

March 7, 2019

Report to the Sharon Board of Education

By: Bob Whelan – Region One Board of Education representative from Sharon, Connecticut

At the February 2019 Board Meeting, these initiatives and presentations were the key focus:

- The Agriculture Department Presentation – “The Three Circles”
- Recognizing Anne MacNeil
- April 2019 recognition – Michael Berkeley, Julie Lane and Jeff Lloyd
- First discussion – 2019/2020 Budget & Public Hearing Date
- NEASC Standard 7
- Policy implementation – Alignment with the Teacher Handbook
- Portrait of a Graduate
- Michelle Patrick, our new (old) Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Dr. Vogel’s report and the FOIC findings

All of the members of the Vo-Ag faculty were on hand to give a presentation of the State of the VoAg system here at HVRHS. It was a real education. The community relationships, the mentoring provided by the FFA and the truly unique teachers that are all the backbone of this program have created an experience for students that is unparalleled. Housy sees the sustainable future of food and the land and the technologies powering them. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to making this program strong, and providing support to help grow the opportunity for more young people.

Anne MacNeil works tirelessly to bring about the most productive athletic experience for young people possible. Her clear commitment to constant improvement is evidenced in many ways, but her efforts of late to explore the opportunity for middle school sports regionalization represents an opportunity to help build relationships among this cohort and provide more possible activities. Developing a program like this has the support of many in the community, including all town Recreation Directors. This is a work in progress, and Anne is spending time with each district to understand the students’ thoughts as well as others. It’s a great example of leadership as well, and is appreciated.

The Board will recognize Michael Berkeley, Julie Lang and Jeff Lloyd next month. Michael has been a part of the Musical Theatre Society for 15 years, and this year created the work being presented March 14th, 15th & 16th. Julie is an integral part of all the good things that happen out of view (in the office)..., and Jeff has stepped in as Facilities Manager of this 130,000 ft² plant, and has done wonders in a short period of time.

The introduction of the work thus far of the Budget Committee to the entire Board emphasized efforts to offer opportunities and keep expenditures flat. At this point, the budget will either again be at a zero increase, of a very minor one. There are numerous folks at work to accomplish that goal, and the efforts are really paying off. The Public Budget Hearing is scheduled for April 4th, 2019 at 7:00 pm at HVRHS. Budget highlights include:

- A Powerschool Specialist Position
- A new Math/Business Education position
- Retaining EdAdvance Curriculum mapping specialists to bring greater alignment to programs throughout the K-8 districts
- Security upgrades at HVRHS

NEASC Standard 7, the final aspect of the report, bears on the Community, and the resources and support HVRHS is provided to promote 21st century learning standards, as well as the school's culture and climate. The Team from NEASC who did the assessments provided 7 Commendations to HVRHS, ranging from the communities willingness to fund a broad spectrum of programs to the cleanliness of the facilities to the quality of programs offered and the utilization of Technology. The community should give itself a pat on the back for its willingness to provide such an amazing breadth of opportunities to our students, as evidenced by the report from this objective outside source. This was the last Standard under review, and concludes the recaps from Mr. Strever. The initial response to the NEASC report has been filed, as mandated.

Numerous policies were adopted by the Board this month. Many of these are provided as templates for the Teacher Handbook and involve student/teacher interaction, drug and alcohol usage and intervention considerations for non-certified staff.

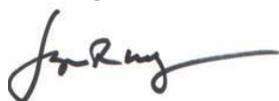
Mr. Strever is moving ahead with the development of the "Portrait of a Graduate", and has received a first round of attributes to be reviewed and adopted as expectations. This is a large project with many moving parts, and Mr. Strever is to be commended for dedicating himself to assembling these thoughts and ideas, put forth by teachers, administrators and members of the community at large.

Pupil Services, under the aegis of Mr. Gross, has always worked to provide the highest level of quality service to our students and community. The latest addition to the staff is Ms. Michelle Patrick as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. Ms. Patrick is a resource to all of the districts, and truly composes the roadmaps for interventions used throughout the Region. Mr. Gross couldn't say enough about Ms. Patrick's contributions to the Region, and her personal presentation about the role of a BCBA was striking in contrast to my personal, limited remembrances of the K-12 years. This role is the foundation of insuring that all children are given the opportunity to thrive in the public schools, and we welcome her in her permanent role in Region 1.

Dr. Vogel provided a very comprehensive report related to a mid-year review of her progress towards achievement of the mutually agreed-to goals also presented to the ABC Committee. There's certainly work to be done, but there is a very fine focus on the achievement of a limited set of defined objectives that should insure success. Another aspect of her report was a recap of the status of the FOI requests and the hearings her office were dealing with. Simply said, the FOIC has found that Dr. Vogel's responses are timely, and she outlined the amount of time and dollars spent to date, both by her office and for legal representation in defense of complaints filed regarding 'timeliness'. This is objective data and is not subject to further interpretation as the FOIC has made its rulings, dismissing the complaints and the appeals made by those who requested an unfocused volume of data related to a date range and all Board members. An unfortunate and ongoing use of scarce resources.

Please feel free to email or call with any questions or comments.

Best regards,



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