

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in regular session on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, at 5:00 PM in the library at Coginchaug Regional High School.

Board members present: Mrs. Caramanello (remote), Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy (arrived late), Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, and Mr. Stone

Board members absent: Mr. DeVecchio

Administration present: Dr. Charles, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance; and Mrs. Stone, Principal of Coginchaug Regional High School.

Mrs. Dahlheimer called the regular meeting to order at 5:12 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Mrs. Hurlbert made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to approve the agenda, as presented. In favor of approving the agenda, as presented: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Recognition and Presentations**A. John Lyman School – ECHOs Share**

Mrs. Dahlheimer welcomed Mr. Ford and students from John Lyman School.

Mr. Ford thanked the board for having him and the group of second and third graders attend the meeting. He also thanked the parents of the students. Mr. Ford explained that Mrs. Bystrek, the teacher who facilitates this ECHO, was unable to attend the meeting. He thanked Mrs. Sorensen and Mrs. Lonsdale for their attendance and help with preparing the children for the presentation.

The second and third graders from John Lyman School performed a presentation about ECHOs. The board thanked the students for their presentation.

B. DMYFS Presentation

Mrs. Dahlheimer welcomed Ms. Adalbert to speak about Durham Middlefield Youth and Family Services (DMYFS).

Ms. Jade Adalbert introduced herself as Director of Prevention Programs at DMYFS. She explained that DMYFS is a youth services bureau (YSB) mandated by the State of Connecticut. DMYFS is an agency

designed for planning, evaluation, coordination, and implementation of a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth, and their families. In addition, YSBs are responsible for the provision of services and programs for all youth to develop positively and to function as responsible members of their communities. Ms. Adalbert explained that YSBs have a broader scope of services than any other youth serving agencies because in addition to providing direct services, YSBs have a responsibility to assess the needs of the youth and identify gaps in services.

Ms. Adalbert stated that the mission of DMYFS is to empower children and families, foster a healthy community, and build resilience by decreasing risk factors and increasing protective factors through prevention, intervention, treatment, and community-building strategies. Ms. Adalbert believes that with this mission DMYFS can address the key part of the state mandate, which is to help develop positive, functioning, and responsible members of the community.

Ms. Adalbert noted that DMYFS has just launched their 2025 community survey and will send the survey to all members of the board. The community survey aligns with the biannual youth survey, which happens for students in seventh through twelfth grade. The information from the surveys is used to create relevant and impactful programming. All programs are evidence-based with goals and measurable objectives. Ms. Adalbert stated that in addition to her position at DMYFS she is also a licensed therapist in the community.

DMYFS collaborates with Regional School District 13, the libraries, as well as other organizations in the community. Ms. Adalbert explained that she and her collaborator, Claudia White, have been with the agency for seven months, and have completed many programs during that time. One of the most recent programs was a suicide awareness and prevention community conversation as well as a program implemented in the high schools during advisory. Ms. Adalbert noted that DMYFS had interns from Springfield College create a video regarding suicide awareness and prevention to distribute to the teachers. Suicide prevention was chosen as a program based on the results of the last completed community survey. Ms. Adalbert stated the hope is to implement this program in an age-appropriate and intentional way to younger grades, such as Strong School, as the survey showed a higher rate of suicidal ideation in middle schoolers than the high schoolers.

Ms. Adalbert continued by listing some of the sponsored clubs DMYFS has, including H.E.R.O. (Helping to Educate Regarding Orientation) and E.D.G.E. (Excellent Decisions Guiding Every day). She explained that the middle school has a program called the Stall Street Journal, where students create a flier for whatever the theme of the month is. Since May is Mental Health Awareness Month, they recently created a flier with coping strategies and facts related to that topic. These fliers hang on the inside of the school bathroom stalls.

Ms. Adalbert noted that all eighth graders are required to have sexual abuse awareness and prevention as a portion of their health curriculum. This was created by Ms. Adalbert and Ms. White and implemented successfully. Ms. Adalbert also explained she has created mental health tool kits around suicide and self-harm for the counseling department at the schools. DMYFS is also hoping to work more with the capstone project at the high school. She explained the Youth Diversion Program has been one of the most successful programs so far, which teaches students about restorative justice.

