



Seymour Board of Education REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2025
Bungay Elementary School
7:00 pm

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 9/12/25
TIME: 3:25pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Members Present: Kristen Bruno, Board Vice Chair (Acting Chair)
Stephan Behuniak, Board Secretary
Ed Strumello
Jim Garofolo
Pete Kubik
Kristen Harmeling
Lori Nespoli

Members Absent: Chris Champagne
Jay Hatfield

Others Present: Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent
Paul Lucke
Keith O'Rourke
Lauren Reid
Dave Willadsen
David Olechna
Dr. Kris Boyle
Shannon Levey, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance - Ms. Bruno called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:03 PM
- B. Introductions were made

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

A. Recognitions

1. Seymour High School – U.S. News & World Report, 2024-2025 Names Seymour High School as one of the best schools in the state and country

- #57 in Connecticut (top 27%)
- #1 along the Route 8 corridor from Bridgeport to Winsted
- #1 in our District Reference Group (DRG)
- Outperforming 62% of schools at or above our DRG

Additional highlights include:

- A 30-point improvement from the previous year
- 41 AP Scholars for 2024–2025
- Highest percentage to date (79%) of students earning a score of 3 or higher on AP exams
- Consistent placement of top-tier students in Ivy League schools
- 35 courses available for college credit
- Unique programs in Engineering, Manufacturing and Racing, EMT, Wastewater Treatment, Robotics and Drones, and Social Media

Mr. Lucke expressed pride in the students and staff, noting the school's continued growth and commitment

to excellence. The Board gave a round of applause in recognition of these achievements.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment provides the opportunity for the public to make a comment. It is not a dialogue between the Board and the public. Based upon what is heard during Public Comment, the Board may choose to add a topic to the agenda. If questions are posed that the Chairperson is able to answer, those questions may be addressed under the Chairperson's Comments portion of the agenda. The Board will not discuss personnel matters. Comments should be respectful and no longer than 3 minutes in length so that all who wish to comment may have the opportunity to do so. All the public wanting to comment will need to state their name and address for the record prior to addressing the Board.

- Public Comment called three times, no comment.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. [Regular BOE Meeting Minutes](#) – August 4, 2025
2. [Policy Committee Meeting](#) – August 4, 2025
3. [Finance Committee Meeting](#) – August 4, 2025
4. [Athletics & Health Committee Meeting](#) – August 4, 2025
5. [Special BOE Meeting Minutes](#) – August 25, 2025

B. Seymour High School Attendance/Tardy Officers

1. To approve the renewal of the SHS Attendance/Tardy Officers for the 2025-2026 school year as follows: Allen Aldrich, Nicole Fearon, Laura Verchili, Deidre Sponheimer. \$2,000 per faculty member.

C. [Pokemon Club \(Incubator Status\)](#) 2025-2026, Seymour Middle School

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the consent agenda as presented

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli

PASSES: 7-0-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

VI. REPORTS

A. School Safety Report – Ed Henry, Director of Security

Security & Safety Update – Mr. Henry

Mr. Henry provided an update on the current security status in the schools. He recently presented on school security during a Professional Development (PD) session for staff. Following Officer Pimpinelli's resignation, security coverage is currently being handled by Mr. Henry and a substitute security officer. Security stations have been relocated to the front entrances of school buildings to maintain a more forward-facing presence when officers are not on rounds. Fire and emergency drills have been conducted across the district by school administrators. Local Fire, Police, and EMS departments have participated in these drills and continue to provide valuable feedback for improvement.

October 9 Referendum

Bungay School Referendum on October 9, 2025 at the Seymour Community Center.

Parking & Traffic – Mr. Kubik and Mr. Henry

Mr. Kubik inquired about potential parking issues on referendum day. Mr. Henry confirmed that staff will be directed to park in the back lots to free up front parking for voters. Due to ongoing construction on Bungay Rd., one lane has been lost, resulting in some traffic congestion. The Chief of Police is aware and will review the current traffic pattern.

Residency Checks & Security Coordination

Mr. Henry continues to work on residency verifications in collaboration with school administrators, Central Office, Dr. Compton, and Shannon Levey.

Campus Access and Traffic Flow – Mr. Strumello and Mr. Henry

Mr. Strumello asked whether road closures due to construction have impacted school operations. Mr. Henry noted that the closures have not caused significant issues. Communication between school and town officials remains strong. The back gate at the high school is closed once the school day begins, which has not presented any problems.

