

Revised

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, July 10, 2024 at 6:00 PM in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Board members present: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio (by phone), Mrs. Hurlbert (by phone), Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone

Board members absent: Mr. Roraback

Administration present: Dr. Schuch, Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance; Mrs. Keane, Director of Student Services and Special Education; Mr. Brough, Human Resources Specialist; Mr. Pietrasko, Director of Infrastructure and Security Technology; Mrs. Quarato, Associate Director of Learning, Innovation and Development, and Dr. Siegel, Associate Director of Learning, Innovation and Accountability

Dr. Schuch called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Both Mr. DelVecchio and Mrs. Hurlbert commented that the audio was muted.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Election of Officers

Dr. Schuch opened the floor for nominations for the office of chair. Mrs. Petrella nominated Mrs. Dahlheimer for chair. Hearing no other nominations, Dr. Schuch closed the nominations.

In favor of Lindsay Dahlheimer as chair: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer thanked everyone for their support. She reviewed that the Policy committee approved the new position of Vice Chair for the Board of Education and opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair. Mr. Mennone nominated Mr. Moore for vice chair. Hearing no other nominations, Mrs. Dahlheimer closed the nominations.

In favor of Bob Moore as vice chair: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer then opened the floor for nominations for secretary. Mr. Moore nominated Mrs. Petrella for secretary. Hearing no other nominations, Mrs. Dahlheimer closed the nominations.

In favor of Lucy Petrella as secretary: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer then opened the floor for nominations for treasurer. Mr. Mennone nominated Mr. Stone for treasurer. Hearing no other nominations, Mrs. Dahlheimer closed the nominations.

In favor of Jason Stone as treasurer: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer thanked everyone for all of their hard work.

Public Comment - at the beginning of the meeting public comment should refer to items on the agenda

A. In-person public comment

Mike Cherkosky, from Durham, appreciated the communication about the Memorial project and reconfiguration, but he felt that more needs to be done. He felt that they need to avoid a referendum in the Fall or immediately after the last referendum failed. He felt that the process needs to be longer and holding a few sessions in the summer doesn't cut it as a lot of people are on vacation. Mr. Cherkosky felt that significant issues and riffs were created by the board with how quickly reconfiguration and the elimination of school choice was done. He asked if they held a referendum in the Fall and it failed again, would they hold a third. He added that the reconfiguration and ending school choice was a complete disaster with very little input from parents or teachers which are the groups that they need to get a new school. He felt that there are large portions of the community who are not on board with the plan and reconfiguration should have come after the Memorial project was approved. He urged them to put effort into mitigating some of the significant problems that reconfiguration will bring for parents, students and teachers. Mr. Cherkosky still had questions about the Memorial project, specifically how realistic the price tag is. The builders even noted that they won't know what they find until the work is started. Another issue is Brewster which can only be sold for educational purposes. He would not want to be stuck with a very expensive renovation, going millions of dollars over budget and another empty elementary school building. He does not feel it is fiscally responsible. Mr. Cherkosky reviewed that they need to listen to the parents, make it a longer process and listen to the teachers.

Mallory Castro, from Durham, noted that she has a toddler, but no one in the schools yet. She felt that a lot of people have lost faith in the process and have lost trust because of the reconfiguration process. She added that it looks like a lot of people don't believe the data. She would love to see something changed as she does believe it will cost more in the long run to maintain the older buildings and thought they could learn from other towns. Mrs. Castro was happy to get the flyer and see information posted on Facebook, but felt there were other opportunities as well. She attended the meetings in February and thought that more forums could be helpful.

Dom DelVecchio, from Durham, thanked everyone for all the work they have put in. He noted that you can easily find information on the district's website under Utilization from 2013 to 2018, with a good summary in 2018. However, after 2018, there's a huge void on that page and you now need to delve into the individual minutes to piece together the options. He reviewed that there had been a multitude of options, but there was no clarity on what they entailed. He suggested they step back and summarize the

14 options and explain why some were eliminated. Mr. DeVecchio noted that there is capacity at the high school but the board dismissed moving younger grades there as they felt parents wouldn't support that. He noted that it is very difficult to follow the stream of information and suggested they explain the options and why some were not pursued and cost estimates for each option.

