

SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

June 17, 2015

A regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board was held on Wednesday June 17, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:11 PM by Jon LeBlanc, School Board Chair, in the library at Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston, NH. The following were recorded as present:

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Janice Bennett
 Jon LeBlanc, Chair
 Corey Masson
 Roberto Miller
 Wendy Miller, Vice Chair
 Dustin Ramey
 Nancy Ross
 Isabella Dunham, Student Council Representative
 Monique Ricard, New Student Council Representative

ADMINISTRATORS: Dr. Brian J. Blake, Superintendent of Schools
 Carol Coppola, Business Manager
 Jennifer Pomykato, Director of Student Services

The meeting began with a salute to the flag.

REVIEW AGENDA

MINUTES

Ms. Ross made a motion to accept the June 3, 2015, public and non-public meeting minutes. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor.

MANIFEST

The following manifest was signed by the School Board: Accounts Payable #28 -\$227,422.34; Accounts Payable #29 - \$4,417.45. Payroll #26 – \$2,852.12; Payroll #27 - \$4,146.24.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS Dr. Blake reported on the year-end activities throughout the District. He reported on the PACE Assessments at the four District buildings. He told how the PACE exams were reviewed twice in the District as well as samples being sent to be reviewed at the State and National level for validity and accuracy. He stated that the District learned a lot being a part of this model for testing. Dr. Blake reported that the Smarter Balance testing went

well and that overall, all assessment testing went well. Smarter Balance Assessment scores won't be ready for a while. Some of the schools chose to use paper and pencil vs. computers. The elementary schools are busy wrapping up classes and packing classrooms up for the summer. He spoke of the tradition at the Bakie School where the entire staff lines up outside to wave goodbye to the students at dismissal – a tradition that the students love.

On June 8th, there was an open house for the 6th grade students at the MS. A presentation on Ferry Beach was held. On June 9th there was a National Jr. Art Honors Program held at the Kingston library. On June 10th the Jr. National Honors Society (JNHS) induction was held. The JNHS donated \$800 to *End 68 Hours of Hunger*. “Kudos” to those students. On Friday, June 12, the HS held their graduation outside. 48% of graduates are attending four year college; 24% are attending two year college; 19% are entering the workforce; 3% of the students it will be a “gap” year; 2% are participating in internships and two students are entering the military. Dr. Blake said he is impressed with the caliber of the universities to which Sanborn students will be attending – Wentworth, RPI, BU, Bryant, Drexel to mention a few.

Dr. Blake said it was a good year. He said students and staff are ready to be done. He said it's been a trying year on a few levels and that “folks are looking forward to Friday”. Mr. LeBlanc asked Dr. Blake if all Sanborn students participated in the Smarter Balance Assessment Test, would the District have to go to paper and pencil. Dr. Blake replied that the District could “manage” to have all students on computers.

STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Mr. LeBlanc thanked Bella for her service on the School Board and presented Bella with a floral bouquet. Mr. LeBlanc said that each year the Student Council Representative receives a scholarship from the SB. Bella is a junior this year, and the scholarship will be given to her at the end of the next school year. Bella thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve on the SB. Monique reported that the students have chosen a theme for next year's Homecoming – international cities. Homecoming is scheduled for October 9th. Monique reported that the Student Council had donated money for a water bubbler at the HS.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Masson reported that the Public Relations Committee had met. He thanked everyone on the SB and Dr. Blake for contributing to the community report. Mr. Masson had a slide presentation that will be available on the District website concerning the community report. Mr. Masson reported that the Committee discussed a SB Action Plan and a summary of the SB goals. Mr. Masson said the Committee discussed Kingston Days and should the SB members attend? He said he was looking for opinions from the SB members. He asked if SB members should have scheduled hours to meet with the public? Mr. LeBlanc asked what the benefit

would be of having SB hours with the availability of telephones and email? Mr. Masson said that some people feel it's more inviting to meet one on one. Mr. Masson said it would be an opportunity for clearer communication channels. Mr. Ramey thanked Mr. Masson and the PR Committee for pulling all the information together for the community report and the slide show, "not a fun thing to do, thank you."

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENT

Mr. LeBlanc reported he attended many of the high school senior events – he has a senior. He attended the Senior Sports Awards. He said he was happy to see two awards presented that are sponsored by two members of the School Board and their families, the Ross' and the Ramey's. He said he attended Class Day and that it was nice to see the students recognized. He said he had a different perspective at this year's graduation – by handing out the diplomas and the "bright eyes". He said it was a nice experience. He said it was great to see the 8th grade NHS donate \$800 to *End 68 Hours of Hunger*. Mr. LeBlanc said he wanted to address the comments made on social media concerning the dress code discussion and the last SB meeting. He said that Ms. Bennett made some good statements and that her comment about "keeping cookies away from a child" was one comment and that the negative comments on social media concerning this one statement was not fair. He stated he thinks people should look in the mirror before posting to Facebook and invited the public to call the SB with questions or comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Channa Alvarado of Newton asked the SB why the video from the June 3rd meeting was not posted until yesterday? Ms. Alvarado said she was there to reply to Ms. Bennett's comments from the previous SB meeting concerning the dress code. Ms. Alvarado referred to an email she sent to all the SB members concerning the dress code. Ms. Alvarado said she thinks it's offensive to compare boys to 2 and 3 year old children around a plate of cookies. She said the boys Ms. Bennett was referring to are high school and middle school boys – not young children. She said it is not right to blame girls for their attire and that the boys have no control – it's "something natural". She said it's not right that the dress code be created around what is distracting to boys. Ms. Alvarado asked if the policy would be reviewed and if changes would be made before the next school year begins. Ms. Alvarado said she asked if the dress code could be put on the agenda and was refused.

