

Regional School District 12
Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes
Shepaug Valley School
March 5, 2018

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order at 6:41 p.m., on Monday, March 5, 2018, by Chairman Anthony Amato. Present were: Alan Brown, John Buonaiuto, Gregory Cava, Michelle Gorra, Stephanie Kolnick, Michael Sinatra, Julie Stuart, Lisa Roush, and Peter Tagley. Patricia Cosentino, Ed.D., Superintendent, and Robert Giesen, Director of Finance and Operations were also present. James Hirschfield and Jennifer Pote were absent.

Also present were: Cathy Colella, Principal at BFS / BS, Teresa DeBrito, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Lori Ferreira, Associate Principal at SVS; Allyson O'Hara, Director of Pupil Personnel Services; and Don O'Leary, Director of Facilities.

PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2018-2019

Dr. Cosentino began her presentation by speaking about the Region's many accomplishments over the last six years: the approval of the Agriscience STEM program, continuously improving the curriculum, all elementary schools named Schools of Distinction, robust digital learning environment, Makerspaces in all schools, creative configurations in elementary schools, kindness initiatives, Growth Mindset and grit initiatives, effort to improve communication outlets.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the Vision and Mission of the Region and about the future plans for the Region which included: 1) Develop a Strategic Plan for the Region; 2) Hire a superintendent, Director of Finance and an Agriscience STEM Director; 3) Open the Agriscience STEM Academy in August 2019; 4) Continue to explore creative configurations in elementary schools; 5) Continue to promote Region 12.

Dr. Cosentino explained how she looked for a balanced approach to providing outstanding educational and academic programs, using resources efficiently and effectively while remaining fiscally responsible.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the areas of significant change such as personnel with a reduction of a .4 FTE Art teacher and a 1.0 FTE mathematics teacher at SVS, addition of a 1.0 FTE physics teacher at SVS, and a full-time Director of the Agriscience STEM program. Program Improvements included: Project Lead the Way - Grade 5; Soccer goals, weight room improvements, homecoming lights rentals, basketball training aid; Author visit - Reading Power; Music instruments; zSpace virtual reality pilot.

Dr. Cosentino spoke about the budget process. After she met with administrators and department chairs, the budget initially totaled a little over \$23,000,000, a 7.67% increase over last year's budget. Dr. Cosentino collaborated with Mr. Giesen and reduced the budget by \$791,448 (3.7%) to bring a total budget recommendation of \$22,237,231 or 3.97% increase over last year's budget. She explained the chart showing the increases/decreases over the last several years. The biggest part of the increase this year is due to the health benefits.

Dr. Cosentino went over the following changes: Salaries up about \$124,000 due to contractual obligations; employee benefits up over \$500,000; purchased professional services category is up \$104,000 (for special educational needs and public relations marketing); purchased services up \$11,542 contractual; other purchased services down (\$56,460) related to special education transportation and placement costs; supplies up \$31,761 for

fuel costs and textbooks; property and program improvements up \$102,000 for technology and program improvements; dues and fees / debt \$15,499 (bonding interest). Dr. Cosentino went over the technology and facilities budget in more detail. She spoke about the access to the playground at Booth Free School to make it ADA compliant. Dr. Cosentino spoke about the 20-year capital improvement study that is currently in development. It includes: 1) Structural: Roofs, windows, doors, masonry; 2) HVAC: Pool rooftop unit, SVS AC and boiler equipment, replace standard motors with variable frequency drives (VFDs); 3) Campuses: SVS tennis courts, ADA playground improvements, WPS asphalt parking areas, sidewalks, stairs, tree removal; 4) Plumbing: Water tanks, piping, pumps, ADA bathroom and water fountain compliance; 5) Electrical: LED lights in classrooms/halls, upgrade BFS main power switch, SVS fire alarm system.

Dr. Cosentino went over the budget distribution for the towns: Bridgewater – (1.27%), Roxbury – 8.9% and Washington – 1.9%.

In conclusion, Dr. Cosentino thanked the Board of Education and the communities of Bridgewater, Roxbury and Washington for their support. She also thanked the administrators who have been helpful in putting the budget together, all the central office staff, Michelle Gorra who chairs the Finance Committee and attended several late afternoon, early evening meetings.

The Superintendent's proposed budget was distributed. Chairman Amato thanked Dr. Cosentino and explained that there would be time to go over the budget page by page, line by line at the business meeting.

Dr. Cosentino explained the timeline in approving a budget to present to the voters.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: made by Peter Tagley, seconded by Michelle Gorra to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Debby Bliven