

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2022

The Board of Education Meeting was held in the Library at Shepaug Valley School. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, November 28, 2022, by Chairman Gregory Cava. Present were Board members Joseph Abdella, John Buonaiuto, Angela Macchiarulo, Justin Ongley, Jane Sarjeant, Julie Stuart, Peter Tagley, and Mary Weber. Stephanie Kolnick, Alex McNaughton, and Jennifer Pote were absent. Dr. Lorrie Rodrigue, Interim Superintendent, and Nicole Grant, Director of Finance were also present.

Also in attendance was: Ben Allen, Media Communications Specialist.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

Chairman Gregory Cava postponed the Consent Agenda to after the holiday music presentation.

HOLIDAY MUSIC PRESENTATION

The Choral Ensemble performed two songs. Music teacher, Beth Harvison, invited the Board to the winter concert next Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at Shepaug Valley School. Ms. Harvison shared how the students were able to participate at the Radio City Music Hall last year and again this year and the impact the field trip has on the students.

CONSENT AGENDA

Board of Education Meeting Minutes, October 17, 2022
Board of Education Meeting Minutes, November 14, 2022

Chairman Cava asked if anyone wanted to remove the October 24, 2022 minutes from the Consent Agenda. John Buonaiuto motioned to remove the October 24, 2022 minutes. Chairman Cava permitted Mr. Buonaiuto to express his concerns with the minutes. Mr. Buonaiuto felt that the October 24, 2022 minutes did not fully reflect what occurred, the narrative was one sided, erroneously concluded that his letter to the *Voices* editor contained inaccurate information, implied that he claimed to represent the Board which he did not, was deprived of a fair statement of facts and statements on October 24, 2022 and would like the pdf transcript he brought to tonight's meeting to be attached to the minutes. Chairman Cava reminded Mr. Buonaiuto that in his letter to the editor he said that the Finance & Operations Committee voted down a request to spend money on a study that Michelle Gorra's group did when in fact the Finance & Operations Committee never took a vote; there was a discussion to add the item to the Finance & Operations Committee meeting agenda but after concerns were expressed by committee members it was not added to the agenda. Chairman Cava recommended putting the October 24, 2022

Board of Education minutes on hold until the minutes from the Finance & Operations Committee meeting are available at their next meeting on December 5.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Interim Superintendent Dr. Rodrigue reported that case numbers are still low. Allyson O'Hara reports our case numbers to the State and provides them to Dr. Rodrigue on a weekly basis. Mrs. O'Hara shared that there have been two known RSV and a few flu cases over a month ago but nothing since. Dr. Rodrigue shared that nurses do talk with families when students are out. Dr. Rodrigue shared that a community member reached out questioning the district sharing vaccine clinic information. Dr. Rodrigue said the district is only sharing the information with families but not requiring them to get vaccinated.

LONG RANGE STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION

Julie Stuart, the chairwoman of the LRP Committee, updated the Board on the status of the plan as well as what the next steps are. The last plan was created with the assistance of Education Connection (Jonathan Costa). That plan was a five-year plan in place from 2012-2017. Currently, under the direction of Dr. Richard Lemons, the executive director from Partners For Educational Leadership, the committee is working on a plan. Ms. Stuart went over the reasons a long-range plan is needed – the most important was for the benefit of the students. The committee began by gathering data with written surveys. They received a total of 555 responses: 52% residents without school-age children, 23% parents of current Region 12 students, 11% teachers/support staff and administrators. The survey included forced ranking regarding priorities for the future, what is the system good at, what needs improvement and what should our values and actions be in the coming year. Participants also had the opportunity to write in responses. After focus groups were held, the data was consolidated and looked at by the committee. The committee identified six goals but consolidated it down to four goals: Powerful Learning, Family and Community Engagement, Diversity, Belonging and Wellbeing, Innovation and Delivering Value. The committee then looked at implementation. The worst thing that could happen is to let all this work sit on a shelf and get stale. The committee will continue to work with Dr. Lemons and the new superintendent with the goal to have a plan in place by next spring.

