REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 7

Newbury Library Media Center
Board of Education Regular Meeting
June 10th, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED 6.24.26

PRESENT: Chair Ms. Molly Sexton Read (B), Ms. Terri Kenneson (C), Ms. Mimi Duran (B), Ms. Deb Bell (N), Secretary / Treasurer, Mr. Noel Gauthier (NH), Vice-Chair Mr. Robert Jerram (NH), Ms. Lisa Fragale (C), Student Representatives, Mia Doyle and Amaya Washington, Director of Finance & Operations, Mr. James Gaskins, High School Principal, Mr. Gary Franklin, Middle School Principal, Mr. Ryan Cornelius, and Superintendent Steven K. LePage.
Absent: Ms. Kim Crone (N).

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Molly Sexton Read called the meeting to order at 6:13pm.

2.0 PUBLIC PORTION

No members of the public were present to speak. The public portion was skipped.

3.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1 May 13, 2026, Regular Board of Education Meeting

MOTION by Terri Kenneson, seconded by Deb Bell, to **APPROVE** the May 13, 2026, Regular Board of Education Minutes, as presented, **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Ms. Duran, Mr. Gauthier. **MOTION PASSED.**

4.0 REPORTS

4.1 Student Representatives Report — Mia Doyle, Amaya Washington

- **Mia Doyle:** Expressed excitement for the upcoming summer break. Noted that senior finals are underway and yearbook signing has begun. Provided updates on Spring Sports:
    - *Baseball:* 10-10 record; lost in Berkshire League Finals and 1st round of State tournament. Two All-Berkshire League athletes, one All-State athlete.
    - *Softball:* 10-10 record; lost in 1st round of State tournament. Two All-Berkshire League athletes.
    - *Boys Tennis:* 7-7 record; three All-Berkshire League athletes.
    - *Girls Tennis:* 2-10 record; three All-Berkshire League athletes.

    - *Boys/Girls Track:* Three All-Berkshire League athletes for boys; Mia Doyle was the sole All-Berkshire League athlete for girls track. Mia and others are continuing with the hammer throw at the State Open.
    - The All-Berkshire League Banquet was held on Thursday, June 4 to recognize these athletes.
- **Amaya Washington:** Reflection on her two years serving as a student representative to the Board. Noted June 12 is the final day for seniors, with a final exam on Friday morning, followed by Graduation on Monday evening, June 15. The Senior Sports Awards Ceremony was held on June 8 and went very well. The Booster Club provided funding for new uniforms and mats for the cheer team. The Student Council hosted a successful flea market on June 6.

4.2 Principal's Report — R. Cornelius, G. Franklin

- **Ryan Cornelius (Middle School):**
    - Reported that 44 students attended the Washington D.C. Civil Rights trip. All returned safely, and parents generously sent gift baskets to the four teacher chaperones.
    - The 8th-grade Semi-Formal at Crystal Peak was highly attended (105 out of approximately 120 students).
    - The Boulder Ridge trip included roughly 200 students and was highly successful.
    - 8th-Grade Awards are scheduled for Friday, June 12, with roughly 45 students receiving recognition. 8th-Grade Promotion will take place on Tuesday, June 16 at 5:00 PM.
    - Administration is wrapping up end-of-year teacher conferences and evaluations.
- **Gary Franklin (High School):**
    - Highlighted recent major events: High School Awards Ceremony, Senior Prom, Senior Sports Banquet, and the Kindness in Motion celebration.
    - Coordinated with elementary school principals (Antolini, Bakerville/New Hartford, and Colebrook) for a "Senior Graduation Walk" on Monday, June 15, allowing graduates to return to their elementary schools in cap and gown.
    - Interviews for the new Junior Board of Education Representative were held today; eight qualified candidates were interviewed, with a finalist expected by next week.
    - The final draft of the Northwestern Magazine was approved and is heading to print.
    - The Credit Enhancement Program is finalized for June 22 – July 8, with 35 registered students across courses such as Algebra 1 Readiness, Culinary, Exploring Art, Exploring RVN STEM, Exploring Rapid Design, and 21st Century Careers.
    - Announced selection to a 10-principal state focus group for Governor Ned Lamont's Connecticut Career Pathways Commission, chaired by former U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. The commission will propose a 5-year pathway development plan before the fall legislative session.

