mr. Champagne expressed he isn't comfortable with putting the phones in the pocket or box, he'd rather have students' keep it on their person.

**A. Required Community Service - SHS, Aaron Pawluk and Heather Brown**

- a. Mr. Lucke has established working committees, one of which focuses on community service, with Ms. Brown and Mr. Pawluk as members. The goal of the initiative is to encourage student involvement in the community, fostering empathy, civic engagement, and academic growth. The program aims to make a positive impact in Seymour and highlight the character and contributions of its students. Ms. Brown conducted research on existing community service requirements, including the number of hours typically required and appropriate timelines. The committee has begun outlining parameters for participation. Opportunities for involvement will include local organizations such as the Blessing Pantry and participation in town events. The committee is currently drafting a form for documentation, which will include a required reflection component asking students to consider what they gained from the experience. The program is intended to position Seymour as not only a place where students attend school but as a community known for its outstanding youth. Input and suggestions for additional service opportunities are welcomed and encouraged. Dr. Compton praised the initiative, calling it "wonderful" and "a great start." The program will apply to incoming freshmen. Mr. Strumello inquired about consequences for not completing the required service hours. It was clarified that fulfillment of the hours is mandatory, with consequences such as loss of privileges for non-compliance. Ms. Brown emphasized that the number of hours is manageable for all students. Dr. Compton noted the need to integrate the program into the official school policy and student handbook. Final approval is expected to return to the board for a vote in July or August. Mr. Strumello confirmed that formal adoption into board policy is necessary. Students may propose new service ideas, provided they receive prior approval from the committee.

**B. Manufacturing and CWE - SHS, Rich Lauer, VP of Sales and Supply Chain for Gen-EI-Mec and Paul Lucke**

- a. This topic will be tabled until the August meeting. Mr. Lucke will send the related documents to Ms. Levey, who will then distribute them to the board members.

**C. Wellness Policy**

- a. Dr. Compton explained that the district's Wellness Committee has been actively meeting. She noted that the Wellness Policy is a required policy and is adopted on an annual basis.

**MOTION:** (Kristen Bruno / Jim Garofolo) to accept and adopt policy 5141.7, the "Wellness Policy"

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Mr. Champagne, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Nespoli

**PASSES:** 6-0-0

**D. Donation –"Track Rules" sign at DeBarber Field, from Bill Lynch**

- a. **MOTION:** (Ed Strumello / Jim Garofolo) to accept the donation from Mr. Bill Lynch for the track rules sign at DeBarber Field and instruct superintended to distribute as appropriate.

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Mr. Champagne, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Nespoli

**PASSES:** 6-0-0

**E. Shared Service Agreement**

- a. First Selectwoman Annmari Drugonis stated that the current shared services agreement has been in place since 2022. She expressed appreciation that the town is able to take on the shared services costs for the 2024–2025 fiscal year, and she hopes that the Board of Education will consider budgeting for half of the shared services and insurance costs going forward. She noted that "nothing really changes," and acknowledged that it was a difficult budget year for both the Town and the BOE. She emphasized the importance of demonstrating collaboration to the community by sharing costs and resources—such as not duplicating roles like IT directors, HR directors, or facilities directors. First Selectwoman Drugonis expressed her desire for the agreement to move forward and to be officially passed. Dr. Compton responded that the shared services costs were originally included in the BOE budget, but due to significant reductions, those items were cut. She agreed on the importance of working together. First Selectwoman noted that discussions on shared services had previously begun but were not continued. Dr. Compton stated that the exact amount the district will receive in ECS (Education Cost Sharing) funds is still unknown. Additionally, the State Partnership Plan saw a higher-than-expected number of staff enrolling in the insurance plan, therefore costing the district more than anticipated. First Selectwoman Drugonis asked if there is anything more the Town can do to

support the BOE, stressing the importance of working efficiently and avoiding unnecessary spending. Dr. Compton acknowledged the positive collaboration with town staff, specifically naming Rob, Tim, and Chris, and said they've had productive discussions recently. Mr. Champagne and First Selectwoman Drugonis recommended updating the current shared services agreement and holding discussions to clarify its contents so all parties are comfortable moving forward. First Selectwoman Drugonis asked if the Board would be interested in forming a Shared Services Committee to facilitate collaboration. She clarified that "expanding" shared services does not mean taking on more departments, but rather focusing on shared costs related to town and school buildings. She added that the BOE should be focused on educating children, not managing non-educational operational concerns. Mr. Champagne stated he is open to that discussion. Ms. Bruno noted that the shared services agreement has been in place for three years and agreed it is an appropriate time to review how it is working and consider adjustments based on what has been learned. First Selectwoman Drugonis confirmed she would send an email to Mr. Champagne to initiate the formation of the committee. Mr. Garofolo inquired about Item #5 in the shared services agreement, and it was confirmed that the current operations are in alignment with that item. Dr. Compton closed the discussion by thanking First Selectwoman Drugonis as well as Chris, Tim, and Rob for their ongoing collaboration and support.