Chris DeGennaro, from Middlefield, wondered why the main topic of the agenda is discussing how the majority of the town opposes the interim plan and what the options are since they opposed it.

Maureen Funke, from Durham, thanked the board for their hard work. She noted that she has not come to all of the board meetings over the last year, but has come to enough to know that this has been discussed for a really long time. She agreed that getting the correct information to the people is very important because nothing seems to be good enough. Based on the number of insane comments on Facebook, she thought there would be a lot more people at the meeting. Mrs. Funke added that the other districts that have had budget overruns were mostly budgets that were developed and contracted before COVID. These projected costs are post-COVID and commercial construction costs have stabilized for at least the last 18 months, though there may still be an issue that no one can project. O&G has no reason to give anyone a bad number. She also noted that everyone on the board and administration has always gotten back to her within 24 hours, if not minutes, and very clearly answered her questions. She encouraged everyone to call and ask any questions. Mrs. Funke felt that the proposed plan is better for students, taxpayers, and property values. The incoming kindergarten class is at a higher number than previous classes and per pupil costs will go down.

Chris DeGennaro, from Middlefield, added that he is 110 percent in support of a single K-5, but didn't feel that the interim plan makes any sense. He felt it would exhaust effort, energy and money while they try to garner support to build the school.

B. Remote public comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

A. Board of Education Special Executive Session Meeting - June 5, 2024

Mr. Mennone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stone, to approve the minutes from the Board of Education Special Executive Session Meeting on June 5, 2024, as presented.

In favor of approving the minutes from the Board of Education Special Executive Session Meeting on June 5, 2024, as presented: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DeVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

B. Board of Education Regular Meeting - June 5, 2024

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stone, to approve the minutes from the Board of Education Regular Meeting on June 5, 2024, as presented.

Mrs. Dahlheimer asked to have the handout from Mrs. Keane included in the minutes.

In favor of approving the minutes from the Board of Education Regular Meeting on June 5, 2024, as presented: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Discussion on Facility Planning Next Steps

Mrs. Dahlheimer explained that they have not met since the failed referendum, though most have been in contact. The next steps email went out through Parent Square, Facebook and to all boards and commissions in both towns and they received about 42 responses. Looking at the referendum results, it did not pass in Middlefield by a 20-vote margin but did pass in Durham.

Mrs. Dahlheimer reviewed the five main themes coming out of the feedback, including concerns about grade 5 attending Strong during construction, communication and process issues, logistical and financial concerns, educational and developmental concerns, and suggestions and alternative ideas. She then went on to read some quotes from the feedback.

Mrs. Dahlheimer then read a statement regarding the plans for Fall of 2024, acknowledging the frustration people have, but noting they are committed to providing communication, support and guidance. This configuration was set in motion in August 2023 and boxes are packed and being moved. The board is dedicated to soliciting all input, feedback and concerns.

Mrs. Hurlbert then went on to explain that the board asked Dr. Schuch to reach out to the administrators and conversations were also held with folks at the Town Halls. In terms of communication process issues, she thanked Dr. Schuch for providing responses. Kids have made visits to the schools they will attend next year. Emails and newsletters have been sent out. Weekly communications will continue to be sent through Parent Square on Fridays.

Regarding the concern about grade 5 temporarily being housed at Strong, a 30-minute daily recess will be provided for the fifth graders. Their classrooms will be located in a separate wing and additional supervision will be provided. They will also work to be sure the fifth graders feel a sense of belonging.

Logistical and financial concerns will be addressed by Mrs. Neubig and/or Dr. Schuch. As for educational and developmental concerns, the board will assure that class sizes remain within the district's targets and transition plans will be shared with families. They will also create a five-year strategic plan to help define long-term educational vision, goals and priorities.

Mrs. Dahlheimer thanked the board members for trusting them to analyze the feedback and prepare for today.

Mr. Moore reviewed that he has been involved in the financial aspect of this since 2015, when they first held a vote to close Lyman School. It has gone through many changes since then. He reviewed that they lost some time during COVID, but have come back to look at 14 different options over the last two years with two different consultants. The total project is \$76 million, with \$37 million in state reimbursement, resulting in a net cost to the district of about \$38 million.

