

SEYMOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 5, 2020

Zoom

7:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Kristen Bruno
Christopher Champagne
James Garofolo
Kristen Harmeling
Jay Hatfield
Peter Kubik
Beth Nesteriak
Fred Stanek
Ed Strumello

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Zachary Braca, Student Representative
Karyna Weaver, Student Representative
Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Sherry Holmes, Business Manager
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk
Derrick Martin, System Technology Coordinator
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS
Paul Lucke, Assistant Principal, SHS
Jodie Roden, Principal, SMS
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS
Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal, BS
David Olechna, Principal, CLS
Rebecca Bennett

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Strumello called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:31 p.m.

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Correspondence

1. Ms. Allison Vance – Donation of Masks

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Please note: If you would like to have a public comment read into the minutes, please email your brief (300 words or less) comment along with your full name and address to dmartin@seymourschools.org by no later than **7:15 on Monday, October 5, 2020**.

Elizabeth White, 49 Sagamore Drive - I am writing to urge the Superintendent to bring students back to school full time in person. I appreciate that all intentions are to keep our kids and staff safe. To my knowledge there have been no known cases in Seymour Public Schools. Many other valley towns are in person five days a week, with Oxford choosing to reopen this week based on our same metrics and results of a survey sent to parents. The hybrid learning experience is vastly different based on a student's age. As a parent of a second grader, a seventh grader, and a sophomore, I see how important being in school in person is for each child, however none more than my second grader. He is not able to navigate the challenges of at home asynchronous learning by himself. At this point, 60% of his week is being at home self guiding his learning through various websites while meeting in person only for Morning Meeting, a reading mini-lesson, and a math mini-lesson. His teacher is amazing and is giving 150%, but it is virtually impossible to conduct two teaching assignments at the same time. Frankly, it is unfair to them. The primary years are crucial for future success in school. He missed half of first grade between long term subs and distance learning. I need his learning accelerated IN PERSON. There is no substitute. For this reason I am proposing we begin by bringing back our K-5 students 100% in person. These students can remain in their cohort and interactions can be controlled

while students receive the education they desperately need. While the intention would be to bring all students back full time, this would be a great phase in. The Middle School could phase in next, and finally the High School where it would be most difficult to have students remain in a cohort. It is easier for older learners to achieve more agency in their learning while at home. According to the CT School Learning Model Indicators which is updated each Thursday, we STILL have a .9% positivity rate in New Haven County. data.ct.gov/stories/s/CT-School-Reopening/ddy2-ijgu/This is considered LOW RISK and FAVORS MORE IN PERSON LEARNING. The secondary indicators are trending down to flat with no statistically significant changes. It is unacceptable that this issue is not up for discussion before October 14th. By the time plans are made for students to return we will be in the midst of flu season. This is unacceptable and unfair to our students and families whose lives have been turned upside down to accommodate this hybrid model needlessly. It is educational neglect.

Cindy Dion, October 5, 2020, Football Equipment - Good morning Jay, Chris and Fred, I haven't heard back from anyone on my request for football equipment for two players from Seymour High School I did some research today on CABA and was unable to find anything regarding sport's equipment only fraternities and sororities as well as student dress code, which wasn't helpful. Should I be asking this to be put on the agenda and voted on? My only concern is their practice starts this Saturday in Woodland. Could someone from the athletic committee please let me know how I should proceed? Thank you

Cindy Dion, Oct 4, 2020 - Good Morning Jay , Fred and Chris, I am sending this email out to ask for permission to use the Seymour HS football equipment for two players that are going to be playing in an independent league. I was informed that this wasn't possible , but I wanted to reach out to the Athletic Committee on the Board of Education to make sure I have reached out to all options. Curtis Dion and Gjerg Sylva are playing with players from Woodland and Derby. Woodland and Derby are allowing their players access to their equipment by signing a waiver? Why aren't we able to do the same thing? I do not want to spend almost \$400 on equipment for my son when there is equipment available to him. Please let me know as the league practice starts next Saturday. We are willing to sign any waivers necessary . I have actually attached the waiver that Woodland is using for reference. Please give this true consideration .Risk waiver- football equipment 092020[17603].pdf

