

Revised

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, February 13, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School, Durham, Connecticut.

Board members present: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor.

Board members absent: Mr. Yamartino

Administration present: Dr. Veronesi, Superintendent of Schools and Mrs. Neubig, Business Manager.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Augur made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as amended: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Katie Tietjen, from Durham, wanted to encourage the board and administration to please consider saving the Latin program at the schools. She was very sad to hear that this program is going to be phased out. She is the mother of two young children, the daughter of a former Latin teacher and an educator herself and feels there is a lot of value in continuing to have the program. It gives the district a distinction from other districts in the state. The knowledge of Latin is positive in many fields, such as the legal, medical and scientific fields, and is also the best way to learn English.

Dr. Joe Octerski, a high school chemistry teacher who lives in Middlefield, was also in support of the Latin program. As a science teacher, he believes that the basics that are learned in Latin help students improve their science ability. He is also the father of a student in the district and read a letter from his daughter who is a graduate student pursuing her master's degree in Greek and Latin at the University of Vermont. She started with Latin in seventh grade at Strong School and she believes that the benefits of Latin are quantifiable. It provides students with problem-solving skills in a non-math-based setting by allowing them to work through translating in a methodical way. They develop the ability to organize and connect ideas while building concentration. Latin students also gain a better understanding of English grammar and they become more proficient in understanding complex sentence structures. Latin students tend to score better on SATs and other standardized tests because they are able to understand the etymology of polysyllabic English words. She quoted from a study from the University of Georgia, stating that students studying Latin for two years or more scored higher on their SAT verbal scores than students learning any other language. Other benefits include the value of reading literature in its original language, space to learn about the ancient world and how it shapes everyday life. Almost half of the 50 states in the US, including Connecticut, have Latin mottos and Latin phrases form the basis of legal and medical language. Ms. Octerski finds the Latin language beautiful and enjoyable to read and is thankful that she was able to begin learning it in seventh grade.

Bronwyn Cummins, from Durham, also spoke in favor of the Latin program. She noted that in her nearly 20 years of teaching in the district, she is saddened to see any changes that affect the well-being of students and this proposal is among them. She taught roughly 60 percent of the students on her team at

Strong and covered foreign language classes on several occasions. Students in Latin class were focused, involved in authentic learning, challenged, interested in their own education, happy and engaged. Their learning in Latin enhanced everything else they did in middle school, including standardized testing. She described the Latin classroom at Strong and explained that student work is everywhere. She added that parents are very, very, very lucky for their children to have a teacher like Katie Reddick who knows her subject matter and teaches it with a passion and dedication that's unparalleled. The Latin program and the teachers behind it represent the very best in education. She feels that the best way to address declining enrollment is to offer the best education possible and respectfully asked the board to keep the Latin program intact on a full-time basis.

Jacob Madison, from Durham, stated that he and his wife have been in town for about 10-11 years and moved here based on the knowledge that they wanted a place to challenge their 5-year-old daughter and that would allow her to be high-achieving. They feel that they made the right decision when they chose Durham. Their daughter has been in the integrated day program and has been taking Latin since seventh grade and is now at Coginchaug. They believe very strongly in public education and wanted their daughter to go to public school, knowing that she could have a fantastic education and go to a top college and be prepared for a great life. They are very disappointed to see some of the moves that have been made recently that appear to be sending a message to high-achieving students that their achievement is not necessarily valued here and he believes that getting rid of the Latin program would send exactly that message. He asked the board to please consider keeping the Latin program.

Laurie was present tonight as a mom of two boys who are both in the Latin program, as taxpayer and also to present a letter from current and former Latin students in support of the program. She took four years of Latin at Lyman Hall High School in Wallingford 30-plus years ago and found it invaluable. It helped with her legal education and her legal practice. Both of her children have very specific and different needs. One is very high-achieving and one is not, yet both have chosen Latin and both are thriving. As a taxpayer, she is sad that this is based on rumors and discussions that don't seem to be forthcoming from the board or the district. She feels that the parents find these things out and scramble to get their viewpoints heard. She is frustrated and personally exhausted that, for the past three years, she feels like parents have come to the board being told that Korn School had to be closed to prevent programming cuts, then told that the two programs have to be merged to prevent programming cuts. Then, it was to close John Lyman School to prevent more programming cuts. She felt that each change seems to cut more programs and every year the board attacks another cornerstone of the school system. She wonders what the board actually values and why they so often conflict with those of the parents, students and taxpayers. They have been trying to prevent programming changes in technology, shop, music, arts and now possibly foreign languages. She feels that there is not one single area that is of concern to the board. She is looking to find out what data supports these proposed changes and how many students are enrolled in Latin. She asked if there has been a survey of parents or students in the district as to what language they would like to take. She also wondered what type of cost savings is anticipated and if additional teachers would be needed to accommodate other languages. She is concerned that the board is throwing pegs at a dart board to see what programs can be cut without any real facts or data. She asked the board to investigate this issue further and highly suggested not making any cuts to the Latin program.

