

Seymour Public Schools

Seymour Board of Education

ATHLETIC AND HEALTH COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 30, 2026

Seymour Middle School

6:30 pm

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 4/2/26
TIME: 7:30pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Board Members Present: Ed Strumello
Jay Hatfield
Stephan Behuniak

Others present: Dr. Compton
Cathy Federowicz
Deirdre Sponheimer
Shannon Levey

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Pledge of Allegiance – Dr. Compton called the meeting to order at 6:47 PM

II. ELECTION OF A COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Jay Hatfield) to nominate Ed Strumello for committee chairperson.

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Strumello

PASSES: 3-0-0

Mr. Strumello is the committee chairperson.

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.

Matthew Palmisano, 17 Carriage Drive – petitioned for his daughter to participate in hockey, noting she has three years of experience and has made significant progress. He expressed a desire for her to have the opportunity to participate in high school sports and benefit from the positive experiences associated with athletics.

IV. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Hockey Cooperative Program (Co-Op) and any future Co-Ops Cathy Federowicz reported that the district currently has one cooperative program for boys hockey with West Haven, Shelton, and Oxford, which required CIAC approval. The program currently includes six boys, and the district shares costs such as transportation and officials.

She also reached out to West Haven regarding a girls hockey co-op, as they currently operate one (towns involved were not specified). She noted that co-op programs are typically intended as a pathway to eventually building enough participation to support a standalone program. While she is in support of exploring this opportunity, she cautioned that expanding co-ops in multiple sports could create additional considerations for the district.

A parent spoke in support of the girls hockey co-op, noting there are incoming seventh-grade players and that his daughter plays goalie, which could help with team viability and overall participation. He also referenced other regional cooperative models, such as Hamden's participation in a multi-town hockey co-op.

It was noted that co-op agreements are typically approved in two-year cycles and must be re-applied for upon expiration.

MOTION: (Jay Hatfield / Stephan Behuniak) to recommend to the full board the establishment of a girls hockey cooperative program

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Hatfield, Mr. Behuniak, Mr. Strumello

PASSES: 3-0-0

B. Banner / Plaque for retired numbers or dedications

1. Cathy Federowicz suggested that if individuals are recognized (e.g., through shirts or names), a plaque with explanatory information should be included so that the recognition includes context about who the individual was and why they are being honored. Dr. Compton noted that any associated cost would come from the Board budget. Mr. Hatfield added that a similar approach should be considered for football and recognition at the press box.

C. Academic Eligibility

1. Cathy Federowicz discussed athletic eligibility standards compared to other local districts, noting differences in passing requirements and grading thresholds. Concerns were raised about students remaining eligible for athletics due to taking a full course load, while failing multiple academic courses. A proposal was discussed to implement an academic probation process, where students not demonstrating academic progress within a set timeframe (e.g., two weeks) would be temporarily restricted from participation in games or practices to prioritize academic improvement.

Mr. Strumello emphasized the need for clear, consistent criteria and monitoring, ideally overseen by the Athletic Director rather than individual coaches. Ms. Federowicz noted that while some flexibility may be needed depending on course type, Athletic Directors would formalize expectations in writing with the goal of supporting student academic progress.

V. REPORTS

A. Board of Education

1. Chairman Comments
2. Board Member Comments

B. Superintendent's Report

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM

Prepared by Shannon Levey, Board Clerk