



Seymour Board of Education REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 3, 2026
Seymour Middle School
7:00 pm

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 8/7/26
TIME: 2:06 pm
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Board Members Present: Kristen Bruno, Board Chair
Kristen Harmeling, Board Secretary
Stephan Behuniak (7:35 PM)
Jim Garofolo
Lori Nespoli
Ed Strumello

Board Members Absent: Chris Champagne
Pete Kubik

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Pledge of Allegiance – Ms. Bruno called the meeting to order at 7:14 PM
- B. Introductions

II. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Bungay Building Committee Update - Mr. Stumello provided a brief update on the status of the Bungay School building project. Ms. Bruno expressed her appreciation to the members of the Building Committee for the many hours they have dedicated to the project thus far and acknowledged the continued commitment that will be required as the project moves forward.

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.

1. **Paul Roy, 80 Washington Avenue:** announced the Seymour High School Hall of Fame induction ceremony, which will be held on October 25 at 2:00 p.m. in Woodbridge. He recognized this year's inductees, including John Mastrobattisto, John Krot, Steve Cochran, Jim Slie, Paul Haynes, Ryan Osiecki, John Murphy, Katy Petroski, Dennis DeBarber for Outstanding Contribution, the 1969 Football Team; also being recognized: Joe Carrafiello, Kenzie Sirowich, and Eric DeMarco as a coach in the New Haven County Basketball Hall of Fame.
2. **Mike Kearney, representing the American Legion:** shared that the Legion sponsored two boys and two girls to attend Boys State and Girls State this year. He expressed interest in organizing another meet-and-greet event to present participants with certificates and medals and invite local officials to attend. He noted that he would coordinate with Shannon to schedule the event. Mr. Kearney also discussed several veteran-related programs. He shared that following COVID-19 restrictions, Legion members have not been able to resume the Book Buddies program at Chatfield-LoPresti School and expressed hope that volunteers could return. He commended the annual fourth-grade veteran interview programs at Chatfield-LoPresti and Bungay Schools, noting that students do an excellent job honoring local veterans. Additionally, Mr. Kearney addressed an error in the May 4 Board of Education meeting minutes regarding the recognition of Chief Master Sergeant Gerald Morey. Mr. Kearney also clarified that he was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus in 2019, and again in 2020, also explaining that the planned presentation was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He also suggested that Anna LoPresti should be considered for induction into the Seymour High School Hall of Fame. Mr. Kearney concluded by stating that he looks forward to

welcoming third-grade students to the Seymour Historical Society. Dr. Compton thanked Mr. Kearney and the American Legion for their continued support of Seymour students and veterans. She encouraged him to provide a list of veterans interested in volunteering within the schools so the district can facilitate the volunteer process. Noting that there would not be a lengthy process to get them started as volunteers.

3. **Bob Koslowski**, Police Commissioner, spoke regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. He explained that both the Board of Education and Police Department budgets were reduced during the budget process following the town vote and subsequent Board of Finance actions. He noted that while he has been critical at times, he supports education and believes the district is making progress. He stated that recruiting police officers remains challenging and asked the Board to consider providing financial support if it wishes to have an SRO assigned to Seymour High School. He also thanked Board members for their volunteer service to the community. Ms. Bruno inquired whether additional funding during the 2026–2027 budget is being requested. Mr. Koslowski responded that any additional funding would assist. He explained that funding for two SRO positions had originally been included in the Police Department budget but was transferred by the Board of Finance to another budget line. He also noted that the department currently has three officers out on workers' compensation, requiring staffing adjustments to maintain patrol coverage.
4. **Jim Freund**, retired Seymour High School Principal, thanked the Board of Education and Dr. Compton for the opportunity to serve as interim principal at Chatfield-LoPresti School. He remarked that working with elementary students was outside his previous experience but described it as a rewarding opportunity. He commended the Chatfield-LoPresti staff, stating that they were exceptional and that he learned a great deal during his time there.

IV.

REPORTS

A. Financial Report – Salvatore Bucci

Mr. Bucci presented the final financial report for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. He reported that the district finished the year on budget, which remains the number one priority, noting that maintaining a balance throughout the year requires ongoing adjustments and careful management.

Mr. Bucci explained that the building repairs and maintenance line appears as it does due to expenses related to CLS, and that the district continually works to balance planned expenditures with unforeseen needs. He noted that a grant received in May provided unexpected funding, which helped offset several significant unanticipated expenses.

He also reported a decrease in the number of outplaced students and related transportation costs, while acknowledging that projecting future outplacement needs remains challenging. The reduction in outplaced students has also resulted in lower projected special education costs for the upcoming year.

