

Board of Education Regular Meeting
June 4, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Central Office Conference Room.

Present: Board members Kendra Wiesel, Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, Matt Service, Jamie Drzyzga, Michael Sepko, Debra Dudack, George Beiter, and Superintendent Karen Berasi

Executive Session

Maureen Sattan moved to go into executive session for discussion of a personnel matter: discussion of candidates for the assistant superintendent position. Michael Sepko seconded the motion.

Board member John Richter joined the meeting at 6:20 pm.

At 6:59 p.m. Matthew Service moved, Michael Sepko seconded to come out of executive session.

Regular Session

Board Chair Wiesel called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium.

Present: Board members Kendra Wiesel, John Richter, Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, Matt Service, Jamie Drzyzga, Michael Sepko, Debra Dudack, George Beiter, Superintendent Karen Berasi, Assistant Superintendent Brian Hendrickson and Business Manager Bill Hoff

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition

The Board of Education recognized this year's retirees: Mitch Charkiewicz, Carmel Godfrey, Phyllis Hameroff, Joseph Rapuano, Holly Reinhard, Lucy Shepard, and Lori Silva. All were in attendance except Mr. Rapuano. Building administrators spoke of each faculty and staff member's contributions to Suffield Public Schools and presented them with a gift.

Suffield Police Officers Peter Osowiecki and Tom Kieselback were recognized by the Board for being awarded the 2018 Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Law Enforcement Award. Officer Osowiecki could not attend. Superintendent Berasi thanked the officers for their support of the district and community and presented Officer Kieselback with a certificate of appreciation.

Public Comment

The following individuals spoke in support of Ms. Gina Olearczyk, SHS Assistant Principal, and her positive influence on their children:

Debbie Ouellette, 687 East Street South, said Ms. Olearczyk is professional, knowledgeable and supportive of the students. Her daughter said Mrs. Olearczyk makes her feel safe at school. Ms. Ouellette said Ms. Olearczyk needs to return to SHS.

David Messenger, 123 Babbs Road, said Ms. Olearczyk makes the school safe. He said without Ms. Olearczyk's involvement and intervention with his daughter, his daughter may not be here

today. He said Ms. Olearczyk always puts the students' best interests first and really cares about kids. He said Ms. Olearczyk deserves to be at graduation.

Kim Worthington, 21 Clay Creek Drive, said Ms. Olearczyk is professional, approachable, a good listener, helpful, insightful, a tireless educator and passionate about her job. She is deeply concerned about the social emotional health of the students. Ms. Olearczyk should be an important part graduation. Ms. Worthington was disappointed with the lack of communication with parents on this issue and asked the Board to resolve the issue quickly. She submitted her comments for the record which will be filed in the Superintendent's office.

Tracy Bedlack, 10 Melrose Lane, said Ms. Olearczyk is professional, engaged and passionate. She gave specific examples of her professionalism and dedication to her students and said many people have been impacted by her absence. Ms. Bedlack said she is not alone in wanting to know what happened and said Ms. Olearczyk should be at graduation.

Sara Mailloux, 34 Stony Brook Drive, said Ms. Olearczyk has been very supportive of her family since her daughter, Brianna's death. Ms. Olearczyk has been in contact with her daily to check on the family, especially Brianna's sisters. Ms. Olearczyk has taken care of every aspect of her daughter, Hailee's transition back to school. Ms. Mailloux said Ms. Olearczyk has been a rock for her family and she needs Ms. Olearczyk at graduation because she wants to be there as well. Suffield has had a lot of losses and kids need someone they can trust and Ms. Olearczyk is one of them.

Kelly LaFrance, 8 North Drive Simsbury, said Ms. Olearczyk has been supportive of her daughter for the four years she has been at SHS. She supported her daughter's challenges with anxiety and depression and taught her daughter how to advocate for herself. Ms. Olearczyk always makes herself available to students and parents, and she even visited her daughter at their home. Ms. LaFrance said her daughter may not be here today without Gina's help. Ms. LaFrance asked the Board to take into consideration the comments tonight and allow Ms. Olearczyk to be at graduation.