Ms. Adalbert shared the upcoming project at DMYFS, which is Expressions of Healing, a community-wide therapeutic art project in which students and community members can create a piece of art to represent what mental health means to them. There will be a gallery show and exhibition for this program on June 4, 2025, as well as a book which will feature the art pieces. The intention behind this program is to not only fight the stigma of mental health and addiction, but also to integrate resources into this conversation. Ms. Adalbert also shared information about their babysitting training organization, Safe Sitters. This program includes courses such as Safe Sitters Essentials, Safe at Home, and a Grandparent's Refresher. Ms. White has presented Safe at Home to Memorial. DMYFS also provides resource cards and mental health kits for the younger children in the community at the Durham Public Library. Ms. Adalbert also described the Nice or Nothing campaign, which addresses toxicity and bullying on a community level. This campaign spans inside and outside of the schools.

Ms. Adalbert closed by recommending the board view the website, www.DMYFS.org, then asked the board if they had any questions or comments.

Mrs. Dahlheimer remarked that the number of projects and campaigns Ms. Adalbert and Ms. White have completed this year is monumental. She also stated that Dr. Charles is working on reinstating information regarding DMYFS in the municipal fliers, expressing how valuable the information is to have throughout the schools.

Dr. Darcy asked Ms. Adalbert how much of their work is reliant upon by federal funds. Ms. Adalbert stated there are several different funding sources, including federal funds. The school-based programming is reliant on the federal funding, however DMYFS is confident they will be able to maintain the quality of their services no matter their financial situation.

Mr. Roraback asked Ms. Adalbert her opinion on the "Wait Until 8th" campaign, a movement that encourages parents to delay giving their children a cell phone until eighth grade. Mr. Roraback commented that he believes it is a positive campaign and something the district should embrace. Ms. Adalbert explained there have been many productive conversations regarding the use of cell phones in school and DMYFS is interested in discussing the campaign further. However, since DMYFS is not directly affiliated with the schools, the programming would have to be developed independently of the classroom setting. Ms. Adalbert further commented that the results of the 2025 youth survey addresses cell phone usage and DMYFS is currently working on a way to present that to the public.

Public Comment

A. In-person public comment

Emma Quick, from Durham, thanked the board for video recording the 5:00 PM meeting. She then expressed concern as to why the 4:30 PM Building Committee meeting could not also be recorded, adding that it is a shame the community would not be able to watch. Ms. Quick stated she personally recorded the 4:30 meeting and offered a copy to any member of the community in need.

Ms. Quick stated that this marks at least the third time during this construction process that the board has engaged parents and the community, made promises, talked about what would and wouldn't be implemented and then reversed those commitments within six months when the voting aligned in their favor. She further commented that the board requested support from the PTO on the interim program, which promised to move the students only once until construction was completed and then six months later there was a plan in place to move the students again. Ms. Quick explained that the board stated that all portables for the Memorial construction project would be new and now she believes the board is reversing that promise as well, stating the portables will be refurbished. She expressed concern as to what type of environmental testing will be completed and what company will be used for remediation. Ms. Quick stated that at a prior Building Committee meeting the public comment was at the beginning, prior to the presentation of the latest information regarding the fifth-grade wing, leaving community members with no chance to speak at the end of the meeting.

Lauren Hall, from Durham, stated that the current situation with the portables in both spaces is currently dangerous and uninhabitable. Mrs. Hall asked the board to update the community with current information regarding remediation. She also expressed concern about the fifth-grade placement, stating that it would not be ideal to have fifth graders sharing bathrooms with eighth graders.

B. Remote public comment

Elyse Kirschner, from Durham, expressed concern about the students being unable to have their own hallway and the smaller classrooms. She stated she hopes the board reevaluates the plan and does what's best for the children.

Memorial Project

Mrs. Dahlheimer explained that a Building Committee meeting was held at 4:30 PM, during which a vote was taken to recommend approval of the bid documents. As part of state requirements, the board must then formally validate this recommendation.