Jazmin Alvarado, sixth grade student, talked about the school dress code and what she referred to as "the rape culture" and sexual violence against women. She stated some examples of rape culture include: blaming the victim; trivializing sexual assault; teaching women to avoid getting raped instead of teaching men not to rape. Jazmin Alvarado said that at the beginning of the school year a letter was sent out to all students at the MS stating "Girls are not to wear

leggings, yoga pants or tights without proper length shorts or skirts over them as they are distracting to male students". She said instead of teaching young men not to harass, you're teaching young ladies to avoid harassment. Jazmin said that dress code policies worry about distracting heterosexual males. She said what's more distracting is students being singled out and made an example of during instruction time. She said making the dress code current can help teach children to live in a tolerant and diverse society.

Ms. Annie Collyer spoke to the SB about something she heard on NPR – the Federal Reserve said they will be maintaining interest rates as they are. She asked about student/teacher ratios and asked the SB to look carefully at these ratios. She spoke of teachers receiving a 5% raise and asked what is sustainable in the community. She asked the SB to consider what the public can afford in preparing the budget.

Mr. Kurt Baitz (who served the SB for 12 years), spoke on behalf of Ms. Jennifer Pomykato. He said the SRSD was losing one of the best administrators the District ever had. He said back in the day when the SB would rotate their meetings between the schools, anytime he was at Memorial School you would always see Ms. Pomykato's car in the parking lot at 7:00 and 8:00 PM. He said even today, she's still putting in the long days when he drives by the HS at night. He said she was relentless in making this District successful. Mr. Baitz said Ms. Pomykato is an extraordinary woman and that she has saved the District thousands of dollars (maybe a million) by keeping students in District and not outsourcing. He said she never takes credit for any of the wonderful things she has accomplished over the years. He asked the SB, "Do you realize what you're losing?" He said Ms. Pomykato "eats, breaths Sanborn" and it's always about the "kiddos".

Mr. Baitz said he wanted to address the serious heroin problem in the community and the District. He said another young life was lost last week. He said the District needs to tackle the drug, alcohol and heroin problem. He suggested the District have more formal classes that students take twice per year. "We need to reach out and touch everybody. Make it a credit based class." He said the program should be taught at the MS level as well. Mr. Baitz said it is a serious problem. He said he's reached out to the State Reps and they don't care. He said he doesn't care about the money, he cares about the kids. "Every kid should have an opportunity."

Mr. Baitz warned the PR Committee about hosting an open office. He said the SB Chair speaks for the SB. Mr. Baitz talked of the old HS campus. He said he read the SB goals and that December 2015 is too late to put anything on the warrant article. He stated the SB needs to have a plan by August or September or give the Seminary back to the Trustees.

At 8:00 PM the meeting took a ten minute recess. The meeting resumed at approximately 8:15 PM. Dr. Blake presented Ms. Pomykato with a bouquet of flowers and thanked her for everything she has done for the District in her 22 years of service. Ms. Pomykato thanked everyone. She stated this is an amazing District and that the District has “come so far”. She stated she is proud to say she is from Sanborn. She complimented the SB and Administration for their leadership. She wished them well. She said she has enjoyed the journey and the District’s support. “Thank you very much.” Mr. LeBlanc thanked Ms. Pomykato for all she has done.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMENT

Ms. Bennett thanked Ms. Pomykato for her service to the District. She thanked Ms. Pomykato for her poise, generosity, good will and humor and wanted to say personally, “thank you”. Ms. Bennett said she attended the HS graduation (her 16th). She said she noticed a different spirit and nature for this graduation. She said it was very personal, very inclusive. She said it was a wonderful event, the weather was lovely, the kid’s speeches were good. Ms. Ross said she read an interesting article on the current drug problem in New England. The article spoke of anyone with a drug problem being provided the opportunity to turn their drugs in and go into rehab. She said she would be pursuing this issue in the fall. Ms. Ross spoke of the dinner for the top students. She said Ms. Nancy Finney, secretary at the HS, organizes the event and it is wonderful. She said Ms. Finney is retiring and has been “an unbelievable employee” and wished her the best in retirement. Ms. Ross attended the Sports Awards Banquet. She said this is a great way to recognize students. Ms. Ross attended the Baccalaureate and said the highlight was the choir – sounded like angels singing. She said Friday’s graduation was lovely and the theme throughout the graduation was to be happy and follow your heart. She congratulated all seniors. Her last statement was for Ms. Pomykato – 22 years and an amazing journey. She said Ms. Pomykato always said it takes a village. She said what Ms. Pomykato has done has been amazing and that she led the District in a positive direction. “Thank you for everything you’ve done.”