Diane St. John, from Durham, was in support of the Latin program as well. She noted how important the program was to her family. They moved here from Chicago in 2006 and chose Durham based on recommendations of the school district. Her first son started at John Lyman and took Latin in seventh grade. Her youngest child also takes Latin and is a great student. She has had great feedback from Katie Reddick and feels that the program itself has made her two children grow. Mrs. St. John feels that it is important that students get three years of a foreign language and she is nervous and scared for the younger

students who won't be able to have this program. She explained that her family chose the district for music, the Latin program and school choice and it has worked out very well for them.

Administrator Welcome - Tom Ford

Tom Ford noted that they are well past the 100th day of school and wanted to focus on one area tonight. As part of the democratic practice component of the HOT school's approach, they have a number of student boards at John Lyman School. These boards are made up of a cross-level group of kids and include a variety of topics. They are facilitated on a voluntary basis by the teachers and staff. These boards provide leadership opportunities outside of the classroom and hopefully help them develop a sense of ownership. He mentioned the literary review board, the art board, a nature trail committee, a yearbook committee, a tech crew, a student broadcast team (WJLS), a song-writing board and the student senate.

Mr. Ford takes great pride in these boards and feels that they are great examples of student voice and choice and action. John Lyman School believes these are very positive and powerful experiences for the students. He extended an invitation to all board members to experience a welcome by the Hello Chorus and a tour by a student senator.

CRHS Reporters - Timothy Arcari, Emily Dell'Orfano and Lindsey Marino

Tim Arcari noted that he was one of the first five members of WJLS back in third and fourth grade. He reported that the Indoor Track Team did not win the conference championship this year, but they did have a lot of significant individual accomplishments, including six athletes going to State Opens. He mentioned that Hayden Rovelli set a school record and is ranked number one in the state. The 4x4 relay team also broke the school record and it is the first time in a long time that the district had a relay team make it to State Opens. He also mentioned that Alyce Boothroyd broke the school record in diving this year. Mr. Moore also mentioned that Tim had been selected for the All-Hartford Courant team for soccer.

Emily Dell'Orfano reported that the Coginchaug Jazz Band performed at the Berkeley Jazz Festival in January and Sierra Astle was awarded the judges' choice award and basically named the top player in the band. The Coginchaug Ocean Bowl competed in the 2019 Ocean Bowl in Groton and came in second place for Connecticut and Rhode Island and won the 2019 Ocean Bowl Sportsmanship Award. On February 5th, the National Honor Society hosted the bookmark ceremony which recognizes student accomplishment and dedicated. This year, 104 students were recognized.

Lindsey Marino reported that the Hartford Courant considered 71 schools when selecting their All-Hartford Courant team and Bailey Zettergren (volleyball), Lindsay Taylor (volleyball) and Tim Arcari (soccer) were named to the teams, honorable mention, for their respective sports. Ten students from the Model UN club traveled to Boston to attend the Boston University's Model UN '19 conference. Students from around the country and several international schools attended the conference. On February 1st, the unified sports team hosted Middletown High School for the annual Wilda Castro Memorial Basketball game. The boys' and girls' basketball teams also participated in Pink Out games and raised \$800 which was donated to Joshua Jerrell and his family. The girls' basketball team also had their senior night and Jessica King scored her 1,000th point.

Emily Dell'Orfano also explained that during the advisory period on February 4th, HERO (Helping Educate Regarding Orientation), ECO (the environmental club) and AP Government and Politics class participated in a Skype forum with Christine Hallquist.

Tim Arcari then reviewed that on January 31st, the eighth grade parents attended orientation and the National Honor Society served as tour guides. Each of the department heads gave presentations. On February 5th, the counselors and administration went to Strong School to help with the course selection process. The course selection process for Coginchaug was finished on Monday and will be happen on Friday for the Strong students.

Mr. Moore asked if the CRHS reporters had any comments on the SRO. Tim Arcari has noticed that the parking lot seems to be much safer. Lindsey Marino sees the SRO in the classrooms and at lunch. He has also made a connection with a lot of students and the students feel safe now that he is there. Emily Dell'Orfano has noticed a palpable change in morale and students can focus on school rather than safety.

Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education regular session meeting - January 9, 2019

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the minutes of the Board of Education regular session meeting of January 9, 2019, as presented.

Dr. Friedrich pointed out, on page 4 under Proposed Grade Level Configuration Survey Results, he felt that Option A requires a description and he requested that “, specifically a one-building track configuration,” be added after Option A. Mr. Moore suggested that that be a footnote as that wasn't actually said at the meeting and Dr. Friedrich agreed.

In favor of approving the minutes of the Board of Education regular session meeting of January 9, 2019, as amended: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Board of Education special session meeting/retreat - January 19, 2019

Dr. Friedrich made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to approve the minutes of the Board of Education special session meeting/retreat of January 19, 2019, as presented.

Mr. Moore noted that a number of objectives were adopted at the meeting and he would like to have the list be a part of the minutes of that meeting.