School Resource Officer (SRO) – Mr. Strumello and Mr. Henry

Mr. Strumello asked about the return of a School Resource Officer. Mr. Henry reported that no applications have been received for the SRO position, though it remains open. The Police Department is currently working to hire more personnel. Discussions with the Police Chief regarding the SRO role may continue.

B. Bungay Building Committee Updates – Fred Stanek, Ed Strumello

All necessary paperwork for the Bungay Building project has been submitted to the state. The referendum is scheduled for October 9. The project is expected to receive approximately a 60% reimbursement rate. Ms. Nicole Klarides is actively working to secure an additional 10% reimbursement. It was noted that building a new school would be more cost-effective than renovating the current facility, which would not qualify for any reimbursement. The Bungay Building Alliance is organizing multiple upcoming events to promote the project. Mr. Strumello shared that he recently toured a school in West Haven designed by the project architects. He praised the facility, particularly the advanced security and safety features, noting that the staff would be fortunate to have such a building. Mr. Kubik emphasized that safety will be a key component in the new school design, with input from the Chief of Police and the Director of Security. Mr. Strumello highlighted the importance of having separate entrances and exits for parents and buses to improve traffic flow and safety. Ms. Harmeling inquired about who is managing the tax impact communications. Mr. Miller has been leading these efforts. Dr. Compton commended Mr. Miller for his diligent work, including preparing charts and spreadsheets, and noted that Mr. Stanek has also invested significant time. These updates have been presented to the Board of Selectpersons. Mr. Garofolo asked if there will be an informational forum. The Alliance group is organizing several opportunities for public engagement. Information is available on both the Alliance's and the district's websites. Mr. Strumello gave special recognition to Mr. Stanek for personally delivering the grant application in Hartford to ensure timely submission.

C. SHS Athletics Hall of Fame – Paul Roy

Announced the upcoming SHS Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony. The banquet will be held on October 26 at 2:00 PM at Oak Lane Country Club. Inductees include Tina Slie, Michele Swanchak, Joseph Carafiello, Christine Critella, Ken Pereiras. Outstanding Contribution Award: Tony Lopresti. Coaches Hall of Fame inductees: Paul Sponheimer and Cathy Federowicz will also be honored. Tickets are available at the high school, town hall, and directly from Mr. Paul Roy.

MOTION: (Ed Strumello / Stephan Behuniak) to add to the agenda the resignation of Lindsay Aldrich as 7E

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli

PASSES: 7-0-0

MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Jim Garofolo) to add to the agenda for the vote for school and healthy food options 7F

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Nespoli

PASSES: 7-0-0

VII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Proposed Line Item Seymour Board of Education Allocation for FY 2025-2026

No discussion or action taken.

C. Newtown Public Schools & Seymour Public Schools Educational Services and Tuition Agreement

MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Jim Garofolo) to approve the Educational Services and Tuition Agreement between Newtown Public Schools and Seymour Public Schools as presented.

DISCUSSION: Ms. Harmeling noted that transportation will be provided by Seymour. Mr. Garofolo requested future discussions on these topics be held in executive session.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik

OPPOSED: Ms. Harmeling
PASSES: 6-1-0

D. District Calendar Update (December 15th correction and Juneteenth)

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to update the district calendar to change the clerical error of December 14th to December 15th

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling
PASSES: 7-0-0

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to add Juneteen as a holiday and have it reflected on the seymour board of education district calendar

DISCUSSION: Ms. Harmeling supports the motion, saying "It's the right thing to do." Mr. Behuniak adds that since the state observes it, the organization should too. Ms. Nespoli clarifies that the change won't affect the required 182 school days and if it falls on a weekend, it would be observed like any other holiday.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling
PASSES: 7-0-0

E. Resignation of Lindsay Aldrich

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to accept the resignation of on LA from SPS (KH / SB)

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling
PASSES: 7-0-0

F. Healthy Foods Option Vote

MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Jim Garofolo) Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Seymour Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling
PASSES: 7-0-0

VIII. INFORMATION

A. MOU Between TEAM Inc. and Seymour Public Schools

B. NEASC - Collaborative Conference Visit Report

C. Seymour High School Department Chairs and Coordinator

1. Department Chairs

- Melissa Anelli – School Counseling
- Jennifer Monaco – English
- Cathy Federowicz – Math
- Erin Scozzafava – Science
- Nicole Fearon – Social Studies
- Allen Aldrich – Special Education