REPORTS AND RECOGNITION

Board Chairman's Report - Chairman Cava expressed gratitude for all the well wishes he received while he was ill. Chairman Cava reported that it wasn't very long ago that we joined the Football Co-op Northwest United. Our kids are undefeated and tomorrow night they play in a playoff game against Masuk High School at Nonnewaug at 6:30 p.m. At a press conference, the head coach of the New York Jets gave a shout out to Jennifer Garzone as the first female coach in the Workhorse co-op. Chairman Cava said the district joined the football co-op to provide another program for our kids and we should be very proud of them. Chairman Cava expressed gratitude to Dr. Rodrigue for stepping in as interim superintendent for the last five months. She has magically kept us moving forward and at the level of excellence that we have been accustomed to.

Superintendent's Report - Interim Superintendent Dr. Rodrigue thanked Chairman Cava for his kind words. Interim Superintendent Dr. Rodrigue reported on personnel as follows: Appointments: Stephen Crowe, Custodian (part-time) at Washington Primary School; Retirements: Connie Ho, Assistant to the Director of

Facilities at Central Office (effective December 31, 2022); Transfers: Allison Gsell, Secretary to the Principal at Booth Free School (formerly Paraprofessional at Booth Free School).

Shepaug Valley School hosted two assemblies today for middle and high school students with Scott Driscoll on Cybersafety and digital citizenship. It was very informative and engaging. The presentation was also offered to parents tonight. On December 16, Shepaug students will take part in a one-hour community service project. Thirty hours are needed in order to graduate. Eighth graders will hear about community service and all the programs offered at SVS at the open house for eighth graders and parents.

Dr. Rodrigue also shared and played a clip of the press conference where Coach Saleh recognized Jennifer Garzone as the first female head coach of the Northwest United Workhorses, first female coach to win a varsity game in Connecticut history and her team is undefeated in their conference. He ended by wishing them the best of luck in the playoffs.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Rodrigue shared that tonight is her last meeting as Marc Gosselin's first day will be December 12 which happens to be the next Board meeting. She expressed how great it was to be reunited with Region 12 during this time and commended staff and students and thanked the Board for their support.

Treasurer's Report - No report. John Buonaiuto expressed thanks to Dr. Rodrigue for being very responsive to him whenever he had questions or needed information during the last 5 months.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Curriculum & Educational Programming Committee - Justin Ongley gave a shout out for the plant sale that will include trees and wreaths on December 10 from 10am-2pm. Mr. Ongley reported that at the committee meeting tonight, Tyler Cremeans gave an update on the agriscience new curriculum proposals which included students not being locked into a pathway, creating two new courses. This restructuring will help the counseling department as well. Dr. DeBrito gave a brief review of the expanding electives. They also had a brief discussion on the K-3 reading legislation. The state is requiring districts to select a reading program for next year but we have applied for a one-year extension.

EdAdvance – No report. Next meeting will be Thursday, December 1, 2022.

Finance & Operations Committee - No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading - Policy 5120 - Meal Charging - Chairman Cava reminded the Board that they discussed this policy at the first reading and asked if anyone wanted to further discuss or make comments on this policy.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

ACTION ITEMS

Consider and if appropriate, adopt Policy 5120 - Meal Charging - Chairman Cava asked for a motion to adopt the policy.

MOTION: made by Joseph Abdella, seconded by Julie Stuart, to adopt Policy 5120 - Meal Charging.

John Buonaiuto asked when the policy would take effect. Nicole Grant answered the policy would be in effect immediately but parents would not start paying for lunches until January 1, 2023.

VOTE: unanimously.

Consider and if appropriate, approve Marc Gosselin, Jr's signature authorization for Region 12 bank accounts -

MOTION: made by Julie Stuart, seconded by Jane Sarjeant, to approve authorization for Marc Gosselin, Jr., to sign for all Region 12 bank accounts.

VOTE: unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by consent at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by D. Bliven