

Regional School District No. 7  
Board of Education Minutes  
October 26, 2004

PRESENT: Mr. Jerram, Mr. Egbertson, Mrs. Kenneson, Mrs. Lafave, Mrs. Sweeney, Mrs. Lafave, Mrs. Lepkowski (7:07 p.m.), Mr. Thomson (7:23 p.m.), Superintendent of Schools Ohotnicky, High School Principal Conner, Middle School Principal Osypuk, Student Representative, Amy Cimmino. Visitors: Ms. Candy Perez, Physical Education and Health Department; Mr. Kenneth Chichester and Mr. Fred Silverio, Science Department.

Secretary Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He announced that Chairman Thomson would arrive around 7:20 p.m. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Jerram read a letter from the Town of Colebrook which stated that Theresa J. Kenneson was appointed as a member of the Board for the term ending July 1, 2005 and was sworn into office on October 19, 2004. KENNESON  
NEW BOE MEMBER  
COLEBROOK

MOTION by Mrs. Lafave, seconded by Mr. Egbertson, and passed unanimously, to change the order of the agenda as follows: Item 4.3. CMT/CAPT Scores Report will be heard as the first item of business under reports with the curriculum reports to follow. (Mr. Thomson and Mrs. Lepkowski not present for this vote.) CHANGE  
ORDER OF  
AGENDA

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak on agenda items. PUBLIC

Mr. Egbertson asked that the Board consider a request from James Hart (Barkhamsted) to speak to the Board about his thoughts on the budget process. Mr. Hart was asked to stay until all members of the Board were present.

MOTION by Mr. Egbertson, seconded by Mrs. Lafave, to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2004 meeting. Aye: Mr. Egbertson, Mrs. Lafave, Mrs. Sweeney, Mrs. Kenneson. Nay: None. Abstention: Mr. Jerram, Mrs. Yard. (Mr. Thomson and Mrs. Lepkowski not present for vote on minutes.) APPROVE  
MINUTES  
10/12/04

Superintendent Ohotnicky gave some background information on the CMT/CAPT testing and the delays associated with the results of the tests. Northwestern students turned in a solid performance on these tests. The questions that will be answered by Principal Osypuk and Principal Conner are: What are the tests? What do they mean to us? What help do we give beyond the testing? CMT/CAPT  
TESTING  
REPORT

Principal Osypuk distributed roses to all people present and began his PowerPoint program entitled "Smell the Roses" to cover the Middle School CMT tests and results. Northwestern Middle School students' scores are at the top of ERG C, and the students have consistently scored above the state average. Mr. Osypuk reviewed what has happened in the last four year including middle school teachers' efforts; professional development activities; leadership from within; team approach; stronger Parent/School partnerships; collaborative efforts on student work; Board of Education support for reasonable class size; Understanding By Design techniques; elementary students coming to Northwestern being better prepared; new programs and higher expectations; mandatory late bus; Saturday school and summer academy. The Board congratulated Mr. Osypuk and staff.

Mr. Thomson called for a short recess so that the Board could have their picture taken for the Yearbook. RECESS

Mr. Thomson called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thomson recognized James Hart from Barkhamsted who spoke of his background as a graduate of the school, parent of graduates and local politician. Mr. Hart offered the suggestion to the Board about forming an Ad-Hoc committee of the four selectmen and chairs of boards of finance and Regional No. 7 Board members to perhaps avoid going through the referendum process. The Ad-Hoc committee would be able to speak to the ability of taxpayers they represent in their communities to pay for the education of students attending Northwestern. Discussion followed. The Board thanked Mr. Hart for his suggestion and would take it into consideration during the budget process. PUBLIC PORTION

High School Principal Wayne Conner presented information on the results of the CAPT tests showing that the students have shown continuous improvement over the last three years, that the scores significantly surpass the state average and either exceed or are on par with other ERG C schools, that there is a higher percentage of students scoring on the advanced level on the CAPT test in Math, Reading and Writing than the average ERG C student, and that there are more scoring at the top and fewer scoring at the bottom. Regarding the SAT, the mean verbal and math scores have continued to rise over the last three years and are consistently higher than the state average. Approximately 50% of our students taking Advanced Placement Exams received a score of 4 or 5 on a 5.0 scale, with 75% received a 3 or better. He contributed this success to teachers integrating CAPT-like experiences and strategies into their instruction; aligning of curriculum between high school and middle school; meetings with elementary schools to provide continuity; solid classroom instruction; students better prepared and more serious-minded about the purposefulness of the CAPT; and student participation in a breakfast and exercise program prior to test taking. He addressed future endeavors including middle school and high school working closely; development of instructional improvement plans; addressing and remediating students who score low on the test to help them achieve proficiency level. Discussion followed. The Board congratulated Principal Conner and his staff. CAPT TEST RESULTS

