

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
March 4, 2019

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, Matt Service, Michael Sepko, Jamie Drzyzga, James Mol, Debra Dudack, Brian Fry; Interim Superintendent Mark Winzler, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, Business Manager Bill Hoff; and SHS Student Representative Sarah Dubocq

Absent: John Richter and SHS Student Representative Hannah Stack

The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance.

Recognition

None

Suffield High School Student Representatives

Sarah Dubocq updated the Board on happenings at Suffield High including the volleyball marathon, which is an all-night fundraising event, the boys' basketball team is in the state tournament, and the boys' 4x800 relay team placed fourth fastest in country. They are going to nationals in New York.

Public Comment

Brian Carroll, 185 North Main Street, spoke against leveling of classes at the middle school and the elimination of accelerated classes in seventh and eighth grade. He would like to see data demonstrating that leveling is effective. He also was not in favor of offering AP classes to freshmen at the high school.

Jen Bombard, 6 Whitfield Way, said she was not in favor of changing the middle school team model to a junior high school model. She said the teaming model is imperative to meeting the needs of middle school students. She echoed Mr. Carroll's comments regarding accelerated class offerings and AP offerings to freshman. She asked the Board to hold off on making any changes right now with so many changes in leadership across the district. She said many parents feel the same way as she does, and she was upset at the direction of curriculum in the district.

Tim Reynolds, 56 Deep Brook Harbor, said he was made aware of an incident that happened at the middle school during the Wax Museum where a resident who writes for the Suffield Observer insulted a student. He said there should be consequences for people's actions and an adult should not act that way toward a child. He said the man should be banned from the schools.

Presentations

None

## Reports to the Board

### Superintendent's Report

- Mr. Winzler said the MOU with the Suffield PD regarding the PD's access to school cameras during times in emergencies and after school hours has been finalized and is now in effect.
- All CREC focus groups have been conducted and a final report should be completed by the end of the month. CREC representatives will present their findings to the administration and the Board.
- He continues to meet regularly with First Selectwoman, Ms. Mack.
- He is serving as a conduit between the Board of Education and Superintendent Search Consultant and the community. The candidate profile, which is a result of the focus groups and survey results, will be posted on our district website.

### Board Chair's Report

- Board Chair Mercik Davis attended the Wax Museum. She was impressed by the effort and participation by the students.
- She congratulated the winter sports teams, particularly the boys' 4x800 relay team and Hunter Adams who is the wrestling State champion in his weight class.
- Board members have been invited by the McAlister social skills team to attend an April 25 school-wide assembly on Autism and students with differences.
- Board Chair Mercik Davis thanked all Board members for the countless hours that go into serving on the Board. She said she is proud to be serving with this Board and gave each member a gift in recognition of March being Board of Education appreciation month.

### Business Manager's Report

- Mr. Hoff said he is meeting with architects tomorrow to tour the middle school to get estimates on the work needed there as part of the district's ACCE request.

## Consent Agenda

**MOTION #19-40:** Dudack moved, Mol seconded to approve the following on the consent agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2019 Regular Meeting
- B. Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2019 Special Meeting
- C. Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2019 Special Meeting
- D. Approval of Minutes – February 11, 2019 Special Meeting
- E. Approval of Minutes – February 20, 2019 Regular Meeting
- F. Approval of Minutes – February 25, 2019 Special Meeting

All members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

## Discussion/Action Item

- Discussion and Possible Approval of the 2019-2020 Proposed Budget  
**MOTION #19-41:** Drzyzga moved, Fry seconded that the Board of Education approve a budget for the 2019/20 school year in the amount of \$36,303,489 which is a 4.3% increase from 2018/19. The budget to be allocated in the line items as presented.

In response to Board member Dudack's questions, Mr. Hoff and Mr. Winzler explained the reduction in stipends for high school curriculum chair positions, and Mr. Hoff said the budget request does not include summer school.

**MOTION #19-42:** Dudack moved to amend the original motion to add \$11,000 to the 2019-2020 budget request for summer school. Sattan seconded the amended motion. Board member Dudack expressed concern over eliminating the program and noted the benefit to students may not be seen during the summer but may have value over the long-term. Board members and administration discussed the challenges of the current program, different ways to structure the program, and different formats, such as an enrichment program. Ms. Zawawi explained the difference between summer school and the Extended School Year (ESY) program. Board Chair Mercik Davis called for a vote of the amended motion. Dudack, Fry, and Sattan voted in favor; Service, Drzyzga, Sepko, Mercik Davis and Mol voted against. The motion failed 3-5.

Mr. Hoff summarized the reductions to the budget from the revised 4.61% increase to the 4.3% increase. These include reductions in high school curriculum chair position stipends, an increase in the turnover/vacancy factor, a reduction of a 0.4 World Language teacher at SHS, and the removal of the proposed 0.5 special services secretary. In response to a Board member's question as to predicting district needs in subsequent budgets, Mr. Hoff said that is difficult to do.

Board Chair Mercik Davis called for a vote to the original motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

- **January 2019 Financial Report**

Mr. Hoff said the projected year end net surplus is \$94. The district is still able to show a positive year-end balance while maintaining instructional supplies, but that is getting more difficult each month. He noted health insurance is significantly less than budgeted due to more employees taking single and plus 1 coverage than family coverage.

- **Approval of Budget Transfers - McAlister School would like to transfer \$7,000 from the instructional supply account to the textbook account in order to buy guided reading books.**

**MOTION #19-43:** Sepko moved, Mol seconded to approve the transfer of \$7,000 from instructional supplies to textbooks. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

### Subcommittee Reports

March 4, 2019 Policy Subcommittee Meeting - Board member Dudack said the committee met this evening and reviewed several policies that will be placed on a 30-day read on the April 2 meeting agenda. These include: adding a food service personnel code of conduct policy, revising the visits to school policy, revising transportation policies, and adding a policy for memorials for deceased students and staff. The committee is discussing the best way to increase public awareness of policies being revised or added.

### Future Business

None

Board Chair Mercik Davis thanked central office administration and staff and building administration for their hard work and diligence through the budget process. The time, scrutiny and deviation to crafting the budget were enormous and greatly appreciated by the Board.

Board member Drzyzga congratulated all those involved in the middle school production of *Annie*. A large number of middle school students were involved in the production and it was very well done.

Adjournment

Dudack moved, Sepko seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

*Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of April 2, 2019.*

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack  
Secretary