Mr. Moore then reviewed that, up until two years ago, the district had only used 1 percent of its budget for capital projects. The only mechanism the district has is bonding which is basically a loan. He then reviewed how the bonding process works. The bonding will need to be authorized for \$76 million, but they would actually only borrow what is not covered by the state grant. During construction, the district will have to borrow some short-term notes and will begin to pay back the money once the project is complete. It is paid once a year and is at a fixed interest rate.

Mr. Moore reviewed the estimated budget impact from 2024-2034, with a 3 percent increase each year that doesn't include any capital improvements or repairs. He also reviewed the budget impact from the Memorial School project. Debt service will be less than \$2.8 million per year which will be equal to the savings of costs that will be avoided. Mr. Moore noted that Mrs. Neubig has estimated the capital needs at Brewster and Lyman to be about \$25 million which will also need to be bonded. He added that this option is the one that came out to be most cost-effective in terms of expenditures, savings and cost of construction. Mr. Moore noted that this has been going on since 2007 and many options have been vetted.

Mrs. Neubig clarified that they need to bond for the entire project amount because the state wants to be sure the voters agreed with the project. Once the state has committed, the money doesn't get pulled back. Bond anticipation notes, the short-term notes, are like a construction mortgage and are interest-only. The \$25 million estimate for capital improvements is not because things were not maintained and is really because systems have reached the end of their life. Parts are not available any longer. She noted that all districts have to bond for capital and that is not unique to District 13.

Mrs. Neubig noted that she asked the bond advisor to help evaluate the mill rate impact, which he did, and added that he does not get paid until a bond is issued. She reviewed that he analyzed the impact with a bonding of \$38.9 million and \$25 million. Mrs. Neubig went through the individual tables, noting that they anticipate an operational savings in 2027-2028. She did note that the debt service will increase after 2030 as well. She also mentioned that these numbers are for the Memorial project only and do not consider anything else in the towns' budgets or the Board of Education's annual budget. Looking at the mill rate impact for end-of-life system improvements only, the mill rate would go up in 2027-2028 because there would not be any operational savings. Mrs. Neubig noted that the bonding numbers are assumptions at current interest rates and for what they know now.

Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that this was the best way for people to understand the difference between the project and end-of-life system improvements. She felt that people need to understand the urgency of the state of the current buildings. Mr. Mennone added that the Memorial project also allows them to look ahead at Strong and Cuginchaug as well. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that districts all over the state are facing these kinds of issues. Mrs. Neubig explained that the \$25 million does not include every necessary repair, but just essential repairs. She added that some of those projects would be state-reimbursable as well.

Mrs. Dahlheimer then explained some of the benefits of renovating Memorial School to a preK-5 elementary school. Those include a consistent curriculum and instructional approach, collaboration between teachers, fostering relationships and a sense of community, centralizing resources, cost savings on administrative and operational expenses, and providing a "future ready" school.

Mrs. Dahlheimer explained that the board has always focused on sale or long-term leases to educational organizations for both Brewster and Lyman. Brewster School is subject to a right of first refusal in favor

of the Town of Durham. The town may purchase it for \$1.50, as per the 1986 agreement. Lyman School property can be sold or leased without restriction. She added that there are magnet and charter schools chomping at the bit to have buildings in our communities. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that she felt that the Meriden Hills Baptist Church is still interested in purchasing Lyman School.

If no action is taken, the district will continue to operate all five buildings, with the estimated cost of \$25 million in basic capital improvements. Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that would be the district in a position to watch things degrade, including programming. The project would also help with safety and security needs. Operational costs include staffing, maintenance, plowing, utilities, repair and replacement of systems and savings from those would be redirected to the repayment of the bonding. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that they do, for the most part, know what they will find once they start renovating Memorial. She also felt that it is next to impossible to renovate a building with kids in it.

Mrs. Dahlheimer added that she is willing to walk door-to-door in both towns to have discussions about this project. Both towns have been very helpful and they are willing to put up signage for the next referendum. She explained that the district cannot advocate after a certain time period. The board does not want to see a low turnout for the vote, however the turnout has been consistent.

