

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, September 4, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Reed Intermediate School library.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K Hamilton, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
R. Gaines	1 Staff
W. Hart	1 Public
K. Alexander (absent)	3 Press
J. Vouros	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to go into executive session and invited Dr. Reed, Dr. Gejda and Robin Pavia for the purpose of interviewing for a special education position. Mrs. Roche seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 1 – Executive Session

The Board interviewed the candidate and exited executive session at 7:20 p.m.

Item 2 – Public Session for Vote

MOTION: Mr. Hart moved that the Board of Education appoint Robin Pavia Acting Supervisor of Special Education Secondary Level with salary per the SERV Grant and the administrators' contract. Mr. Gaines seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mrs. Hamilton moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the minutes of August 20, 2013, \$425.25 in donations for Sandy Hook school, a donation of \$50,000 from Victorinox Swiss Army to support the Readers' Workshop program, and the updated fall coach's roster. Mr. Gaines seconded. Motion passes unanimously

Item 4 – Public Participation – none

Item 5 – Reports

Correspondence: Ms. Hamilton stated a letter was received from Craig Knop with questions on bullying on buses and one from Dawn Cornhaus with common core questions.

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein attended the teacher convocation with other Board members. She received positive reports on the start of school. She mentioned the upcoming CABE convention workshops.

Mr. Hart noted that one workshop was titled "Sandy Hook Shooting: Lessons Learned." Mrs. Leidlein asked for a follow-up on that item.

Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Reed spoke about resignation of Joan Libby, part-time Director of Human Resources. He feels the new superintendent should fill that position but he will bring someone to substitute in that position that has the appropriate experience. He is still analyzing the workload. We need a realistic assessment of what the staff expects. There is the potential to restructure that position.

We reinitiated regular meetings with the clergy in town as he views them as being an integral part of the community and the schools.

The October 1 enrollment is the official enrollment. We are down in the 80s from what the estimated enrollment was in the budget. He cannot make inferences on trends beyond this year. There will be a more specific report in October.

The high school started working with the Unity Project last year collecting information related to resiliency and will do some surveys at the high school. We want some baseline data to get the feeling of students and staff related to the December event. We may also have someone talk about the benefits of the testing. Dr. Reed will present the format we will use to study the gifted and talented program. We must take time to do the proper research. We are looking for a consultant who has experience to help facilitate this.

Mr. Vouros asked about the kindergarten enrollment.

Dr. Reed said we picked up additional students but not an overwhelming number. Class sizes are 20 to 22. The referendum is October 5 but he cannot send any information thought the schools. The First Selectman and PTAs can do so. Having it on a Saturday will allow for more to be able to vote.

#### Item 6 – Old Business

Middle School Roof Replacement Project:

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education accept the Newtown Middle roof replacement State Project #097-0113 as complete and authorize the filing of the final grant application form ED049F. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Bienkowski spoke about the project which started in the summer of 2011. The Public Building and Site Commission approved it as complete at their meeting on August 27, 2013.

Ms. Hamilton asked what things were not eligible for reimbursement.

Mr. Bienkowski said there was an ineligible cost list which included resurfacing drives and walks, masonry and concrete repair, cleaning and waterproofing. The state makes the determination of items that are non-maintenance. Also included is the replacement or maintenance of items not required by code, repair of gutters and leaders, except the built-in gutters, and new skylights in the re-roofing projects.

Ms. Hamilton asked if it was within the budgeted amount.

Mr. Bienkowski stated it came in under budget. The General Assembly approved \$4,257,690. The Public Building and Site Commission did not approve any of the alternates.

Dr. Reed acknowledged the thoroughness of Public Building and Site Commission and their quality of work and expertise along with Mr. Bienkowski's tenaciousness in responding to issues.

