

Seymour Board of Education



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

February 5, 2018
Chatfield-LoPresti School
6:00 p.m.

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 2/21/18
TIME: 2:00 pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

COMBINED MEETING OF THE SEYMOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE SEYMOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield (6:27 pm)
Edward Hendricks
Jennifer Magri
Ed Strumello
Sukhman Singh, Student Representative
Paulina Karwowski, Student Representative

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Peter Kubik
Fred Stanek

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Assistant Superintendent - Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Michelle Pinho-Esteves
Grace Brangwynne
Kaitlyn Esposito
Melyssa Gagliardi
Dibran Trepca
Ashley Sirowich
Molly Adamo
Joshua Magri
Evan Petrino
Janiza Molina

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Magri called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:20 p.m.
The Board members and the Student Council members enjoyed pizza before beginning their discussions.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. INFORMAL DISCUSSION

A. Informal Discussion between the Seymour Board of Education and the Seymour High School Student Council

Ms. Magri welcomed the members of the student council to the special meeting and encouraged the students to speak up, she asked them to tell us what is good, what is bad, and what can change. She said the Board would like to hear about the whole high school experience. The students said they would like to see less or no homework over breaks. They said it would be easier for teachers and it would allow for everyone to get an actual break. Mr. Garofolo said he would like to hear how the students feel about homework and what teachers do with homework. Mr. Dibran Trepca agreed that it would be nice not to have homework on breaks so they would have more time for things like going outside and doing things that build their resumes. Ms. Melyssa Gagliardi said she found that a lot of the homework given over break is busy work and not enhancing her skills. Ms. Molly Adamo said it should be a better quality of homework and they should be given more time to do it. As far as what teachers do with the homework she said it depends on the teacher, some of them go over the homework; some just check to see if it is done. Ms. Kaitlyn Esposito said the homework given over breaks is not beneficial and it just adds stress to get it done. Ms. Grace Brangewyne said she finds the homework given over breaks to be busy work but it is an easy way to get 100 which could affect your final grade. Ms. Ashley Sirowich said she finds homework over break interferes with getting important things done like studying for exams which happen right after we return from Christmas Break. She said teachers give homework but they forget that we get it from all of them. Having a break would be a better quality of life for the students. Ms. Harmeling said in the working world you earn your vacation and you should take it. Go on vacation and leave your electronic devices home. Everyone deserves down time. Mr. Garofolo asked if they had talked to their teachers about this. The students said teachers asked what they could do better and it would be good if they actually applied it. Mr. Strumello asked what their definition of busy work is. Ms. Grace Brangwynne said she felt busy work is work that can easily be looked up online or the same questions over and over again. It is doing things that you already know and then they just check to see if it is done and then never addressed again. The students brought up the bathroom situation at Seymour High School. Mr. Dibran Trepca said he thought it would be good if the teachers had a spreadsheet that all teachers will be able to see. One problem is that kids are going to the bathroom to meet up with other kids, the spreadsheet would allow teachers to see who is in the bathrooms and make it harder for kids to meet up. There is one bathroom for students to use and the ones in the cafeteria. Ms. Harmeling asked how long it will take to get to the bathroom and the kids said it can take up to three minutes if you are coming from the science wing. Dr. Ed Hendricks said he likes the enthusiasm he sees in the students of Seymour and asked what they feel is right with the school. Ms. Melyssa Gagliardi said she loves Seymour High School, there are lots of clubs and sports. She really enjoys "The Wild" at sporting events. Ms. Molly Adamo said she really likes the Social Studies department, the teachers are so open and easy to talk to. Ms. Grace Brangwynne said the student body is really friendly, someone will always sit with you at lunch, she likes the teachers and their distinct personalities make learning fun. They have made my time at Seymour High School worthwhile. Ms. Ashley Sirowich said she enjoys the concerts and plays and there are lots of activities that are really fun. Mr. Strumello asked the students what they thought about changing the start time. If they are in favor what would happen with sports? The students said practices don't start on time anyway so changing it to a later time won't be so much of a change. Mr. Strumello said that was true of practices but games would be an issue. Most of the students agreed that they would prefer a later start time but there would be issues with performing arts who are there until 7:00 or 8:00 already and there may be conflicts with after school jobs. Mr. Dibran Trepca actually thought the start time should be a little earlier which would allow for a little more daylight in the afternoon. Everyone agreed there is a lot to consider.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Ms. Magri thanked the students for attending this special meeting and encouraged them to come back anytime. She reminded them that they could make a statement at any meeting during public comment. She also encouraged them to use the BOE student representatives as their voice. She said hearing from them was great and thanked them again for the good discussion.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mr. Champagne, sec., Mr. Strumello) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Dr. Hendricks, Ms. Magri, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

The meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk