

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE April 7, 2016
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 Board of Education**

A regular meeting of the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education was held on Thursday, March 3, 2016 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board members in attendance:

Leigh Rankin, Susan Hollister, Chris Riley, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Jim Olson, Mario Gioco, and Jennifer Clark- as well as Senior Student Representatives Acacia Bowden, Julia Hammond

Also in attendance:

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Ruth I. Levy,
Assistant Superintendent, Kristina Martineau
Business Manager Garth Sawyer;
Valley Regional Principal Mike Barile
John Winthrop Principal William Duffy
Board Clerk Kelley Frazier (Substitute)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Riley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion made by Jim Olson and seconded by Jennifer Clark, the Board unanimously **VOTED** to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 7, 2016 and the Accounts Payable Report.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Cindy Frantz, a mother of a sophomore boy's lacrosse player, is requesting permission to build a snack shack on the lacrosse field. Building supplies, labor and all services to complete the project have been donated. She can have this work done in three weeks which would be in time for the spring season. Mr. Riley thanked Ms. Frantz for her work on this project. He noted that there is a process we need to follow to manage our property effectively. After this is done, a decision will be made.

OTHER ITEMS

Region 4 Student Representatives Report

JWMS Middle School students

Kate O'Brian and McGuire Nelson presented the school report. The girls' basketball team ended their season 15-1 and the boys ended their season 12-4. Baseball tryouts are being held. Math counts competed at the Coast Guard Academy and received a third place finish. Penny Wars raised \$1,200. Students will be participating in the CMEA festival. The blood drive will be March 8th. The dodge ball and chess tournaments will be held in March. Xanadu will be performed by the students on April 1st and 2nd.

Mr. Riley congratulated Julia Hammond for being a National Merit Scholar finalist.

Acacia Bowden and Julia Hammond discussed the events happening at Valley Regional High School. The performance of The Adams Family will take place on March 11, 12 and 13th. The boys' basketball team made it into the State and Shoreline Tournaments. The entire junior class completed the SAT. The National Honor Society students went to the EES and CES to celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday. Debate begins at the end of the month. Moot Court is at the first of April. Spring sports begin on March 19th. The Senior Class is going to Six Flags for their class trip. Valley Student Leadership Committee and the Student Council are planning a pep rally around Earth Day. Warriors in the Community will also take place in May.

Presentation on International Baccalaureate School – VRHS Teachers

Mr. Barile introduced VRHS staff who are working on the I/B program. Mr. Talmadge, Mr. Barile and staff gave a presentation on the opportunities I/B presents. Ms. Dwyer discussed student opportunities. Ms. White discussed the

unique aspects of I/B. Ms. Livtig discussed the similarities and differences in our current program. Ms. Ehrhardt discussed 21st Century alignment. Mr. Perrault discussed the next steps. Mr. Riley thanked the teachers for the extra effort and time they have put in to investigating this program. Dr. Levy asked that Board members who have further questions to email her.

Spiral International Presentation – R. Levy

Ms. Shiring discussed the Spiral International program. She noted that her daughter, Emma, is also working on this project as part of her Capstone Project. They hope to bring Chinese students to study in the United States. It would also allow our students to have experience with different backgrounds, opinions and ideas. Victoria, a Chinese Student studying at East Lyme High School, discussed her experiences. She wanted to do this so that she could understand the American way of life. She hopes to go to college in the United States. Ms. Shiring discussed the two week Summer Camp Program for 30 students she is hoping to bring to Valley Regional High School. A grant in the amount of \$30,000 will cover the cost of this program. The students would live with host families. There are safeguards put in place. Mr. Riley feels that this is a great opportunity for our kids and our community. This moves toward increasing the ability to expose our students to diversity and different cultures.

Discussion and VOTE Regarding International Students and Summer Camp

Upon a motion made by Jim Olson and seconded by Jennifer Clark, the Region 4 Board of Education unanimously **VOTED** to accept the \$30,000 grant from Spiral International for a two week Summer Camp program at Valley Regional High School.

Presentation Regarding and Possible Vote to Approve request for VRHS French Trip

Ms. Wheaton discussed the proposed trip to France in April of next year. The kids will not miss any days of school. Mr. Riley asked Ms. Wheaton to have two students present their experiences to the Board after their trip. Mr. Gioco voiced concerns regarding safety.

Upon a motion made by Susan Hollister and seconded by Jennifer Clark, the Region 4 Board of Education **VOTED** to approve the student trip to France on April 7-15, 2017. Ayes: Jennifer Clark, Susan Hollister, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Chris Riley, Leigh Rankin, Jim Olson. Nays: Mario Gioco. The motion passed.

Valley Regional High School – Principal, Mike Barile

General Update

Principal Barile thanked Mr. Talmadge for coordinating the first SAT administration to the Junior Class during the school day. Incoming freshman and their parents will meet teachers and VRHS students on March 17th. Mr. Barile noted that we are constantly looking at maintaining our enrollment. This year we had two middle school students shadow Valley students. Mr. Olson suggested reaching out to other students who may be considering other options. Mr. Barile has a plan to do this. Scholar athlete awards will be shared next month. CAS awards will also be shared.