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*A. Discussion and possible action upon Superintendent's contract and evaluation

**It is anticipated that much of the discussion on this matter will take place in executive session.*

Ms. Harmeling asked to have it posted on Facebook when the meeting resumed after executive session. Ms. Dauerty said she could take care of this.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Champagne) Move to enter executive session for the discussion of matters concerning the Superintendent's contract and evaluation requiring attorney/client protected legal analysis from Board counsel and to invite Attorney Fred Dorsey to attend.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

Into Executive Session: 7:42 pm

Enter Regular Session: 9:34 pm

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. ~~Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2020~~

2. Special BOE Meeting Minutes – September 23, 2020

B. Financial Management Summary – ending September 30, 2020

C. Staff Hiring – Non-Certified

1. Bopp, Allison

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School
- Replacing Colleen Sadick

2. Elliott, Megan

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Bungay Elementary School
- Replacing Mary Pannone

3. Grzywacz, Kelly
 - Monitor Paraprofessional
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - Replacing Monali Shah
- D. Staff Hiring – Appendix E
 1. Blade, Nicholas
 - Head Coach, Girls Swim Team
 - Seymour High School
 - Replacing Patrick DiCaprio
 2. Meek, Sarah
 - Marching Band Director
 - Seymour Middle School
 - Replacing John FitzGerald
- E. Volunteer Appointment
 1. Perry, John
 - Volunteer Assistant Coach
 - Girls Soccer Team
 - Seymour High School

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Champagne) move to approve the consent agenda as amended (Item A1 Removed)

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

VI. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Harmeling asked that Item A1Regular BOE Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2020 be removed from the consent agenda because she wanted to make a change to the minutes.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Kubik) to accept the September 14, 2020 Regular Board of Education Meeting Minutes with one change with the strikethrough of C2 to remove the language “said the splits are working out well but”

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

ABSTAIN/RECUSE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 7-0-2

VII. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- A. Policy #5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to add Policy #5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings as presented

MOTION TO AMEND: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to amend the agenda

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

Ms. Bruno asked if violations by students with rights under special education/504 are not precluded by this policy. Mr. Wilson said if the students are unable to wear a mask they would not be in violation if they have a medical reason or a 504. She asked what if the disability impacts their behavior. Mr. Wilson said if the child has no medical reason not to wear the mask, we would work with them and will contact home and have them work with them also. This is for the safety of the child and for those around them. Mr. Strumello said on page three, first paragraph addresses what was asked.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to approve the recommendation of the Policy Committee to add Policy #5141.8 4118.237/4218.237 Face Masks/Coverings as presented

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

NO RESPONSE: Mr. Kubik

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 8-0

B. Team of One

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to approve the recommendation of the Seymour High School Athletic Director to accept the request of Ansonia Athletic Director Thomas Brocket for Ansonia High School student Karolina Morrelli to participate as a Team of One with the Seymour High School girls swim team for the 2020-21 season

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

C. BOE Student Representative

AMENDED MOTION: (Mr. Stanek/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to approve the recommendation of the High School Administration to appoint Karyna Weaver as the Alternate BOE Student Representative

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

VIII. **REPORTS and DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION**

A. HS Student Representative Report – Zach Braca, Karyna Weaver

Mr. Wilson informed the Board that he let the two student representatives leave the meeting because of the lateness of the hour.

B. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2020

2. Policy Committee Meeting Minutes – September 29, 2020

Mr. Strumello said there was only one policy discussed and the policy was discussed with Administrators who agreed with the plan and were in support of the policy.