Mr. Bucci emphasized that managing the district's finances is a continual balancing act, as many expenses and circumstances arise that cannot be predicted. He noted the importance of supporting Dr. Compton's priorities for operating the school district while remaining fiscally responsible and avoiding the need to request additional funding. He reiterated his commitment to living within the district's means and stated that the same careful balancing will continue into the next fiscal year.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Intra-District Transfer Requests 2026-2027
- B. Fall Athletic Coaches
- C. Fall Athletic Volunteers
- D. Tuition Rate for Out-of-District Students
- E. Permanent Build Substitute Contract
- F. Ratification of Nurses Union Contract
- G. Approval of Minutes
 1. Finance Committee Meeting – June 15, 2026
 2. Regular BOE Meeting – June 15, 2026

3. Special BOE Meeting – June 24, 2026

MOTION: (Jim Garofolo / Stephan Behuniak) move to approve the consent agenda as presented

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

V. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) move item VI. E to the top of section VI.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

VI. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

E. Memorandum of Understanding – School Resource Officer

Dr. Compton provided an update regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for School Resource Officers. She explained that the Board of Education has a general MOU to review, which is required by law and must be updated every three years. The current MOU was last completed three years ago, and the Chief of Police has reviewed the document and indicated that he believes it is well developed. The MOU will also be reviewed by the Board of Education's legal counsel.

Dr. Compton emphasized the district's respect and appreciation for the School Resource Officer program, noting the positive experiences the district has had with SROs in the past. She explained that when the Seymour Police Department was unable to provide an SRO, the district utilized School Security Officers (SSOs) as an alternative. She reiterated that community members are always welcome to attend Board meetings, participate during Public Comment, or request that a topic be placed on a future agenda.

Dr. Compton shared that the Chief of Police would like to meet with building principals on August 10 or 11 regarding the two SRO candidates currently being considered—one position assigned to Seymour Middle School and one assigned to Seymour High School. Board of Education members are invited to participate in the process. She also noted that the Board of Education has not historically funded SRO positions.

Mr. Bitso, Chairman of the Police Commissioners, shared that the Police Commission is supportive of funding the SRO positions and expressed appreciation for the partnership between the police department and the schools. However, they have had budget cuts as well and would appreciate the Board of Education helping to fund the SROs. He highlighted the positive impact Officer Tomasella has had through the relationships he has built with students. He also shared that the police department recently started a summer youth program, reflecting the department's continued efforts to engage positively with children in the community.

Ms. Bruno asked whether there was a specific amount being requested from the Board of Education for the current year and invited representatives to attend future budget meetings to discuss funding considerations. She also noted the importance of SROs, explaining that they bring specialized training and provide benefits not only to the schools but to the broader community. She questioned how other communities structure funding for SRO programs.

Ms. Harmeling noted that \$183,054 has been allocated in the budget for the SRO positions. Mr. Koslowski clarified that approximately \$184,000 represents the cost for both SRO positions, including benefits, and expressed hope that the Board of Education would consider funding one of the positions.

Ms. Strumello shared his positive experiences with SRO programs in previous districts and emphasized the importance of having administrators involved in the selection process. He stated that SROs play an important role in schools by building relationships with students and helping students better understand the role of law enforcement. He expressed appreciation that administration will be included in the selection process to ensure the officers selected are a strong fit for the school community.

Dr. Compton thanked the Chief of Police and Police Commissioners for including school administrators in the selection process. She reiterated the importance of collaboration between the district and the police department and stated that you can't put a price tag on school safety.

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Stephan Behuniak) to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for School Resource Officers for Seymour Public Schools as presented.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