John Winthrop Middle School Principal, Bill Duffy

General Update

Principal Duffy discussed the transition process going from 6th to 7th grade and from 8th to 9th grades. He discussed how JWMS handles this process. Counselors are meeting with students as well as VRHS students who presented the opportunities available at the high school. We also have the incoming sixth graders attend various events and then they attend Unity Day at the end of the year as well as the Ice Cream Social. Our blood drive is next Tuesday sponsored by the 7th grade class. You can sign up at redcross.org.

REPORTS

Financial Status Updates

Business Manager Garth Sawyer reviewed the financial status report. Mr. Sawyer stated that we are looking at a budget surplus. We had a loss of revenues for special education costs and the excess cost grant.

Cafeteria Report

Our meals served is higher than last year at this time. Mr. Sawyer discussed the reconfiguration of the USDA funding. We do look for different vendors. We have a number of items that are prepurchased that we need to use first. This is a governmental decision to reduce this funding.

Discussion and possible VOTE on Recommended Region 4 Budget Transfers for 2015-16

Upon a motion made by Jim Olson and seconded by Jennifer Clark the Region 4 Board of Education **VOTED** unanimously to approve the recommended budget transfer so for 2015-16.

Committee Reports

Finance will be held on March 29, 2016.

Curriculum will be held on March 21, 2016.

Policy will be held on March 21, 2016.

OTHER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Supervision District Committee Update

We have been focused on the budget. Mr. Riley thanked the Board for taking out the request for a Math Coach which was helpful in developing the other school budgets.

LEARN

Ms. Fitzgibbons attended the last LEARN meeting. All magnet school principals presented at this meeting. The number of LEARN students is 2,270. She noted that 4 out of 7 students in these programs receive free and reduced lunch. The percentage of non-white students is over 57%. The Marine Science Magnet school had 300 applications for 60 slots. She also noted that our charges from LEARN will increase. She feels that we need to be a cooperative region instead of competing for students. After seeing other Boards of Education, she is proud with how our Board functions.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

District Update – Information and Communication

Superintendent Levy said that she is proud and thankful our district is exploring the I/B program and introducing our students to different cultures. Niche.com has rated Region 4 number 18 in the top 100 schools in Connecticut. We have a 97.8 percent graduation rate of our kids that go through our district K-12. This is a result of the collaboration of the PreK-12 program. The Manufacturing program at the high school is full and growing. Mr. Olson noted that his father is retiring from Whelan. Because of his involvement they are developing a manufacturing program at Keane State and University of New Hampshire. Mr. Riley suggested honoring the partnership of Whelan and their enormous generosity to our schools at graduation. Students have been offered the opportunity to learn manufacturing at Whelan and how this business works. Dr. Levy discussed that we will have unannounced fire drills as well as other drills to make sure we are prepared. This will be part of our process moving forward. Dr. Levy is compiling talking points for the Board to discuss with the public. This will include why our budgets are up this year. She will distribute these soon. This will explain the budget mandates. Due to weather, the Community Dinner was cancelled. This will be rescheduled for September 9th from 5-730pm with a whole community BBQ. Johnathon Costa will give a presentation at this event. Dr. Levy congratulated Chester Elementary for being selected by the State Department of Education as a school of distinction.

Discussion Regarding Any Pending Policies – Standing Item

None to discuss.

Discussion and VOTE Regarding the Revision to the Proposed 2016-17 Region 4 Budget for Public Hearing

On a motion made by Jim Olson and seconded by Susan Hollister, the Region 4 Board of Education **VOTED** to approve the revised budget of \$19,481,300 (nineteen million, four hundred and eighty one thousand, three hundred dollars) which is an increase of 2.47% and to recommend this be brought to a public hearing. Ayes: Susan Hollister, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Chris Riley, Leigh Rankin, Jim Olson. Nays: Mario Gioco. Abstentions: Jennifer Clark. The motion passed.

Mr. Gioco voiced concern that we are spending \$20,000 per pupil. Ms. Clark voiced her disappointment that the Math Coach was taken out of Supervision District.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Martineau stated that we are in assessment season. Science assessments were discussed and will be discussed further in the future.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS - none present

EXECUTIVE SESSION –PERSONNEL

The Region 4 Board of Education moved into Executive Session at 8:54 pm. to discuss the Superintendent's recommendations for non-renewals. Dr. Levy and Ms. Martineau were invited to attend the Executive Session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:58 p.m.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously **VOTED** to approve the Superintendent's Recommendations for non-renewals as presented by Dr. Levy.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Next Joint BOE meeting April 7, 2016
- Region 4 Public Hearing on Proposed Budget, April 04, 2016
- Next Region 4 BOE Meeting May 5, 2016
- BOE Self-evaluation (TBD)

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously **VOTED** to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Clark, Secretary
(Kelley Frazier, Substitute Clerk)