C. Discussion on bus monitors as requested in the motion passed on August 17, 2020

Ms. Holmes reported that she continues to work with All-Star Transportation on hiring bus monitors. She has been in contact with the Derby Bus Manager to obtain a list of monitors to be interviewed. Mr. Gardner is advertising for bus monitors. Ms. Harmeling asked if this meant we have no bus monitors right now. Ms. Holmes said this is correct. Ms. Harmeling wondered if they are needed and asked how the kids are doing. Ms. Holmes said the kids are doing ok and said the bus monitors will be covered under the grant and they are making an honest effort to get a few hired. Ms. Harmeling said her recollection was to have a discussion on whether we need to continue with monitors. Maybe we should direct our efforts elsewhere. She then said if we reopen, we might have a need for them. Mr. Garofolo asked if we have a job description for bus monitors. Ms. Holmes confirmed that All Star Transportation has a job description. She also shared that we have a shortage of bus drivers and monitors. They have lost 12 drivers in last few weeks. Mr. Garofolo asked if any drivers were affected by the virus and Ms. Holmes said no, these drivers left due to getting new jobs.

D. General Status Updates

1. Health - Ms. Bennett

Head Nurse Becky Bennett provided the Board with an update saying she is very happy with the way things are going. Things are going well; the students are doing very well, including the littlest ones. We have been successful with our cohorts. The custodians continue to do a great job; they clean the bathrooms every hour. She said the medical technicians are extremely helpful. The nurses view them as a blessing and they are all very thankful. She reported that everything is going well and the plan came together. Everyone is putting a good effort forward and all are working well together.

2. Facilities - Mr. Connors
Mr. Connors said everything is going well despite a couple of hiccups. He said everything is under control. The custodians are sanitizing every evening and are doing all the routine tasks as well. Everyone is doing well. Mr. Strumello complimented Mr. Connors on the Plexiglass dividers for the specialized staff.

E. Board of Education Report

1. Chairman's Comments
None
2. Board Member Comments
MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Garofolo) to add to the agenda an item related to the possible reopening of schools

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

Ms. Harmeling suggested we quickly put out a survey to all staff, students, and parents before the October 14 Reopening Committee meeting. Ms. Bruno agreed that we need more information. Ms. Harmeling offered her services to help with this task. She suggested we use Google Docs so Board members can offer suggestions. This is so all Board members would have the opportunity to offer input. Mr. Wilson welcomes this however he suggested a deadline for input be noon on Friday.

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Champagne) to direct the Superintendent of Schools to work with the Board of Education to develop and send a short survey to the full school community including parents, students and staff to inform the October 14 reopening committee

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

F. Superintendent Report

1. Pandemic Actions taken by Superintendent
Nothing new since last meeting
2. Reopening Committee
 - a. The reopening committee will be meeting on Wednesday October 14, 2020. At that meeting, the group will hear from our district Doctor, our Head Nurse, and from the Director of NVHD so that they can let us know where we are from a health perspective so that we can use this information to guide our discussion.
3. Sports Update
 - a. Our Soccer, Cross Country, Swimming, and Volleyball teams have each played games and we could not be happier to have our student athletes back in action.
4. How are Things Going?
Mr. Wilson read the input from each of our Administrators on how they felt our reopening has been going:
CLS - Ms. Albertson and I believe our reopening has been extremely successful thus far, based on student, parent, and staff feedback. Students daily demonstrate feeling safe in school, being prepared to learn, and most of all, happy to be present. Difficulties that had been thought as possible concerns, such as resistance to wearing masks, have been practically nonexistent. Students who do not attend remote learning sessions are being contacted early enough in the day so parents can then turn it around so the students often become present for the day. Maintaining cohorts within the building, including arrival and dismissal, as well as for our lunch and recess procedures, have all gone very smoothly. Parents have regularly praised our new traffic flow, too. Parents do reach out to communicate their concerns and/or difficulties (often with technology, but also remote attendance) and we are addressing them. CLS staff, in administration's eyes, are doing exceptionally well with the new challenges of teaching in this manner. All teachers are experiencing success with the synchronous learning, although teachers face different

challenges than another for a variety of reasons such as student age, parental involvement, and technology. All are making progress and we actively communicate with our staff's certified and non-certified groups to make sure they know we are listening and are here for them.

