

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO BOARD APPROVAL AT THE September 01, 2011 MEETING
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4 Board of Education**

May 05, 2011

A regular meeting of the Regional School District No. 4 Board of Education was held on Thursday May 05, 2011, in the John Winthrop Middle School Library, with the following Board members in attendance:

Linda Hall, Richard Strauss, Mary-Beth Harrigan, Duane Gates, Chris Riley, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Pamela Christman and Jennifer Clark as well as Senior Student Representatives Patrick Campbell & Shin-Yi Lee and Junior Student Representatives Karli Bahner and Alison Gates.

Also in attendance:

Administrators: Superintendent Dr. Ruth I. Levy, Assistant Superintendent, Ian Neviaser
Business Manager Garth Sawyer; Valley Regional H.S. Interim Principal Kristina Martineau; Valley Regional H.S. Interim Associate Principal Sarah Smalley; John Winthrop Middle School Principal David Russell

Board Clerk: Jennifer Bryan

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Linda Hall called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the special meeting of April 12th, 2011; Minutes from the public hearing of April 14th, 2011; Minutes from the special meeting of April 14th, 2011; and the Accounts Payable report.

The minutes of the regular meeting of March 3rd were pulled out and on motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the minutes of March 3rd, 2011 with the following revisions: Richard Strauss recused himself from the vote for statement in support of Supt. Levy, he did not abstain as was originally stated in the unapproved minutes. The time out of Executive Session was 9:27 p.m. and the Board moved to adjourn at 9:28 p.m.

OTHER ITEMS

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to elect Chris Riley as Board Treasurer.

Board Chair Linda Hall presented Senior Student BOE representatives, Patrick Campbell and Eve Lee with a token of appreciation for their service on the Board over the last two years. She praised all the student representatives for their great representation this year. Both Patrick Campbell and Eve Villanova thanked the BOE for their support and the opportunity to participate in the BOE process.

Dr. Levy thanked the Board for their support during a difficult budget process. She reported that all 3 towns passed the Region budget on Tuesday, which she feels is a testament to all the wonderful accomplishments by the Region 4 schools.

Student Representatives

Senior Student Representative Patrick Campbell thanked the Board for appointing Mrs. Martineau to the permanent position of VRHS Principal. He stated that he couldn't think of a better person to be in that role and that the students are very excited.

He also praised Thomas Peterlik, Director of Food Services. He discussed the cafeteria survey and changes instituted as a result of that. Many students are very excited over the addition of a salad bar. Other things such as improved quality of the meals, greater diversity, and larger portions have also been instituted.

He asked the Board to give their support to a new electronics policy that would allow the appropriate use of cell phones and iPods, at the discretion of the teachers if it were to come before the Board for vote in the coming year. He also asked the Board to be supportive of possible policy regarding seniors, where if they are achieving a certain grade they would be eligible for exemption from taking the final for that class. He noted that this policy is currently in place at other schools with success. And he feels it helps to maintain focus and is a nice incentive for students. He also discussed common core standards, recently approved by the State, and asked the Board to embrace the new standards and stay on the cutting edge of challenging Region 4 students

Senior Student Representative Shin-Yi (Eve) Lee reported on her goal to bridge the gap between middle and high school. The National Honor Society has started a tutoring program once a week for high school students to help middle school students. They are looking to continue and expand that program next year. Work is ongoing to create a smoother transition from 8th to 9th grade. To that end, an 8th grade social was held while parents attended the high school informational session. Many activities and tours were conducted.

Junior Student Representative Karli Bahner also reported on bridging the gap between JW and VR. A Camp Hazen overnight will be held for incoming freshman. Twelve counselors trained in peer advocacy, team building, etc. This will be a way to help make freshman more comfortable with upper classmen. Next year's goal will be to continue working on bridging the gap more easily. They will also work to start community service during freshman year as opposed to junior or senior year.

Junior Student Representative Alison Gates reported that the students had made improvement in CAPT scores, and that scores have been increasing as a whole over the past several years. An SAT prep course was provided for free by teachers and Patrick Campbell. It was very successful and she encourages students next year to take advantage of this. Next year she would like to make a strong foundation for building a bridge between students and administration. She will use her time during Core, along with other representatives, to field issues, concerns, ideas that they can bring to the administration.

Laura Hilton introduced VRHS students who recently received honors at the Heritage Music Festival in Williamsburg, VA and noted how proud she was of the behavior of all of the students. They were all winners in that regard even before performing, but they also won an impressive array of awards.

There was a short break while administration provided an ice cream treat in celebration of the budget passing in all three towns and the recent accomplishments of the students.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Approximately 40 students and citizens were present. No comments were made.