Vote: 6 ayes

#### Item 7 – New Business

Minutes of August 23, 2013:

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved to approve the minutes of August 23, 2013. Mr. Vouros seconded. Vote: 4 ayes, 2 abstained (Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Gaines)

Board of Education

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September 4, 2013

Item 8 – Public Participation – none

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to adjourn. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 6 ayes

Item 9 - Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

**Board of Education  
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers at 3 Primrose Street.

D. Leidlein, Chair	J. Reed
L. Roche, Vice Chair	L. Gejda
K Hamilton, Secretary	R. Bienkowski
R. Gaines	2 Staff
W, Hart	5 Public
K. Alexander	3 Press
J. Vouros	

Mrs. Leidlein called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to go into executive session for the purpose of interviewing a high school assistant principal applicant and invited Dr. Reed and the candidate. Mr. Alexander seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 1 – Executive Session

The Board interviewed the candidate for Interim Assistant Principal of Newtown High School

Item 2 – Vote on Interim Assistant Principal Position

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education appoint Matthew Childs Newtown High School Interim Assistant Principal with salary per the administrators' contract. Mrs. Roche seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board of Education add the appointment of the Acting Assistant Principal for Sandy Hook School under New Business. Mr. Gaines seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 3 – Consent Agenda

MOTION: Mr. Hart moved that the Board of Education approve the consent agenda which includes the minutes of July 16 and August 6, 2013, the Newtown High School Band field trip, donations totaling \$1,330 for Sandy Hook School, the resignation of Jennifer Meyers, lead teacher at Head O'Meadow School, the resignation of Kristin Elliot, teacher at Head O'Meadow School, the resignation of Lea Attanasio, teacher at Hawley School, the resignation for retirement of Jo-anne Sheehan, teacher at Newtown Middle School, the leave of absence for Kaitlin Roig, teacher at Sandy Hook School, the resignation of Joan Libby, Human Resources Director, and the Newtown High School fall coaches. Ms. Hamilton seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 4 – Public Participation - none

Item 5 – Reports

Correspondence: Ms. Hamilton stated that letters were received requesting a route change for bus 42 going to the middle school.

Chair Report: Mrs. Leidlein attended the new teacher luncheon with Dr. Reed and Ms. Hamilton. The administrator contract negotiations are continuing. The Board decided to hire CABA as the Board of Education

superintendent search firm with the contract to be discussed tonight. She and Dr. Reed visited the three new principals.

Ms. Hamilton asked for an update regarding the new Sandy Hook School and the selection process for the architect and construction manager. Mrs. Leidein sat in on the interviews for the construction manager. The Public Building and Site Commission will make a recommendation to Pat Llodra. A financial decision hasn't been made.

Dr. Reed said the Public Building and Site Commission have put forth written feedback but they were not ranked. A smaller group will come back to be considered. They have the option regarding the demolition of Sandy Hook School to hire someone to do the specs for that job. It has to be bid and it is anticipated that it will come down in November.

Mr. Hart said it was important to encourage people to vote at the referendum on October 5.

#### Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Reed reminded everyone that the new state law state does not allow the superintendents to send notices to remind the public to vote.

We are closing on hiring the project recovery director and the Board will meet to approve that appointment.

Within last three months we hired 10 administrators, filled 38 regular teaching positions, and 13 related to the SERV Grant. It is important to know that emergency circumstances resulted in hiring this many administrators.

Hawley School is undergoing a fairly significant project regarding heating in the 1948 building. The contractors finished a couple of days early but there is a tremendous cleaning job to get the school ready. We had to postpone the student visitation until Monday to give the teachers time to set up their rooms.

He will be sending an email to parents on a number of topics including buses being late the first few days of school. We are dismissing the high school 10 minutes early the first two days of school to help with buses to get to the elementary schools on time.

He and Joni spoke about the 22 policies that we reviewed and he encouraged the policy subcommittee to meet.

The convocation is Thursday morning and the entire staff was invited to attend. He asked the BOE to attend. Breakfast is available at 7:15 and the program will start at 8:25.

#### Assistant Superintendent's Report:

Dr. Gejda spoke about the upcoming biennial report on the Youth and Parent Substance Abuse surveys that were administered in April 2013. There will be a more comprehensive report shared with parents. She introduced Dr. Archie Swindell who presented a preliminary overview of the surveys.

Dr. Reed said the complete report would be posted online. The good news is the trends are going down and also going down nationally but we are in the middle of a discussion about the legal use of marijuana.

Mr. Gaines said there was concern that use might have gone up after December 14 but that didn't happen. Julie Haggard and her department are to be commended for their work.