2. Department Coordinators (Department Observations)

- Melissa Anelli – School Counseling

D. Seymour Middle School Advisor

1. Jennifer Batterton – Math Team Advisor

E. Staff Hiring – Non-Certified

1. Matthew D'Onofrio

- o Instructional Paraeducator

- o Seymour Middle School
- o Replacing Melissa Fredricksen
- 2. Jodi Hamel
 - o Instructional Paraeducator
 - o Seymour Middle School
 - o Trish Massaro
- 3. Carly Bomba
 - o Food Services Worker
 - o Seymour Middle School
 - o Replacing Cathy Smarz
- 4. Shayna Landau
 - o Permanent Building Substitute
 - o Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - o Replacing Anuoluwapo Hazzan
- 5. Stanley Wallace
 - o Para Monitor
 - o Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - o Replacing Susan DeFelice

F. Appendix D

- 1. Jeffery Coppola
 - o Boys' Basketball Coach
 - o Seymour Middle School
 - o Replacing Christopher Barton

G. Volunteer

- 1. Marissa Merithew
 - o Volunteer Cheerleading Coach
 - o Seymour Middle School
- 2. Jessica Bumbala
 - o Volunteer Cheerleading Coach
 - o Seymour High Middle School

H. Staff Transfers – Non-Certified

- 1. Dawn LaLlave
 - o Instructional Paraeducator
 - o Rescinds resignation
 - o From CLS to Seymour Middle School

I. Staff Resignations – Non-Certified

- 1. Kevin Pimpinelli
 - o School Security Officer
 - o Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - o Effective ~~October~~ September 4, 2025
- 2. Jennifer Widlar
 - o Boys' Swim Coach
 - o Seymour High School
 - o Effective August 26, 2025

IX. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

A. Board of Education Comments

1. Chairman's Comments

Ms. Bruno attended the celebration for Coach Fed and the dedication of the court. She described it as wonderful.

2. Board Member Comments

Ms. Harmeling:

- Wants collaboration with board leaders on a statement about the Charter Revision Committee's proposed changes. Reported on a meeting with AMD and KM about shared services and possible contract reviews. Suggested combining the finance and facilities committees, and focusing on long-range planning. Congratulated Mr. Lucke on Seymour High School's recognition. I was proud of the staff and called it a "return on investment." Proposed creating a survey for families about school supplies and related concerns.

Ms. Nespoli:

- Highlighted a student group, Kids 4 Kids, which successfully collected school supplies and aims to help others. Dr. Compton wants to recognize the group.

B. Superintendent Report

1. Thanks expressed for school supplies, backpack scavenger hunt (Ms. Nespoli, AMD, Liberty Bank, Seymour Methodist Church).
2. Upcoming events:
 - i. Meet the Teachers (important for parents).
 - ii. Sept 27: 2nd Annual Community Pep Rally (athletics, clubs, youth groups).
 - iii. Oct 6: Middle School Board Member/Admin Retreat (strategic planning, goal setting).
3. The Cathy Fed court event was successful; proclamation written by Shannon.
4. Director of Curriculum & Instruction:
50 applicants for positions; great in-house efforts.
5. The NEASC report was outstanding; it involved months of data gathering. "Vision of a Graduate" is nearly complete; will be embedded in curriculum and student handbooks. Curriculum committee forming to improve consistency and templates for lesson plans. Communication improvements at the high school with an action plan by Mr. Lucke. Technology updates: Wifi and infrastructure improvements underway. Some accreditation feedback missed meeting directly with the technology director. Library media center staffing challenges; potential sharing of media specialist with the middle school. The NEASC team was thorough but did not include much interaction with the superintendent, which was disappointing. Mr. Lucke was praised for his preparation. Ms. Harmeling asked about the NEASC process and involvement of BOE members or parents. Dr. Compton explained the process is less stakeholder-focused currently but noted areas for improvement. Clarified that this visit was preparatory for accreditation, not a final decision. The next visit in two years will focus on improvements.

X. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to adjourn the meeting.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Kubik, Ms. Harmeling

PASSES: 7-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 PM

YouTube Link (9/8/2025): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4n1Bkni04eA>

Note: The next Regular Board of Education meeting will be held on **Monday, October 6, 2025 at 7:00 pm in Seymour Middle School.**

Prepared by: Shannon Levey, Board Clerk