- A. Mr. Bucci provided an overview of the proposed line-item budget allocation, including comparisons to the January projections and updates made since that time. He reviewed several areas where adjustments have occurred, including certified staff, custodial services, shared services, special education out-of-district tuition and transportation, custodial supplies, electricity, heating fuel, and insurance credits. Mr. Bucci noted that the custodial services reduction reflects a resignation and the decision not to fill that position. He also reviewed reductions related to a decrease in out-of-district special education placements and associated transportation costs, as well as savings in custodial supplies and electricity. Heating fuel projections have remained consistent, and an insurance credit has also positively impacted the budget. Ms. Harmeling requested clarification regarding staffing changes reflected in the budget. Mr. Bucci confirmed reductions of one custodian, one full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher, and one IT position. Discussion continued regarding paraprofessional costs. Ms. Harmeling asked whether the district's goal remains to manage costs within the projected \$1.5 million or whether an increase closer to \$1.8 million is anticipated. Dr. Compton explained that the district will continue working to fill paraprofessional positions while prioritizing compliance with student IEP requirements. She noted that staffing levels, scheduling, and student needs continue to be evaluated, but acknowledged that the district could potentially exceed the current projection depending on staffing needs. Ms. Harmeling asked whether staffing 54 instructional paraprofessionals would eliminate the need for Delta-T substitute support. Dr. Compton stated that the district would provide an updated staffing list and explained that if all 54 positions could be filled, the need for Delta-T support would likely be significantly reduced, with only limited coverage needed for remaining vacancies. Ms. Bruno suggested that Dr. Boyle attend a future meeting to provide an overview of the special education programs, staffing structures, caseloads, and related services to provide additional context regarding special education needs. Mr. Strumello discussed the increase for the library media specialist position, explaining that the increase reflects filling the high school position required as part of the accreditation process. He noted that the position has remained vacant for approximately five years. Dr. Compton also noted that the budget includes the addition of an additional Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) due to student needs and caseloads. Ms. Nespoli asked about the increase in tutor services. Mr. Bucci explained that in previous years, the district was able to offset a significant portion of tutor expenses through Title I grant funding. However, Title I funding has remained relatively unchanged, requiring the district to balance how grant funds are allocated between teacher salaries and tutoring services. He noted that tutor expenses increased during the current year, which contributed to the increased projection. Ms. Bruno expressed hope that Dr. Compton had communicated with the Secretary of Education regarding the importance of Title I funding. Dr. Compton confirmed that she had advocated for the importance of Title I and emphasized the role these funds play in closing achievement gaps and supporting students. She also shared her concern when public education is criticized unfairly, noting the important work being done by public schools. Ms. Nespoli continued to seek clarification regarding the tutor services increase. Dr. Compton reviewed the breakdown of tutoring expenses and explained that the costs also include tutoring services provided for students receiving expulsion-related educational services. Mr. Strumello shared that he will be attending the CAFE Leadership Conference and plans to advocate for increased state and federal funding, as well as more timely communication from state agencies regarding funding information. He emphasized the challenges districts face when critical funding information is released in the middle of the local budget process.

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Jim Garofolo) to approve the Seymour Board of Education allocations for the fiscal year 2026-2027 as presented

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

B. Athletic Training Agreement

The Board discussed the status of the district's athletic training services. It was reported that Griffin Hospital is no longer able to provide athletic training coverage. The district has reached out to approximately five or six different companies to explore alternative options. CT Orthopedics is currently working to assemble a team to provide athletic training services for the district, and Ms. Cathy Federowicz will provide an update once additional information is available. It was noted that the cost of services may be nearly double the amount the district has previously paid. The Board discussed the growing trend among school districts to employ full-time athletic trainers and acknowledged that this may be an option the district needs to begin considering, as securing consistent athletic training coverage continues to be challenging. The importance of ensuring students have access to qualified athletic training support was emphasized.

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Ed Strumello) To move agenda item VI. D to follow IV. B

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

D. Out of State Girls' Basketball Tournament

Dr. Compton and Ms. Federowicz explained the tournament opportunity and the benefits of participation for the girls' basketball program and students. They noted that the program has been flourishing and that participation in the tournament would provide a valuable experience for the students. The Board was informed that parents have volunteered to cover the costs associated with registration, hotel accommodations, and transportation. It was also noted that other Seymour athletic teams have previously participated in out-of-state tournaments with costs covered by parents.

MOTION: (Jim Garofolo / Stephan Behuniak) To approve Seymour participation in the out-of-state girls basketball tournament in Springfield.

AMENDED MOTION: To approve Seymour participation in the out-of-state girls basketball tournament in Springfield, pending review of the required forms.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

C. District Physician Contract

The Board discussed the renewal of the district's longstanding agreement with its district physician, Dr. Frederick A. Brown, for the 2026-2027 school year.

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Ed Strumello) To approve the contract with Dr. Frederick A. Brown as Seymour Public Schools' district physician for the 2026-2027 school year, with an amendment to be made to the invoice.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

F. Authorization to Carry a Firearm on School Grounds 2026-2027 School Year

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Ed Strumello) To allow the Superintendent in collaboration with the Seymour Chief of Police to authorize Edward Henry (Director of Security), Ronald Barnard (School Security Officer BES), David Olivetti (School Security Officer CLS), Michael Rogers (School Security Officer SHS) and Patrick Taylor (School Security Officer SHS) to carry a firearm on school grounds through the end of the 2026-2027 school year. This arrangement will be reviewed and reauthorized prior to the beginning of each school year.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

MOTION: 6H Discussion and possible action for the reconcile of the 25-26 school budget

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak

PASSES: 6-0-0

H. Discussion and Possible Action for the reconciliation of the 2025-2026 school budget.

MOTION: (Kristen Harmeling / Jim Garofolo) To approve the final year-end line-item transfers necessary to fully reconcile the Board of Education's 2025-2026 spending allocation.