BUNGAY - Mrs. Reid and I would like to thank you the Board of Education, the reopening committee, and the Bungay staff for their input and guidance in helping to create a highly successful reopening for all of our students. I applaud the extraordinary teamwork, ongoing communication with the administration, parents, staff, and students, the meticulous planning and the execution of a well-thought out reopening plan as essential components to the success of our school's successful reopening. The successful opening is attributed to so many different people. The Seymour Board of Education was always there to support us and provided us with valuable and informative feedback from the parent, staff and students. The survey they provided was extremely helpful in helping to lay the groundwork for our staff and student expectations to safely reenter our schools. Through the ongoing communication, Mr. Michael Wilson consistently provided us with updates and encouragement for a safe reopen. He would frequently contact us, answering our questions, valuing our thoughts and opinions, and he was there to guide us in the direction to move forward to safely reopen our schools. Mr. Wilson was and continues to be our springboard when concerns arise. He has been the compassionate leader! Mrs. Vonda Tencza was there to help us sort out the distance learners and the hybrid students. She was there to ensure equity and there to provide the professional learning for our staff including our new teachers and our distance learning teachers ensuring that all the curriculum resources were available and in order. She has been a teacher's teacher all the way! Mr. Tim Connors continues to provide our school facilities with the necessary changes and requirements to better adapt to the CSDE COVID guidelines. Mr. Connors was available to answer every teacher's questions about their uncertainties at our initial teacher's meetings. Along with our custodial staff, Mr. Connors was able to place signs and stickers reminding everyone of the importance of social distancing. Mrs. Rebecca Bennett, our experienced school and district nurse always remains calm and is in continuous contact with administration, constantly updating and keeping us informed of how we plan to keep our students and staff safe following CSDE and NVHD guidance. Having Mrs. Bennett in our building, we know we are well cared for! Our compassionate school counselor, Ms. Thea Ouellette and school psychologist, Ms. Chloe Germain, continue to meet with and reached out to students and families to ensure they feel safe and comfortable. They have been there to help families who have questions about childcare and other resources. Mrs. Cindy Brooks, Director of Nutrition, worked collaboratively with administration to develop a plan to have healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunches safely delivered to each cohort classroom. The plan has been highly effective. Mr. Rob Dyer and the IT department have done a wonderful job ensuring that all of our students have a 1:1 chrome book. They have been available to respond to our teacher's needs almost immediately. Whenever a parent emails with a question, they have responded, provided individual lessons and have been there to help them to navigate technology. Our teachers have planned and put in countless hours to ensure that each student has a success school year. Our teachers have been building a special bond and rapport with each student. Teachers have positively commented, "There was a learning curve. I felt like a first year teacher all over again. I have the hang of it. I get to meet with each student every day, how perfect is that! Our students are going to grow with all this attention we can give to them." "I am surprised at how much many of my students have gained on the MAP testing from March to now." "There are no discipline problems...." I would like to offer a special thank you to Mrs. Lauren Reid, Assistant Principal. She helps in so many different ways. She is able to wear many different hats and helps out wherever she is needed. She is a great partner! Together, the success of the reopening of the school has truly been "a team" effort, a team that I am truly proud to be a part of! Sincerely, Mary Sue Feige, Bungay School Principal

SMS - In order to gauge if our reentry has been successful, there are many qualitative and quantitative data points one can consider. To begin with, our students are smiling (or

smizing with their masks). When students enter the lunchroom, they sit with in their cohorted groups (4 to a table) and have conversations with whomever is at that table. No one sits alone, and no one isn't engaging. It is a PLEASURE to join each grade level in the lunchroom and see them enjoying time with each other. The students are also timely in arriving and dismissing from the cafe, which allows our custodial staff to ensure the cafe is clean between each lunch wave. Our staff is excited to engage in new technological strategies. From the most recent google break out rooms, to combining all students under the same learning roof via our web cams, to allowing students to take the instructional lead by sharing their screens for discussion, all staff is focusing on what will engage out learners on either side of the screen. They have been extremely flexible in incorporating bathroom breaks, desk cleaning time, as well as mask breaks while delivering instruction. Our parents are getting students in on time via parent drop off or bus, as well as picking up at the end of the day. With their collaboration, the beginning and ending of our instructional day did not need to be modified. Finally, the engagement is evident with our average daily attendance at 96.38% for the first nineteen days! We are all working hard to make this year a success.