Mrs. Petrella added that she was in a school where they did a renovation with the students in the building and it took a lot longer to do as well as being disruptive. She also noted the benefits of having older students in school with younger students. Mrs. Dahlheimer also asked administration to look to see if there was a way to bus kids from one school to another for pick-up. Mrs. Neubig stated that they currently bus some students from Memorial and Lyman to Brewster for the after-school program. She thought they could look into the possibility of transporting to other schools as well and they would work with the families.

Mr. Moore made comments about the Building committee and noted that they have been very active in this. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that the Building committee kept costs under control on the Pickett Lane and field house projects and are very fiscally responsible. Mrs. Hurlbert then added that the QR code brings people to the Memorial Project slide show with more specific information. Mrs. Dahlheimer also felt they should take a look at the Utilization portion of the website and get more information there and Mrs. Neubig will look into that.

Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that they needed to provide more information and try to hold another referendum in the Fall. She would like to hold two forums in July and August as well as a public hearing. She wants to make sure the community has the opportunity to ask questions about the project. Mrs. Dahlheimer suggested Monday, July 15th, for the community forum, with a special meeting immediately after to set a public hearing date. She'd hope to have another forum at the end of August if there is board consensus.

Mr. Moore's comments were inaudible at first, but he added that designers have to plan according to what will be bonded as well as the construction schedule. He added that once the referendum date is set, they are prohibited from spending any more money on advocating for the project.

Dr. Darcy had the impression that some people voted against the referendum because they thought they would be voting yes for the bonding as well. She felt it was important for everyone to understand that they are two different decisions. The board needs to understand what the real concerns are so that they can be addressed. Dr. Darcy feels that the financial piece is almost unquestionable. Mr. Moore hoped

that they could answer questions at the forums. Mr. Stone asked if the email will remain open so that people can ask questions. Mrs. Dahlheimer explained that she responded to all 40 respondents, thanking them for their feedback, and the email will remain open. There was then general consensus to move forward with the forums and public hearing.

Superintendent's Report

A. Grade Level Reconfiguration 2024-2025 Update

Dr. Schuch noted that the move during the week of June 17th was very organized and successful. Unpacking will happen in the Fall. Mr. Moore asked Mrs. Neubig to follow up on transportation between schools. Mrs. Dahlheimer the concerns that had been discussed, noting that informational slide shows had been sent to all parents. Staff directories have been updated. Mrs. Dahlheimer added that they are considering operating separate bus routes for Strong and Cuginchaug during the temporary relocation timeframe. QA+M has assessed the Lyman and Strong facilities and recommended temporary design changes. Teaching staff will be transferred during the construction.

B. Kindergarten Registration Update

Dr. Schuch reported that all kindergarten classes will be on one campus in the Fall and there are currently 95 registered. That number is a little higher than was expected as there is a disproportionately high number of families who are choosing to enroll their child under the waiver. Class size policy in kindergarten is 18 and, at 95 students, it is currently at 19. He asked the board if 18 is the maximum class size or more of a target and if they need to add a kindergarten teacher, they ought to do that tonight. He would like it on the record by consensus so that they can advertise for another teacher.

Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that they need to hold true to what they say about class sizes and stick to it. Mr. Moore added that it was more important to have more teachers and less students. Mrs. Hurlbert and Mr. DelVecchio both agreed with smaller class sizes. There was general consensus of the board to move forward with hiring another kindergarten teacher.

C. Other Updates (if applicable)

Dr. Schuch congratulated Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone on their election as the board's officers. Dr. Schuch added that Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Trainer did an awesome job with graduation.

Staff Reports

A. Director of Finance - Kim Neubig

Mrs. Neubig reported that they are still working on closing out the year and will hopefully report on final numbers at the next meeting, but June ended with 98 percent expended, 99 percent encumbered with 95 percent of revenue received. They were able to hold the anticipated surplus at \$350,000 for next year's budget.

The turf replacement has been completed, but there are still supplies and construction equipment out there. The bathrooms in the field house have been framed and inspections have been passed. They do expect the CO by July 26th. The lights will start being delivered next week, but will not be installed until there is a CO. Work is also happening on the sprinkler project at Strong and Cuginchaug. PA systems are also being upgraded.