#### Technology Grant Application:

Dr. Gejda stated that Governor Malloy released \$10M in grant money for technology which is for reimbursement. Mrs. Amodeo specifically made a request to replace obsolete equipment that is

seven years or older and increasing the band width. Approximately \$75,000 would come back to Newtown.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education approve the grant application for technology investments to implement common core state standards. Mr. Gaines seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Year-end Financial Report and Transfers:

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education approve the year-end financial report and transfers dated June 30, 2012. Mr. Hart seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski stated that we concluded the year with a positive balance in the appropriated budget of \$6,035 which will be returned to the Town as unexpended year-end funds. Unliquidated encumbrances from the 2011-12 fiscal year totaling \$222 will also be returned to the Town. We had good financial success with the transition to a new bus company. The cost was \$212,853 less than what was budgeted for the first year. About \$12,000 was realized by reducing the school year by two days. The property insurance claim for Chalk Hill expenses still have outstanding receipts of \$449,739 but there may be additional expenses.

Mr. Alexander asked if there were any extra costs for transportation for Chalk Hill. Mr. Bienkowski said the extra cost was approximately \$20,000 for the extra time for drivers which was submitted to the insurance company. The routes were kept the same last year but this year they have been rerouted to reduce the length of the routes by 10 minutes. There will be no extra expense for transportation to Chalk Hill.

Mr. Alexander asked about the instructional library supplies cost and asked what we didn't get. Mr. Bienkowski stated that this includes a large amount of items for the schools. The cooperative bid for supplies wasn't covered. We normally order from the bid list in April but those orders were not issued until July 1.

Mr. Alexander asked about the \$407,000 for the Sandy Hook School restoration. Mr. Bienkowski said the cost includes depreciation. We would like to use portions of these funds to remove things from the building that can be used at another school such as boilers and Smartboards. The cost for the contractors to go in to remove these won't come close to that amount. It will end up in the town's insurance proceeds account.

Mr. Alexander asked how we get to use those funds to reuse the items from the building. Mrs. Leidlein said we would formalize the process to get those funds. Dr. Reed stated that the ed specs reflected 75,000 square feet. The state will reimburse 70,000 square feet. Additional money could be used for any program the state would not reimburse.

Ms. Hamilton asked when the property insurance would be resolved. Mr. Bienkowski said all the data was submitted last week. It takes three or four weeks for them to be reviewed. The outstanding balances are in the insurance proceeds account.

Dr. Reed wants to see where the savings will be in the route changes this year. We don't know if we may need to add a bus. Mr. Vouros asked if we would be using all of the buses we have to which Mr. Bienkowski stated we would.

Mrs. Leidlein felt we should wait until school starts regarding the bus situation and get a report from All-Star.

Dr. Reed said it was better wait until the second meeting in September to be sure he has the right information regarding recommendations for improvements.

Motion passes unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education approve the financial report for the month ending July 31, 2013. Mr. Gaines seconded.

Mr. Bienkowski said with this report out of district tuition has exceeded the account balance by approximately \$267,000.

Ms. Hamilton asked if we received excess cost grant money throughout the year.

Mr. Bienkowski stated we usually received money in December and the last payment is dependent upon all submissions in the month of March.

Motion passes unanimously.

Item 6 – New Business - none

Item 7 – New Business

MOTION: Mr. Alexander moved that the Board of Education appoint Brian Kirmil Acting Assistant Principal of Sandy Hook School for the 2013-2014 school year with salary per the SERV Grant and the administrators' contract and the exact length of the work year to be determined by the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Gaines seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Reed stated that because of the SERV Grant we have an additional assistant principal at Sandy Hook School. Kathy Gombos spoke to him about possibly getting a retired principal. Mr. Kirmil just retired after 18 years at Rockwell School in Bethel so he brings a lot of experience especially with full day kindergarten. Dr. Reed thanked him personally for joining us. He is also a Newtown resident.

CIP Update and Timeline:

Mr. Bienkowski said we have no project for year five and made a change in the Sandy Hook School window replacement so the amount has gone down. He suggested going back to the middle school for replacing boilers and energy improvements. The timeline was from Bob Tait.

Ms. Hamilton asked if we would add the Sandy Hook School project.

Dr. Reed said every school addition has been in our CIP.

Mr. Beinkowski stated the high school project was in our CIP.

CABE Superintendent Search Contract:

MOTION: Mrs. Roche moved that the Board of Education approve the Letter of Understanding between the Newtown Board of Education and CABE for the superintendent search.

Mr. Vouros seconded.

Mr. Alexander questioned the length of time the search would be valid. Mrs. Leidlein would get that information.

