

***THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE January 06, 2014 MEETING
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 Board of Education***

November 07, 2013

A regular meeting of the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education was held on Thursday, November 07, 2013 in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board members in attendance:

Chris Riley, Laurie Ann Tomlinson, Ann Monaghan, Jennifer Clark, Leigh Rankin, Jane Cavanaugh (arrived 8:00 p.m), as well as Senior Student Representatives Phoebe Petrovic and Emily LeGrand.

Also in attendance:

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Ruth I. Levy
Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Joanne Beekley
Business Manager Garth Sawyer;
Valley Regional Principal Kristina Martineau;
John Winthrop Principal William Duffy

Board Clerk: Jennifer Bryan

CALL TO ORDER

Superintendent Levy called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Superintendent Levy opened the floor for nominations for the position of Board Chair.

Jennifer Clark nominated Chris Riley.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to elect Chris Riley to the position of Board Chair for a one year term.

Mr. Riley opened the floor for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman. Mr. Riley nominated Ann Monaghan.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to elect Ann Monaghan to the position of Board Vice-Chairman for a one year term.

Mr. Riley opened the floor for nomination for the office of Secretary. Ann Monaghan nominated Jennifer Clark.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to elect Jennifer Clark to the position of Board Secretary for a one year term.

Mr. Riley opened the floor for nominations for the office of Treasurer. Ann Monaghan nominated Mario Gioco.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to elect Mario Gioco to the position of Board Treasurer for a one year term.

It was decided to hold off on making committee appointments until the full Board was present. Mr. Riley asked Board members to let him or Dr. Levy know of preferences for specific committees on which to serve.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the regular meeting of September 03 2013, the minutes from the Special Meeting of September 16, 2013, and the Accounts Payable report

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

2 citizens were present. No comments were made.

OTHER ITEMS

Senior Student Representative Phoebe Petrovic reported on the National Honor Society's annual Fall blood drive at which they collected 52 pints of blood, and had one of the best high school turnouts ever seen according to the Red Cross. Valley recently hosted a State wide conference for other schools on how to successfully host blood drives. Ms. Petrovic also reported that mock trial competitions are beginning. Also in forensics, students will be participating in the Model UN conference in MA in December.

Senior Student Representative Emily LeGrand updated the Board on fall sports including boys soccer, boys football, girls soccer, girls volleyball, and girls field hockey who beat H-K for the first time in 15 years. Valley will be holding the coffee house gathering tomorrow night where participants are welcome to sing or otherwise perform. Auditions for the spring musical, "Secret Garden" begin next week.

John Winthrop Middle School students, Matthew Maratinez & Jeffrey Riggio updated the Board on recent activities at JWMS including the following: two spirit days have already been held, "crazy hat day" competing for the spirit banner and welcoming 7th graders, and "pink day" for Breast cancer awareness. They also held a bake sale at a recent cross country meet and raised over \$300 that was donated to Susan G. Komen for the Cure.

The presentation by Students who attended the Spanish class trip to Costa Rica last year was postponed until the January meeting.

Superintendent Levy and Business Manager, Garth Sawyer reviewed the key provisions of the recently negotiated Region 4 Secretaries and Nurses contract. Eight secretaries and two nurses are covered by the contract. Dr. Levy noted that the Board was represented by members Linda Hall and Mary-Beth Harrigan during negotiations.

There was a discussion regarding the proposed contract.

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board VOTED (4 Yes, 0 No, [1 abstention - Leigh Rankin] – motion passed) to ratify the agreement between the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education and Local 1303-419 of Council 4 American Federation of State, Count, and municipal Employees, AFL-CIO for July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017.

REPORTS

Financial Status Updates

Business Manager Garth Sawyer reviewed the financial status report, including a review of line item surpluses and deficits as they currently stand. The audit is currently underway for 2012-13.

Mr. Sawyer also reviewed the cafeteria account report and current status. He noted that they are adding an option for parents to add money into student lunch accounts by using their credit card through the website, thereby making it more convenient for parents and possibly increasing sales of lunches.

Principals Update

Valley Regional Principal Kristina Martineau provided the Board with an update on the 2013-14 school year. She reviewed the planned activities for observance of the upcoming Veterans Day, on which school will be in session for the first time this year. She anticipates it to be a very meaningful day for all of the students and staff.

She also reviewed the profile of the graduating class for 2013. She reviewed the key points of the report, including the following: student plans following graduation, SAT scores, AP tests taken, and colleges accepting Valley students.

John Winthrop Middle School Principal, William Duffy updated the Board on the 2013-14 school year, noting that the report cards for 1st quarter grades went home today. JWMS has had a very busy first quarter with completion of writing and reading assessments and other activities. He also reported on the various activities that students will be participating in to observe Veterans Day, including writing thank you letters to veterans and viewing a variety of presentations by local veterans. He feels it was a great district decision to observe the day through educational means.

He also reported that author, James Preller, *Bystander* – the current JWMS “one book, one school” novel, recently visited the school and talked with students throughout the day.

