

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the library at Coginchaug High School.

Board members present: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino

Board members absent: Dr. Friedrich

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools, Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance, Mrs. DiMaggio, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Mrs. Keane, Director of Student Services and Special Education, Mr. Pietrasko, Director of Infrastructure and Security Technology

Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Booth, to approve the agenda, as presented.*

*In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.*

**Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes**

**A. Board of Education District meeting - May 3, 2021**

*Mrs. Booth made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2021 Board of Education District meeting, as presented.*

*In favor of approving the minutes of the May 3, 2021 Board of Education District meeting, as presented: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Mr. Hicks and Mr. Yamartino abstained. Motion carried.*

**B. Board of Education regular meeting - May 12, 2021**

*Mrs. Petrella made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2021 Board of Education regular meeting, as presented.*

*In favor of approving the minutes of the May 12, 2021 Board of Education regular meeting, as presented: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino. Ms. Geraci and Mr. Hicks abstained. Motion carried.*

**Next Board Meeting - June 9, 2021 at 7:00 PM**

**Resolution to approve the Proposed Amendment to the Plan of regionalization for District 13 and to approve the Question for a Referendum**

Mr. Moore explained that both items were sent out to the board members. It has been somewhat modified by the attorney to shorten it up a bit. It also includes the letter for the Commissioner of Education. Mr. Moore summarized that the Board would be authorized to close John Lyman Elementary School and maintain Brewster, Memorial, Strong and Coginchaug schools. The question at the referendum would be “shall the Regional School District 13 Plan of Regionalization be amended to authorize the Region 13 Board of Education to close John Lyman School in the Town of Middlefield.”

This would need to be approved by the Commissioner of Education and then the district can begin to hold public hearings.

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the resolution.*

Mr. Yamartino asked about the official name of Memorial School and felt that the word “Middlefield” is included in its name. Several board members felt that it was Middlefield Memorial School. Mr. Moore will check to see what the official name is.

*Mr. Yamartino amended the motion to assure that the Memorial Middle School name is correct on the document.*

*In favor of the motion to approve the resolution, with the amendment: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.*

**Resolution to call a Special District Meeting/Public Hearing to Present the Proposed Amendment to the Plan of Regionalization for District 13**

Mr. Moore explained that the next step is to set the date of the district meeting/public hearing to present the proposed amendment, though he was not sure the board was ready to set that date right now. After the public hearing, the board would need to vote and set a date for the referendum. Mr. Moore suggested tabling this resolution until they are a little more certain about public relations and communications.

**Committee Reports****A. Student Achievement Committee Meeting - May 20, 2021**

Mrs. Petrella reviewed that their first discussion was on the summer program. There are approximately 65 students signed up for various summer programs, with approximately 30 students receiving transportation. Additional notices will be sent out. Mrs. DiMaggio noted that they are up to 74 students right now. Mrs. Petrella summarized that the district will be offering a Kindergarten Academy, camps including math, mixed media, STEAM, explore and ceramics as well as personal projects for high school students, including an independent art project and Chinese language. Tutoring sessions will also be offered.

The committee also discussed grant opportunities and it was reported that the district did not get the grant for the integrated arts program.

Mrs. DiMaggio also presented drafts of professional learning plans. Professional learning will be held on August 31, September 27, November 2, January 27, February 18, March 11, and May 17. Some of the offerings at the elementary level include examining data and goal setting, literacy, K-12 arts, Dibels assessment training and the science of reading and structural reading. Mrs. DiMaggio noted that Mrs. Allen will provide the bulk of the science of reading professional learning this summer. A CREC consultant will work with teachers and coaches to implement differentiation and strategy groups in the classroom. The main focus this year will be on reading skills, but math will also be included.

At the middle school, they will have data talks and review district data, individualized student reports, and continue with restorative practices. There will also be a math consultant for the high school and middle school to continue curriculum writing at the high school and perfect the performance tasks. Equity training will be held at the middle school, with a focus group of students. The high school will have curriculum writing and equity for social studies and language arts departments.

The committee also discussed keeping the community updated on summative learning.

## **B. Utilization Committee Meeting - May 25, 2021**

### **1. Possible vote to re-appropriate security funds**

Mr. Yamartino reported that the Utilization committee met last night and discussed alternatives to hardening the entrances at the schools which turned out to be more expensive than anticipated. The district had allocated about \$200,000 to do that. Mrs. Neubig had presented a summary of security items and the committee recommended that the board fund the items included in that summary. They also recommended that the district apply for the state school security a grant to cover approximately 40 percent of those items.

Mr. Yamartino explained that there is also an opportunity to apply for a communications grant also. They are recommending \$275,000 for a new phone system and increased radio capabilities.

Mr. Yamartino reviewed the individual projects. They include establishing panic buttons in the school offices as well as on the radios. Increased radio capabilities will allow for an individual frequency at each school.

Ms. Geraci stated that she thought that the details would not be discussed at a public meeting and Mr. Moore explained that these are summaries and not specific to where anything would be located or how it would work.

Mr. Yamartino stated that the SRO endorsed hallway painting to help identify hallways for emergency services. Window film will be placed on additional windows. There will be enhanced buzz stations in all schools and doorway reprogramming. The total cost of these items is approximately \$120,000, with roughly \$194,000 currently approved for security improvements. The Utilization committee recommends authorizing this expenditure against that budget.

The committee also discussed the balance remaining in the budget and felt it would be best to hold the remainder in reserve for additional security items that may come up.

*Mr. Yamartino made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hicks, to re-appropriate security funds as presented to the Utilization committee in Executive Session on 5/25/21 and to apply for the school security and communications grants.*

*In favor of re-appropriating security funds as presented to the Utilization committee in Executive Session on 5/25/21 and to apply for the school security and communications grants: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.*

### **Communications**

Mr. Moore received an email from Henry Bugai and Nick Faiella about discussing advertising on the fencing around the sports fields.

Mr. Moore reported that the concert on Friday night was fabulous and Mr. Fisher and Ms. Schilling did a wonderful job. He also reported that the girls' softball team lost in the semi-finals last night to North Branford and the boys' baseball team won and will play at Palmer Field tomorrow night for the Shoreline championship.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Schuch explained that he would like to share his report on his first six months at the next board meeting. He added that he and his wife and daughters were able to attend the concert Friday night and he really felt at home being able to have face-to-face conversations. He also thanked Mr. Pietrasko for preparing the room tonight with the new sound system.

Dr. Schuch also reported that masks will continue to be worn in the schools until the end of the school year, per executive order. He thanked everyone for their cooperation with that. Dr. Schuch also encouraged everyone to get vaccinated, if they are able. He has also asked the attorneys if committee meetings need to be in person and the attorneys felt that the rules that govern board-appointed committee meetings fall under the same statutes as full board meetings which need to be in person, but suggested that they not make any changes quite yet as things are always subject to change. The attorney also felt that committee members may call in to in-person meetings as well.

Dr. Schuch also reviewed that the process of searching for a new principal to replace Mr. Falcone continues and the position has been posted. He also reported that they launched a Thought Exchange about that last Friday and lots of people have provided input. High school students have not provided a lot of input as of yet and he encouraged them to do so. Dr. Schuch also encouraged the public to provide any candidates as well. The process closes on June 15<sup>th</sup>, but could be extended.

### **Public Comment**

Kim Johansen and Jen Cassillo introduced themselves.

**Anticipated Executive Session**

**A. Discuss superintendent's evaluation**

**Adjournment**

*Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Yamartino to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education.*

*In favor of adjourning the regular meeting of the Board of Education: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Ms. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Yamartino. Motion carried.*

Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz  
Alwaz First