

Board of Education Regular Meeting
September 5, 2017

Call to Order

Board Chair Gee called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium. Present: Board members Susi Keane, Michael Sepko, Matt Service, Jeanne Gee, Lori D'Ostuni, John Richter, Natalie Semyanko, Kendra Wiesel (arrived 6:04 p.m.), Superintendent Karen Berasi, Assistant Superintendent Brian Hendrickson, and Business Manager Bill Hoff

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition

The following retirees were recognized by the Board of Education for their years of service to Suffield Public Schools, collectively 250 years of service: Mary McKenna, Charmaine Spinelli, Dotty Surmolian, Jean Barnes, Marcia Monsieigneur, Judy Case, Shirley Zavisza, Mary Ruggiero, Gail Myers, Kim Moriarty, Bill Johnson and Ed Griffin. Those in attendance were Dotty Surmolian, Shirley Zavisza, Gail Myers, Kim Moriarty and Ed Griffin.

Denise Rigby, Teacher of the Year, and Morgan O'Malley, Paraeducator of the Year were also recognized by Karen Berasi and Steve Moccio, respectively, on behalf of the Board.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

D'Ostuni moved to approve the August 21, 2017 meeting minutes. Richter seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion carried 8-0.

Consent Agenda

None

Discussion/Action Items

- 2017-2018 School Year Staffing Report
Superintendent Berasi said the School Staffing report is given to the Board every year at this time. The data shows teachers who have retired, resigned or on leave, as well as teachers who have moved to different positions within the district.
- Summer Programs Report
Ms. Donais and Ms. Sheridan presented the Extended School Year (ESY) Program report. Programs were held at Spaulding and at Suffield High School with various delivery models based on student Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The focus was on literacy, numeracy and for some students, social skills. A total of 77 students attended ESY. Fifteen students participated in Kids Korner Camp (K-3). Six students in grades 4-8 attended the afternoon program at Sunrise Park, where they were fully integrated with other campers. Ms. Donais highlighted the training provided to staff in preparation to work in the ESY

program. Also, additional training occurred at the end of August which was facilitated by CCSN and will continue during early release days this year. In response to a board member's questions, Ms. Donais said summer programming is based in special education students' IEPs. Board members asked how the effectiveness of the program is evaluated. Ms. Donais said benchmark data and goals and objectives in students' IEPs are used as evaluations. Ms. Donais said the team will debrief the aspects of the summer program and also meet with Parks & Recreation staff to solicit their feedback. Mr. Hendrickson and Ms. Marzi discussed the Summer Stars program and the data from the program will be compared to the fall benchmark assessments, which will be shared with the Board. Ms. Berasi said the focus of the ESY program is to individually address each student's needs and design targets specific to each student, which is difficult to measure globally. The Board would like information on the percentage of students who reached their goals and on next steps and areas for improvement in the program on a district-wide basis.

- Summer Curriculum Update

Mr. Hendrickson reviewed the Summer Curriculum and Professional Development report. Mr. Hendrickson commended the curriculum leaders and teachers for their collaborative work done in curriculum writing over the summer. Ms. Baranauskas and Ms. Boakye-Datthey spoke about the curriculum work done in math K-12 grade. Mr. Hendrickson added that Rubicon Atlas, the platform where the district's curriculum is housed, will be available online for public viewing this fall. Mr. Hendrickson also said the administrative team benefits from the curriculum leaders' content area expertise. A Board member asked how teachers know students understand a historical timeline so the students can make interdisciplinary connections. Mr. Hendrickson said more interdisciplinary experiences and making connections among subject areas is the goal. Mr. Kinel gave specific examples of social studies timelines through middle school and interdisciplinary subjects, such as world cultures, geography, economics and philosophy. Ms. Pryce also gave specific examples of humanities being taught in fifth grade that provides a framework for interdisciplinary experiences in social studies and English Language Arts. Superintendent Berasi commended the curriculum leaders' and teachers' work ethic who worked this summer to accomplish a tremendous amount of work in curriculum writing.

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Berasi said the opening of the 2017-2018 school year was the smoothest she has experienced in her 40 plus years in education. Teachers and staff were very excited to start school. Mr. Hendrickson created a video to show how the district and school improvement plans are at work in the district. Mr. Hendrickson credited Mr. Spada who helped create and edit the video.

- Ms. Berasi informed the Board that Suffield School District is ranked #22 in Connecticut by Niche, which nationally awards for the best schools in America.

- Board Chair's Report - none

- Business Manager's Report

- Mr. Hoff said teachers were engaged and excited to be back at school. He noted the smooth transition back to school was due to the hard work done prior to the start of school, specifically, Jackie at M&J and central office staff who tracked new hires, salaries, and movement of current staff, tracked enrollment, coordinated out of district transportation and set up payroll for the year. It was a great team effort that resulted in a successful start to the year. In response to a board member's question, Mr. Hoff said fire

alarms for the high school are coming in tomorrow and installation should start next week. The Fire Marshal will meet with the fire alarm company tomorrow who will begin testing the system. A more definitive completion date will be known once installation begins. In response to a board member's question, Mr. Hoff said the financials for the summer program will be included in the August financial report which will be presented to the Board at the October meeting.

Subcommittee Reports

A budget subcommittee meeting will be scheduled in the near future. A Teaching and Learning subcommittee meeting is Thursday, September 7 at 8:00 a.m. and a Policy subcommittee meeting is Monday, September 11 at 5:30 p.m.

Future Business

None

Adjournment

Service moved, Keane seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the next meeting on October 2, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori D'Ostuni
Secretary