



SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2019

Seymour Middle School

7:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Jennifer Magri
Ed Strumello
Sukhman Singh, Student Representative
Ashley Sirowich, Student Representative
Edward Hendricks
Peter Kubik

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Art Poole, Interim Business Manager
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Rob Dyer, System Technology Coordinator
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Ernie DiStasi, Assistant Principal, SHS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Heather Brown
John McCasland
Emily Spear
Jennifer Monaco
Meaghan Cleveland
Michelle Pinho
Sarah LeBlanc
Jill Gagne
Lisa Cheney
Tanya Gayle
Max Gayle
Darlene Verab
Lori Forte

Paul Forte
Aimee Cronin
Diane Certello
Denise Marchetti
Lisette Alves
Andrea Melnick
Diane Valdes
Alison Brett
Cheryl Lapointe
Christine Baxter
Paul Roy
Dibran Trepca
Kim Farmer
David Willadsen
Karen Studley
Julie Nintzel
Theresa Hannon
Lisa Rubio

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Magri called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:48 p.m.

A moment of silence was observed for two long time Seymour educators, Violet Brennan and Karen Stanek, who is also the wife of Board Member Fred Stanek.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Congratulations to the Chatfield-LoPresti Students who have been recognized by the Hartford Yard Goats as the most improved students.

B. Media Coverage

1. Media Links

- <https://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Seymour-to-hire-FB-Outdoor-Track-coaches-during-13587553.php>
https://www.primepublishers.com/voicesnews/news/community_events/schools-participate-in-say-something-week/article_69e29723-4936-5e7b-a6a6-903f3ce6f66e.html
<https://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Parents-students-demand-Paul-Lucke-return-as-13598700.php>
<https://www.nhregister.com/valley/article/Former-WWE-star-Marc-Mero-brings-message-of-13591920.php>
https://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_police_investigating_report_of_suspicious_incident/
https://valley.newhavenindependent.org/archives/entry/seymour_middle_school_honor_rolls/
<https://www.nhregister.com/valley/article/Program-teaches-kids-to-look-out-for-warning-13650436.php>

2. Board Role in Grievances and Teacher Discipline

Ms. Magri read a statement concerning the Board's role in grievances and teacher discipline (attached)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Darlene Verab, 115 North Street – said she was there to ask the Board of Education to consider the importance of Mr. Lucke's position. She said he was the best Assistant Principal and it would be a great loss to the school if he is terminated. He deserves respect and needs to get back to his position. She said everyone makes mistakes and learns from them. She said he is a good father and a good son and she knows because she is his mother. She questioned whether they are being heard and asked where the Board's voices are.

Tanya Gayle, 23 Oakwood Drive – said today marks 15 weeks without Mr. Lucke in school. It is a shame! She said that means at least 75 students have not been helped due to the incompetence of the Board. Mr. Lucke is a mentor for both school and home life issues. Why has he be reinstated? There are many kids who would not have graduated if it were not for the support of Mr. Lucke. She said it was bizarre to her to keep fine gentleman away from school. She spoke of people making mistakes and wondered if he was being kept out to be made an example of, if so shame on you. She demanded that an executive session be held to reinstate him tomorrow.

Kate Williams, 61 Washington Avenue – said Mr. Lucke went out of his way to help her children to become successful. She deserves a second chance. Do you want Seymour to be known as the town where you make one mistake and are told to get out? Let him return and be the example of how you can change. Reinstate.

Spencer Williams, 61 Washington Avenue – said he was appalled at this situation. Mr. Lucke helped him and went out of his way to do so. He was nice to him and helped to set me on a path to a great future. He was a surrogate family member to me. He strongly recommends that the Board reinstate.

DJ Kirpas, 40 Chamberlain Road – When he transferred to Seymour High School as a sophomore, Mr. Lucke helped him get out of trouble and gave me a second chance. He gave him community service. He always checked in on him. He helped him to pick a college. He helped me and you should help him.

Paul Roy, 80 Washington Avenue – here in support of Mr. Lucke. Remembers situations in the past where a person at Town Hall was given a second chance. People make mistakes and deserve a second chance. Remembers years ago when a principal was caught speeding in a school zone and nothing happened to him. He deserves a second chance.