Motion passes unanimously.

Minutes of July 18, 2013:

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved that the Board of Education approve the minutes of July 18, 2013. Mrs. Roche seconded. Vote: 3 ayes, 4 abstained (Ms. Hamilton, Mr. Hart, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Vouros. Motion passes.

Item 8 – Public Participation -none

MOTION: Mr. Gaines moved to adjourn. Mrs. Roche seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Item 9 - Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Kathy Hamilton  
Secretary

Consent Agenda  
September 4, 2013

- Minutes of August 20, 2013
- Donations for Sandy Hook School
- Updated Fall Coaches Roster

# DONATIONS

To BOE for Approval on September 4, 2013

9/4/2013

SHES

Keystone Central School - T.Suygan  
Morgan Stanley K-Leblanc

\$ 392.00  
\$ 31.25

ck# 60-1809/433  
ck# 110123463

Total \$ 423.25 \$ 423.25

SHES Library

\$ -

Newtown Public  
Schools

\$ -

Total \$ - \$ -

NPS Teachers

\$ -

\$ 423.25

\$ 423.25

Newtown High School Fall Coaches  
2013-2014

Additional Coaches:	Carl Strait 1	Assistant Cross Country Coach
	Stephanie Paproski 1	Field Hockey
	Linda Dirga 2	Freshman Field Hockey

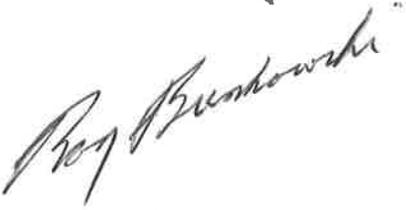
Volunteer Coaches withdrawn:

Cory Fisher - football  
Monica Mueller - volleyball  
Blair Culhane - volleyball

**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUSINESS OFFICE**

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** September 4, 2013  
**TO:** Board of Education  
**FROM:** Ron Bienkowski, Director of Business  
**SUBJECT:** Middle School Roof Replacement Project



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The construction activity for this project occurred during the summer of 2011. Since that time, eligible and ineligible costs needed to be identified, along with the State Department of Education review and in some cases reconsideration. Final paperwork has been reviewed with the State.

The Building and Site Commission formally accepted the project as complete at their meeting of August 27, 2013. The final step for this State Project is for the Board of Education to accept it as complete and authorize the final grant filing. A motion for such is included in the agenda.

The financial summary is as follows:

<u>Final Project Costs</u>	
	Architectural Design \$ 264,292
	Other Professional Fees \$ 99,485
	Fully Eligible Construction \$2,857,881
A.	<u>Eligible Costs Sub Total</u> \$3,221,658
	Ineligible Construction \$ 518,615
B.	<u>Total Project Costs</u> <u>\$3,740,273</u>
C.	Anticipated Total Grant
	A. Eligible Costs \$3,221,658
	Reimbursement Rate 32.50%
	<u>State Project Reimbursement</u> \$1,047,039
D.	State payments received to date \$ 723,355
E.	Balance Due \$ 323,684

cc: Dr. John Reed, Interim Superintendent  
Robert Tait, Finance Director



### Additional Consent Agenda Item

- Donation of \$50,000 from Victorinox Swiss Army to support the Reader's Workshop program



**VICTORINOX**  
SWISS ARMY

August 28, 2013

RENÉ H. STUTZ  
PRESIDENT

Dr. John R. Reed  
Interim Superintendent  
Newtown Public Schools  
3 Primrose Street  
Newtown, CT 06470

Dear Dr. Reed:

Thank you for your time last week. It was a pleasure to meet with you and John Vouros to discuss how Victorinox Swiss Army can assist in providing the middle school students of Newtown with a unique learning experience.

As discussed, Victorinox Swiss Army, Inc. has agreed to donate \$50K to support the *Reader's Workshop* program. The first installment of \$25K will be paid in 2013 as soon as we receive your acceptance of the terms of this letter. We will pay the second installment of \$25K in January once we receive notice from you.

In addition, we also agreed to provide the ten participating classrooms with shelving to house the *Reader's Workshop* books.

Renee Hourigan will work with John Vouros moving forward to finalize all the details.

On behalf of Victorinox Swiss Army and its employees, we are very excited to partner with you on this wonderful program.

