

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
March 9, 2015

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:48 p.m., on Monday, March 9, 2015, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were: Valerie Andersen, Alan Brown, Emily Hibbard, Jennifer Pote and Susan Stumpf. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present. Tony Bedini, Kelly Lott and Peter Tagley arrived at 6:54 p.m. Gregory Cava arrived at 6:59 p.m. Michelle Gorra and Michael Sinatra were absent.

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2015-2016

Dr. Cosentino thanked the administrators, Bob Giesen and the Finance Committee members for their time and contribution in helping put the budget together. Dr. Cosentino began her presentation reminding the Board about the Vision / Mission statement.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the plan for the Region. 1) The three elementary schools will remain open in each town. 2) REACH will remain at WPS. 3) As our enrollment numbers decrease, we will continue to look at multi-grade classrooms at each school. 4) At this time, we are not looking at any other consolidation options. 5) Shepaug Valley School will remain a comprehensive school with an Agriscience STEM program. 6) The Region is doing some repair work at Shepaug Valley School in the FY2015 and FY 2016 budgets. 7) Region 12 is planning to go to referendum for the Agriscience STEM program and the renovation of the Shepaug Valley School Science wing in September 2015.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the plan for Shepaug Valley School: 1) Await State Board of Education approval and Connecticut State funding for the Agriscience STEM program. 2) Renovate the SVS Science wing. 3) Continue SVS repairs from the master list both in Region 12 budget and future funding.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the Board continuing to promote Region 12 and sharing the great things going on in all of the schools, letting people know they are committed to all the schools and working with Ann Baldwin of Baldwin Media for public relations.

Dr. Cosentino spoke on how the budget stems from the Long Range Strategic Plan's three goals which are: Curriculum, technology, aging facilities and declining enrollment. Dr. Cosentino stressed that everything is based on the achievement of the regional goals and what is best for students.

Dr. Cosentino told how she looked for a balanced approach to dealing with providing outstanding educational and academic programs, using resources efficiently and effectively while remaining fiscally responsible to the taxpayers. The budget supports Curriculum and Instruction: curriculum is continually being revised to include 21st Century Skills, Common Core State Standards, SBAC assessments, professional development. The budget continues the academic programs and expands opportunities for our students (i.e. Virtual High School, Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences, Minds In Motion, cultural enrichment, etc.). The budget supports professional development, technology, safety and security.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the budget process. After meeting with administrators and department chairs, the budget initially totaled \$21,610,276, a .04% decrease over last year's budget. Dr. Cosentino

collaborated with Mr. Giesen and reduced the budget by \$92,652 (.43% decrease) to bring a total budget recommendation of \$21,517,624 or .46% decrease over last year's budget. Dr. Cosentino spoke about the significant changes which include: Personnel services – Reduction in 2 FTE certified staff (Science teacher at SVS and elementary interventionist); reduction of nurses hours at BFS and BS; addition of .2 FTE psychologist; addition of .5 FTE custodian at WPS; addition of .2 FTE TV support; salaries up \$187,620; benefits down \$461,223; supplies down \$97,629; other purchased services up \$50,602 and program improvements down \$185,270.

Dr. Cosentino went over the budget distribution for the towns: Bridgewater – 20.61%, Roxbury – 33.57% and Washington – 45.82%.

In conclusion, Dr. Cosentino expressed that she believes that as the Agriscience STEM program is established it will attract more families to the area and the schools. Dr. Cosentino thanked the Board of Education and the communities of Bridgewater, Roxbury and Washington for their support.

The Superintendent's proposed budget was distributed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 p.m.