4.3 Superintendent's Report — S. LePage

- **Personnel Updates:**
    - Reegan Blore has been selected as the new High School English Teacher (pending Board approval tonight).
    - Michael Pauletto (a New Hartford resident) has been hired as the new Career Pathways/Step Coordinator in conjunction with Shared Services.
- **Kindness in Motion:** The celebration took place last night in a full, intimate room. Superintendent LePage thanked the Board for their support, as well as the community fundraising efforts for the Dr. Judy Palmer Kindness Award. The district is considering shifting the application window and celebration timeline next year to ease the end-of-year scheduling crunch.
- **Correspondence/Community Outreach:** Read a letter from the Executive Director of the Community Kitchen of Torrington thanking NWR7's Social Justice Club, Mr. Rodenberg, and teacher Christine Mitchell for their regular Friday night volunteer and food donation efforts.
- **Educational Assistants Negotiations:** After two meetings spanning four hours, a tentative contract agreement was reached with the union president and state union representative. It was ratified by the union yesterday.
- **Theater Updates:** Met with the NGA union regarding equity pay, specifically balancing pay scales for Assistant Director Anne DeServo and Director John DeCheso. The teachers' union initially declined to reopen the contract but ultimately proposed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) adding $3,052 to the pool. This adjusts Ms. DeServo's pay up to equity parity (matching John's previous rate + 1%). Superintendent LePage recommended accepting this compromise. Additionally, electrical renovations funded by an allocation will be performed in the theater this summer via Delta.
- **Hallway Review and Reimagining Committee:** The committee met today for 35 minutes to discuss aesthetic and cultural upgrades to the school's hallways. Initial steps include establishing unified bulletin boards requiring principal approval and removing aged, non-current large paintings. The art department supports shifting to dynamic student art showcase areas. The district will look into hiring a marketing company to establish an official Northwestern style guide (standardizing school colors/red tones).
- **Calendar Change Request:** Recommended adjusting the quarterly marking periods to a uniform 83 days each, correcting historical imbalances caused by midterm and final exam schedules.
- **Weather Service Update:** The regional superintendents group is transitioning away from John Bagioni's services to Drake Weather Services. The new service utilizes a streamlined text-alert protocol and a consolidated billing invoice across 33 participating towns.
- **Special Education Recognition:** Read an emotional letter sent from a parent (the Pashkevych family, who relocated from Ukraine/Belarus) to former Secretary Miguel Cardona, praising NWR7's *Links Program* and teachers Ms. Megan Ficke and Ms. Rhonda LeKang. The letter highlighted that after 13.5 years, their daughter Anna spoke the word "Mama" for the first time due to the program's impact.

4.4 Director of Finance and Operations — J. Gaskins

- **Solar Project Update:** Referenced the Building Committee presentation on solar canopies held prior to this meeting. No formal action has been taken yet; detailed discussions will occur under New Business.
- **Facility Condition Assessment:** The on-site assessment took place the week after Memorial Day. A comprehensive report is expected in a few weeks, which will require deep review.
- **LENS Grant Closeout:** The Lockdown Emergency Notification System grant has progressed excellently. Out of the $500,000 project cost, the state has already reimbursed $498,000. The final closeout request has been submitted.
- **Gymnasium Bleachers:** An order was executed for new composite red and gray gym bleachers, coming in under budget. Based on coaching feedback, a row of branded team seats will be installed on the floor, slightly shortening the right-side bleacher bank. By removing an old center partition, the company will install one continuous, long row of bleachers on the opposite side. Total gym seating will be 1,052.
- **Summer Facility Projects:** General painting, carpet replacement (excluding the auditorium), epoxy flooring installations at the athletics entryway, and a fire alarm system upgrade funded via a safety grant are slated for July.

5.0 OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Updates

- The Board Chair and Superintendent met with the four towns in hopes of aligning the K-12 curriculum. The town of Hartland was invited to attend the next meeting on June 23, 2026. There were voiced concerns but the team is working through any possible issues. The Superintendent is working with EdAdvance for a curriculum audit to make this process easier. The cost would be divided among 5 budgets, the four towns and the school. The Board is hoping to have a decision by November and build this cost into the 2027-2028 budget.

5.2 BOE Goals

None.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Discussion and Possible Action on Proposed 2026-2027 Calendar Changes - Review of Marking Period Quarters

- **Discussion:** The Superintendent proposed to the Board that he would like to have each quarter equate to 83 days, in place of shortening the 2nd and 4th quarters.

6.2 Discussion and Possible Action on the RSD#7 Educational Assistants' Contractual Agreement

MOTION by Deb Bell, seconded by Terri Kenneson, to **APPROVE** the Education Assistant's Contracts, as negotiated. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

6.3 Discussion and Possible Action on the Solar Project Proposal

- **Discussion:** The Board reviewed the presentation details from the prior Building Committee session regarding solar canopy implementation. Board members raised questions about layout, structural logistics, and fiscal timelines.
- **Action:** No binding action was taken; item tabled for future evaluation pending additional reports.

6.4 Approval of New Hire ~ HS English Teacher – Reegan Blore

MOTION by Deb Bell, seconded by Lisa Fragale, to **APPROVE** the hire of English Teacher Reegan Blore. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**

6.5 Discussion and First Reading of Policies:

The Board conducted a collective first reading of the following policy updates and accompanying administrative forms:

- a. Health Assessments and Immunizations 5141.3
- b. Reporting of Child Neglect 5141.4/R5141.4
- c. Use of Physical Force 5144.1
- d. Restraint and Seclusions Law In CT (Appendix) 5144.1 A
- e. Protective Measures Procedures (Appendix) 5144.1 C
- f. Protective Measure Report (Appendix) 5144.1 D
- g. Form #1 Physical Restraint Report Form 5144.1 Form #1
- h. Form #2 Seclusion Report Form 5144.1 Form #2
- i. Form #3 State Incident Report 5144.1 Form #3
- j. Sexual Abuse Prevention & Education- Student Opt Out Form 5145.511
- k. Title IX U5145.44

Note: These policies will be moved to a second reading and potential adoption at the next scheduled meeting.

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent LePage shared the Community Kitchen of Torrington thank-you letter and the Pastukhovich family commendation letter during his main report.

8.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

No public comments were made.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Noel Gauthier, seconded by Terri Kenneson, to **ADJOURN** at 7:58pm. **AYE:** Ms. Sexton Read, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Gauthier, Ms. Kenneson, Ms. Bell, Ms. Fragale, Ms. Duran. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None. **MOTION PASSED.**