

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
March 6, 2017

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:42 p.m., on Monday, March 6, 2017, by Vice Chair Michelle Gorra. Present were: Alan Brown, Gregory Cava, Stephanie Kolnick, Michael Sinatra, Jennifer Pote, Lisa Roush, and Peter Tagley. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present. Anthony Amato, Valerie Andersen and Rebecca Devine were absent. James Hirschfield arrived at 6:57 p.m.

Also present were: Cathy Colella, Principal at BFS / BS, Teresa DeBrito, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Lori Ferreira, Associate Principal at SVS; Kim Gallo, Principal at SVS; Emily Judd, Principal at WPS.

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2016-2017

Dr. Cosentino began her presentation by speaking about the Vision and Mission of the Region and the accomplishments over the previous year. They included: all elementary schools received Schools of Distinction status by the State Board of Education, Shepaug's accountability index increased five percentage points to 83.6% to attain the status of the top 25% of high schools in the state, syllabi created and published on website, teachers collaborate and use data to drive decisions, almost all students participated in PSAT in preparation for the SAT. Dr. Cosentino spoke about the Counseling Department earning American School Counseling Association (ASCA) RAMP recognition of the top six distinguished programs in the nation. Dr. Cosentino spoke about the balance the Region provides with athletics, social emotion health and educating the whole child.

Dr. Cosentino reported that 100% of students at the elementary level participated in the Summer Reading Challenge, test performance increased in third grade mathematics, and how fortunate we are to have very supportive parents and community members. She went on to talk about how the elementary schools will focus this year on kindness and growth mindset, integration of STEM in K-5.

Dr. Cosentino congratulated the Region for the following: 1) Assessment Performance increase; 2) Working with consultants to develop alternate class options; 3) Participated in the State Teacher of the Year Program; 4) MakerSpace created at Shepaug; 5) SVS Counseling Department recognized as ASCA model program; 6) Published District Newsletter in November; 7) First Place winner at White House Film Challenge.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about future plans 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) Become a lighthouse program for alternative class options for K-5; 3) Work to right-size the AgSTEM project. 4) Focus on student achievement.

Dr. Cosentino gave an update on the plan for the AgSTEM project: 1) Continue to work with Kaestle Boos Architects and DAS to right-size the project; 2) Promote AgSTEM at the legislature; 3) Open doors August 2019.

Dr. Cosentino spoke on how the budget stems from the Long Range Strategic Plan's 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, new science standards, assessments, professional development and every student leaves SVS College and career ready. The budget continues the academic programs and 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. Program improvements include Project Lead the Way for K-5 and MakerSpace for all elementary schools.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the areas of significant change which include Personnel services – Reduction in 4.0 FTE certified staff (1 teacher at WPS, 1 teacher at BS, 1 teacher at SVS, 1 teacher in the music department) and reduction of 2 non-certified staff (1 at BFS and 1 TBD).

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the enrollment and student / teacher ratio at each school and then spoke about the change in enrollment from this year to next year. Shepaug is up 11 students while the elementary schools are down 29 students.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the budget process. After meeting with administrators and department chairs, the budget initially totaled \$22,611,006, a 5.85% increase over last year's budget. Dr. Cosentino collaborated with Mr. Giesen and reduced the budget by \$1,249,560 (5.85%) to bring a total budget recommendation of \$21,361,446 or 0% increase over last year's budget.

Dr. Cosentino went over the areas of significant change: Salaries up \$499,799; purchased professional services up \$11,777; supplies down (\$124,918); other purchased services down (\$39,052) and program improvements down (\$316,322). She went over the budget distribution for the towns: Bridgewater – 18.82%, Roxbury – 34.45% and Washington – 46.73%.

In conclusion, Dr. Cosentino thanked the Board of Education and the communities of Bridgewater, Roxbury and Washington for their support. She also thanked the administrators who have been helpful in putting the budget together.

The Superintendent's proposed budget was distributed. Chairman Hirschfield thanked Dr. Cosentino and explained that there would be a time to go over the budget page by page, line by line at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: unanimous.

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