Mr. Thomson called on Ms. Candy Perez to talk about the health and physical education curriculum. Ms. Perez talked about current programming including the physical education and health instructors and classes and the State of Connecticut Fitness Testing. She talked about the CAPT Implementation Project (Breakfast and Exercise), physical activity and nutrition's effect on learning and the senior year "test out" program that is in existence. She envisions a fitness-based physical education program. She talked about the new heart rate monitors, fitness programming, adventure education and health education skills. The Board members were given a number of handouts including health rubrics, physical education statistics (high school and middle school), expectations for student learning and learning connection between nutrition and physical activity. Ms. Perez fielded questions from the members. HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM REPORT

Mr. Thomson introduced Mr. Ken Chichester and Mr. Fred Silverio to talk about the Science curriculum. Mr. Chichester explained the State-mandated Core Science Curriculum Framework. The focus of the framework is that science curricula be built with an eye toward increasing science literacy of all people shifting away from elite students and preparing future scientists. The framework emphasizes development of critical thinking skills in a hands on/ minds on science program, knowledge of practical applications in the real world and capacity to pose and evaluate arguments based on evidence and how to apply conclusions logically. The goals are to articulate core science ideas, knowledge and skills; define knowledge, abilities, and understandings that students are expected to demonstrate on the statewide science assessment and engage and motivate students to continue their science studies and pursue science-related careers. The framework is organized around 11 strands from inquiry to science and technology. Mr. Chichester distributed copies of the state core science curriculum framework and materials relating to it. Mr. Silverio, Middle School Science Content Leader, spoke about the middle school curriculum and inquiry-based learning; the Understanding By Design curriculum and process skills. He shared an experiment his students had done with paper towels. He talked about coordination between the elementary schools and the middle school and then to high school. He also spoke about the use of technology in science.

SCIENCE  
DEPT.

Dr. Ohotnicky distributed an e-mail from Christine Bartram, a June graduate from Northwestern, who wrote about her experiences in our science, English, and art classes and how well prepared she was for college.

CORRES-  
PONDENCE

Dr. Ohotnicky distributed a copy of a picture of the prize-winning Agriculture Education “Front door” presentation at the Big E this year.

MOTION by Mr. Egbertson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, and passed unanimously, to appoint Jean Lafave as a Delegate to the CAFE/CAPSS Delegate Assembly.

LAFAVE  
CAFE DELEGATE  
ASSEMBLY

Mrs. Lafave distributed pins from CAFE to each member.

The Board discussed the letter from Jim Parrott regarding the construction of a “Celebration Garden” by the media center to celebrate the lives of friends of Northwestern lost over the years.” The Board discussed this issue and asked that Dr. Ohotnicky talk with Mr. Parrott to get more detail about this endeavor.

PARROTT  
LETTER

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS: (1) Report on revamped goals – occasional updates; (2) Superintendent’s goals; (3) Instructional Improvement Plans; (4) Move Technology Department Report to next month along with English Department Curriculum; (5) New schedule for curriculum reports.

ITEMS FOR  
FUTURE  
AGENDAS

Mrs. Shelly Lloyd spoke about two items: The Celebration Garden letter and Mr. Hart’s proposal for an Ad-Hoc Committee on the budget process.

PUBLIC

MOTION by Mr. Egbertson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, and passed unanimously, to go into Executive Session at 10:34 p.m. to discuss negotiations.

EXECUTIVE  
SESSION

Board of Education Minutes  
October 26, 2004  
Page Four

MOTION by Mr. Egbertson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, and passed unanimously, to come out of Executive Session at 11.18 p.m.

PUBLIC

MOTION by Mr. Egbertson, seconded by Mr. Jerram, and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 p.m.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl DePaoli, Clerk