Seymour Board of Education

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 6, 2025
Seymour Middle School
7:00 pm

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 10/8/25
TIME: 2:05pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Board Members Present:	Kristen Bruno Stephan Behuniak Ed Strumello Jay Hatfield Lori Nespoli Kristen Harmeling Pete Kubik
Members Absent:	Chris Champagne Jim Garofolo
Others Present:	Dr. Susan Compton Attorney Floyd Dugas Shannon Levey Paul Lucke Stephanie Ciccone Dave Willadsen Lauren Reid David Olechna Jake Velleco

I. **CALL TO ORDER**
   A. Pledge of Allegiance – Ms. Bruno called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM
   B. Introductions

II. **BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS**
   A. Seymour Champion Recognitions – Creative
      1. Bungay School
         a. Margo Mills
         b. Jonathan Blakeman
      2. Chatfield Lo-Presti School
         a. Brayden Sanchez
         b. Makayla Torres
      3. Seymour Middle School
         a. Madison Petruny
         b. Gabriele Rivera
      4. Seymour High School
         a. Kayla Sproles
      5. Recognitions
         a. Resolution – SHS Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2025
         b. National Merit Scholar Commendation – Kevin Rodriguez

MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Ed Strumello) to move item II 6, student representatives, to discussion and possible action.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

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 public comment

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes
   1. Regular BOE Meeting - September 8, 2025
   2. Budget Working Session - September 8, 2025

B. Seymour High School Attendance/Tardy Officer
   1. To approve the renewal of the SHS Attendance/Tardy Officer for the 2025-2026 school year as followed: Jennifer Monaco; $2,000 per faculty member

C. Hiring – Non-Certified
   1. JoAnn Roberts
      a. Secretary Substitute
      b. CLS and Central Office
      c. Covering Darlene Sebes and Elisabeth Thompson
   2. David Olivetti
      a. Armed Security Officer
      b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
      c. Replacing Kevin Pimpinelli
   3. Jocelyn Cases
      a. Food Services Worker
      b. Seymour High School
      c. Replacing Nisha Moktan
   4. Haley Cole
      a. Food Services Worker
      b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
      c. Replacing Cathy Smarz

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Ed Strumello) move to approve the consent agenda as presented
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

VI. REPORTS

A. Bungay Building Committee Updates – Pete Kubik, Ed Strumello
   1. All required paperwork has been submitted. The referendum is scheduled for Thursday, October 9th. Once approved, the next steps will include moving forward with planning and

selecting an architect. The total project cost to the town will be approximately $20 million after state reimbursement.

B. Strategic Plan Update

1. Dr. Compton thanked the Board members, administrators, and Meagan, noting that it was a real treat to work collaboratively. She commended everyone for their diligence in developing the framework for the district's strategic plan and stated that it was a productive and successful working session.

MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) to move agenda items 7 B and C up to discuss and take possible action on
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

C. (7C) Custodian Union Contract Ratification

a. Attorney Dugas reviewed the details of the Custodian Union Contract, noting that the revisions primarily involved clarifying language. He recommended approval of the contract as presented and expressed appreciation for the custodians' cooperation and collaboration throughout the process.
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the custodian union contract dated July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2029
DISCUSSION: Mr. Hatfield: thanked the custodians for their collaboration and the excellent work they do. Kristen Bruno noted that October 2nd is Custodian Appreciation Day, making it a fitting time to recognize and express appreciation for the custodians and their union.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli
ABSTENTION: Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 6-0-1

D. (7D) Paraeducator Union Contract Ratification

MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the paraeducator contract dated July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2028
DISCUSSION: Mr. Hatfield and Mr. Behuniak: remarked that the paraeducators are the backbone of the district—often underappreciated and underpaid—but emphasized that the agreement represents a fair outcome, and they are very thankful for the paraeducator staff. Ms. Bruno added that the district's goal is always to attract and retain quality employees, noting that this is an outstanding group that is deeply appreciated. Dr. Compton agreed.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Kubik
ABSTENTION: Ms. Nespoli
PASSES: 6-0-1

E. CATS Program Update

1. Mrs. Spear and Ms. Mordowanec presented alongside Mr. Lucke, who expressed his gratitude to Dr. Compton and the Board of Education for supporting the creation of the CATS Program. A PowerPoint presentation was shared, highlighting the program's staff, purpose, and structure. The CATS Program, an alternative educational program at Seymour High School, offers a less traditional learning environment designed to meet the needs of students who benefit from a more individualized approach.
2. The presentation outlined the referral and enrollment process, exit and graduation requirements, program benefits, student behavior data, and feedback from participants. Mr. Lucke noted that the district worked with a seasoned consultant during the pilot phase and that the program has been invited to be showcased at the state level.

