

Regional School District No. 7
Board of Education
January 23, 2008

PRESENT: Mr. Thomson, Mrs. Yard, Mr. Griffey, Mrs. Sexton Read, Mr. Lanctot, Mr. Jerram, Mrs. Kenneson, Mrs. Dorazio, Roger Newbury, Director of Finance and Operations, and Clint Montgomery, Superintendent of Schools, High School Principal Conner, Middle School Principal Perez

Chair Thomson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

No comment from the public

PUBLIC

MOTION by Mrs. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Lanctot, and passed unanimously, to approve the corrected minutes of January 9, 2008. Correction: Spelling of Mrs. Sexton Read's name.

MINUTES
1/9/2008

Mr. Van Valen, Director of Guidance, described the guidance department's approach to all students as an "open door" policy. He explained numerous goals and an ongoing plan to use quality indicators to expand the customer service aspect of the department. In January, they will be conducting follow-up meetings with students who have not yet applied to be sure that all students' needs are being met. They would like to conduct a mid-year survey to parents and students regarding guidance services.

GUIDANCE
CURRICULUM
REPORT

Another quality indicator of the guidance department is to compare the percentage of students enrolling in college to other DRG schools, and to find out why some students are not applying. The goal for this quality indicator is 82% of graduating students attending either a two- or four-year college/university.

Mr. Van Valen stated the third quality indicator for the department is the processing of Applications with the goal set at 100% within two weeks. Mr. Jerram inquired about the two-week turnaround of student college applications and whether or not the guidance department is utilizing the secretary that has been allocated to them.

Mrs. Kenneson inquired whether or not the students are submitting applications "at the last minute" and if this impacts the turnaround time. Mr. Van Valen responded that for the most part, students are getting their applications in at reasonable times, but some colleges are not looking for them until late spring, so these students have no reason to get them in any earlier.

Mr. Jerram also inquired about the survey that was given last spring. Mr. VanValen and Mr. Montgomery stated that upon review, it was found that the data collected was uninformative and fragmented. Other means for collecting data will be sought.

Ms. Delaini, Career Resources Facilitator, described one quality indicator as increasing student readiness into the workplace through the Senior Employability Seminar. This is designed for kids who do not plan to go on to higher education. Teachers and guidance department faculty identify them and then they are approached with an invitation to the seminar. Last year, 15 students of the 19 invited, attended the seminar. This year, the guidance department is hoping to invite 25 students to this year's seminar. The objective is to give them skills that employers are looking for and for the students to become familiar with the skills they already have. They spend time matching their interests to jobs and then determining whether

or not further education is necessary to qualify for a job they are well suited for. Letters are sent home to parents about the program. There are 2 sessions per week for 10 weeks. Each session is 1.5 hours long. Lori Roy, the Director of Human Resources at Alcoa, donated supplies and helped during the last year's seminar. This year, she will facilitate private interviews with Alcoa staff to give the students practice with interviewing skills. Again, she will help students fill out job applications and create resumes. As a culminating event to the seminar, the students will be invited on a group tour of the plant. During a luncheon there, a panel of Alcoa employees will answer any questions the students might have. In addition to Ms. Roy's generous help, the Dept of Labor has sent an abundance of helpful information, free to the students.

The guidance department is looking to add one course per year to the three existing Career Pathway's courses.

Middle School Principal Perez reported CMTs are 5 weeks away and although it might seem like the students are being tested for a longer period of time, they are actually only taking one test per day rather than two, as in previous years. The tests are one hour each and will be administered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. In addition, Science has been added to the 8th grade test. The PTO will provide healthy snacks and Yoga instruction during testing days in order to help focus the students and offer them a supportive testing atmosphere.

PRINCIPALS'
REPORTS

Principal Perez reported that the CMT Prep - Pilot Tutoring Program started last week. It is an afterschool program involving 20-25 students who are in need of additional testing support. Students were chosen based on a number of reasons. Three teachers are participating in the program.

Principal Perez reported that the 6th grade transition surveys have been well received by the public. It has been helpful to the guidance department in finding out what concerns students have about transitioning to the middle school, as well as what they are excited about.

Principal Perez reported that the K-12 Curriculum Council met with 6th grade teachers to talk about books used and major projects to avoid overlapping. The meeting gave the teachers an opportunity to meet and talk and offered them a way to continue communication.

