

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE March 01, 2018 MEETING
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 Board of Education**

A regular meeting of the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education was held on Tuesday, January 16, 2018 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board members in attendance:

Jennifer Clark, Jane Cavanaugh,, Mario Gioco, Trisha Brookhart, Lori Ann Clymas, Rick Daniels, Kate Sandmann, Michelle Grow, Leigh Rankin (arrived at 7:07 p.m.) as well as Senior Student Representatives Max Klin and Sydney Suedmeier

Also in attendance:

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Ruth I. Levy,
Assistant Superintendent, Kristina Martineau
Business Manager Kim Allen;
Valley Regional Principal Mike Barile;
John Winthrop Principal William Duffy

Board Clerk: Jennifer Bryan

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jennifer Clark called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board VOTED (7=yes, 0=No, 2=abstained = MOTION PASSED) to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 13, 2017 and the Accounts Payable Report with the following statement added to the minutes of the November 13, 2017: *a discussion took place on the financial information provided and the usefulness of it*

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

30+ citizens were present. No comments were made

OTHER ITEMS

Region 4 Student Representatives Report

JWMS Middle School 8th grade students Chase Conrad and James Marsden reported on recent and upcoming events at JW including MathCounts; an upcoming visit by the author of *Bystander*, their one book, one school reading project; student award winners of the CT Arts Scholastic Arts Award; a Tech Ed. field trip to Whelen; Project Oceanology; NELMS Spotlight School evaluation visit; report cards; mock trial; student leader conference, and the upcoming Spirit Week at the end of February. In addition they discussed News 8's recent segment on the JW Farm for "What's Right with Schools"; boys and girls basketball; ski club; CMEA; upcoming performances by the 8th grade choir and the Jazz Band for visiting 6th grade students, and rehearsals for the spring musical *James and the Giant Peach*.

Senior Student Representatives Max Klin and Sydney Suedmeier reported on recent and upcoming events at VR including indoor track; basketball; midterms coming up next week; Western Civ. field trip with Mr. Perreault; upcoming language department trip to Quebec, and rehearsals are in full swing for the musical *Cinderella*. They also

reported that although the Winter Ball has been cancelled several times due to inclement weather, they still managed to raise over \$2000 for children in need at Christmas time.

A video presentation was made by Dina Monaco and students from the Life Skills Class at JWMS. They talked about the Thanksgiving Feast for which they planned, shopped, prepared and hosted in November.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 7:23 to discuss a teacher settlement agreement. Attorney Kevin Roy, Principal Mike Barile, and Associate Principal Carolyn Gbunblee were invited to stay for the session.

The Board moved out of Executive Session at 7:40

Principal Updates

John Winthrop Middle School Principal Duffy gave a general update on recent and upcoming activities at JWMS including the New England League of Middle Schools upcoming biennial evaluation for the continued recognition of JWMS as a spotlight school. They will be meeting with students, teachers, parents and administration during the visit. John Winthrop is currently one of only 12 identified schools in Connecticut. Principal Duffy also discussed many upcoming activities with Project Oceanology. He reported that in addition to the wonderful science the students are exposed to, perhaps the biggest benefit of the program is that the JWMS students get to work alongside a diverse population of students from an urban district, Classical Magnet School, all year long. He also said that transition activities for incoming 7th graders have already begun, with a parent's information night tomorrow evening.

Valley Regional High School Principal, Mike Barile introduced the Valley International Baccalaureate (IB) team, many of whom were in attendance (with roughly 15 faculty representatives from Valley there) to present and support the continued pursuit of the IB program. A detailed PowerPoint presentation on the past steps, current status, and future timeline of the IB School application process was given by Principal Barile, Associate Principal Dr. Carolyn Gbunblee, and faculty members Maria Ehrhardt and Don Perreault. If the application process continues, the current freshman class would become the first students eligible for the IB diploma or certificate beginning as juniors, in the 2019-20 school year.

A lengthy discussion ensued covering such topics as how many students would likely participate; what do college admissions think about IB diplomas; what type of student is a good fit for the IB curriculum; how might students react to possibility of lower grades in a more rigorous curriculum; how would students not enrolled in the diploma program still benefit from Valley being an IB school (i.e. a critical thinking skills culture would be good for all, no matter where they're headed after college); how teachers will be trained in the curriculum and the assessment of students; how students will be assessed; college success rates of IB vs. non-IB student; what the cost and fees for the program would be; the added benefits for local real estate markets; the increased possibility of attracting tuition paying students; how excited the teachers are about IB; etc...