A. Vote to accept the Building Committee recommendation to approve the scope of work for the bid documents for the Swing Space at Strong and Lyman Schools

Lyman School

Mr. Rusty Malik began discussing where the classrooms are located, how they will be occupied, and how they will be separated. Out of the four existing portables at John Lyman, two of them are currently occupied while the other two are used for storage. Mr. Malik explained that a meeting was held with local officials to be sure the portables were up to code. The fire alarm systems, the communication systems and the technology systems will be updated in all four portables. Every space will be updated, including the removal of the floor and carpeting and an evaluation of the decking. The roofs with leakage issues are actively being replaced. Air quality tests will be performed. Mr. Malik explained that the walls will not only be painted but updated and repaired. There will be new ceilings, updated lighting, and new flooring.

All issues will be assessed, including electrical and mechanical. Mr. Malik stated they are meeting all the ADA requirements, which include an assessment of the covered walkways and handrails.

Mr. Malik remarked that there are three options. Option one is to bring a new portable, two is to bring a refurbished portable, and the third option is to bring a portable from Memorial. Once the bids come in, these options will be evaluated. Mr. Malik noted that in many cases there are portables that were previously unused and now can be available for evaluation, relocation, and usage. Mr. Malik assured the board and community members that the portables will be healthy spaces that will meet all the criteria necessary.

Mr. Malik stated there are also plans in motion to expand the parking at Lyman. Mr. Collier added that the surrounding area by the parking spaces is being evaluated as well, including creating a new pathway. There will be twelve parking spaces in that area.

Mrs. Petrella inquired whether there was any evidence of rat infestation in the existing portables at Lyman, and how such a situation would be addressed should evidence of infestation arise. Mr. Malik explained that there will be an environmental consultant involved in the construction process. If infestation occurs it will be taken care of. Mr. Mennone stated that children will not be in an unsafe portable. Mr. Malik agreed.

Strong School

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted there has been a gap in the timeline from the original approval of moving the fifth graders to Strong School. She asked Mr. Malik to address any changes regarding that situation.

Mr. Malik explained that there was a discussion regarding taking the locker rooms and turning the area into classrooms so as not to split fifth grade, however this was not possible due to the absence of natural light in the area. There was also discussion about relocating the current fifth graders to where the sixth-grade classroom is. The issue at hand is how to create more classrooms and meet enrollment criteria (which is based on the highest enrollment projection of 104). Three full sized classrooms have been reviewed which would hold 22 students per classroom. Mr. Malik noted the construction used an unofficial state guideline of 34 square feet per student. He stated the construction team looked at modifying existing space adjacent to the media center and created two classroom spaces. These rooms are slightly smaller than the existing full-sized classrooms and would hold 18 students. This would keep the grades together. The classroom across from the locker rooms is also available as an option.

Mr. Mennone asked for clarification on what was meant by “smaller” classrooms. Mr. Malik stated that the classroom size is normally 720 or 715 square feet and the smaller would be 515 square feet.

Mr. Malik discussed the map outline of where the classrooms would be located with the board.

Mrs. Hurlbert inquired as to why the fifth-grade wing hasn't been finalized yet and why there are still so many questions and concerns about where it will be located.

Mrs. Neubig explained that there were many options discussed openly early on, before the architect's evaluation of the space.

Mrs. Hurlbert asked if anyone had consulted with the staff. Mrs. Neubig said it is something that will be discussed further. Mrs. Hurlbert suggested the board commit to adding that item to the staff agenda. Mrs. Dahlheimer noted it could be discussed at the June 2, 2025, meeting.

Mr. Mennone asked how many students are expected in the fifth grade, to which Dr. Charles responded that there are 102 students.

Dr. Darcy expressed concerns over the adults in the building having their opinions heard and keeping the students in the middle school safe and protected. She explained there should be strong rules enforced for student movement in the building. Dr. Charles responded that she had spoken with Ms. Cheryl Gonzalez and the intention as of now would be that the students would be escorted.

Mrs. Maura Caramanello voiced concern as to why parents were told that the students would be in a separate wing and that is now not the case. Mr. Moore explained that the construction and design team is just now getting into the buildings to evaluate what the best options would be. Any options discussed prior were speculative and reflected possibilities rather than confirmed plans.

