

Regional School District 12
Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley Middle/High School
August 19, 2013

The Business Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 7:00 p.m., on Monday, August 19, 2013, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were Board members: Valerie Andersen, Tony Bedini, Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Kelly Lott, Jennifer Pote, Susan Stumpf and Peter Tagley. Also present were: Patricia E. Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations. Michael Sinatra arrived at 7:10 p.m. Emily Hibbard was absent.

Cathy Colella, Principal, Booth Free and Burnham Schools; Teresa DeBrito, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Kimberly Gallo, Principal, Shepaug Valley Middle High School; and Emily Judd, Principal, Washington Primary School were also present.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda items approved:

Approval of Minutes: Education Committee Meeting – June 17, 2013; Business Meeting – July 8, 2013; Retreat – July 29, 2013.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

No report.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Correspondence: Dr. Cosentino referenced the letter she sent to Commissioner Stefan Pryor at the State Department of Education regarding the Board's plan to revise the regionalization plan.

Personnel: Dr. Cosentino introduced Mark Raimo, a recent retired lieutenant from Watertown as the new School Resource Officer. Officer Raimo spoke about his background of 25 years in law enforcement starting out as a patrolman to detective to sergeant and ultimately lieutenant. Early on in his career, he worked in the school systems teaching D.A.R.E. programs. Officer Raimo spoke about looking forward to working with the students and being an approachable role model.

Dr. Cosentino shared personnel changes. Appointments: Mark Raimo, School Resource Officer; Danielle Ciccone, Biology Teacher at SVMHS; Jason Conway, Physical Education/Health Teacher at SVMHS; Nicole Dabros, Educational Assistant (.5) at BFS; Ingrid Erickson, School Psychologist (.5) District; Lori Ferreira, 6-12 Assistant Principal at SVMHS; Breanne Gillespie, English Teacher at SVMHS; Kelly O'Connell, Literacy Tutor at WPS; Shannon Puzinski, Physical Education Teacher (.6) at WPS; and Andrew Tenholder, Literacy Tutor at WPS. Resignations: Kathryn Beach, Math Teacher at SVMHS (effective 7/23/13); Caroline Calhoun, Elementary Teacher at WPS (effective 8/1/13); Marissa Fraser, Literacy Tutor at WPS (effective 7/4/13); and Steven Schibi, Physical Education Teacher at SVMHS (effective 7/15/13). Retirements: Vivian Cantor, Physical Education Teacher at WPS/BS (effective 7/17/13); Alfredo Ciarlo, Technology Teacher at SVMHS (effective 8/10/13); and Margaret

McQuillan, Secretary at BFS (effective 9/30/13).

MOTION: made by Valerie Andersen, seconded by Michelle Gorra to accept the notifications of retirement of Vivian Cantor, Alfredo Ciarlo and Margaret McQuillan with great regret.

VOTE: Unanimous.

Leaves of Absence: Brandi Dougherty, Social Studies Teacher at SVMHS (8/22/13 to 1/2/14); Kara Street, Elementary Teacher at BS (8/22/13 to TBD); and Amy Thayer, Science Teacher at SVMHS (11/23/13 to 3/28/14).

Update on Real Estate Impact Study: Chris Kerin from Kerin Fazio will make a presentation to the Board at the September 9th meeting next month.

State of the Schools – Highlights of 2012-2013 School Year: The principals shared highlights of the 2012-2013 school year. Cathy Colella and Emily Judd began the PowerPoint presentation focused on the primary schools. Highlights included: Teaching and learning, new technology implemented (i.e. SMARTBoard) and health and wellness. Mrs. Colella and Mrs. Judd spoke about the Safe School Climate plan, community initiatives promoting social skills that create a sense of belonging and significance. Next, Teresa DeBrito shared insights on the changes that students experience (i.e. shyness in talking in front of their peers) as they enter their middle school years and the efforts teachers take to encourage and help them to take risks. She presented a video created by teachers of students in grades 6-8 highlighting how they learn to take academic risks, solve real world problems, collaborate with peers, and learn from community guests. Kim Gallo spoke regarding these learning experiences that are fortified at the high school. Mrs. Gallo shared that the alignment of K-12 learning experiences supports the criteria for NEASC accreditation. The presentations ended with a slideshow containing snapshots of the year in all the schools accompanied by students' singing.

Dr. Cosentino informed the Board that orientation will be held tomorrow for the new teachers. Opening day for all staff will be Thursday with Dr. Cosentino's convocation beginning at 8:00 a.m. Dr. Cosentino invited everyone to attend. Dr. Cosentino expressed her confidence that the year ahead will be a very good year with all that has gone on over the summer and with the new administrative staff.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Communications: Dr. Cosentino let the Board know that she has entered the Board's newsletter to CABA for an award.

Education: Mrs. Gorra will meet with Mrs. DeBrito and Dr. Cosentino to put together an agenda and goals for this year.

Education Connection: No meeting

Facilities: No meeting.

Finance: No meeting.

Region 12's Vision / Mission Strategic Plans: Dr. Cosentino reported that work was done on the Vision and Mission statements in the spring with staff and also by the administrators during the summer. Work will continue this fall with a goal for completion by December 1st.

Negotiations: Mr. Cava reported teacher negotiations will begin in September.

Policy: Mrs. Gorra reported on the audit performed by CABA. The audit revealed that overall our policies are in good shape with keeping them up-to-date. The committee will work on four policies that are mandated but not in our current policy manual. Currently, 87% of our policies are fine as written and 13% need some revising.

Regional School Repairs: No meeting.

Alan Brown left the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Long Range Plan – Goal 3: Dr. Cosentino reported that the regionalization revision group met to revise the regionalization plan and has sent the language to Gary Brochu. They are waiting to hear back from Mr. Brochu. Last week the educational specifications group (draft passed out) went through page 9 (school programs, general classrooms, different subject areas) to page 12 and assigned different parts to different group members. Dr. Cosentino requested that the Board look at it on Google docs and be prepared to approve it at the next meeting on September 9. Tomorrow the building committee will meet to work on the RFQ.

Alan Brown returned to the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Hirschfield asked Allyson O'Hara, Director of Pupil Personnel Services about the concerns on issues discovered about a year ago. Mrs. O'Hara said progress has been made on the IEP and PPT process. Structures have been set up and the focus is on student and learning.

NEW BUSINESS

Review Board of Education member handbook: Dr. Cosentino handed out a draft of the Board of Education member handbook (first three pages only). She requested that a committee be formed to work on it and bring it to the next Board Retreat at the end of September. Mr. Cava volunteered with the help from the policy committee. There was a discussion about serving on both town boards and the board of education. Chairman Hirschfield requested that this be put on a future meeting agenda.

To consider, and if appropriate, approve request from Housatonic Valley Association to use Washington Primary School: Chairman Hirschfield read the letter from the Housatonic Valley Association requesting use of the Washington Primary School gymnasium on November 22 through November 24 for their annual auction. Alcohol will be served on Sunday the day of the auction.

MOTION: made by Michelle Gorra, seconded by Michael Sinatra to approve the request made by Housatonic Valley Association to use Washington Primary School from November 22 through November 24 for their annual auction.

Discussion followed. Concerns were: that no alcohol be served on Friday (a school day); insurance and other appropriate paperwork be in order; and that HVA be required to protect the floors in the gymnasium.

VOTE: Unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frannie Caco, Washington - spoke about communication issues, powerschool, and staff changes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

No executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: made by Alan Brown, seconded by Gregory Cava to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.