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0

- G.** Discussion and possible action pertaining to the employment, performance, and evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools (Contract) (may be discussed in Executive Session)
MOTION: (Stephan Behuniak / Jim Garofolo) to enter executive session to discuss the employment, performance and evaluation of superintendent of schools.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0

Entered executive session at 8:44 PM.
Invited Dr. Compton into executive session at 8:55 PM.
Exited executive session at 9:05 PM.

MOTION: (Kristen Bruno / Kristen Harmeling) to offer Dr. Susan Compton a superintendent's contract from 2026-2029 with terms to be approved at a later meeting.
AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Bruno, Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Nespoli, Mr. Strumello, Mr. Garofolo, Mr. Behuniak
PASSES: 6-0-0

VII. INFORMATION

- A.** Summer Hiring - Certified
1. Vincent Condo
 - a. Elementary Teacher
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing Susan Duke
 2. Filippo Santoro
 - a. Elementary Music Teacher
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing Cory Wooley
 3. Kaleen Barbieri
 - a. Elementary Teacher
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Replacing Katie Furino
 4. Lisa Mariano
 - a. TESOL/ML Teacher
 - b. District-wide
 - c. Renewing yearly contract
 5. Anuoluwapo Hazzan
 - a. Elementary Teacher
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing herself
 6. Joanna Phabmixay
 - a. Speech & Language Pathologist
 - b. Bungay Elementary School / Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. New position
 7. Julia Mulumphy
 - a. Special Education Teacher
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Replacing Rachel Ferrugia
- B.** Summer Hiring - Non-Certified
1. Meredith Indorf
 - a. Instructional Tutor
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing Jillian Goodman

2. Diane Wasilewski
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Replacing Jodi Hamel
3. Sarah Van Hook
 - a. Instructional Tutor (Grant Funded)
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Replacing Linda Criscio
4. Melody Pizzola
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing Ashley Nazzaro
5. Penelope Mitchell
 - a. Instructional Tutor (Grant Funded)
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. New position
6. Victoria Babineau
 - a. Permanent Building Substitute
 - b. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - c. Replacing Shayna Landau
7. Stephanie McLean
 - a. Permanent Building Substitute
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Renewing annual contract
8. Hannah Brighindi
 - a. Permanent Building Substitute
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Renewing annual contract
9. Oyinda La Russa
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. New position
10. Beth Bergmann
 - a. Para-monitor
 - b. Seymour High School
 - c. New position
11. Emma Rousseau
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Replacing Dawn LaLave

C. Summer Transfers

1. Jodie Hamel
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Transfer from SMS to SHS
 - c. New position
2. Ashley Nazzaro
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Transfer from CLS to SHS
 - c. Replacement

D. Summer approved Interns/Student Teachers

1. Simona Fazliu
 - a. Bungay Elementary School
2. Meghan Ruhl
 - a. Bungay Elementary School

- 3. Makayla Waldek
 - a. Chatfield-LoPresti School
- E. Resignations
 - 1. Emily Griscom
 - a. Special Education Teacher
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Effective July 20, 2026
 - 2. Penelope Mitchell
 - a. Instructional Paraprofessional
 - b. Seymour Middle School
 - c. Effective July 14, 2026
 - 3. Kaleen Barbieri
 - a. Instructional Tutor
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Hired as second grade teacher at BES
 - 4. Ryann Guiliani
 - a. Instructional Paraeducator
 - b. Bungay Elementary School
 - c. Effective 6/17/2026
- F. School Events
 - 1. Chatfield-LoPresti School
 - 2. Bungay Elementary School
 - 3. Seymour Middle School
 - 4. Seymour High School

VIII. **BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS & SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

- A. Board of Education Comments
 - 1. Chairman's Comments - none
 - 2. Board Member Comments - none
- B. Superintendent Report
 - Dr. Compton reported on summers and staffing as well as convocation and orientation activities.

IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

YouTube Link (8/3/2026): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3-ckMFsltw>

Note: The next Regular Board of Education meeting will be held on **Monday, September 14, 2026, at 7:00 pm at Seymour Middle School.**

Prepared by Shannon Levey,
Board Clerk