

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
March 7, 2016

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:32 p.m., on Monday, March 7, 2016, by Chairman James Hirschfield. Present were: Valerie Andersen, Rebecca Devine, Emily Hibbard, Jennifer Pote, Peter Tagley, and Sydney Worobel. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present. Alan Brown arrived at 6:33 p.m. Gregory Cava arrived at 6:44 p.m. Anthony Amato arrived at 6:55 p.m. Michelle Gorra and Michael Sinatra were absent.

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2016-2017

Dr. Cosentino thanked all those that came to the meeting. She acknowledged Bob Giesen and the Finance Committee members for their time and contribution. She also thanked the administrators, the Board, the community members and stakeholders who have been helpful in putting the budget together.

Dr. Cosentino began her presentation by speaking about the accomplishments over the previous four years that she has been superintendent which included: approval of the AgSTEM program in all three towns, extensive technology program, renovated the mall at Shepaug, higher expectations for all students, more course offerings at Shepaug, impressive scores on the new state assessments, excellent NEASC visit and review.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about things that the principals are proud of at their schools. She announced that each of the elementary schools have been named as Schools of Distinction by the State Board of Education and briefly talked about the conditions that play into that recognition, and that the students at Shepaug performed very well on the 2015 state assessments.

Dr. Cosentino introduced the new logo and tagline for the district. She spoke about the Vision and Mission. She then spoke about the plan for the Region. 1) Work with the Long Range Planning Committee to begin work on the next five-year Region 12 Strategic Plan, 2017-2022. 2) The three elementary schools will remain open in each town. As our enrollment numbers decrease, we will continue to look at multiage classrooms in each school. 3) 2016-17, Burnham School will have K/1 and 2/3 multiage classes as well as 4th and 5th grade classes. 4) A math teacher will work .5 FTE at Burnham and restore .5 FTE math interventionist at Booth Free. 5) Continue repairs and renovations at Shepaug Valley School through school budgets as we move forward on the Agriscience project and the science labs renovations.

Dr. Cosentino gave an update and the plan for the AgSTEM project: 1) Appointed Kaestle Boos Architects and 2) O & G appointed as the Construction Manager; 3) Projects are moving through the Department of Administrative Services; 4) Awaiting CT funding in May 2016; 5) The Building Committee and Advisory Committee are meeting; 6) Breaking ground in Spring 2017; 7) The Shepaug Valley Regional Agriscience STEM Academy opening August 2018.

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 creating an Education Foundation in Region 12.

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 explained 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. The budget supports Curriculum and Instruction: curriculum is continually being revised to include 21st Century Skills, Common Core State Standards, assessments, professional development and every student leaves SVS College and career ready. The budget continues the academic programs and expands opportunities for our students (i.e. Virtual High School, Interventions (SRBI), Minds In Motion, cultural enrichment, STEM enrichment, Talented and Gifted, etc.). The budget supports professional development, technology, safety and security.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the significant changes which include: Personnel services – Reduction in 1.9 FTE certified staff (a Tech Ed. teacher at SVS, .4 FTE English teacher at SVS and .5 FTE Spanish teacher at elementary schools); addition of 1.0 FTE TAG Enrichment teacher; addition of .5 FTE Tech support; addition of AgSTEM Advisor stipend position; addition of the following stipends: Musical Orchestra Director, Drug Counselor and Tri-M Coffee House. Dr. Cosentino spoke about program improvements: cultural enrichment (K-5), Minds in Motion Program (CT Association for the Gifted), theater support (SVS), new math textbooks for MS, pool scoreboard, PSATs for Grades 10 and 11 students, bus from BFS to Burnham for ACE program, and renovate the teachers' work area (SVS).

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the budget process. After meeting with administrators and department chairs, the budget initially totaled \$21,764,499, a .94% increase over last year's budget. Dr. Cosentino collaborated with Mr. Giesen and reduced the budget by \$185,161 (.86% increase) to bring a total budget recommendation of \$21,579,338 or .08% increase over last year's budget.

Dr. Cosentino went over the budget distribution for the towns: Bridgewater – 19.44%, Roxbury – 32.02% and Washington – 48.54%. She went over the areas of significant change: Salaries up \$339,877; benefits down (\$131,965); supplies down (\$68,600); other purchased services up \$148,541 and program improvements down (\$190,789).

In conclusion, 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

MOTION: made by Rebecca Devine, seconded by Gregory Cava to adjourn the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

VOTE: unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.