F. RISE Program Update

1. Mr. O'Rourke provided an overview of the RISE Program, explaining its purpose and the students it serves—those who may need additional support at any time during the school day. He noted that students in the program are scheduled to spend approximately 90% of their day with their peers and that all participants are special education students with assigned case managers. The program provides a space for students to reset, recharge, and return to class when challenges arise that impact their success.
2. Mr. O'Rourke highlighted that six of the eight participating students could have been outplaced, but the program has successfully kept them within the district. He emphasized that the program is clearly effective, with improvements in attendance, engagement, and behavior. While occasional dysregulation occurs, students now have a structured environment to receive support and continue learning throughout the day. The program focuses on improving appropriate behaviors, academics, attendance, and positive interactions with peers and adults, while helping students earn rewards and reduce avoidance behaviors.
3. He credited the BCBA for outstanding support and noted that no students have required outplacement since the RISE Program began. Dr. Compton commended the program, remarking that she has observed significant positive changes, particularly with its new location within SMS, and that it is operating very successfully.

G. Enrollment Report

H. Special Education Report – Dr. Boyle

I. Financial Report – Salvatore Bucci

VII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. **MOTION**: (Ed Strumello) Add to the agenda CABE Bylaw 9160

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

PASSES: 7-0-0

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Jay Hatfield) to approve the updated policy regarding student representatives to the Board of Education.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Strumello noted that the existing policy was outdated and recommended updating it to align with the Board's current practices.

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

PASSES: 7-0-0

B. (4D) Student Reports

MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Ed Strumello) to approve the recommendation of the Seymour High School Administration and the Student Council to appoint Daphne Shea as the Board of Education Junior Student Representative.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Strumello thanked the student representatives for their patience during this policy update.

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

PASSES: 7-0-0

1. SHS Student Representative Report – Jeremy Tomasheski, Daphne Shea

   National Honor Society: Participated in community volunteer events, organized "Pink Out" Day, and is planning to induct a new class on November 15.

   Student Council: Awaiting their first meeting to select the homecoming date.

   Hope Club: Conducted a sock and coat drive, made blankets, and maintained the school garden.

KinderKats: Met with participating students; program begins this Wednesday.
Sports Teams: Mid-season updates provided; highlighted a senior's historic achievement at a national boxing championship.
Yearbook & Art Club: Yearbook theme finalized; art club creating fall-themed projects including clay pumpkins and cheetah print decorations for the parade float.
Spanish Club: Celebrating National Heritage Month and in the process of selecting officers.
Car Club: Planning annual club race on Halloween.
Robotics Teams: Volunteered at the Pumpkin Fest and will attend at least three competitions.
FBLA: Membership continues to grow; students have begun selecting their event in the Sprint.
Newspaper Club: Meeting to plan the first issue, scheduled for release on October 16.
Line Dancing Club: Actively participating in Tuesday morning sessions.
Bible Club: Meets weekly throughout September, reading and discussing different prayers; participated in "See You at the Pole."
Best Buddies: Raised over $750, created nine new buddy matches, planning a school assembly and a pumpkin decorating contest.
Environmental Club: Active in various initiatives.
Overall, there is strong school spirit and active student involvement across multiple clubs and programs this year.

C. Educational Specifications for Bungay School prepared by Construction Solutions Group, LLC for the Seymour Board of Education, Approved February 3, 2025, Revised April 18, 2025, Revised September 30, 2025

MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) to accept and approve the Educational Specifications for Bungay School, 35 Bungay Road, Seymour, CT 06483 prepared by Construction Solutions Group, LLC for the Seymour Board of Education, Approved February 3, 2025, Revised April 18, 2025, Revised September 30, 2025 as presented.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

D. CABE Mandated Policies

1. Mr. Strumello reminded the Board that these are mandated policies, which he and Mr. Champagne have reviewed. He requested that the Board approve them at this meeting and adopt them at next month's meeting.
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) to table the CABE Mandated Policies until the next month's meeting.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

E. Griffin Athletic Trainer Contract

1. Cathy Federowicz provided an update on the athletic trainer, noting that the trainer has been exceptional and that the district is receiving a very competitive rate compared to surrounding towns. Mr. Strumello expressed full agreement, stating he supports Federowicz's assessment 150% and has personally witnessed the trainer's impact.
2. **MOTION**: (Kristen Harmeling / Pete Kubik) to accept the Griffin Athletic Trainer Contract with the necessary changes to reflect Seymour HIgh School.