SHS - The start of the school year went very well. The faculty have been adjusting to the current teaching environment providing our students with the best education possible given the circumstances. They have been sharing ideas and approaches while collaborating within their departments and with the entire faculty. New best practices and approaches spread rapidly throughout the building quickly evolving the instructional approaches within the school. The students have been fantastic; they have been adhering to the guidelines established to maintain a safe learning environment. Student behavioral concerns have been minimal. Overall student attendance is improved over the first fifteen days of school. Last year the average number of absence days for each student was 0.86 days/student, this year the average is 0.67 days/student. What is particularly exciting is the interactivity between the teacher, in-person and remote students. The adaptability of the faculty and students is evident as they work together in the hybrid classroom. This is also true of athletics, we are incredibly proud of our coaches and students as they prepared for, and as they compete in interscholastic competitions while adhering to established safety protocols.

SPECIAL EDUCATION - We are excited to be moving forward with the piloting of 2 Social-Emotional Learning programs throughout the district. At the elementary level, we are in the beginning phases of piloting the Caring School Community program. This program is going to be implemented using our current Responsive Classroom practices, utilizing the same Morning Meeting time to provide direct instruction about a range of social-emotional topics. At the middle and high school levels, we will be piloting the Suite360 Student program. This program will capitalize upon our new 1:1 Chromebook initiative, as students will engage in computer-based lessons weekly. Following each computer-based lesson, students will engage in continued conversations with a teacher to allow for on-going discussion. Staff throughout the district have been working very hard on behalf of our students with special education services. Special education services are being provided in-person, as well as through distance-learning/tele therapy, at all levels.

ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT TENCZA - I would say yes for sure. Our Seymour students and teachers are coming to school in-person hybrid and remotely hybrid regularly during a time where many are not comfortable attending schools in other districts across our state and country. We have been in classrooms in person and virtually to see happy, hardworking students in every classroom. Teacher absences have been lower during the month of September than in years past. Full distance learners are attending school virtually at a significantly higher rate than the spring, as evidenced by high weekly attendance and participation data. We report weekly and monthly to the state regarding hybrid in person, hybrid remote, and full distance attendance and engagement and this data is much more positive than last spring. We credit this success to the tremendous efforts of the teachers to be 'live' virtually with our students regularly throughout each day and their efforts to design challenging lessons that promote student engagement. We also credit this success to every single individual staff member's contribution to the system of

learning. Everyone owns part of this success and I believe everyone is proud to be a part of the Seymour team.

Mr. Wilson would like to thank all of our students, teachers, administrators, and staff for all of their hard work and for all of their efforts placed into our reopening of schools. Their dedication to our students is much appreciated.

Ms. Harmeling thanked Mr. Wilson for the update but said she did not understand what that was. Under the Superintendent's Report the item was to discuss how are things are going and we were read to from the voice of our administrators. She said she was confused as to what that was. Mr. Wilson explained that he feels the reopening has been very successful and in meeting with the Administrators, he asked them how they felt the reopening was going. What he read was their sentiments. Ms. Harmeling said it was personal preference but she would much rather to hear authentic from the Administrators rather than a prepared statement. She would like to have a discussion rather than a written script.

IX. INFORMATION

A. Activities and Recognitions

1. Seymour Middle School
2. Bungay Elementary School
3. Chatfield-LoPresti Elementary School

B. Special Education Monthly Enrollment Update – Dr. Kris Boyle

Ms. Bruno asked with the numbers shared, are you caught up with initials that were paused? Dr. Boyle said there are a number of students in the evaluation process should be done by November meeting. Trending slightly lower this year. Ms. Harmeling curious to know if we can see the number of students who have 504 plans. Because as we move toward reopening we should have the information on this. If we cannot have a full opening, we may possibly bring back IEP's and 504 students first. She said we have heard a lot of how everything is going wonderfully but we cannot pretend that we do not have students struggling in every single school. We have students with IEPs and 504s and other students who are struggling. She is very upset that we don't talk about these things and we act like things are hunky dory because they are not. Dr. Boyle offered to provide this information. Ms. Harmeling said this would be helpful. Ms. Bruno asked that we have information on ELL also so they can be prioritized to come back to school.