Julie Nintzel, 50 Briarwood Drive – said thank you for the Facebook Live. Would like to have meetings streamed live for those who cannot attend. Would like to have Wi-Fi access when in the school buildings. She is happy that forced regionalization is being discussed tonight.

Dibran Trepca, 147 Main Street – reminded the Board that we had a motivational speaker come and talk to the kids about how he got a DUI and then turned his life around to become a motivational speaker. Not having Mr. Lucke is a waste of talent, waste of hope, waste of love. He can return and be a motivation to all of the students now.

Paul Forte, 6 Apple Lane – this is the second time he has spoken in support of Mr. Lucke. He was a mentor for his son. He is in complete support of Mr. Lucke. He asked the audience who was in favor of Mr. Lucke being reinstated and they responded they were.

Susan DeRosa, 1 Evening Star – wanted to know why the Board of Education is not listening and why the voice of the people cannot be heard. She said her questions on absenteeism and tardiness have not been addressed. Mr. Lucke deserves a second chance. Her question is why are they not being heard?

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes
 - 1. Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2019
 - 2. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – February 4, 2019
- B. Financial Management Summary - ending February 26, 2019
- C. Nutritional Services Financial Report – December, 2018
- D. Staff Hiring – Non Certified
 - 1. Bercier, Lanny
 - Part Time Custodian
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Tomasso Esposito (transfer)
 - 2. Bohuski, Rachel
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Replacing Dee Wanzie
 - 3. Burroughs, Rachel
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Replacing Fiona Matear
 - 4. Grasso, Laura
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - Replacing Renee Palumbo
- E. Staff Hiring – Appendix E
 - 1. Ames, Jenny
 - Assistant Coach, Outdoor Track
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing David Willadsen

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Strumello) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None

VI. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- A. Policies to Adopt – Approved Regular BOE Meeting, February 4, 2019
 - 1. Policy #1112 Community Relations – News Media Relations
MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec. Mr. Garofolo) to adopt policy #1112 Community Relations – News Media Relations which was approved by the Board of Education on February 4, 2019

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

2. Policy #5114.12 Students – Student Handbooks

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec. Mr. Garofolo) to adopt #5114.12 Students – Student Handbooks which was approved by the Board of Education on February 4, 2019

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

3. Policy #5141 Student Health Services – School District Medical Advisors/School Nurse

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec. Mr. Champagne) to adopt #5141 Student Health Services – school District Medical Advisors/School Nurse which was approved by the Board of Education on February 4, 2019

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

- B. Policies to Approve as Recommended by the Policy Committee on February 26, 2019

1. Policy #1312 – Public Complaints

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee to approve Policy #1312 Public Complaints as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Hatfield

MOTION PASSES: 5-1

2. Policy #6163.5 Physical Education (6-12)

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Champagne) to accept the recommendation of the Policy Committee to approve Policy #6163.5 Physical Education (6-12) as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Ms. Harmeling

MOTION PASSES: 5-1

- C. Non Renewals

1. Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured School Teachers (Long Term Substitute Teachers)

Mr. Wilson explained that this is standard procedure to non-renew Long Term Substitute Teachers at the end of the school year.

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Strumello) to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent to non-renew one non-tenured teachers, Matthew DeMarco at the end of the 2018-19 school year in accordance with the provisions of the Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151. I further move that the Superintendent be directed to communicate this action of the Board in writing to Matthew DeMarco and that the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to respond on behalf of the Board to any request, if required by law, or for other data which may be forthcoming from the teacher and/or his/her representative pursuant to applicable provisions of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