In favor of approving the minutes of the Board of Education special session meeting/retreat of January 19, 2019, as amended: Mr. Augur, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Mrs. Caramanello abstained. Motion passed.

C. Board of Education special session meeting - February 5, 2019

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the minutes of the Board of Education special session meeting of February 5, 2019, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes of the Board of Education special session meeting of February 5, 2019, as presented: Mr. Augur, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Mrs. Caramanello abstained. Motion passed.

Next Board Meeting - February 27, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Library at Coginchaug Regional High School

Progress Toward Strategic Coherence Goals

Dr. Veronesi reviewed the three focus areas of student achievement, well-being and engagement. The iReady winter testing has been completed and Mrs. DiMaggio will review those results at the Student Achievement committee meeting. They were very pleased with the work that is being done and the growth across the district, particularly in math at the middle school level. They continue with curriculum writing at the middle school in ELA. The report card committee continues to meet. An administrative planning session was held for the Portrait of the Graduate and Dr. Veronesi met with Patrice Nelson, the person who will actually be working with the district. Patrice has extensive experience with HOT school planning and HOT school initiatives.

Dr. Veronesi reviewed that they continue to work with Middletown about a STEAM partnership in the middle school and the Colchester partnership will focus on innovation and HOT school programming. She explained that Colchester has the same grade configuration that we will be moving to and explained that their 3-5 school is a HOT school. Work continues to be sure that budget recommendations are aligned with the vision for the school reconfiguration, staffing and professional learning and development.

In the area of well-being, the board has set a goal of establishing a well-being committee and hopefully there will be student representation. Programming with Second Step Communities and Advisory continues. The well-being committee is continuing work on specific approaches for staff members. The Equity committee will meet for the third time in April and the Administrative Council meeting will be held at the end of this month.

In the area of engagement, they are focusing on the Board of Education reaching out to the community and the community understanding what's happening in the district. They had a meeting with ACES' communication specialist and a proposal is being created for the district. ACES felt that the district is ahead of the curve in the work that's being done on communication. She also felt that the board's goals and objectives help to heighten the engagement. Dr. Veronesi also reported that she is working with Silver Petrucelli on the beginning phase of EdSpecs for the school alteration projects at Brewster and Memorial as well as the vestibule work at Strong and Coginchaug. The flyer for the Brewster principal was created, with the assistance of ACES, and that is slated to be posted at the end of the week.

Dr. Veronesi stated that the budget has been finalized, aligned with strategic priorities and the work on the China partnership continues. A decision was made on behalf of Ningbo to offer a tuition payment of \$1,500 per student and they anticipate sending 20 students from China to Coginchaug in the Fall.

SRO Update

Brian Falcone explained that he and Trooper Mark Hesseltine were present to discuss the SRO's impact on the schools, the community, the students, the staff and the administration in the six months that he's been with the district. Mr. Falcone reviewed the key elements of an officer working in the district.

Officer Hesseltine stated that he has enjoyed working with the staff and students at the schools. He noted that more and more students stop by his office just to say hello and he's also had a few occasions when students have asked for help. Several students have expressed interest in careers in law enforcement and he is currently setting up a tour of the Troop F barracks as well as ride-alongs with other troopers.

A typical day begins at the high school parking lot where Officer Hesseltine is visible to the students and parents. He tries to drive in between Strong and Coginchaug during that time. He then visits the schools,

being in the hallways and cafeteria as well as going into the boys' bathroom. He also tries to visit one or two other schools during the day and typically ends his day in the high school parking lot. After that, he tries to visit two other schools' parking lots before the school day ends.

So far this year, Officer Hesseltine has responded to 34 school-related incidents district-wide. These included under-age drinking, sexting, motor vehicle violations, suspicious packages, physical altercations, damage to school property and complaints of suspicious persons on school grounds.

Mr. Falcone felt that the key to this is consistency and having a person who knows the community, the kids and the schools is a bonus. In the past, the response time from Troop F was 25 minutes and having someone local is just priceless.

Officer Hesseltine reported that he has made three arrests which all stemmed from the same case. In this case, the parents were adamant and wanted to press charges. He has also made four motor vehicle citations to students and a parent, all of which were warnings. He has also had to steer two cases to the Juvenile Review Board.

Mr. Falcone stated that one of the key pieces to this is working with parents and almost counseling them on this process. When possible, the administration tries to shift parents' thinking from pressing charges to going to the Juvenile Review Board. The Juvenile Review Board is made up of community officials from Durham and Middlefield that come together and hear the incident that occurred. They put a plan of action in place for the student which could include community service, a curfew or probation and, as long as the student follows that plan of action, there is no arrest, file or police involvement. When the child does not follow through or the parent does not help the child follow through, the court will then step in, there would be an arrest and the child would then have a court date. Mr. Falcone also explained that the three arrests that were made would have happened whether the district had an SRO or not.