MOTION #18-52: Service moved to add SHS Student Representative as Item V to the agenda. Richter seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Suffield High School Student Representative

Zachariah Service updated the Board on happenings at Suffield High School. Graduation is June 16 and finals begin next week. Many events have occurred or will occur during the last few weeks of school including the spring concert and naming the band room in honor of Mr. Migliore, SHS band participation in Memorial Day parade, undergraduate awards, drama awards, sports awards, scholarship night, senior banquet, film festival, the scholars' breakfast and the senior outing. Rotary students of the month for May were Jim Casella and Gabrielle Stevens.

Approval of Minutes

Dudack moved, Beiter seconded to approve the May 7, 2018 meeting minutes. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Consent Agenda

MOTION #18-53: Service moved to approve the consent agenda item: the Business Manager's contract. Richter seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

Discussion/Action Items

- Possible Appointment of an Assistant Superintendent

MOTION #18-54: Dudack moved to table the appointment of an assistant superintendent. Sepko seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- Approval of SHS Social Studies Textbook

Mr. Hendrickson said the textbook review was vetted by a group of teachers and presented to the Curriculum and Instruction subcommittee. Ms. Mercik Davis said Mr. Kinel's and Mr. Wheeler's presentation was excellent and thorough information was provided to the subcommittee, and she recommended the Board approves the proposal. Mr. Kinel reviewed the process for the board. He noted only 140 textbooks will be purchased for four classroom sets. These books will not go home with students as there is an online component the students can utilize.

MOTION #18-55: Beiter moved to approve the SHS Social Studies textbooks as presented. Richter seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 9-0.

- District Professional Development Report

Mr. Hendrickson introduced the team of teachers that were present to speak about professional development (PD) that occurred in district this year. He noted all PD is aligned to the district and school improvement plans. He spoke of the important work of the PDEC committee in developing relevant PD. Mr. Janick spoke of his involvement in PDEC and the collaborative nature of the work. He thanked Mr. Hendrickson for creating the effective team in which PDEC has evolved. Ms. Reiser said being involved in PDEC has been a fantastic opportunity. She gives a voice to teachers in her building and represents their needs at committee meetings. Mr. Hendrickson displayed a bar graph showing the results of a survey given to teachers to monitor the effectiveness of PD, comparing responses from October and May early release PD days. Board member Sattan asked if this data was specific to a certain PD or school. Mr. Hendrickson said it was an average district-wide and measured PD effectiveness at the October early release PD offerings and then the May early release PD offerings. Board member Mercik Davis asked for the response rate. Mr. Hendrickson said response rate in October was 60-70% and in May was 85-90%. Board member Beiter asked if there is a demand for more outside PD; and if it is a budget issue. Mr. Hendrickson said he is not aware of any outside PD requests being denied, but noted there is budget implications for outside PD. Superintendent Berasi noted there is a process for teachers requesting PD and in their requests they have to show how the PD is aligned to improvement plans. Board member Mercik Davis asked for next steps to improve the percentage of teachers that are modifying their instruction based on the PD they are receiving. Ms. Berasi said instruction needs to be monitored in classroom through observations by building administrators to ensure it is being implemented in the classroom. Mr. Hendrickson added the district is using a peer-based support model which facilitates collaboration among teachers, curriculum leaders and coaches. Board member Mercik Davis noted that administration should also look at the relevancy of the PD being offered as that may be a reason why teachers are not modifying their instruction. Ms. Baranauskas spoke of the increased confidence in K-5 teachers teaching math over the last few years due to the PD and coaching offered to teachers. She shared a letter from Ms. D'Amato, who could not attend, about the improvements in her instruction due to the PD offerings, noting the structures that have been put in place have supported teachers in all content areas. Board member Drzyzga asked if teachers are provided with multiple sessions of one PD topic so teachers have more opportunity to build upon those skills and increase their confidence. Mr. Hendrickson said they are working on providing flexibility to teachers to provide PD based on their feedback. Some teachers want more time to delve into a topic while others want to work on other topics. Mr. Autieri said PD has transferred into the classroom by curriculum leaders and coaches providing support to teachers, modeling

lessons, and observing and coaching teachers during their instruction. The PLC process has fostered collaboration and conversations among administrators, curriculum leaders and teachers. Ms. Killam said the curriculum leaders support teachers with materials, ideas and sharing their experiences and encourage teachers to go into other classrooms to view their colleagues' instruction. In response to Board member Mercik Davis' question as to the impediments for teachers to modifying their instruction, Mr. Janick said he believed time and confidence are two factors. Mr. Hendrickson reviewed the growth areas for next year which include increasing direct implementation of PD into the classroom, continuing to refine and strengthen the curriculum revision process, library media center support for technology integration and differentiation, and improve, monitor and evaluate academic intervention programming.

- April 2018 Financial Report

Board member Beiter asked the status of the money owed to the district by CL&P/Eversource. Mr. Hoff said he has yet to receive Eversource's report, which was supposed to be received in January. Mr. Hoff added he is also waiting on their plans for more efficient systems and lighting enhancements at SHS and SMS.

Beiter left the meeting at 9:06pm

Mr. Hoff said the projected end of year net surplus is \$152,673, and increase of \$136,362 from last month due to reductions in expenditures on items projected to be spent this year. The net loss in food service is essentially the same as last year. In response to Board member Sattan's question, Mr. Hoff said the Board of Finance is requesting the BOE spend the \$80,459 additional funds they gave the BOE in this year's budget rather than return it to the town in order to reduce the BOE's 2018-19 budget.

- Approval of Increase to the 2017-2018 Approved Budget by \$80,459

MOTION #18-56: Sepko moved that the BOE increase the 2017-2018 approved budget by \$80,459 to a total of \$34,611,844 by increasing the amount budgeted for Tuition by \$80,459. Dudack seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

- Approval of Revised 2018 BOE Meeting Schedule

Board Chair Wiesel said the revised schedule adds a second meeting a month starting in September and changes the start time to 6:30pm. Once the new schedule is filed with the Town Clerk's office any meetings within 30 days of filing would be considered special meetings, but after that they are considered regular meetings.

MOTION #18-57: Service moved to approve the revised 2018 BOE meeting schedule as presented. Richter seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

- Healthy Foods Certification

Mr. Hoff said participating in the Healthy Foods Certification program generates between \$12,000 and \$15,000 a year.

MOTION #18-58: Wiesel moved that the BOE approve participation in the Healthy Foods Certification program for 2018-2019 with an exemption for food sold at events after the end of the school day at the location of the event. Dudack seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report
 - Ms. Berasi thanked Mr. Hendrickson for his three years of dedication, diligence, partnership and great work. Mr. Hendrickson said it has been a pleasure to work in the district.
 - Ms. Berasi will be attending the senior banquet on Thursday night.
 - The Teacher of the Year will be announced on June 19th and Ms. Berasi has been asked to serve on the Teacher of the Year committee for the state process.
 - Superintendent Berasi will be meeting with her intern for next year and will introduce her to the Board.
 - The draft NEASC report should be received next week and be finalized in two weeks.
- Board Chair's Report
 - Board Chair Wiesel asked Board members to RSVP for graduation if they have not done so already. Board member Service will speak at graduation.
 - There is a CAFE negotiations workshop on June 12.
 - A special BOE meeting is being scheduled for June 25 and a workshop with Nick Caruso from CAFE needs to be scheduled in August for the Board to establish its goals for next year.
 - A chairperson for the Communications subcommittee is being finalized.
- Business Manager's Report
 - Mr. Hoff said maintenance projects over the summer are being organized. Bids have gone out for the pavilion at McAlister. Spaulding will be closed over summer once asbestos abatement begins.

Subcommittee Report

- A. May 18, 2018 Policy Subcommittee Meeting – Board member Dudack reported that the Wellness committee met and worked on revisions to the wellness policy. The subcommittee is meeting tomorrow to review the policy and plans to forward to the full Board at June 25 meeting for a 30-day read.
- B. May 24, 2018 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting - Board member Mercik Davis reported the committee discussed the social studies textbooks presented tonight and the changes to the PreK program and the communication issues around that change, which have been resolved. Also discussed were best practices in curriculum revisions in PreK and around the best day for no school for the four day program. For next year, Spaulding will keep the same schedule: Fridays off and review this going forward. Mr. Hendrickson also gave an update on changes in curriculum and instruction. Board member Mercik Davis will be meeting with the Superintendent and curriculum leaders and the committee will meet on June 26. She would like the committee to establish a vision and purpose and establish full meeting dates for the 2018-2019 school year.

Future Business

- RISE program - update at August meeting
- Review Graduation Process/Ceremony

Adjournment

Service moved, Mercik Davis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the special meeting on June 25, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack
Secretary