VII. REPORTS and DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. HS Student Representative Report – Mr. Sukhman Singh, Miss Ashley Sirowich
Mr. Singh and Miss Sirowich reported that February was Black History month and the Social Studies department focused on one person, group, movement, or event in which African Americans helped shape the Society, Culture, and National Identity of the United States. The school also focused on Women’s Month. On February 27 the school was fortunate to have Sandy Hook Promise come to Seymour High School and Seymour Middle School to present the program “See Something, Say Something”. This assembly trained students how to recognize the signs, especially through social media, of a person who may be a threat to themselves or others and when/how to say something to a trusted adults to get them help. It will touch as well on active shooters, suicide threats and threats. The program is based on research done by two of the leading national experts on threat assessment and intervention, Dr. Dewey Cornell and Dr. Reid Meloy. The HOPE Club would like to thank the faculty, staff and students for helping to make the kindness initiative a reality. Bulletin Boards across the building have a kindness theme on them. Additional several members of the HOPE Club spent their time writing out kindness affirmation cards for every student locker in the building. Cards were posted on lockers Thursday, February 14 in the afternoon so that the following morning all students were welcomed with a sign of positivity and kindness to start their day. The Performing Arts show is this Friday at 7:00 (Music from the 70’s). Coming soon is two 1 act plays. Cheerleaders placed 3rd at States and 1st at Team of the Year. The Dance Team placed 2nd at NVLs. The SAT will be given on March 27. At the Junior Achievement competition, Seymour placed 1st in the constellation round.
- B. Committee Reports
1. Finance Committee Minutes – February 4, 2019
 2. Athletic Committee Minutes – February 7, 2019
Mr. Strumello said we had a good last meeting with Ms. Yusko and talked about athletic training, banners, locker room supervision. The four Outdoor Track Assistant Coaches have been hired. Ms. Federowicz had begun as the interim Athletic Director.
 3. Communications Committee Minutes – February 26, 2019
 - a. Update on Organizational Meeting – Ms. Harmeling
Ms. Harmeling reported that they had a good meeting and they are charged with reviewing all communication tools throughout the district. They will survey teachers and stakeholders. The goal is to improve communication districtwide.
 4. Policy Committee Minutes – February 26, 2019
Ms. Magri reported that most of this meeting content was addressed in the Recommended Actions portion of this agenda. She said they had a good discussion regarding absenteeism and tardiness and the committee felt there was no need to change the policy. They have asked principals to address this in their handbooks instead.
- C. Next Generation Accountability System Report Results – Mr. Wilson
Mr. Wilson presented the Next Generation Accountability System Report which is basically a report card on the district from the State. Administrators met to review this report and there was growth across our schools and district. Our chronic absenteeism is better than the State average but Mr. Wilson said we can still do better. This report is attached.
- D. Technology Projects and Funding - Rob Dyer
Mr. Dyer explained the Touch Panel Project – Smartboard Replacement. Each classroom in grades K-8 have Smartboards in them at the front of the room. These boards are interactive and collaborative. They allow the teacher to annotate and work over or alongside whatever is currently displayed on the teacher’s computer screen. These boards are approaching 8-10 years of age and thus coming to the end of their useful life. They have become an integral part of instruction and must be replaced. We put together a RFP and solicited bids to replace these SmartBoards with current technology back in January and received bids from four different vendors pitching three different products. We asked for a demo of each product and placed the demo units in a teacher’s classroom asking them to “put it through the paces” so we could be confident in our choice. The pricing that we got back from the winning bidder was very aggressive (1,000\$ cheaper than expected) and even included a 7 year warranty on all boards.

The financing cost to go through the company that won the bid is substantial (roughly 12% or around \$100,000). If we were able to secure financing through the Town we would save 80-90 thousand dollars in financing costs. These savings could then be used in conjunction with USF E-Rate funds to fund our Switch Replacement project detailed below. The BOE would reimburse the town out of our existing operating budget (equipment leasing & rental) over a period of five years. He also explained the Switch Replacement Project. Most of our switches are approaching 8 years of age, some of them are older. The typical lifecycle of a network switch (devices used to connect computers, printers, Wi-Fi access points together) is around 10 years maximum. E-rate is a federal program that not only offers steep discounts on hardware, but funding as well. Each district is required to fund a portion based on the free/reduced lunch population in their district. Seymour for example is responsible for 40% of the total cost while E-Rate picks up the other 60%. Any funds that we do not use this year will be forfeited and there is no news yet on whether or not these items will be funded next year. As we always do, any equipment that is not end of life will be re-used in other town departments. The total cost of this project is \$212,973.00 of which Seymour would be responsible for \$85,189.20 (40%). The one catch with E-rate funding is that the school district CANNOT finance their portion. It must be paid up front and in whole.