Principal Perez described Focus Study Halls, which is for students who have two study halls in one day and need help staying focused. Once they show improvement in this area, they will be able to return to the regular study hall assignment. Currently, 36% of middle school students have two study halls in one day.

Principal Perez reported the PTO is working on a cruise for 8th graders on May 30th on the Connecticut River.

High School Principal Conner reported that today was the last day of exams.

As a follow up to a previous meeting, Principal Conner reported that nine girls are on the Freshman Basketball team and are scheduled for ten games. In addition, there are eleven boys on the Boys Freshman Basketball team and they are scheduled for twelve games.

Principal Conner reported that in response to a question from Michael Welch at least one computer lab will be open each period of the day. The labs will be open after school until at least 4 p.m., but students will have to sign in with the Housemaster first, due to the fact that damage has been done to the computers in both rooms.

Principal Conner reported that last Wednesday, Northwest CT Coalition for underage drinking met to discuss the problem of underage drinking. He distributed an article from the Register Citizen describing the purpose of the committee and some possible causes of the problem.

Principal Conner reminded the board that on January 25th, the CT Center for Non-Violence will be holding two assemblies at the high school. After the program, students and faculty can sign up for training.

Principal Conner attended a meeting on the CT Association of Schools with approximately 100 other principals. The Commissioner of Education shared with the attendees that CT is no longer first in math and reading and he intends to make changes to improve that. Although Principal Conner agreed with many of the goals of the Commissioner, he has concerns about the impact it will have on many students that are already struggling.

Superintendent Montgomery commented that at the Administrator's meeting tomorrow, he would like to discuss goals for faculty in regard to specific CMT and CAPT scores for the current year.

UPDATES

Superintendent Montgomery commented on the Commissioners ideas to raise the bar for CT students and that they are all progressive, but they are also most likely unfunded.

Superintendent Montgomery reminded the board that the legislation enacted on July 1st regarding expulsions and suspensions will become even more restrictive. He will continue to plan for alternatives and creative interventions in order to abide by the new legislation.

Superintendent Montgomery reported that the green schools committee will meet starting next week to discuss possibilities for the school as a whole. He also shared a sample of a "second generation" solar panel that lays flat on the roof.

Mr. Newbury reported that the Abatement Application (#042) has been filed and they have submitted the specifications to local authorities. Once they have signed off on these specs, NWR7 will submit Application form #049 to the state. Once the state approves this Application, NWR7 can go out to bid for the Abatement Project. Bids are currently being solicited for the gym floor replacement itself.

GYM
FLOOR

Mr. Thomson requested that a member of the board volunteer to be the Shared Services Representative. This person would be responsible for hiring the director and approving the budget. The meetings are the 4th Monday of each month at 5:30. Mr. Griffey volunteered for the position with Mr. Jerram as an alternate.

SHARED
SERVICES
REP.

Mr. Thomson opened the discussion about the proposed budget meeting timeline. There was some discussion about changing the way the budget is proposed and reducing the amount of meetings proposed. Some consolidation of meetings was considered.

BUDGET
TIMELINE

The 50th Anniversary Committee requested that the Board give its consent to be responsible for signing an application given by Ski Sundown. After lengthy discussion, the board would like to hear more details from the committee about why they need the school's insurance for the event.

50 YEAR
CELEBRATION
DISCUSSION

Kari Banach, reporter for the Waterbury Republican requested more information on the declining enrollment, which was discussed earlier in the meeting. Superintendent Montgomery promised to get her that information. She also wanted to know if there was any progress on the teachers' contract. Mr. Jerram responded that the contract is subject to audit and review during tonight's Executive Session and she can inquire again tomorrow.

PUBLIC

MOTION by Mrs. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Griffey, and passed unanimously, to go into Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. for the purpose of negotiations and possible legal action. Present in Executive Session: Mr. Thomson, Mrs. Kenneson, Mrs. Sexton Read, Mr. Lanctot, Mr. Jerram, Mr. Griffey, Mrs. Dorazio, Mrs. Yard, Roger Newbury, Director of Finance and Operations, and Superintendent Montgomery.

EXECUTIVE
SESSION

MOTION by Mrs. Kenneson, seconded by Mr. Griffey, and passed unanimously, to come out of Executive Session at 9:20 p.m.

PUBLIC

MOTION by Mr. Jerram, seconded by Mr. Lanctot, and passed unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted,

Tera B. Dunn