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to add an additional Audience of Citizens comment period at this point in the agenda.

Audience of Citizens: 3 present

Dan Morrissey, parent of a Valley freshman, asked about the logistics of an IB cohort when you have students starting the program with differing skill levels. Although the audience of citizens time is normally a time for comment only, the Board allowed Principal Barile to give a response.

Paula Weglarz, Deep River resident, stated that she is thrilled that the district is pursuing this program. While she doesn't think it is probably a program for every student, she does feel that for kids who want more rigor, it is a wonderful program with many benefits for students. She also mentioned that she feels that it could be beneficial for her child to learn now that he/she may not always get A's and how to deal with that before they are on their own at college and facing that potential scenario.

A citizen who did not give his name received permission to ask a question as well. He asked if AP courses would stay along with IB. The reply was, yes.

There was a short discussion, with a request to be given more data from other schools currently certified as an IB school, and a confirmation that the district has already procured the grant necessary for the 2018-19 application fee.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve continuation of IB application process as presented.

REPORTS

Financial Status Updates

Business Manager Kim Allen reviewed the financial status update and the cafeteria account update. Including anticipated deficits and surpluses.

There was a brief discussion regarding the boards receiving a more detailed MUNIS financial report on the months where they have no individual board meetings. There was also a brief discussion regarding lighting conservation at JWMS and VRHS (past, current, and future plans). Chair Clark asked that Board members share their ideas via an e-mail with Dr. Levy, who would pass them along to Bruce Glowac, Director of Region 4 Facilities, for consideration as appropriate.

Committee Reports

Policy Committee has not met since Nov. 27th - their next meeting is scheduled for March 19th.

Policy Committee Chair Leigh Rankin briefly discussed the pending policy #5132 Dress Code. The first reading of language revisions recommended by the Joint BOE Policy Committee was held at the December 7, 2017 Joint BOE meeting. The second reading and vote is currently scheduled for the February 22, 2018 Joint BOE meeting.

Curriculum Committee has not met since Nov. 27th - their next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 22nd

Finance Committee - has not met since Sept. 26th - their next meeting scheduled for Jan. 30th

Supervision District Committee Update - Jennifer Clark reported that the Supervision District will be presenting their proposed Supervision District budget for 2018-19 at the February 5th public hearing. The proposed budget represents only a 0.51% increase from this year's budget.

Joint BOE Ad Hoc Cafeteria Committee Dr. Levy reported that they will meet again on January 23rd.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Martineau gave a general update on activities within the districts including the following: strategic planning and recent BOE workshops with Jonathan Costa; the creation of a shared district mission statement, district priorities, a 3 year action plan, etc... She also discussed performing an assessment audit in 2019-20 and beginning revisions to report cards. Ms. Martineau handed out a very rough draft of a K-12 rubric and said there is still much work being done on them. Upon a request she said she would electronically share the evening's handouts with Board members.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Levy said that many items from her update had already been shared earlier throughout the meeting, so instead she deferred to Chair Jennifer Clark who asked to share brief updates at each meeting to remind members of pertinent Board information from the past 2 months. She briefly discussed the Board workshop with Jonathan Costa and the focus on critical thinking. She also discussed the new BOE member workshop with Kevin Roy that was held in December. She said that she encourages all Board members to attend any futures ones, as it's not just for new members, but very helpful for sitting members as well. She told members that she had already had the handout from the new BOE member workshop e-mailed to them and she encouraged them to review it and keep for future reference.

Dr. Levy mentioned that there will be a presentation by Dr. Alicia Farrell on "Resilience" at JWMS on April 4th. It will be a sequel to the anxiety presentation held recently.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS - 2 present - no comments were made

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next Joint BOE meeting is February 22, 2018
- Region 4 Budget Workshops Jan. 24, Feb. 07, Feb. 21, 2018
- Next Region 4 BOE regular meeting is Mar. 01, 2018
- BOE and Community input for 2018-19 budget (on-going)
- Presentation of Major Budget Drivers for 2018-19 (TBD)
- BOE Self-evaluation (TBD)

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

_____, Secretary
Jennifer Bryan, Clerk