MOTION: (Mr. Champagne/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to collaborate with the Town of Seymour on funding the Touch Panel and Switch Replacement Projects.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Magri, Mr. Strumello

ABSTAIN: Mr. Garofolo

MOTION PASSES: 5-1

E. **Forced School Regionalization (Senate Bill #457, Senate Bill #738)**

<http://ctschoolfinance.org/reports/district-and-school-consolidation>

Ms. Magri said this is prevalent in the news right now and there are several Grass Roots movements in response to this. She was asked to testify but did not want to represent the Board without a conversation on what the Board's statement would be. She said that she is not in favor of anything forced. She said there has been no talk about student achievement. Mr. Champagne said he worries about class sizes and super powers in sports and is not in favor. Mr. Strumello said he is not in favor of regionalization and said he does not like the idea of big high schools. Kids will not be able to participate in activities including sports. He is not sure any money can be saved. Ms. Harmeling said many people purchase a home based on the schools in the area. If they wanted to go to a big school, they would buy homes in an area where big schools are. Mr. Wilson said this would also affect current regionalized districts as the proposal calls for redistricting some regionalized districts. Mr. Garofolo said he is skeptical when the State gets involved, in the past this has not been good. Mr. Hatfield said there is talk that this is just a way to get the attention away from tolls. Mr. Strumello said he would encourage the PTA's to discuss this issue.

F. **Bathroom and Locker Room Facility Update – Mr. Connors**

Mr. Connors is not in attendance today so this item will be discussed at the next Board meeting. Mr. Wilson noted that Mr. Connors is working very hard to address situations as they arise. Cleanliness is Mr. Connors' focus. If you hear of an issue, please contact Mr. Connors. He is very responsive to any issues.

G. **Interim Athletic Director Appointment**

1. **Stipend, Expectations, Administrative/Secretarial Support, Coach Hiring, and Evaluations**

Mrs. Federowicz is very comfortable as she begins her position as Interim Athletic Director. Ms. Yusko left everything in good shape. She is currently learning some of our systems that she was not familiar with. For her, teaching comes first; she can return calls on her prep time. She has been told to contact Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Tencza with any situations that arise. Mrs. Federowicz has the same dedication as Ms. Yusko. We are excited that she has taken on this position. Ms. Yusko has made herself available to Mrs. Federowicz should she have any questions or concerns.

Mrs. Federowicz is in a good place. She will have coverage for any athletic director meetings she needs to attend. Process and procedure was Ms. Yusko's strength and Mrs. Federowicz will uphold the current process/procedures, and budget that is in place.

H. Dean of Students/Athletic Director Position

Mr. Hatfield asked to table this item but Ms. Magri said we need to get feedback on this as timing is important. Mr. Strumello said this is a new position and the Board is the only one who can create a new position. There was some conversation regarding this new position and the Board members voiced a number of concerns including discipline, difficulty in finding someone who has the 092 certification who wants to work part time, and what school this person would be at. The Board asked Mr. Wilson to go back to the drawing board and come up with a different scenario to solve this issue.

I. Hiring Update

1. Retired Teachers

Will be posted at the end of this month.

2. Administrative Positions

Will share with the Board what the plan is for the administrative positions.

3. Paraprofessionals

This is a consistent need and there are a couple of open positions.

4. Custodians

There are some internal shifts taking place. Mr. Wilson talked about their contract and how they have 30 days to decide if they want to stay in their new position.

5. Spring and Fall Sports

J. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments

Ms. Magri attended the See Something Say Something presentation at the middle school. It was well received and she thanked Board Member Dr. Hendricks and Director of Security Rich Kearns for bringing it to our district. Ms. Magri addressed prior questions from public comment around the following: Special meeting - that is designated by FOIA. Regular meetings must be posted more than 30 days in advance. As this meeting was rescheduled it becomes a Special meeting where items cannot be added to the agenda. Mr. Roy has shared his experiences with municipal employees. Ms. Magri shared that the rules are different with respect to teachers/administrators since they are covered under the Teacher Tenure Act 10-151. She addressed the Wi-Fi request saying that she would speak with Rob Dyer further but was not sure if we could accommodate as once a password is out there students might use it too. Reiterated that the Board cannot take action on things until they are brought to the Board and referred the audience back to her earlier comments regarding grievance and discipline process.