Kind regards,

René Stutz

RHS/tah

## **SHS Booster Program 2013 Survey Results**

The Sandy Hook Booster program for 2013 was held at the Reed School during the weeks of August 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> on Monday through Thursday, from 8:30 AM – noon for students in grades K-4. There were several planning days at which the decision was made to have a schedule where all of the math content was delivered by 2 individuals who work with the students during the year at SHS. One of the math resources used was the new math program (Stepping Stones). The classroom teachers were responsible for the daily Responsive Classroom session and the literacy program (using Readers Workshop model) and integration of literacy across curricula areas.

Originally, there were 109 students registered for the program. In total, 104 students attended for some length of time.

The goals of the program were to

- establish a routine for students in anticipation of the upcoming school year
- engage students in a learning setting exposing them to broad, grade-level concepts in math and LA
- socialize with others/classmates

In order to inform our work, the assistant superintendent and the site administrator developed a survey for parents to complete. On the last day of the program, parents were handed the survey as they dropped off their child(ren) and asked to complete and return it at their earliest convenience. Most parents handed the survey back immediately or by the end of the day. We received back 61 surveys. There were some children who did not attend the second week, other families had several children in the program and there were a total of 16 children absent on the last day. Surveys will be mailed out to those who did not attend on that day.



Teacher were great. Would love opportunities to vary levels of difficulty for kids at different academic levels We had a great 2 weeks Thanks

Thank you for offering this Booster program. I feel my daughter will be more prepared for the new school year.

This was wonderful for my daughter. Her teachers were wonderful and really connected with her in a short amount of time. Thank you.

I have none because the program was very well organized. Thank you

Would like more feedback on what was done each day in the classroom my child did not communicate in too much detail. Thank you.

My son had an excellent experience! Everyone was very helpful, super friendly and happy to be there. It is exactly what we needed. The only bad thing was that he missed the first week due to attending Boy Scout Camp!

My daughter loved the booster program. I would certainly recommend it to other SHA parents I think it worked out very well, both of my kids enjoyed it and benefitted from it

BEST Program! It helped all of US....Getting back to Routine-Back with Friends and establishing a "schedule" as well as stirring up excitement for the new school year. Both my children are sad that today is the last day. Thank you so much. A beautiful way to ease all of our nerves and anxiety and see the POSITIVE

Great program kids like it very much

Thank you. Great program my son had a great time and learned a lot too.

It was great! Thank you so much

The children had a great time! Feel program was adequate for the children!

Thank you so much for this opportunity for my son to continue to learn and grow in a structured yet fun setting.

Would like some brief feedback from the teachers on their observations of how our child is doing. Thank you to all. I think the program was a great experience overall.

Thank you. This was really helpful to refresh and get ready for this year.

The staff was great...The kids had a blast. Thanks

Perhaps an assessment should be made of where every child is in September. We have all felt that the kids obviously are not 100% at next grade level and the slip concerns some of us.

Writing skills and math seem to be the biggest slip for our daughter

This program really helped to start to establish the "school routine" and keep them in the learning mode. One child really needs a summer program, but due to our vacation schedule we cannot participate in July- August is better. Thank you

My girls loved it and were happy to come each day!

My child loved the Booster Program "I loved everything we did at booster" from a 7 yr. old 2<sup>nd</sup> grader. It was a great idea, he had fun while learning plus it was great to get them back into routine before school starts in the fall. Thank you everyone involved.

Start at 9 AM !

Excellent in every way

You are awesome! Thanks

Should include more activities/classes – art-music-PE

I think this is a great program. My son loved coming to camp every day. Great teachers!  
Everyone was so nice and so welcoming. Thank you  
Kids should be going to school year-round  
I think it was wonderful and Faith LOVED IT.

My son thinks the program was perfect and he wouldn't change a thing ! Thank you  
Thank you for everything! Kids had a great time!

I am happy this was offered this year, I feel it helped him get ready for school  
Make it longer and more intensive. Let the parents know the objectives and set their  
expectations.

Thanks to everyone who provided this wonderful opportunity for our children

I thought the program ran well. The idea of the teachers being people the kids know was great.

Very happy with program.

Thank you. Appreciate the extra academic attention

Thank you for organizing Booster Camp

No suggestions: My children seemed to enjoy camp. I love that my 4<sup>th</sup> grader got lots of locker  
practice in and is now more familiar with Reed. Thank you so much for doing this.