REPORTS

Financial Status Updates

Business Manager Garth Sawyer reviewed the financial status report, the student activity account report, the cafeteria account report, capital fund report, health insurance fund report, and the grant funding report.

On motion duly made and seconded the Region 4 Board of Education unanimously VOTED to receive the financial reports as presented.

Mr. Sawyer presented recommended budget transfers between line items within the Region 4 budget. On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the following recommended transfers between line items:

Object 100: Salaries	Budget Decrease of	(\$120,686)
Object 200: Fringe Benefits	Budget Increase of	\$6,312
Object 300: Purchased Services	Budget Increase of	\$26,135
Object 400: Rentals & Repairs	Budget Decrease of	(\$22,284)
Object 500: Other Outside Serv.	Budget Increase of	(\$74,188)
Object 600: Supplies	Budget Decrease of	(\$21,209)
Object 700: Equipment	Budget Decrease of	(\$1,292)
Object 800: Other Miscellaneous	Budget Decrease of	(\$62,049)
Object 900: Debt Service & Transfer	Budget Increase of	<u>\$120,885</u>

Net Amount of Increases versus (Decreases) \$0

Principals Update

VRHS – Interim Principal Kristina Martineau - reported on the current college acceptances for VRHS students this year; over 150 different schools are confirmed. She also discussed an expansion of courses accepted for credit by Middlesex Community College, including a new pre-calculus course in which a grade of C or better earns college credit.

She also reported on a variety of issues including the following: Valley continues to build on Asset Development in conjunction with Tri-Town Youth, the school is investigating community service by freshman, the Spain and Italy field trip went wonderfully, and numerous art awards were recently won by Valley students.

Interim Associate Principal Sarah Smalley reported that 20 Valley students were involved in buddy baseball this year.

JWMS – Principal David Russell – discussed High on Life week held recently in conjunction with Tri-Town Youth Service Bureau. It included assemblies and activities throughout the week, including a motivational wellness speaker. He thanked the Board for their support of these activities within the current budget.

The school has a solar cell, of the type currently being installed on the roof, on display in the front lobby. The installation is moving along faster than anticipated.

Committee Reports

Region 4 Audit and Finance Committee -

The Joint PK-12 Policy Committee is scheduled to meet later in May – Elaine Fitzgibbons

The Joint PK-12 Finance Committee – no report

The Joint PK-12 Curriculum Committee is scheduled to meet later in May – Mary-Beth Harrigan

There was a vote on approval for the Civics textbook, which includes on-line textbook options. On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to approve the purchase of the “Civics in Practice” textbook for the 2011-12 school year.

Region 4 Audit and Finance Committee Update – R. Strauss noted that there will be a June 22nd meeting with auditors and towns regarding the health insurance fund.

Supervision District Committee Update – no report

Assistant Superintendent’s Report

Mr. Neviasser reported on the elementary Civics Bee recently held at JWMS. It was very successful and helps get elementary kids interested and involved in civics prior to their required civics courses at the middle school and high school.

He also reported the following: the annual Data Fair will be held on June 2nd ; he is already receiving information on CAPT testing and is looking to have all students taking it on-line by the 2014-15 school year. In addition, he talked about the Common Core State Standards, regarding which he was pleased to hear that our district is ahead of many other districts in moving towards those new standards. However, it will still be a multi-year process. The math committee consisting of teachers, administrators and parents, has continued meeting and working to avoid learning gaps while moving from current state standards to common core standards.

Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Levy noted that the recent re-designation of JWMS as a spotlight school again, was really an award for everyone, students, faculty, and leadership. JWMS was one of only 11 in named in CT. Also, David Russell will be awarded an appreciation award by the Connecticut Association of Schools. She congratulated David Russell for both awards.

Administration is setting up end-of-year evaluations and looking forward at five year plans, goals, and assessments.

In addition, Dr. Levy discussed the focus of administrative rounds and a new initiative - changing demographics - over this summer and the next year. They will be looking at how we can change to meet and differentiate all the needs of our various diverse students.

The discussion and possible VOTE on a softball field trip was postponed.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – none present

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion duly made and seconded, the Board unanimously VOTED to move into Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. for a personnel matter and a student matter.

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to move out of Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.

Future Agenda Items

1. Next Region 4 Regular BOE meeting (September 1st @ 7:00 p.m.)
2. School Opening (JW & VR) Update (Sept)
3. Introduction of new hires (Sept)
4. 2010-11 R4 Financial Status Update (Sept)
5. 2010-11 R4 CMT and CAPT results review (Sept)
6. 2010-11 AYP update (Sept)

On motion duly made and seconded the Board unanimously VOTED to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary-Beth Harrigan, Secretary
Jennifer Bryan, Clerk