C. Staff Resignations – Non Certified

1. Brochu, Linda
 - Retirement
 - Instructional Paraprofessional
 - Seymour Middle School
 - October 6, 2020
2. Gelada, Amanda
 - Tutor
 - Bungay Elementary School
 - October 2, 2020

D. Staff Resignations – Appendix E

1. DiCaprio, Patrick
 - Head Coach, Boys and Girls Swim Team
 - Seymour High School
 - August 3, 2020

E. Add to Agenda

MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to add to the agenda the hiring of Doreen Garcia

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

Doreen Garcia

- Instructional Paraprofessional
- Bungay Elementary School
- New Position (Board Approved 08/17/20)

MOTION: (Mr. Hatfield/sec., Ms. Harmeling) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to hire Doreen Garcia as an instructional paraprofessional at Bungay Elementary School

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES/FAILS: 9-0

X. PUBLIC COMMENT

Please note: If you would like to have a public comment read into the minutes at the end of the October 5, 2020 BOE meeting, please email your brief (300 words or less) to Mr. Martin (dmartin@seymourschools). It must be received prior to the **Superintendent's Report** on the meeting agenda.

Irizarry, Rachel - To the Board, Good afternoon. My name is Rachel Irizarry and I am a mother of three students at Bungay Elementary School. I have a kindergartener who is repeating kindergarten due to developmental delay and an ADHD diagnosis on a 504 plan. I have a neurotypical second grader. I also have a fifth grade student with ADHD who is also on a 504 plan. I am a registered nurse working in the emergency department. I understand the intricacies of Covid 19; as I have been working through it since the very beginning. With all of those facts being stated, I am writing to urge the board to return our students (at least those in elementary school) back to full time in person study. I spend the entirety of my day trying to navigate my children through their school work. I then go to work in the ED until the late night/very early morning hours. I have placed my three year old in childcare three days a week so that I can give attention to my Bungay students. In all honesty, we are all failing. I am doing my best and I have been met with emails from teachers stating that my children should only be eating when the schedule dictates and should be 100% focused on the meets when they are logged on. How am I supposed to be able to ensure that this is occurring if I am jumping from computer to computer just trying to make sure that they are where they need to be at the correct time? According to the American College of Pediatricians, children from 5-18 years of age should only have between one and two hours of screen time per day (Children and Screen Time. (2019, September 30). Retrieved September 29, 2020, from <https://acped.org/blog/children-and-screen-time>) My children are spending at least five hours per day, three days a week in front of a screen. I find this reliance on distance learning for our youngest learners, unacceptable. They have missed out on the last two and a half months of school last year and are going to miss out on at least two months this school year. Those that I have spoken to in the community are divided on the issue. The parents of older children seem to feel as if distance learning is working well. The parents of elementary aged children seem to be the ones struggling the most. This is an unprecedented time in our history, but how long are we supposed to carry on this way? The CDC recommendations are ever changing and due to the low numbers that our district is seeing, I believe it is in the best interest of our learners to return to a more full-time schedule. Distancing as much as possible, masking, and frequent hand washing are at the apex of preventing the spread of the virus. In addition to the effects of screen time on our children, we are also ignoring the impact that lack of play and face to face interactions with their peers have on our children. I urge you to consider a more full-time schedule for our elementary students. Thank you for your time and consideration

XI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Mr. Garofolo/sec., Mr. Hatfield) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk

NOTE: The next scheduled Regular Board of Education meeting is on Monday, November 2, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

The Public is invited to participate in a listen only mode using the link below:

YouTube Link

<https://youtu.be/M9-fpb26Tu8>