

Board of Education Regular Meeting
November 5, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Suffield Middle School Auditorium.

Present: Board members Kendra Wiesel, Susan Mercik Davis, Debra Dudack, Jamie Drzyzga, John Richter, and Matt Service; Interim Superintendent Mark Winzler, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, Business Manager Bill Hoff, and SHS Student Representatives Hannah Stack and Sarah Dubocq

Absent: Maureen Sattan, Michael Sepko and George Beiter

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition

None

Suffield High School Student Representatives

Board Chair Wiesel introduced Hannah Stack and Sarah Dubocq who are this year's Board high school student representatives. This is the first time student representatives have sat on the Board. Ms. Stack and Ms. Dubocq introduced themselves and shared some information about their interests and school involvement. They gave an update of events happening at SHS including that the new principal, Mr. Blain, has created a positive climate at the high school and he is supportive of all, all fall sports teams have made it to States, and over 200 people attended the first homecoming dance at SHS.

Public Comment

None

Presentations

- 2018-2019 Suffield Middle School Improvement Plan

Mr. Ken Smith, SMS Principal, presented the middle school improvement plan. He noted the process has been very positive and it gave him the opportunity to work and collaborate with staff and Ms. Zawawi and Mr. Winzler. He highlighted the three key goals of curriculum and instruction, teacher growth equals student growth, and organizational health. He also reviewed the key measures for each key goal. Mr. Smith discussed previous years' scores in SBAC and other assessments and said they are not only looking at grade level data over time but also cohort data over time. Mr. Smith reviewed student attendance and student behavior data as well as the spring 2018 survey responses from staff, parents and students. In response to a Board member's question relative to Mr. Smith being surprised by the low number of suspensions at the middle school last year, he said for a middle school this size, about 40 suspensions are typical. In response to a Board member's question, Mr. Smith said SBAC data includes all students. Mr. Smith next explained the action plans and strategies to accomplish each key goal. The goals

are multi-year goals and the strategies may be adjusted year-to-year to ensure progress toward achieving each goal. Mr. Smith said eighth grade students will take the PSATs this year because this test will give the high school administration a baseline of these students coming into ninth grade, gives more detail than the SBACs, and is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Another benefit of eighth graders taking the PSATs is, through College Board, students receive feedback and opportunities to work on areas with which they may struggle. Mr. Smith stated the administration is looking at the middle school schedule. He will be soliciting information and feedback from staff and parents. Mr. Smith spoke about the positive social emotional supports in place for students, such as our School Resource Officer, Tom Kieselback, the partnership with the Town's youth services director, and the establishment of a school climate committee. Board members thanked Mr. Smith for his clear, easy-to-understand presentation and were pleased with the collaborative relationships being fostered with town departments. In response to a Board member's question, Mr. Smith said the eighth grade PSAT content is different from the eleventh grade PSAT content. Board members and student representatives discussed the positive aspects of taking the PSATs in eighth grade.

Reports to the Board

- Superintendent's Report
 - Mr. Winzler said he, Mr. McGrath and Ms. Zawawi met today with CREC representatives to review the special education proposal. They agreed to move ahead with CREC administering a survey; however, they discussed making a few minor changes to the questions that will be asked. In addition to the surveys to staff and parents, focus groups will be scheduled and conducted by CREC.
 - Mr. Winzler has begun a personnel audit which also ties into the budget process. He has begun meeting with all principals and department administrators to review their staffing.
 - Mr. Winzler said the district and town are working on an agreement to share IT services. He is meeting with Ms. Mack tomorrow and she will present the proposal to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Winzler added it is important to establish a collaborative relationship with the town and community and look for avenues to increase communication.
 - Mr. Winzler noted the administration is currently in teacher negotiations: a session is scheduled tomorrow evening.
 - The budget process has begun and meetings with building and department administrators will be taking place weekly now through December break. The Superintendent's budget will be presented to the Board on January 22, 2019.
 - Mr. Winzler welcomed Ms. Stack and Ms. Dubocq to the Board and encouraged their participation.
- Board Chair's Report
 - Board Chair Wiesel said the CABA Convention is November 16 & 17. Mr. Winzler will be participating in a "mock" meeting of the "Nutmeg" Board of Education.
 - Ms. Wiesel said she met with the new Interim Director of Special Services, Glenn McGrath, and was inspired by his energy and ability to get right to work and also to assist the Board in understanding its role in special education.
 - Ms. Wiesel announced she and her family will be moving out of Suffield and will be resigning from the Board in the near future. She said she was sad to leave this community and the Board, and is proud and appreciative of the great work the Board has done. She thanked those who have supported her and the work of the Board.
- Business Manager's Report – none

Consent Agenda

MOTION #19-15: Service moved, Richter seconded to approve the following items on the consent agenda:

- A. Approval of the October 15, 2018 regular meeting minutes
- B. Approval of Policy #6159- Individual Education/Special Education

All members voted in favor. The motion carried 6-0.

Discussion/Action Items

- Adoption of Free and Reduced Price Meals Policy Statement

Mr. Hoff explained that the district is required to adopt the agreement as part of the district's participation in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program and it is due to the State by November 15.

MOTION #19-16: Service moved, Wiesel seconded to adopt the agreement and authorize the Interim Superintendent and the Business Manager to sign claims for reimbursement. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 6-0.

- Proposed 2019 BOE Meeting Schedule

Ms. Wiesel said the Board moved back to holding two meetings a month as a result of having to schedule several additional meetings throughout the year. Having two meetings a month will provide the Board the opportunity to hold workshops during one of those monthly meetings which will be a better utilization of the Board's time. Mr. Winzler suggested that one meeting be a business meeting and the other be a workshop model with a specific topic for the Board to discuss such as budget, special education, new curricular offerings, etc.

MOTION #19-17: Service moved, Mercik Davis seconded to approve the 2019 BOE meeting schedule as presented. All members voted in favor. The motion carried 6-0.

Future Business

None

Board member Dudack thanked Board Chair Wiesel for her service and leadership.

Adjournment

Service moved, Mercik Davis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of November 19, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack
Secretary