Committee Reports

Some Board members shared their preferences for certain committee assignments. Jennifer Clark would like to remain on Policy, and Chris Riley would like to join Policy as well. Ann Monaghan would like to stay on Curriculum, and Laurie Ann Tomlinson said she is willing to serve wherever she’s needed. Leigh Rankin was suggested for serving on the Finance Committee. Dr. Levy noted that Elaine Fitzgibbons, although absent this evening, had indicated she would like to remain on Policy and Supervision District.

Region 4 Audit and Finance Committee - Mr. Sawyer reported they met on October 23rd. The Committee will meet again on November 26th at which time they will continue their review of the proposed business procedures manual.

Dr. Levy reported that the Joint BOE Policy Committee met on October 15th, 2013 and reviewed several policies. The Joint BOE Policy and Curriculum Committees have cancelled their November 19th meeting, as not all Boards will have seated their members and have selected committee representatives by that time.

Supervision District Committee Update -

Assistant Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Beekley gave a general update on activities within the districts. She reported that there will be no CMT or CAPT administered this year as they will instead be administering the SBAC test. The test will not be computer adaptive this year; instead set tests will be used this year to insure each child is taking a different test version. Administrators have picked the end of April to mid-May testing window for elementary schools, and the high school has selected the time window prior to that. Dr. Beekley said she has been assured that the technology infrastructure can handle testing during the same window if need be in future years. She noted that there are SBAC practice tests available that will be used to help show students technological information needed to complete these computer-based tests. She also noted that she feels this test will provide much clearer growth profiles for individual students once fully administered with the computer adaptive test version.

She discussed the full Professional Development day recently held to familiarize teachers with the technology needed for the new teacher evaluation plan. Overall it is very stressful this year for teachers and administrators, but she feels the new evaluation plan has enriched conversations about teaching and learning. There is support being provided for any teacher who is intimidated by the new program.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Levy discussed a teacher’s request for a sabbatical for the 2nd semester of the 2014-15 school year. Ann Ralston, English teacher at JWMS gave a presentation on her request for sabbatical to complete writing and illustrating her children’s book. Per policy the Board needs to vote on this. She shared two completed chapters with the Board. She plans to use the sabbatical, if granted, to complete more chapters and explore publishing options. She would like to continue in her current role as English Department Coordinator and attend departmental meetings so that she may continue in the process of ensuring student success in the new assessment through Common Core. She stated that she would use her experience to share with students the process of writing, editing, revising, and getting to a finished

product. She also said that it would be an honor for her to share the finished book with not only the Middle School, but also the elementary schools once her sabbatical has ended.

Chair, Chris Riley responded that the Board will need to hold a full discussion of the current policy, what it means for her and the schools, the students, and how she would transition out and back in again. Dr. Levy noted that the district would hire a long-term sub for the two quarters, and because the request has been made so far ahead, it would allow for a seamless transition out, while her continued planned involvement in departmental meetings would allow for a seamless transition back in to the classroom. It was decided that the Board would be provided with the policy and financial information at the January meeting where a discussion and vote will be held.

Dr. Levy briefly communicated other information on district happenings. She discussed the educator evaluation plan and BloomBoard program used to submit evaluation information.

She also invited members to attend a presentation at JWMS on November 13th @ 7:00 p.m. that she has been asked to give, in conjunction with Lon Seidman, Essex BOE Chair, regarding unfunded educational mandates and their impact on budgets and the budgeting process.

She reiterated that Veterans Day celebrations will be going on throughout the day at all five schools. She met with local Veterans last year regarding this idea, and was given their blessing, in fact, she noted, they embraced the idea of observing the day in this meaningful way.

Dr. Levy presented the major budget drivers for the 2014-15 Region No. 4 proposed draft budget; a.k.a. the “helicopter view” or high-level overview. No dollar amounts have been assigned at this time, as these are moving targets. Rather the overview is just meant to give an idea of major budget requests anticipated. She reviewed a handout that included enrollment projections, anticipated ADM, contractual obligations, Supervision District costs split among Region 4 and the elementary districts, and new budget requests under considerations, such as staffing, technology, equipment, security, and NEASC self-study need requests. In addition, she discussed capital requests including snow blower, storage, security cameras and gated access at the high school to limit vehicular movement around the school grounds, as well as the physical connection of the Tech Ed building to the main school building. More specific details will be forthcoming coming as the budget process progresses and requested are refined.

Some discussion was held.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – none present

Ann Monaghan asked that future class profiles include comparisons to schools in Region 4’s DRG, as well as other “local” schools, regardless of DRG, particularly for SAT scores. She also asked if future profiles could include the percentage of students taking the SAT and a list of schools students decided to attend. Ms. Monaghan said she would share the state link that provides some of that particular information for other schools, with Principal Martineau.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Joint BOE next regular meeting Dec. 05, 2013 @ 7:00 p.m. (JWMS)
2. Region 4 BOE Next Regular Meeting (MONDAY, January 6, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m.)
3. Executive Session – mid-year evaluation of Superintendent (Jan.)
4. BOE and Community input for 2014-15 budget (on-going)
5. BOE Self-evaluation (TBD)

ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Clark, Secretary
Jennifer Bryan, Clerk