2. Board Member Comments

Ms. Harmeling addressed the audience with her concerns regarding their opinion of the Board responsibility with regard to Mr. Paul Lucke. She said if issues are brought to the Board of Education by Administration there is a process in place. It is not under the control of the Board of Education. The process is in place and speed is not under our control. She said some of the comments are hurtful. Mr. Hatfield congratulated Mr. Connors and Mrs. Brooks on the logo contest. He asked if school tours can be given on March 29.

K. Superintendent Report

1. Accountability Index Presentation

2. AASA Conference Workshops

WORKSHOPS:

TO RESPOND OR NOT TO RESPOND: Social Media presented by Superintendents/Communication Coordinators from Saint Paris Ohio, Tabernacle New Jersey, Mount Prospect Illinois, and Selma Alabama

- Always attempt to keep a positive overload on your own Social Media Page since this is the only page that you can control

- Being Pro-Active is the Key
- Always promote the great things that are happening
- If you become aware of a post on a different social media page (aka the MOMS Page) what do you do?
 - DO NOT ADDRESS IT
 - The Superintendent and his or her team is NOT to address this as this gives credence and recognition to that alternate platform/page.
 - If BOE members are a part of this page, then they should be the ones to redirect these "naysayers" to the place to receive proper information which is to contact the school administration directly first.
 - If PTO Presidents are a part of this page, they too should be the ones to redirect these "naysayers" to the place to receive proper information which is to contact the school administration directly first.
- What if there is a negative post on one of the other pages that we do not control?
 - Once again, it is the BOE or the PTO Presidents or "friends" of these individuals that are to redirect the "naysayers".
- What if your BOE is on Social Media?
 - They are to be instructed to ignore the negative.
 - They are also to be reminded that their job is to be redirectors of those individuals who post negative comments.
 - They are also encouraged NOT TO RESPOND, but just to redirect in order to get the answer.
- What if there is an incident that took place in the district, what should or should not be shared?
 - NEVER should any PERSONNEL information be shared
 - Just post the FACTS about the incident and provide NO DETAIL. Even though students will tend to share details with their parents even if they are incorrect, we are to only share the FACTS and no detail.
 - At all times, try to post messages of reassurance rather than more detail.

Actionable Measures of Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships presented by Superintendents from Spanaway Washington, Pasadena Texas, and Malvern Pennsylvania

- Always attempt to get the most out of student data in terms of how it is presented.
- Use student and parent feedback to assist in goals for Strategic Plan.
- Data driven instruction is great for teachers and administrators but make an effort to let the parents and students know.
- How the data that is collected the same in terms of student and parent response and sharing that with these stakeholders?
- Providing answers to questions that are asked on surveys by parents or students is a key to engagement and to return survey responders.
- Use the data from surveys to guide school/district initiatives.

Public Schools for Tomorrow: Where should we be headed and how do we get there? Presented by Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond of the Learning Policy Institute in California and by Superintendents from Ithaca New York and Glendale Arizona

- Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional is something that Dr. Hammond states is part of what we do. She stated that while there may be conflicts, there does not need to be a combative approach as long as we all have student's best interests in mind.
- She stated that the comparison between Finland and Singapore schools is unfair because in those places, the government pays for the educator's tuition. This

ensures the value that the government places on education as well as the value of their educators.

- She stated that college access should be a reality for all and not a dream. Her ideas shared were from a proactive approach of having our local town and government agencies fighting for affordable college tuition for our children.
- Social Emotional Learning was discussed and stated that it should be in your Strategic Plans. Not just in theory, but in practice and that definitely means more counselors and social workers as well as a trained staff to address the needs of all of our students. While all understood the price attached to this initiative, they stated that the research is pushing all of us in this direction.