Officer Hesseltine has also made four DCF referrals and has referred students and their families to support in mental health services. Mr. Falcone noted that the SRO's presence has an impact on adult and student behavior. Officer Hesseltine stops in the boys' bathrooms because there is a vaping issue in the high school and that has decreased significantly because of his presence. The students in all of the schools interact with Officer Hesseltine and are creating relationships. Mr. Falcone also noted Officer Hesseltine's presence in all of the district schools create a feeling of safety and security.

As far as plans for the future, Officer Hesseltine has arranged to have a private company do a Choices Matter presentation at the high school on March 4th about underage drinking. Another company will come to the high school on March 19th with a Save A Life tour presentation about distracted driving. They will also bring driving simulators for the students to try. On March 20th, Officer Hesseltine and another trooper will participate in Career Day at Strong School. He is also working to set up a chess club at Strong School. Officer Hesseltine is also looking to set up a mock crash at the high school in the Spring to demonstrate the effects of drunk driving.

Mr. Moore asked if the students have said anything about the anniversary of the Parkland shooting and Officer Hesseltine has not heard any comments about that. Dr. Taylor asked if the district is taking into account the number of incidents that there have been compared to the last several years. Mr. Falcone noted that the 34 incidents include anything from checking a package outside a building to disciplinary action. He felt that the disciplinary is on par with what has happened consistently every year. Mr. Falcone felt that the biggest differences are having a consistent person to go to and the other is being proactive. They are utilizing the Juvenile Review Board more now rather than arresting students.

Mr. Augur asked about the SRO's presence on social media and Officer Hesseltine stated that he has not yet created an Instagram account, but he knows that some of the other SROs do that. Mr. Falcone stated that they have had a number of incidents with regard to decisions students are making with their phones or other technology and Officer Hesseltine has been able to help prevent photos from being sent or released. Mr. Falcone stated that kids bring social media issues to his attention.

Mr. Falcone stated that having a consistent person, for him and the administrative team, has been a game-changer.

Dr. Veronesi mentioned that Officer Hesseltine will be participating in monthly meetings with other SROs. Officer Hesseltine explained that they meet every month and noted that he will also attend a National SRO class in May.

2019-2020 Budget Presentation

Dr. Veronesi started by explaining that the proposed decrease in Latin isn't a board proposal, but is part of the Superintendent's proposed budget. The administrators have reprioritized the district's priorities in order to move forward with what they see as a responsible budget. In looking at Latin, there are two full-time Latin teachers who are both exceptional teachers with exceptional programs. Currently, in Latin II at the high school, there are 22 students enrolled. In Latin III, IV and V combined, there are 28 students. At the middle school, there are 78 students enrolled in Latin. The reduction that is being proposed is a .4 reduction at the high school which would still allow all students in Latin to continue through Latin IV. If students needed and wanted Latin V, an adjustment could be made for that in future years. The interest in Latin has fluctuated over the past 10 years, from nine students to close to 30. Many students list Latin as their second choice when entering middle school and are placed in that class because French and Spanish classes are filled. The administrative team looked at two full-time staff members for a total of 50 students at CRHS and 74 (not 17) students at Strong (*correction made at the end of the board meeting to the numbers stated as 74 total students enrolled with 17 having selected Latin as their first choice*) and are now proposing a reduction and are looking at other ways to allow students to be involved in Latin. Dr. Veronesi will be presenting the high-level overview of the budget tonight, however she felt it was best to address the Latin issue tonight based upon the concern stated in the audience.

Dr. Veronesi summarized that the administrative team feels very fortunate to work with the staff that they work with in the schools, the parents and the Board of Education. She thanked everyone who worked on this budget and felt that the budget being presented tonight is very responsible and is focused on the district's goals and priorities.

The theme for this budget is RSD 13 United. Administrators and teachers can absolutely say this district is growing stronger every day. Instructional choices and support for students are deliberate, purposeful and get better and better. They felt that unification is happening on so many levels, particularly the board's decision to move toward a single educational approach. Areas of this budget are directed toward supporting that, including the capital plan which is united, connected and deliberate.

Dr. Veronesi thought that the trailer version of the District 13 budget would be something like the theme of this budget is a plan created to move mountains. It holds the theme of unity and what can be one when many people are united around a singular vision. The cast consists of 1,570 students and 299.4 staff members. Nearly 300 adults work together to assure that students are able to reach their destinations. The setting of the five to six schools has to be maintained by replacing or improving mechanical systems. Plan are enacted, including the Portrait of the Graduate, where the depiction of a successful student is painted, programming is developed and adults help with project-based learning. There are also

4.7 coaches, interventionists and teachers who are added to the team. The cast comes to the conclusion that the journey is eternal, the destination is never reached, but the mission is accomplished and the group will be back at it again. In the end, everyone learns that the budget increase is .06.

Dr. Veronesi explained that a budget book was now available and she asked if everyone would carefully review it and submit any questions or comments in the shared budget doc that will be available to the board members.

The majority of the budget is salaries and benefits that account for 75 percent of the total budget. In comparison to this year's budget, the greatest increase is in certified salaries, with other increases in purchased services, operating services, equipment and capital. Overall, expenditures are up by just about \$900,000. The increase of \$656,000 in salaries is a budgeting strategy which only budgets for 98 percent of the salaries. In purchased services, the increase is basically for the architectural and engineering fees that are associated with the Picket Lane culvert repair. The repair itself will likely be about \$800,000. There will also be more STEAM programming in the high school as well as engineering courses which require training and development for the teachers. They also want to move forward with more project-based learning, there will be new curriculum to implement and continued work on equity and well-being.

Operating Services includes funds for teacher training, travel to China and increases in magnet school and special education outplacement. The area of district-wide communication is also included here.

Capital priorities have been identified in the \$6.9 million proposed bonding package as well as in the operating budget. Sinks and counters as well as overall equipment in the Family and Consumer Science classroom at the high school need to be upgraded this year.

Dr. Veronesi also pointed out that there is a \$16,000 increase in dues and fees which is comprised of the partnership with China. In debt service, there is no change because of the plan to level-fund the debt.

Expenditure decreases are seen in benefits due to favorable renewal rates and the number of employees enrolled and supplies (which is about 4 percent of the budget).

Mrs. Neubig reported that projected revenue shows an increase of \$877,000 which is based on historical data. Building rental revenue has declined over the past few years. In-house tuition shows a decrease of \$114,000 due to a decrease in MTA tuition. That is offset by preschool tuition and tuition from the China students. The activity fee and other line item is budgeted at a small increase of \$2,500. In many towns, if the schools have a surplus at year-end, those funds are returned back to the towns. In a regional school district, those funds are used to offset budgets in subsequent years. This proposed budget represents an increase of \$988,000 of unexpended funds from the 2017-2018 year. This is a result of unexpended salaries and benefits. Special education excess cost is budgeted at an increase of \$18,000. The total increase of \$877,000 in revenue is almost identical to the increase in expenditures, resulting in a net operating budget increase of \$22,370 or .06 percent.

Dr. Veronesi explained that, as part of the budget process, they review the ratio of staff members to students, primarily in the elementary and middle school level. She pointed out that, as of February 1st, the class size in the kindergarten program at Brewster was 19, 19 and 19. At John Lyman, there are 36 students. There are another 14 students that may be registering for kindergarten, with several of them being Brewster siblings. Decisions needed to be made about staffing and they decided to have four classes at Brewster and two at Lyman. Dr. Veronesi also pointed out that there has been a request to have four teachers in the sixth grade contemporary program at Memorial. As of right now, all grade levels fall within the class size limits.

Dr. Veronesi also reviewed that they are proposing a net change in certified staffing of an increase of 4.7 FTE. The total staff change over a three-year period is a reduction of 10.2 staff members. She explained that they will talk in greater detail about staffing changes at the February 27th meeting. They do propose the reduction in Latin, a reduction of a sixth grade teacher based on enrollment at Memorial, a slight decrease in math, with a total decrease of 2.1. Additions being proposed are coaches and interventionists and include a special education coach. They would also like to add an additional special education teacher at John Lyman.

The four library media center teachers have been used to cover the five schools and they are now looking at having a full-time person at Brewster, Lyman and Memorial. They are proposing an increase in the three-year-old pre-K class, with the teacher going from .6 to .8. They are also proposing a small increase to one of the Social Studies teacher at Coginchaug based on student needs and projected course enrollment.

Dr. Veronesi reviewed overall salaries for certified staff which are projected to be just over \$17 million, with non-certified staff at \$4,600,000.

Mrs. Neubig went into details of the decrease in benefits of \$265,000 due to the favorable renewal rate which could potentially drop. The course reimbursement line is level-funded and is contractual. There is an increase of \$6,000 in pensions which is computed every two years. Unemployment was increased by \$10,000 basically due to potential liability. In purchased services, the overall increase of \$169,619 is due in part to a \$123,000 increase in instructional services. This represents the cost of the athletic trainer, PT and OT, homebound tutors, the district health official and specialized consultation services. Professional services has decreased by \$270,000 and includes legal, audit, security and technology support. That decrease is mainly due to security money which has yet to be spent.

Administrative services has increased by \$210,000, primarily due to the engineering and architectural services for the culvert project. This line item also includes actuarial services for the pension, strategic visioning and a school-based design team. Potential fees for Korn School and an insurance broker are also included.

Buildings and grounds services has an increase of \$60,000 which represents specialized services, such as plumbing, electrical and fire suppression and is due to unanticipated repairs. Maintenance repair and lease services shows an overall decrease of \$144,000. Disposal services went up by \$1,000, snow removal increased by \$15,000 because previous year budgets had been over-expanded and lawn care recently went out to bid and there is a slight increase. Repairs are basically budgeted with an increase for building repairs that have been under-funded in years past.

Managed print copy services has decreased by \$10,000 because printers have been removed from classrooms and color copies have been restricted. In the lease area, a large decrease of \$202,000 is due to a lease on instruments expiring and bus leases expiring at the end of 2019. Mrs. Neubig has budgeted to use vendor-owned buses rather than leasing district vehicles. There is an increase in transportation services that offsets that savings.

Dr. Veronesi stated that property insurance has had a very favorable renewal rate. There is an increase in communications as part of the district priority to increase engagement. Travel includes mileage reimbursement for administrators and other staff as well as travel to professional learning and workshops and conferences. This also accounts for the travel that the administrators will engage in to China, but this will be offset by student tuition. Magnet school tuition is projected to increase slightly and adult

education is a fee that is set. The Vo-Ag program will have three students graduating which results in a decrease of nearly \$60,000.

Dr. Veronesi reviewed that the supplies area is one that, while only 4 percent of the budget, the department heads work very hard to keep flat. They have used consortium bidding in Buildings and Grounds and have been able to get more favorable rates.

Mrs. Neubig reviewed that there is a decrease of \$28,000 in Buildings and Grounds Supplies, small decreases in electricity and bottled gas as well as heating fuel which has dropped in price. Heating fuel is budgeted at \$2.11 this year, as opposed to \$2.25 for last year.

Dr. Veronesi explained that textbook changes are basically due to the fact that the district's use of print resources has decreased over the past several years.

Mrs. Neubig pointed out that there is an overall increase in equipment of \$186,000, primarily due to the capital programs being budgeted at \$340,000 (a \$121,000 change over last year). Technology hardware has decreased by \$9,500, due to some items being leased. Software does represent quite a large increase of \$69,000, including software licensing and copyright laws. There have been two new software programs budgeted for the high school. There is a slight increase of \$5,000 in equipment to purchase a new kiln for Memorial School.

Dr. Veronesi reviewed that dues and fees are an indication of professional memberships and reiterated that the partnership with ACES and the international partnership was included in that line item.

Mrs. Neubig went over that the debt line is level-funded, with no increase or decrease. Debt is dropping off at the end of the 2022 year and again in 2025, the budget has been level-funded to allow the district to put forth a \$6.9 million bonding package with absolutely no increase to the budget. This will take care of the end-of-life immediate need critical systems and does not increase the operating budget at all.

Dr. Veronesi noted that capital has often been the casualty in the budget process and they are now making a concerted effort to have a very deliberate and purposeful approach to addressing the district's capital needs. A short- and long-term capital plan has been created and that will be addressed through the operating budget and the proposed bonding.

Mrs. Neubig explained that the items listed are not part of the \$6.9 million bonding package but would include things like the turf and track replacement and classroom furniture replacement. Dr. Veronesi explained that they are looking at furniture differently now and how it enhances or detracts from the students' learning. She had asked Mrs. Neubig to increase that line item by \$20,000 to begin to have a furniture replacement cycle.

Mrs. Neubig went on to review Unanticipated Building, Equipment and Maintenance. This line item has traditionally been used for repairs, but has been used for equipment failures this year. A power supply system at \$23,000 is for the Information Technology department and is a battery backup system which will replace the current system. The stage flooring and curtain are needed upgrades in the auditorium due to wear and tear. She also reviewed the Family and Consumer Science classroom upgrade and explained that it had been asked for last year but was not funded.

Dr. Veronesi explained that the budget for MTA (Middlesex Transition Academy) includes tuition of \$52,000 and there are 17 students anticipated next year, two of whom will be at somewhat of a reduced rate. They are anticipating 14 students in the summer program, at a rate of \$2,000 per student. District 13

students do not pay tuition to the district. Total revenue from MTA is just over \$1 million and \$60,000 will be transferred to the general fund, leaving a total anticipated balance at MTA of \$82,000.

Dr. Veronesi explained that the per pupil expenditure will be reviewed at the next budget meeting as will the rationale behind the staffing decisions that are being proposed. They will also share the capital plan with the public at the next meeting. She explained that anyone in the public can send questions to budgetquestions@rsd13.org and those will go directly to Mrs. Neubig and Dr. Veronesi. They will respond and will address any questions at the subsequent meetings.

Dr. Veronesi acknowledged the work of the entire school team in putting this budget together. No new proposals are put forth without being linked to the district's goals and priorities in the strategic plan. Mrs. Neubig also noted that this presentation will be online on the district website tomorrow. Dr. Veronesi and Mrs. Neubig thanked Tippi Popp for all of her hard work. She also noted that the budget will be available at the town halls and libraries tomorrow as well.

Mr. Moore reminded everyone that the February 27th meeting will be solely on the budget.

The board took a short break at this point.

Dr. Veronesi explained that Mr. Sadinsky had pointed out that instead of saying 17 students picked Latin as their first choice, there are 74 students who are taking Latin at Strong, 29 in seventh grade and 45 in eighth grade, 17 of whom picked it as their first choice.

Vote to Authorize the Superintendent to Pursue Bonding for District-Wide Capital Responsibilities

Mr. Moore explained that, earlier today, the Educational Resources Committee recommended to go ahead with the \$6.9 million bonding. The Finance Committee had also recommended to go ahead with the \$6.9 million bonding. This vote would be to get the language prepared and begin this process.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Augur, to authorize the Superintendent to pursue bonding in the amount of \$6.9 million for district-wide capital responsibilities.

In favor of authorizing the Superintendent to pursue bonding in the amount of \$6.9 million for district-wide capital responsibilities: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote to Establish a Regional School District 13 Building Committee

Mr. Moore explained that there are a number of projects that will require a committee, including alterations to the schools, some of the capital improvements and the Pickett Lane reconstruction. This committee will consist of members from both the board and the public and they will be appointed over the next few weeks.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to establish a Regional School District 13 building committee.

Dr. Taylor asked if this will eventually take the place of the Utilization Committee and Mr. Moore explained that these are the people that actually oversee the activities.

In favor of establishing a Regional School District 13 building committee: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote to Authorize the Superintendent to Apply for School Construction Grant

Mr. Moore explained that this vote is for Dr. Veronesi to apply for a school construction grant for any alterations and improvements to the reconfiguration.

Vote to authorize the Superintendent to apply for school construction grant, establish a building committee, and to authorize the preparation of schematic drawings and outlined specifications for the construction of classrooms at Frederick F. Brewster School

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Taylor, to move the following resolution for the Frederick F. Brewster School, resolve that the Board of Education and Regional School District 13 authorizes the district to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services for and to accept or reject a grant for the construction of classrooms at the Frederick F. Brewster School; resolve that the Regional District 13 building committee is hereby established as a building committee with regard to the construction of classrooms at the Frederick F. Brewster School; and resolve that the Board of Education of Regional School District 13 hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outlined specifications for the construction of classrooms at Frederick F. Brewster School.

In favor of the above resolution: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Vote to authorize the Superintendent to apply for school construction grant, establish a building committee, and to authorize the preparation of schematic drawings and outlined specifications for the conversion of existing locker room to classroom at Memorial Middle School

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to move the following resolution for Memorial Middle School, resolve that the Board of Education and Regional School District 13 authorizes the district to apply to the Commissioner of Administrative Services for and to accept or reject a grant for the conversion of existing locker room to classroom at Memorial Middle School; resolve that the Regional School District 13 building committee is hereby established as the building committee with regard to the conversion of existing locker room to classroom at Memorial Middle School; and resolve that the Board of Education of Regional School District 13 hereby authorizes at least the preparation of schematic drawings and outlined specifications for the conversion of existing locker room to classroom at Memorial Middle School.

In favor of the above resolution: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

A. Board of Education Special Session Meeting/Retreat and Board of Education Goals - January 19, 2019

Mr. Moore explained that goals and objectives came out of that special meeting and include four basic pillars: student achievement, well-being, engagement and fiscal oversight. They meld quite consistently with the Strategic Coherence Plan. He reviewed some of the specific goals under student achievement,

including the establishment of a Talented and Gifted program. Under well-being, some of the specific goals included issues such as safety and recognition of achievements and establishment of a well-being board committee. Mr. Moore has asked Mrs. Caramanello if she would chair that committee and she has agreed to do that. Mr. Moore also recommended that a student and a teacher serve on that committee as well.

As for engagement, some specific goals include hosting a community conversation with the board at least twice a year, to conduct an employee engagement survey as well as survey parents to see why students are leaving the district. The Ningbo, China partnership process is scheduled to begin and they will talk to families about hosting students from China as well as if our students are thinking about going there. They also hope to continue publishing a community newsletter and invite community members to sit on committees. They also want to communicate with PTOs on a more regular basis as well as parent and community booster organizations.

Regarding fiscal oversight, one of the specific goals would be to maintain transparent and specific alignment between district spending and the district's mission.

Mr. Moore explained that this is the first time specific goals and objectives have been set of the Board in a long time, if ever. Mr. Hicks could not recall this ever having been done before. Mr. Moore hoped it would make the board more accountable to the general public, students and teachers.

Mr. Augur asked if those goals would be published on the district's website and Dr. Veronesi thought it would go under the Announcements section as well as the Board of Education section. She noted that they are talked about in Mr. Moore's newsletter as well as her Town Times article this month. Mr. Augur asked if the Strategic Plan would also be updated and that there could be some confusion.

B. Student Achievement Committee Meeting - January 23, 2019

Mrs. Petrella reported that they had a meeting on January 23, 2019 and Grace Gaudette, their new community member, attended as well. They reviewed the PSAT scores and the fact that the ninth graders also take a version of the PSAT. There is not a lot of emphasis put on this for the students, however the staff uses the results to fine-tune programming and course offerings. Scores exceed the state and national goals in quite a few areas. As for next steps, the teachers analyze the results for all grades and create action plans based on that information.

The committee also discussed the new high school graduation requirements and Mrs. Petrella asked if that information could be forwarded to the entire board. The district actually has more requirements than the State does. Dr. Veronesi explained that that information will be included in the board packet for the board to vote on at the February 27th meeting.

They reviewed the proposal high school course offerings, which will include an introduction to engineering and robotics, manufacturing and innovation, AP computer science principles, mobile app development, a design and build studio, an ocean exploration course, entrepreneurship and others.

Mrs. Petrella also noted that NEASC will include Portrait of the Graduate as part of their requirements.

Dr. Taylor asked if there was an update on any of the new courses, but Dr. Veronesi did not have that information at the moment.

C. Finance Committee Meeting - January 24, 2019

Mr. Augur reported that the main issue that was discussed at the Finance Committee meeting was the \$6.9 million bonding proposal.

D. Educational Resources Committee Meeting - February 13, 2019

Mr. Moore reported that the ERC met earlier this evening and discussed the bonding proposal as well as had a presentation about the field house/storage building. The booster clubs are offering approximately \$35,000 over five years and that the total cost would be approximately \$130,000. The board had already recommended that this be considered as a separate item on a referendum. A number of questions came up at the committee meeting and more work needs to be done.

Mr. Augur asked if the building committee would also manage this project and do the preliminary research and Mr. Moore felt that they would. Dr. Veronesi felt that it may take a while for the building committee to get up and running, but the district will get started on the research.

Mr. Augur also asked why a tarp has never been put on the concrete slab and Mr. Moore thought that moisture and other things would happen underneath a tarp.

The ERC also discussed the DATTCO bus contract and recommended that a discussion about that process be brought to the full board. Mrs. Neubig and Dr. Veronesi have recommended that the district continue with DATTCO for another five years. DATTCO has provided transportation for the district for the last 32 years and it isn't clear when the last time the contract went out to bid. The district has been very satisfied with their service as well as the fact that they have a local depot in Durham. If the district goes out to bid, that would mean they reject the renewal proposal of a 5.5 percent increase this year, with 3 percent for the remaining four years. That would include new buses as well as the use of some smaller 48-seat buses.

Mrs. Neubig recommended that the district stay with DATTCO because of their excellent service, but also because of the unknown school districting. DATTCO is familiar with the street, the students and the district's needs. She did not feel this would be a great time to bring in a new vendor. Mrs. Neubig has spoken with different business managers and they are seeing double-digit increases in transportation and they have advised her to stay if the district is happy.

Dr. Veronesi explained that this issue does not require a board vote and this is more informational in nature. Mr. Hicks felt that the board should not have this discussion as it was not on the agenda and Mr. Moore explained that the Educational Resources Committee recommended the board have the discussion. It was agreed to talk about this issue at the next meeting.

Communications

Mr. Moore reported that he received emails from Maya Liss, Christine Viski and Katie Tietjen about Latin and another may have come in during the meeting. Mr. Augur was contacted by Nancy Cuomo about Latin as well. Dr. Veronesi also received correspondence about increasing Spanish.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Veronesi updated the Board that there is a professional learning day scheduled for this Friday afternoon which will be dedicated to the use of technology to enhance student learning. She invited any and all board members to attend. Mrs. Caramanello will have her board orientation with Mr. Moore, Mr. Hicks and Dr. Veronesi.

The Ningbo partnership is organized around the topic of STEAM and the plan is to begin that work virtually. Their students are very interested in seeing what our students are doing. The meeting on March 14th is for students and parents to learn about the partnership.

Business Manager's Report

Mrs. Neubig reported that the new accounting software has been fully implemented and three payrolls have been completed. It was also used to produce the budget.

Expenditures are running at 53 percent expended YTD and revenue is at 55.5 percent. MTA's revenue is at 66 percent and expenditures are at 54 percent. The Department of Homeland Security is meeting on Friday and they will make recommendations about what applications they will fund. She hopes to hear if the district has been awarded any money in the next two weeks.

New Business

A. 2019-2020 Board of Education and Committee Meeting Schedules

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the 2019-2020 Board of Education and Committee Meeting schedules.

There was some discussion about how to schedule committee meetings when committees are just being formed.

In favor of approving the 2019-2020 Board of Education and Committee Meeting schedules: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

B. 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 District Calendars

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 District Calendars.

Mrs. Petrella asked why the February vacation was so short and April vacation is usually an entire week. Dr. Veronesi explained that that change has been in place for several years. It was also discussed that school will start before Labor Day. Dr. Veronesi felt that having a three-day week, then a four-day week, then a five-day week helps the students to transition back to school.

In favor of approving the 2019-2020 and 2021-2021 District Calendars: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Field Trip Request

Mr. Moore reviewed that they have received a field trip request from DECA for the DECA International Career Development in Orlando.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the request for the CRHS DECA International Career Development Conference field trip to Orlando, Florida from April 26-May 1, 2019,

with the understanding that this trip may be withdrawn at any time by actions of Homeland Security or other law enforcement agencies and that parents or guardians will be apprised of this action.

In favor of approving the DECA field trip to Orlando, Florida from April 26 to May 1, 2019: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, Dr. Taylor and Mr. Yamartino. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

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

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mr. Augur, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz
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