

Board of Education Meeting
November 18, 2014

Call to Order

Board Chair Sanborn called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Media Center. Present: Board members Lori D'Ostuni, Natalie Semyanko, Mary Roy, Jeanne Gee, Mary Lou Sanborn, Michelle Zawawi, Sue Porcello, Scott Schneider, and Superintendent, Karen Baldwin.

Executive Session

Roy moved, Semyanko seconded to go into executive session at 5:34 p.m. for the purpose of discussion and review of the tentative agreement between the Suffield Board of Education and the Teamster Union, Local 671.

Semyanko moved, Roy seconded to come out of executive session at 6:18 p.m.

Regular Session

Board Chair Sanborn called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. in the Suffield High School Media Center. Present: Board members Lori D'Ostuni, Natalie Semyanko, Mary Roy, Jeanne Gee, Mary Lou Sanborn, George Beiter, Michelle Zawawi, Sue Porcello, Scott Schneider, Superintendent, Karen Baldwin, Assistant Superintendent, Jim Collin and Business Manager, Bill Hoff

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Melissa Finnegan, 50 Cedar Crest Lane, said she has been a part of several organizations in the school district and is excited to see the focus on increasing academic standards and improving the school climate. She does not want to dwell on the past but move forward. She asked the Board to support the current leadership structure created by Dr. Baldwin, which has yet to be fully staffed, and she requested that the Board extend Dr. Baldwin's contract.

Suffield High School Student Representative

Taylor Schwab reported the happenings at Suffield High School:

- Students from the Agri-Science program traveled to Kentucky for the National FFA Convention: the team won gold in the nursery landscape category and Emily LaFlamme came in 12th in the country.
- Best Buddies held a friendship walk last week, approximately 30 people were in attendance, including 5 buddies.
- Several other clubs are underway: Interact Club, Giraffe Club and Unified Sports; Model UN Club went on Field Trip to New York City; A Team met with the administration this week; Anime Club will hold a fundraiser soon, Photography and Fashion course students went to New York City.
- Winter sports are beginning.
- Students are wearing school apparel for School Spirit days.
- Romeo and Juliet play was performed 2 weeks ago and many staff and students were involved in the production.
- Toys for Tots and Teens will be held in December.

- National Honor Society students will be going to Spaulding School to read to students
- The State Student Advisory Council, of which Taylor is a member, is discussing the topic of assessments.
- Taylor also attended the CABE conference last weekend and served on the student panel.
- Mr. Moccio said Taylor and Sam Cutler were nominees for the Wendy's High School Heisman Award. Taylor was the Connecticut female award recipient.

Communications

Board Chair Sanborn said the Board received correspondence from Scott Dunn, Principal of Spaulding School, thanking the Board for giving Karen Carpenter-Snow and him, along with his team, the opportunity to present the climate report and their PBIS model at the last Board meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Roy moved, Beiter seconded to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2014 Board of Education meeting. All members voted in favor except for Schneider, Porcello and Zawawi, who abstained. The motion passed 6-0.

Consent Agenda

MOTION #14-52: D'Ostuni moved, Porcello seconded to approve the following item on the consent agenda:

1. Field Trip Request – SMS Quebec City, Canada – May 1-4, 2015

All members voted in favor.

Discussion/Action Items

- Discussion of the 2015-2016 School Calendar
Dr. Baldwin said the draft calendar is a first read for the Board's review and discussion. The calendar was developed in consultation with the SEA, specifically Mark Janick, as well as input from the administrative team. She said the two consecutive days of professional development at the beginning of the year was beneficial to faculty, especially in curriculum work and the 1:1 digital initiative. She noted Labor Day falls later than usual so the first day of school presented is Monday, August 31. She noted that Election Day is a school day since it was a local election year, and past practice has been to hold school on Election Day when it is a local election. She said the State is moving toward a regional calendar and would like districts to use Election Day as a professional development day. Board member Gee asked if the registrar of voters had been consulted. Dr. Baldwin said she did not contact the registrar's office, but her office will get their feedback on the issue. Many Board members expressed concern over having the first week of school be a full week for students. Board member Gee asked if the teachers expressed concerns as well. Dr. Baldwin said Mr. Janick did not raise any concerns over the first week of school being a full week. Board member D'Ostuni suggested school start on Tuesday, September 1, which will still allow for two consecutive professional development days for teachers. Board member Gee also discussed the regional calendar having school on Veteran's Day and the transitioning. Dr. Baldwin said the Teamsters contract includes Veteran's Day as a holiday. She suggested the Board create a calendar committee to discuss the issues raised and how to best communicate changes to all stakeholders. Dr. Baldwin said she will consult with the registrar of voters and look at options to reduce the first week of school from five days to four days.