Re-envisioning Learning: Addressing the Critical Needs of our Students presented by Dr. Bill Daggett from the International Center for Leadership in Education

- Try to be forward focused as opposed to Future Focused
- Try to be Student Focused vs. Content Focused
- Try to be Growth Focused vs. Proficiency Focused
- Focus on Instructional Practices
- Professional Learning and Executive Coaching are necessary for success.
- Our Students need to Know how to and they need to be able to do.
- Changing Labor Market Needs Will Impact Policies, Funding and Instructional Programs.
- The eventual reality is that if you can write an algorithm for a task, the job is gone.
- Our students need to have these ten skills:
 1. Complex Problem Solving
 2. Critical Thinking
 3. Creativity
 4. People Management
 5. Coordinating with Others
 6. Emotional Intelligence
 7. Active Listening
 8. Service Orientation
 9. Negotiation
 10. Cognitive Flexibility
- To remain on the cutting edge successful organizations need to create a tension between what is now working and pushing for what could be.
 - Remember that revolutionists get killed. Even though we want to push students to be there best, we need to be realistic in our approach.
- We Have a Growing Mental Health Issue
 - Mental health and behavioral disorders are diagnosed in 1 out of 7 children ages 2-8
 - Most common in non-Hispanic white boys
 - Average age of depression is now 14.5 as compared to 29 years old in 1978
 - 1 in 12 high school students have cut themselves
 - 16% of high school students have thought seriously about suicide.
 - 18% of college students have thought seriously about suicide.
 - Since 2010, girls are more at risk for suicidal tendencies and severe depression
- Core vs. Support
 - COGNITIVE SKILLS = ability to focus and pay attention, set goals....
 - SOCIAL AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS = ability to read social skills, cooperate.....
- EMOTIONAL SKILLS = ability to manage emotions, cope.....

Developing 21st Century Education Leaders Who Can Drive Transformation presented by Superintendents from Fort Thomas Kentucky and Tucson Arizona

- In order for schools to be successful they need to work as a team in order to achieve:
 - Critical thinking
 - Closely look at data and use that data in order to make decisions on curriculum and instruction
 - Collaboration
 - Always work as a team
 - Together as Superintendent and Building Administrators, work as a unit in order to review data and make changes for student improvement
 - Communication
 - Building Level Communication to Parents is important to success
 - Communication from Central Office to Building Level Administrators is important to ensure that messages are uniform and clear
 - Creativity
 - Be creative in your approach to learning
 - Support alternative ways to problem solve

Grading Reform in Action presented by Doug Reeves, Founder of Creative Leadership Solutions

- Doug uses the acronym of be FAST when it comes to grading any assessment
 - F is Fair
 - If the assessment is deemed to be not fair by the students, then they will refuse to take it seriously
 - A is Accurate
 - The assessment should only assess what the students were instructed on and were informed that they would be assessed on.
 - S is Specific Feedback
 - All feedback should be pointed and specific. Students should be able to read this feedback and use it as a guide to better understand the solution. It should not just be read and discarded.
 - T is Timely
 - All assessments need to be corrected and returned back to the students in a reasonable amount of time se by the teacher but also told to the students
- There are new studies out that lead a lack of homework to socio-economic status.
- In terms of homework completion, it should be done. Not doing homework and just receiving a zero is not beneficial to the learning process. Since Homework is an extension of the learning process, teachers should be encouraged to keep students before or after school in order to make up homework.

3. Logo Contest for Students
Winning Logo will be placed on shirts for our Cafeteria and Custodial Staff
4. See Something, Say Something
5. Update on Meeting with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro
6. Facebook Update – As of today we have 1375 followers

VIII. INFORMATION

- A. Activities and Recognitions
 1. Seymour Middle School
 2. Bungay Elementary School
 3. Chatfield-LoPresti School
- B. Special Education Monthly Enrollment Update – Dr. Kris Boyle

- C. Staff Hiring – Appendix E
1. Avena, Michael
 - Assistant Coach, Outdoor Track
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing John Johnson
 2. Esteves-Pinho, Michelle
 - Drama Club Advisor (Split Position)
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Brandt Schneider
 3. Spear, Emily
 - Drama Club Advisor (Split Position)
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Brandt Schneider