Mrs. Dahlheimer reiterated that the track is not open yet. Mr. Moore asked about the agreement about the solar farm on Maiden Lane and Mrs. Neubig noted that there was no formal agreement, but a letter of interest. She has heard nothing in the past five years, but the district would be interested in looking into it.

Mrs. Dahlheimer wanted to discuss the dedication ceremony for the field house, track and field. She would like to see an updated sign at the complex as well.

B. High School Program of Studies Update - Deb Stone

Mrs. Stone noted that Mrs. Trainer had provided the information for the board. Mrs. Stone explained that the last column shows a multitude of reasons that a class may not run. Mrs. Trainer added that juniors and seniors were asked to choose between two and eight primary electives and anywhere between four and eight alternative electives. Mrs. Stone added that they did this to introduce students to other subject areas and limit the number of students in study halls.

Mrs. Stone explained that articulated classes are classes that are worth three credits at a partner college, including UCONN, University of Bridgeport and hopefully another soon. Mrs. Hurlbert asked if there were any fees associated with articulated classes and Mrs. Stone explained that it is \$50 per credit. Mrs. Hurlbert added that there are also additional fees for the AP exams. Mrs. Stone explained that they don't get enough requests for some classes, so they pick a higher priority elective for the teacher. Mrs. Trainer added that they have discussions with the team leader as well as the individual teacher. Mrs. Hurlbert stated that there are three art classes that are not running due to more courses than FTE load and asked if those courses would run if an additional teacher was added in the Fall. Mrs. Stone stated that they could look at that, but they did not have a lot of kids choose those classes.

Mrs. Hurlbert asked how many students have chosen a pathway and Mrs. Stone stated that they haven't had them choose pathways yet. The one completed pathway (health and human services) was presented to the freshmen but that is all that has been presented. Business and technology pathways will follow. Mr. Moore asked for information on what classes are included in each of the pathways and Mrs. Stone will forward that.

Mrs. Hurlbert asked about the two tech ed classes that are not running and felt that that teacher is currently teaching .6 human services and .4 tech ed. She wondered if the enrollment and interest is proportional to that in terms of requested classes. Mrs. Stone explained that 3D modeling and design has not run in the past three years. Robotics Engineering is taught by a different instructor and they only get one or two requests for Robotics II. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if they have surveyed the younger grades about tech ed. Mrs. Hurlbert stated that historically when something is removed from the program of studies it doesn't go back in. She again asked how many students are asking for the .6 human services courses vs. how many are asking for .4 tech ed classes being offered. Mrs. Stone explained that once they set the Power School scheduler to work, the requests go away. She did offer to check how many students

are registered for EMR, EMT and fire science classes. Mrs. Hurlbert was more concerned with the level of interest and the impact of reducing the tech ed classes. She felt that the district talks about a manufacturing pathway, but is continuing to reduce offerings. She added that 4.5 credits of tech ed are being offered next year with eight classes as opposed to 14 tech ed classes and a total of eight credits in 2021.

Mrs. Stone explained that they are all being offered, but those classes were the lowest requested. She is not suggesting that any of these classes come out of the program of studies. Mrs. Trainer explained that they provide an overview to everyone, even if it's not included as a class for this year.

Mrs. Hurlbert noted that the two part-time tech ed teachers do not equal one FTE and she would like to see that changed. She asked if they could take a look at how many students are in each of the classes in the Fall. Mrs. Hurlbert asked about unified music and unified health and when that will become official. Mrs. Stone explained that they are both in Rob Bajoros' area, but they have yet to be able to get together to see what that would look like.

Mrs. Hurlbert asked Dr. Schuch and Mr. Pietrasko about the process where proposed classes were presented to the Board of Ed before making it into the program of studies and where that process has gone. Dr. Darcy asked what the process was that teachers had to go through to get a course into the program of studies. Mrs. Dahlheimer felt that a lot of that was done through Mrs. DiMaggio, the curriculum director. Mr. Pietrasko explained that each department in Central Office maintains its own section of the website and he didn't know about specific links or documents.