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

F. SHS Track Coaching Position Change Proposal
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to accept the SHS Outdoor Track Coaching Position Change Proposal as presented
WITHDRAW MOTION (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak)
DISCUSSION: Cathy Federowicz noted that the program has an added new piece of technology and is experiencing significant growth which makes more work for the coaches. Despite the changes, students will continue to have access to two separate coaches, and the program remains cost-neutral with the union aware of and in agreement with the adjustments. The program's structure will remain the same, with all students practicing together.
Additionally, the district is hosting more track meets due to other districts lacking facilities. A winter track program is also being proposed to provide opportunities for students who may not participate in basketball or swimming; this would require an additional track coach. Dr. Compton emphasized that these changes should be reviewed by the district attorney and presented to the liaison committee to update stipend positions with more specific language. It will be reviewed and brought back to the table at the November meeting.
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) to table to agenda item for SHS track coaching position change
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

G. European Trip for 2027 to Greece
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the Seymour High School European Trip for 2027 to Greece
DISCUSSION: Ms. Ciccone presented an informational packet with details about the trip.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

H. Nutritional Services Requests – by Cindy Brooks
a. 2.25% wage increase for cafeteria managers and employees
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) to approve the 2.25% wage increase for the cafeteria staff.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0
b. Job Title Change of the Nutrition Services Secretary to District Nutrition Services Manager
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the title change of the Nutrition Services Secretary to District Nutrition Services Manager
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0
c. District Nutrition Services Manager Contract
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the District Nutrition Services Manager Contract as presented
DISCUSSION:The contract is within the approved budget. The only changes are a wage increase and updated job title. Mr. Hatfield: noted that the district is fortunate to employ independent staff, as many districts must outsource these services.

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

VIII. INFORMATION

A. Seymour High School Spectator Expectations
No approval was required, as the matter was issued by the school administration. Mr. Strumello suggested that the procedure be modified and clearly outlined for all Seymour High School events, not just football.

B. Hiring - Volunteer
1. Alexa Michaud
    a. Volunteer Unified Cheer Coach

C. Hiring – Non-Certified
1. Erin Perry
    a. Substitute Nurse Pool
    b. District Wide
2. Savannah Guliuzza
    a. Substitute Nurse Pool
    b. District Wide

D. Hiring – Appendix D
1. Melissa Anelli
    a. Student Council Advisor
    b. Seymour High School
    c. Replacing Caroline Sweeney
2. Cory Woolley
    a. Band Instructor
    b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
    c. Replacing Melissa Labbe
3. Cory Woolley
    a. Marching Band Coordinator
    b. Seymour Middle School
    c. Replacing Sarah Quinn
4. Jennifer Severino
    a. Co-Advisor of National Junior Honor Society
    b. Seymour Middle School
    c. Replacing Meagan Krushinski
5. Trish Hazzard
    a. Co-Advisor of National Junior Honor Society
    b. Seymour Middle School
    c. Replacing Meagan Krushinski

E. Transfers
1. Darlene Sebes
    a. Secretary
    b. From CLS to Central Office/Special Education Department
    c. Replacing Diane Fuchs
2. Laura Botelho
    a. Secretary
    b. From part-time secretary to full-time at SHS
    c. Replacing Lyndsay Aldrich

F. Resignations
1. Natalie Marinko-Salatto
a. Food Service Worker
b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
c. Effective 9/15/2025

G. School Events
1. Chatfield Lo-Presti School
2. Bungay Elementary School
3. Seymour Middle School
4. Seymour High School

H. SMS Health & Wellness Day – Thursday, October 23, 2025

I. Kindness Day – Thursday, November 13, 2025

IX. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

A. Board of Education Comments
1. Chairman's Comments
2. Board Member Comments - Stephan Behuniak: Go vote Thursday!

B. Superintendent Report
1. Congratulations were extended to the high school student for his national boxing achievement. Dr. Compton also expressed pride in Cathy Federowicz and Paul Sponheimer for their induction into the Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame, noting that there is much for the Seymour community to be proud of.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

*A. Director of Curriculum and Instruction (PK-12)
MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Kristen Harmeling) move that the Board enter Executive Session for discussion and possible action on the appointment of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (PK-12). The Board invites Dr. Susan Compton first, and then the candidate into the Executive Session

***It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session from which the public will be excluded**

Entered Executive Session at 9:05 PM
Mr. Olechna joined the Executive Session at 9:18 PM
Excited Executive Session at 9:30 PM

XI. POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Pete Kubik) to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to appoint David Olechna as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (PK-12)
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Kubik
PASSES: 7-0-0

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:31 PM

YouTube Link (10/6/2025): Seymour Board of Education Meeting 10-6--25 - SMS

Note: The next Regular Board of Education meeting will be held on **Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 7:00 pm** in **Seymour Middle School.**

Prepared by: Shannon Levey, Board Clerk