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mark Forte, 6 Apple Lane – voiced his support once more for Mr. Lucke and asked why it is taking so long to make a decision.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- *A. * Superintendent of Schools Mid-Year Review
 * *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session from which the public will be excluded.*

MOTION: (Mr. Strumello/sec., Ms. Harmeling) move that the board enter Executive Session for the mid-year review of the Superintendent of Schools. The Board invites Michael Wilson into the Executive Session

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Strumello

OPPOSED: Mr. Hatfield

MOTION PASSES: 5-1

Enter Executive Session: 10:40 pm

Exit Executive Session: 12:02 pm

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

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

MOTION PASSES: 6-0

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm

Submitted by:
 Lee-Ann Dauerty
 Board Clerk

The Role of the Board of Education in Grievances and Teacher/Administrator Discipline

The Seymour Board of Education as a 9 member board fulfills a specific role as it relates to bargaining unit grievances as well as teacher or administrator discipline. The Board acts much like a jury would in a court of law - as a decision making body when matters rise to their level.

All bargaining unit contracts include language regarding the process for remedy in the event of a grievance. It is only at a certain point in of each of those processes that the Board is privy to the details of the grievance. It is the role of the board to determine based upon the facts presented and examination of underlying contract language whether or not to uphold the decision of the Superintendent or overrule it. If grievances are directly related to personnel matters they are heard in executive session. Otherwise grievances such as those that relate only to interpretation of contract language can be heard in public session. The timelines for action on such matters are outlined in each bargaining unit agreement. All agreements are posted on the Seymour Public Schools website at

<https://www.seymourschools.org/district-departments/finance-operations/contracts>

Teachers and administrators as well are also held to a Code of Professional Responsibility, which can be found in regulations enacted by the Connecticut State Department of Education. For Teachers, these regulations can be found at Connecticut State Agencies Regs Section 10-145d-400a -

<https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/getDocument?guid=%7BA7F454BA-B6D8-4F0F-BDA8-FE8FFA78B04E%7D>

For administrators, the regulatory section is found under Section 10-145d-400b -

<https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/Browse/getDocument?guid=%7B05861090-25F8-4B62-8967-4FFFFAF661039%7D>

These Codes of Professional Responsibility for both teachers and administrators outline the State's determination of the responsibilities and expectations for those positions, which must be enforced by boards of education at the local level.

Employment of teachers in Connecticut is governed by the Teacher Tenure Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-151. Administrators under the rank of Superintendent are also considered to be "teachers" under this Act. There are very specific rules within this statute to allow for due process to such "teachers". One of those rules allows a "teacher" who has achieved tenure to request a hearing **PRIOR** to the disciplinary action being decided by the Board. This right also allows the tenured "teacher" to select whether he/she wants the hearing to be before the Board or an impartial hearing officer from outside the district. If an impartial hearing officer is selected by the "teacher", the hearing is held before such officer, who then delivers to the Board a decision with findings of fact and a recommendation to the Board for appropriate disciplinary action. The Board is bound by the finding of facts but not to the recommendation. As such, the Board has no authority to change any fact found by the impartial hearing officer but can come to a different conclusion from those facts as to what disciplinary action is appropriate.

It is the Superintendent of Schools who is ultimately tasked with the oversight of all disciplinary matters, as he or she too has a role in the grievance and disciplinary processes. The only employee of the 9-member Board of Education is the Superintendent. The Board of Education only becomes involved in discipline issues for other employees if those issues are brought to the Board through either a grievance procedure under a collective bargaining agreement or a request for hearing under Section 10-151(d) of the Teacher Tenure Act.

The Board of Education does not and will not act on personnel matters until they are able to review findings of fact or hear both sides of a matter. The processes set forth under both contract grievance language and the Teacher Tenure Act 10-151(d) clearly outline the hearing options that an employee has in these matters, when the Board of Education involvement begins, what the Board charge is, and how the Board must evaluate the facts presented. If a matter does progress to the Board level, it will typically be heard in Executive session, unless otherwise requested by the employee, but any Board ruling must be voted upon in public session.

While it is safe to say that no one likes the rigidity or length of these legal processes, they are in place to protect all parties - employees, management and the Board - alike.