Mrs. Trainer explained that they ask departments to work collaboratively and have team leaders produce classes that they believe would match students' interests. From there, the primary and alternate numbers determine classes. Dr. Darcy noted that it has been her experience that the Boards of Ed have to approve curriculum. Mrs. Hurlbert added that state statute dictates that. Mrs. Dahlheimer stated that she and Mr. Moore had a discussion about this and it's been quite a while since they approved a textbook. She felt that this should be sent to Student Achievement and that they need to get a handle on the role of the board when it comes to curriculum. She noted that the board is very interested in this and it's within their realm and purview to make sure classes offered match the board's goals and mission.

Mrs. Hurlbert stated that Mrs. DiMaggio left in June of 2022 and asked what happened to the work of that individual. Dr. Schuch stated that he does not recall new courses coming before the board for approval since his arrival in January of 2021. He does recall Student Achievement meetings discussing class offerings. Dr. Schuch has not seen that process in other districts, but noted that they can certainly build that in. Any necessary staff for those courses would be built in through the budget process. Mr. Moore recalled that Mr. Falcone used to bring a list of proposed new courses sometime in April or May and the board would vote to accept them, but not get into the details of the curriculum. Mrs. Stone offered to share the curriculum of the articulated courses. Mr. Moore asked if the UB course credits would be accepted at other universities and Dr. Siegel noted that each university has their own standard. Dr. Darcy felt that articulated classes help on college applications, even if the college does not accept the credit. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if there were more colleges that don't accept the UConn credits vs. the UB credits. Mrs. Stone felt that Connecticut schools usually transfer credits with other Connecticut schools.

Mrs. Hurlbert again asked what happens to forms and processes when an administrator leaves the district. She reiterated that Connecticut state statutes mandate that Boards of Education review and approve

curriculum. Dr. Siegel noted that they received about 50 drives and apologized if they missed that. Mrs. Dahlheimer suggested that this issue be brought to Student Achievement.

Mrs. Stone also reported that 167 AP tests were taken and 20 percent of the tests scored 5, 26 percent were 4, 34 percent were 3, 18 percent were 2 and 2 percent were less. She will forward the specific information to the Student Achievement committee. Discussion continued about the advantages for students taking AP classes.

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that the board has not officially eliminated the Latin program and asked if they are still offering it virtually. Mrs. Stone explained that they do not have anyone to teach Latin, but they do have a relationship with Virtual High School. The district is no longer posting for a Latin teacher.

August 14, 2024 Requested Amendment: Mrs. Hurlbert asked to include that the AP exam fee for 2024 was \$98 per exam. She also added that she reminded Mrs. Stone that courses in the spreadsheet that was shared note specifically that classes were not being offered in the 2024-2025 program of studies. She also noted that 35 percent of AP scores were 3s, not 34 percent.

Board Communications and Professional Development

Mrs. Dahlheimer had distributed information about the Leadership Conference on August 8th at Water's Edge and encouraged the board members to attend. The deadline for the CABA/CAPSS Conference is August 25th and the keynote speaker is Tim Shriver, chairman of Special Olympics.

Mrs. Dahlheimer also sent everyone the CABA newsletter and she also submitted information to CABA about the Panama Unified Sports group for the next newsletter.

Mrs. Dahlheimer also acknowledged the Building committee for their hard work. Dr. Darcy thanked Ryan Walsh for his email about the online petition and noted that there seemed to be signatures from people outside the community.

New Business

A. Review and Vote on Committee Membership

Mrs. Dahlheimer hoped to create a Well-Being Committee in the next few months, with an action-based team. They may want to include a student representative as well.

Mrs. Dahlheimer also noted that Mrs. Petrella is on the Policy Committee and added Mrs. Hurlbert to Policy as well. She then asked Mrs. Hurlbert to take over as Student Achievement co-chair with Mrs. Petrella. She also noted that the chair of the Board of Education has to be added to the Building Committee, per state statute. It was agreed to hold Student Achievement meetings at 4:30 PM. Dr. Schuch noted that the committee met at 4:00 PM in the hopes of having some teachers attend, but he hoped they might attend at 4:30 as well. Mrs. Dahlheimer suggested they brainstorm alternative ways for Student Achievement to meet.

