

Board of Education Regular Meeting
October 15, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium.

Present: Board members Susan Mercik Davis, Maureen Sattan, Michael Sepko, Debra Dudack, Jamie Drzyzga, George Beiter (arrived 6:35pm), and Matt Service; Interim Superintendent Mark Winzler, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, and Business Manager Bill Hoff

Absent: Kendra Wiesel, John Richter

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition

None

Public Comment

None

Minutes

Dudack moved, Drzyzga seconded to approve the October 1, 2018 regular meeting minutes. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 7-0.

Consent Agenda

MOTION #19-13: Dudack moved to remove Bylaw #9312 and #9314 from the consent agenda. Mercik Davis seconded the motion. Board member Dudack explained that these bylaws were proposed to be dissolved as they were going to be incorporated into another bylaw. However, since the Board has decided to have an audit done of the Board's policy manual, the bylaw that was going to incorporate the language from #9312 and #9314 has been put on hold until the policy manual audit is complete. These bylaws should remain until the policy committee resumes its work after the audit is complete. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

MOTION #19-14: Dudack moved, Service seconded to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- A. SHS Field Trip Request - Peru - February 15-23, 2020
- B. Revisions to: B#9160 – Student Representation on BOE; B#9221 – Filling Vacancies; B#9310 – Development, Distribution, and Maintenance of Policy, Regulation, and Bylaws Manual Policy Dissemination; B#9315 – Board-Administrator Relationship (dissolution); B#9321 – Time, Place, Notification of Meetings; B#9322 – Public and Executive Sessions; B#9323 – Meeting Agenda and Dissemination; B#9324 – Advance Delivery of Meeting Materials (dissolution); B#9325.1 – Quorum; B#9325.2 – Order of Business; B#9325.3 – Parliamentary Procedures (dissolution); P#5141.21 – Administering Medication

All members voted in favor. The motion carried 7-0.

Discussion/Action Items

- 2018-2019 Suffield High School Improvement Plan Presentation

Mr. Blain thanked Brendan Canny and Ashley Eichorn for their partnership and work on the school improvement plan (SIP). Mr. Blain reviewed the three district goals: curriculum and instruction, teacher (administrator) growth equals student growth and organizational health. He said an action plan was developed to accomplish each goal by developing two strategies for each of the three district goals. Specific action items, resources needed, timelines and responsible parties were identified for each strategy and performance indicators were chosen to measure their effectiveness. Board members had several questions relative to low data points presented in the SIP and how those will be addressed. Mr. Blain and Mr. Canny spoke about the low survey data point from teachers regarding clear procedures for handling disruptive student behavior.

Mr Canny noted that last spring the high school had an interim principal and the absence of an assistant principal which led to inconsistencies in handling student disruptive behavior.

Mr. Blain added the discipline committee has been redefined and members recently attended a workshop on proactive problem solving in this area. Also students will be involved in the process to give them a “voice”. In respect to the low data point regarding students feel they treat each other with respect, Mr. Blain said the school climate committee is empowering the Wildcat Advisory Group and they are working on identifying the core values in action.

Dudack left the meeting at 7:03 p.m., returned at 7:07 p.m.

In response to a Board member’s question relative to breaking down the process, Mr. Blain said the administrative team looked at 26 indicators originally identified in the district improvement plan and determined a more focused approach was needed. Two strategies have been selected for each of the three district goals to focus their efforts and to simplify as much as possible a complex process. In response to a Board member’s questions relative to SAT scores, PSAT data and DRG results, Mr. Blain stated the “meeting or exceeding goal” percentage for SATs is based on the aggregate score and the goal is set by the State. He said PSAT data is given as an aggregate score and he can add DRG data as a comparable. Mr. Blain explained the accountability measures put in place in response to a board member’s question, specifically detailing a common reporting form used by all and shared with administration to ensure accountability and consistency. In response to a Board member’s question relative to budget needs for the high school, Mr. Blain said support and resources will be needed for additional course offerings for next year: AP World History, AP Computer Science Principles and a two-year capstone course. In addition, professional development funds will go toward AP summer institute trainings for teachers.

- 2018-2019 Class Size Report

Mr. Winzler said he asked board members if they had questions about the Class Size Report to send them to him before the board meeting so he could provide them with the answers. Several Board members had questions to which he provided the answers earlier today. The report has also raised many questions for him as well. He added that a summary of this report would be more beneficial for board members instead of this detailed report. In response to a Board member’s question as to the importance of class size in student achievement, Mr. Winzler said class size is a factor but not the only factor; there are many factors that contribute to student achievement. He noted administration needs to pay close attention to class sizes at the elementary level because those are foundational grades. Areas of concern for Board members were noted around the larger class sizes in the elementary grades, a disproportionate number of students in different sections of the same class, and that there was no information given on the number of special education students in each classroom, and of those how many are students with extensive needs. In response to a Board member’s question about having a district policy in place to address class sizes, Mr. Winzler said the Board could create a policy, but class size is

addressed in the teacher's contract. A policy could not allow for larger class sizes than what is indicated in the teacher's contract but could allow for smaller class sizes.

- September 2018 Financial Report

Mr. Hoff said the projected end of year net surplus is \$47,665 and administration continues to monitor spending closely. The district has received the Title grant revenue projections and we expect to receive \$91,783 more than originally budgeted.

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report

- Mr. Winzler said Interim Director of Special Services, Denise Epps' last day is Friday, October 19. He thanked Ms. Epps for her hard work and calm demeanor. Mr. Glenn McGrath will take over as Interim Director of Special Services, starting on October 22. Mr. McGrath retired from West Hartford a few years ago after 20 years as the Director of Special Services, and prior to that he served 10 years as Supervisor. He has already begun reviewing reports specific to Suffield and he will be meeting with Ms. Epps tomorrow.
- Mr. Winzler and Ms. Zawawi are taking a close look at teacher evaluations, ensuring consistency across all four schools.
- Mr. Winzler, Bill Hoff and Larry Plano met with emergency responders today to discuss the schools' safety and security plan.
- An audit of all district personnel will take place with the district leadership team. He noted the Board needs to advocate for what is in the best interest of the students.

- Board Chair's Report - none

- Business Manager's Report - none

Subcommittee Report

- A. October 15, 2018 Community Engagement & Public Relations Meeting - Board member Sattan said the subcommittee met for the first time this evening. The committee will begin its work looking at current communication avenues (i.e. Panorama survey) and establish goals at a future meeting. Board member Sattan will send out future meeting dates to the full Board for anyone who would like to attend.

Future Business

None

Adjournment

Beiter moved, Dudack seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of November 5, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack
Secretary