**F. Independent Contracts**

1. Barnard, Ronald
  - a. School Security Officer · Bungay School
2. Brooks, Cindy
  - a. Director of Nutrition Services · Districtwide
3. Levey, Shannon
  - a. Executive Administrative Assistant · Central Office
4. Henry, Edward
  - a. Director of Security · Seymour High School
5. Ling, Guo
  - a. BCBA · Districtwide
6. Magnotta, Michael
  - a. BCBA · Districtwide
7. Martin, Derrick
  - a. Network Manager · Districtwide
8. Moktan, David
  - a. Districtwide Computer Technician · Districtwide
9. Olowina, Christine
  - a. Payroll Specialist · Central Office
10. Pimpinelli, Kevin
  - a. School Security Officer · Chatfield-LoPresti School
11. Rogers, Michael
  - a. School Security Officer · Seymour High School
12. Russo, Dominic
  - a. Districtwide Computer Technician · Districtwide
13. Spence, Miriah
  - a. Accounts Payable
14. Sponheimer, Deirdre
  - a. Assistant Athletic Director, P/T · Seymour High School
15. Taylor, Patrick
  - a. School Security Officer · Seymour High School
16. Zhingri, Alana
  - a. Administrative Assistant · Central Office

**MOTION:** (Kristen Bruno / Stephan Behuniak ) to approve the Independent Contracts for the 2025-2026 school year

**AFFIRMATIVE:** Mr. Champagne, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Nespoli

**PASSES:** 6-0-0

**H.** Discussion and possible action pertaining to the employment, performance, and evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools (Contract, July 7, 2025)

1. Dr. Compton stated that an updated contract will be drafted in collaboration with the board attorney and shared with members. She noted that no significant changes are expected. Dr. Compton shared that she has reviewed the historical contracts of past superintendents in Seymour and surrounding districts and found that similar provisions have been included previously. She addressed concerns raised about her salary during the recent budget process, expressing that the scrutiny was hurtful, particularly as she is currently one of the lowest-paid superintendent in the state of Connecticut. She clarified that her contract does not include a provision that district administrators receive. Dr. Compton requested consideration to have the same fringe benefits that the administrators union contract has. This is the only change she is requesting to consider. Mr. Champagne noted that he did not receive any feedback from board members regarding the superintendent's evaluation. As not all board members were present, the board agreed to revisit this matter in July. Dr. Compton concluded by expressing her sincere appreciation for the Board's support, stating that it means the world to her. She emphasized the importance of transparency in her leadership and reaffirmed that she remains open and communicative with the Board.

**VII. INFORMATION**

**A. Hiring - Certified**

1. Steven Marinaro
  - a. Physical Education and Health
  - b. Seymour High School
  - c. Replacing Paul O'Connor

**B. Summer Hiring – Non-certified**

1. Jacob Britto
  - a. Summer Custodian
2. Michelina Adinolfi
  - a. Summer Custodian
2. Ezequiel Gonzalez
  - a. Summer Custodian
3. Ryan Martin
  - a. Summer Custodian
4. James Duda
  - a. Summer Custodian
5. Extended School Year Summer Hires

**C. Hiring - Appendix D**

1. Gary Parkosewich
  - a. Assistant Football Coach
  - b. Seymour High School
  - c. 2025-2026 School Year
2. Melissa Medieros
  - a. Volleyball Head Coach
  - b. Seymour Middle School
  - c. 2025-2026 School Year
3. Jennifer Monaco
  - a. English Department Chair
  - b. Seymour High School
  - c. Replacing Lisa Cheney
3. Allen Aldrich
  - a. Special Education Department Chair
  - b. Seymour High School
  - c. New Position

**D. Resignations**

1. Erin Swan Buhl
  - a. Nutrition Services Manager
  - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School

- c. Effective June 30, 2025
- 2. Christopher Barton
  - a. Basketball Coach
  - b. Seymour Middle School
  - c. Effective May 28, 2025
- 3. Jane Ryder
  - a. Paraprofessional
  - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
  - c. Effective June 12, 2025
- 4. Jessica Gagne
  - a. Permanent Building Substitute
  - b. Seymour Middle School
  - c. Effective June 12, 2025
- 5. Lily DeLoma
  - a. Literacy/Numeracy Tutor
  - b. Bungay Elementary School
  - c. Effective June 12, 2025

**E. Retirements**

- 1. Kimberly Barton
  - a. Teacher
  - b. Bungay Elementary School
  - c. Effective August 1, 2025

**F. 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** - Mr. Champagne noted that the graduation ceremonies were very nice, albeit hot. He appreciated the decision to begin the ceremony an hour later, which helped mitigate the heat from the sun. He also complimented the appearance of the school grounds, stating they looked excellent.
- 2. Board Member Comments
  - Mr. Strumello:**  
Quoted, *"If we want to invest in the prosperity of our nation, we must invest in the education of our children so their talents can be fully employed."*  
He reported attending the moving-up ceremonies at CLS and SMS, both of which went very well. He also praised the SHS graduation as outstanding. He inquired about plans to retain the same athletic trainer setup, noting that the coaches were very pleased and expressed hope they would return.
  - Mr. Garofolo:**  
Offered kudos to the administration for a well-executed and successful school year.
  - Ms. Nespoli:**  
Extended congratulations to all graduates and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the graduation ceremonies.
  - Ms. Bruno:**  
Shared her gratitude for being part of the graduation ceremony and referenced Mr. Stanek's sentiment that *"Graduation is always the Board of Education's meeting of the year."*

**B. Superintendent Report**

The Superintendent reported that the graduation ceremonies were outstanding and expressed pride in the district's accomplishments.

- Interview scheduling for Assistant Principal for Chatfield-LoPresti School will begin Monday, with 121 applications received for open positions.
- A reminder was issued regarding upcoming union contract negotiations, with meeting dates and times shared.
- The district had a productive meeting with BHCare in Derby. There is potential for BHCare to provide a clinician at the elementary school level.
- A meeting was held with the Mayor of Shelton to discuss a possible new building in Shelton focused on special education. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for July.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM

YouTube Link (6/16/2025): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4GmaSzENnU>

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

Prepared by Shannon Levey,  
Board Clerk