B. Policy Review

1. **Second read and possible vote on series 5000 (part 1)**
 - a. Video Cameras on Buses and in Facilities 5145
 - b. Uniform Treatment of Recruiters 5230
 - c. Transportation 5541
 - d. Suicide Prevention and Intervention - Shipman
 - e. Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention 5141.28
 - f. Confidentiality and Access to Education Records 5125
 - g. Student Records (PPRA) - Shipman
 - h. Smoking 5131.7
 - I. Pledge of Allegiance - Shipman

Mr. Moore reviewed that d, g and I are new policies from Shipman, with all others being current policies.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stone, to approve the policies listed above.

In favor of approving the policies listed above: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

2. **First read on series 5000 (part 2)**
 - a. Chemical Health for Student Athletes 5131.6
 - b. Concussions 5141.7
 - c. Drug and Alcohol Use by Students 5131.4
 - d. Education Stability Procedures - Shipman
 - e. Food Allergies GSD and Diabetes 5140
 - f. Fund-raising Activities 5325
 - g. Homeless Children and Youth 5118.1
 - h. Immunizations - Shipman
 - I. Meal Charging - 5542
 - j. Non-Discrimination - Students 5146
 - k. Recess and Play-Based Learning - Shipman
 - l. Student Attendance, Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism 5113
 - m. Student Discipline - Shipman

Mr. Moore reviewed that no changes were made to 5131.6 and 5141.7 has been moved to the 4000 series. Policy 5131.4 is current. Education Stability Procedures is a new policy from Shipman about transportation of students with special needs. Policies 5140, 5325 and 5118.1 are current, with no recommended changes. Immunizations is a new policy from Shipman with new statutory requirements included. Policy 5542 and 5146 are current. Recess and Play-Based Learning is a new policy from Shipman based on new state laws. Policy 5113 is current and Student Discipline is a new policy from Shipman.

Mr. Moore explained that the committee still has some policies from the 5000 series to review.

Public Comment

A. In-person public comment

Maureen Funke, from Durham, asked if there was any conflict on Monday with any town meetings and suggested the check that. She also suggested that Mrs. Neubig do some videos, explaining the numbers. Mrs. Funke also wanted to note that she did not want to diminish the validity of some of the comments on Facebook, but felt that those comments should be made here, not on Facebook. She was discouraged that the people that made the comments are not at the meeting.

Dom DelVecchio asked how much of the \$25 million in improvements is designated for Strong and the high school and Mrs. Neubig stated that that was zero. He also confirmed that the mill rate numbers do not reflect any state reimbursement. Mrs. Neubig did feel that they would most likely be approved for reimbursement.

B. Remote public comment

Michael Heiligmann, from Middlefield, asked what the Pledge of Allegiance policy was about and hoped that it didn't mean they would be eliminating the reciting of the pledge. Mrs. Dahlheimer stated it was just an updated policy. Mr. Heiligmann felt that some of the confusion about the Memorial project is approving the full \$76 million bonding and Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that they have said numerous times that the project would not move forward without state reimbursement. Mr. Heiligmann added that he is 100 percent for the K-5 school, but a lot of his concern is about the interim plan. He stated that a lot of the community felt unheard and there had been a petition last Fall against it. He added that the majority did not agree with the plan and felt that the failure of this past referendum is because of that. Mr. Heiligmann acknowledged that it is too late to change it now, but added that it felt rushed and upset a lot of people. He felt that Lyman and Brewster should both be K-4 while the new school is being built.

Mr. Moore added that the majority of people did vote in favor of the K-5 program.

Kate Checko, from Middlefield, agreed with Mr. Heiligmann about the interim plan, noting siblings in the same school with the same dismissal times. She has communicated in the past about her disappointment with this plan. She also felt that people would vote yes if this interim plan was reversed. She emphasized that the kids come first and they are upset.

Adjournment

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Petrella, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education.

In favor of adjourning the regular meeting of the Board of Education: Mrs. Caramanello, Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. DelVecchio, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

Debi Waz

Alwaz First