Ms. Miller thanked Ms. Pomykato for her service and everything she has done. She thanked the Jr. NHS for donating money to *End 68 Hours of Hunger* – it meant a lot to her and she was shocked at the donation. She said it was great to see. Ms. Miller talked about the dress code. She said as a SB member she is often involved in hot topics. She said there has been a lot of conversation on social media. She said she was asked to refrain from posting her opinions on social media. She said she was asked not to bad mouth another SB member on social media. Ms. Miller said she wanted to state for the record that she did not bad mouth anyone. She said she stated her opinion. She said she would like to believe the reason she received 666 votes is because people trust her and respect her. She said she is not afraid to speak her mind and won’t refrain from stating her opinion. She said that volunteering as a SB member does not

take away her freedom of speech. She said that kids have enough issues with self-esteem and a dress code policy should promote respect and dignity. She said she spent the day with the MS students at a field trip to a water park. She said the girls were hesitant to put on their bathing suits because they did not want to be seen by their teachers (it was awkward). She said when the students passed the teachers they covered themselves with their backpacks. She asked, “what are we doing to our daughters”? She said she told the girls to be proud of themselves and they had nothing to hide. She asked the SB members and the community to think about the message they are sending to the children of Sanborn. She said it’s time to teach students dignity and self worth.

Corey Masson thanked Ms. Pomykato and said he was astounded by what she has done.

Mr. Miller thanked Ms. Pomykato for her service and wished her luck in the future.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS none

NEW BUSINESS

a. Nominations: Ms. Ross made a motion to approve the Professional Staff Nominations dated June 17, 2015, of Ms. Caitlin Houlihan, Biology, and Michael Corkery, English. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor.

b. Middle School Update: Ms. Coppola reported a timeline had been completed for the bid process for the MS. The bid package will go to the Fire Marshall for approval. It is anticipated the bid package will be released July 13, earlier if completed. Only invited contractors who qualify will be submitting bids. It is anticipated that the bid will be awarded July 28th with an August 1st starting date. Ms. Coppola said the District is working with FEMA and the insurance company about reimbursement. An architect has estimated the approximate cost of repairs to be between one half million dollars and three quarters million dollars. She said the District is currently looking at revenues, the operating budget, and expenses and preparing a summary. Ms. Coppola said a motion was needed to reserve \$500,000.00 from the unexpended funds balance to pay for the roof repair while the District is in conversation with FEMA and the insurance company. The District needs to have a “line” where they can expend the money from for the repairs. The amount of money that will be returned to the community will depend on the reimbursement from FEMA and the insurance company. Fourteen classrooms at the MS have been affected. A discussion was held concerning the hardship of the 8th grade students being housed at the MS. Dr. Blake stated they are in a crisis situation and making the best of it. Mr. Masson suggested keeping the 8th grade students at the HS. Ms. Miller asked what would be the cost to keep the 8th graders at the HS? Mr. Masson questioned whether the District wants to invest the money into the MS or putting it into something else?

“Are we doing our due diligence?” Ms. Bennett asked if the District is cutting off one of the grades due to an accident? Dr. Blake said that all the District can do is put their best foot forward. He said it is not a waste of money to repair the building the District needs. Nancy Ross made a motion to reserve \$500,000.00 from the unexpended funds. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. Further discussion followed and Ms. Ross amended the motion to reserve \$501,663.00 from the unexpended funds. Ms. Bennett seconded the amendment. All in favor.

c. Authorization to Hire/Accept Resignations: Dr. Blake stated that each year the Superintendent is given authority to offer conditional offers of employment and accept resignations. Ms. Ross made a motion to grant the Superintendent authority to offer conditional offers of employment and resignations. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED/SENT none

WRITTEN INFORMATION none

PUBLIC COMMENT Ms. Annie Collyer said she thought the Community Report was good for the community. She said she was encouraged by the drug and alcohol awareness programs spoken about. She said it was good to catch the problems early and while students are young. Ms. Gannon said she was encouraged to hear that one of the laid off teachers has been brought back on staff. She said she heard there was a discussion on NPR concerning state funding that should be interesting. Ms. Gannon said she is pleased that the SB is going to review the dress code policy. She said the policy would be more accepted if the people in the community have their voices heard.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMENT Ms. Ross wished everyone wonderful summer.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION – RSA 91-A:3 IIC

Ms. Ross motioned to enter into non-public session at 9:43 PM. Ms. LeBlanc polled the Board. All in favor.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next **regular meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board** is tentatively set for **Wednesday, August 12, 2015, at 7:00 PM**, in the Library **at the Sanborn Regional High School, Kingston.**

The next **District Area Selectman/Sanborn School Board Meeting** will be held on **Monday, June 22, 2015, at 6:30 PM at the Newton Town Hall.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail M. LeBlanc
School Board Secretary

Minutes of the School Board meetings are unofficial until approved at a subsequent meeting of the School Board.