- October 2014 Financial Report
 Bill Hoff noted the current budget projections showed a year end surplus of \$164,913, which is approximately the same as last month. He highlighted the potential budget losses and gains. Mr. Hoff reviewed the State and Federal Grants and the Food Service Income Statement. He noted he just received the October financials from the food service director that afternoon and his preliminary review showed a surplus of about \$3,000. Participation rates have increased approximately 2% over last year. Board member Beiter expressed concern over the year-to-date daily sales being significantly lower than last year's year-to-date daily sales. Mr. Hoff said the payment system, Nutri Kids, account has to be taken into account as well, which was significantly higher than last year. He stated next month's food service financials would likely look more favorable. Board member Beiter asked what the Open Choice participation rate was. Dr. Baldwin said 3%, or \$6,000 per student. Board members discussed the HSA higher deductible rate not being factored into the health insurance renewal that informed the budget. They expressed their concern over receiving insurance rates late in the budget process from the insurance company. Dr. Baldwin noted that the Town has a new representative, MDG Associates. Mr. Hoff said his experience with MDG is they are very proactive, and he met with them last week and gave them the Board's timeline and all contracts as it relates to budget.
- Approval of the Tentative Agreement between the Suffield Board of Education and the Teamsters Union, Local 671
 Dr. Baldwin said the Board has reached a fair agreement with the Teamsters, which they discussed in executive session prior to the regular session this evening. She said all stakeholders worked well to reach the agreement. There is a less than 8% salary increase over the three year term of the contract, with 2% increases each year plus step increases. The HSA plan will be implemented as of January 1, 2015 with deductibles of \$1,500/\$3,000 for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 and a \$2,000/\$4,000 deductible for 2016-2017. Board Chair Sanborn thanked Board members Semyanko and Roy, who served as Board representatives on the negotiations committee. Board member Roy thanked the union members on the committee as well.
MOTION #14-53: Semyanko moved to approve the tentative agreement between the Suffield Board of Education and the Teamsters Union, Local 671, Roy seconded and all members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Superintendent's Report

- Partnering with Parents November 12, 2014 Workshop – Dr. Baldwin said the workshop was the most well attended session with about 40 parents in attendance, many of which were new faces. The purpose of these workshops is to engage parents in the work of the district. Mr. Dunn, Ms. Carpenter-Snow presented on the PBIS model and Ms. DeMichele and Ms. Wagar presented on the SCERT's program. Middle School teachers also presented on the Unified Arts program at the middle school, and high school teachers shared information on the Unified Sports program at the high school. Dr. Baldwin said the program was sponsored by SPED-PAC, who is doing great work to reach out to parents and the community. Dr. Baldwin also thanked Dr. Collin and all those who presented.

Chair's Report

Board Chair Sanborn asked the Board members who attended the CABE conference to give an update. Board Chair Roy said she attended all three days and will provide a written report to the

Board at a later date. She said the State Department of Education is reaching out to districts in a more helpful manner. Commissioner Pryor gave his farewell speech. She said the main speakers were interesting and informative. Board member D'Ostuni noted that Mr. Bill Daggett, a speaker at the conference, gave an engaging presentation about emerging trends, technology and how easily all forms of internet use are able to be accessed within the next 12 months – it's Web 3.0 participatory. She stated she will also provide the Board with a written report. Board member Gee added that Mr. Daggett said because of the dynamic nature of technology, people spend time solving problems that are already irrelevant, including addressing issues of how we educate our children. Board member Gee added that she appreciated the opportunity to attend the CAFE conference.

Board Chair Sanborn said as the Board engages in the 2015-2016 budget, Board members need to help communicate a positive message to parents and the community of what is happening in our schools. If people are informed about the positive things that are going on in the district, it will be easier to promote the budget. In the past, negativity has occurred during the budget process.

Board Chair Sanborn also stated the Tri-board meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 16 at 7:00 p.m. Superintendent Baldwin said that will necessitate the regular Board meeting being moved to 5:30 p.m. in order for members to attend the Tri-board meeting. Board members will be updated when the Tri-board meeting date is confirmed.

Subcommittee Reports

Board Chair Sanborn said a Facilities subcommittee meeting will be held on Friday, November 21. She said there are several policies on 30 day reads that are due to legislative changes.

Future Business

- Material Selection and Curriculum Audit – *Nov./Dec. 2014*
- Curriculum Writing Process and Engagement of Teachers – *Nov./Dec. 2014*
- Policy Process – Curriculum Review and Adoption – *Nov./Dec. 2014*
- Appeals Process for Material Selection in Classrooms – *Nov./Dec. 2014*
- Middle School Schedule Update – *Dec./Jan.*
- Update of 1:1 digital environment at SHS
- List of Monitoring Reports
- Report on Summer Reading Program
- Report on Staffing and Retention
- A presentation of the Superintendent's choice with rationale for the district administration structure with two alternative structures from high performing districts.
- Curriculum for approval
- Update on LAF/School Construction close-out process
- Standards-Based Report Tool presentation
- Measurable data of the 4 Strategic Plan Goals
- Review of Kelly Services
- Safe School Climate Plan Approval
- Discussion of philosophy and goals of the district and the policy on evaluation and selection of books and instructional material

Executive Session

Gee moved, Semyanko seconded to go adjourn the regular meeting and go into executive session at 7:34 p.m. for a personnel matter: a discussion of the Superintendent of Schools Performance Evaluation 2013-2014.

Semyanko moved, Gee seconded to come out of executive session at 8:05 p.m. The meeting adjourned.

Minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting on December 2, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

Lori D'Ostuni
Secretary

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