Mrs. Caramanello suggested taking more time with the project would ease the minds of parents and community members. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked David Cravanzola (O&G Industries, Inc.) to help further explain the reasoning behind performing the construction now. Mr. Cravanzola explained that the construction work would be best performed in the summer while students are not in school. He stated that starting the project next year would cause an escalation of 4.5-6.5 percent.

Mrs. Neubig noted that the options that are being discussed currently would be the same if this project were pushed off for one year. Mr. Malik explained that the goal is to still maintain the idea of having the fifth grade separated. Mr. Roraback clarified that Mr. Malik said from day one the best plan would be to perform the construction in the summer so the students would not be impacted.

Mrs. Dahlheimer discussed how both O&G Industries and QA+M have been on calls with the state multiple times a week and a temporary approval number has been issued until the end of the session on June 4, 2025, which is when the amendments for the priority list will be established. The state is currently involved and has granted approval, pending the passage of the legislation. Mrs. Dahlheimer explained that after a referendum failed in June last year, the board could have delayed this project's placement on the state priority list. Instead, they took steps in August and November to amend the plan and secure funding, ensuring the project would be included on the list before the July 1, 2025, deadline. Mr. Malik added that there is new legislation being proposed that would further restrict the reimbursement. Therefore, if the project does not move forward now there could be additional issues.

Mrs. Caramanello asked for clarification on an email from Lorel Purcell of O&G Industries. This email stated that the action of approving this project will jeopardize reimbursement from the state and that the board must approve the bid documents on May 15, 2025, to go forward with the construction this summer. Mrs. Neubig stated that she shared that email with the Building Committee and board members as a weekly update. The term "jeopardizing reimbursement" was used because the grant approval has not been received yet. The bid will be out but not awarded until the grant funding is received. Mr. Cravanzola added that the state and the office of grants administration are highly regimented and have a very precise

process. The approval of the bid must happen before the next step can occur. The state must issue a letter stating their approval to let the board bid on the project.

Mrs. Caramanello inquired if approving tonight prior to receiving notification of a grant will jeopardize reimbursement. Mrs. Dahlheimer answered that no, this will not jeopardize reimbursement because the board is not awarding the bid until they hear from the state. Mrs. Caramanello asked how the board plans to not jeopardize reimbursement. Mr. Cravanzola explained that the outcome of the PCR meeting will include a recommendation to wait approximately one week before initiating the bidding process. If the state is unable to issue the letter authorizing the board to proceed with bidding, the board can still move forward using notwithstanding language to ensure that, even without the letter, reimbursement will still be granted. Mrs. Caramanello asked the board whether waiting for the grant commitment letter and choosing not to proceed in the meantime would jeopardize the reimbursement. Mrs. Dahlheimer answered that in that case the board would not have time to bid.

Mrs. Dahlheimer made a motion to vote to accept the Building Committee recommendation to approve the scope of work for the bid documents for the Swing Space at Strong and Lyman Schools.

Motion approved by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mr. Mennone.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Mrs. Hurlbert** – Aye
- **Mrs. Caramanello** – No
- **Mr. Stone** – Aye
- **Mrs. Petrella** – Aye
- **Mr. Moore** – Aye
- **Mrs. Dahlheimer** – Aye
- **Mr. Roraback** – Aye
- **Mr. Mennone** – Aye
- **Dr. Darcy** – Aye
- **Mr. DelVecchio** – Absent

Result: *Motion passed (8 Ayes, 1 No, 1 Absent)*

B. Vote to approve award of RFP 2025-003 Construction Manager at Risk for the renovation and addition to Memorial School to O&G Industries

Mrs. Dahlheimer stated there were some questions from the Building Committee regarding executive sessions and the lack of minutes. Mrs. Neubig explained that interviews for responses to proposals are done in the executive session because they are still in the negotiation process. It is confidential information that is not to be discussed in public sessions.

Mr. Moore discussed that the Building Committee interviewed three different proposals for the Construction Manager at Risk before agreeing upon O&G Industries. O&G was chosen based on their experience and cost. Mr. Moore asked Mr. Cravanzola to explain his role. Mr. Cravanzola noted that O&G is a professional services provider tasked with supervising the work on the project. O&G is

currently working with QA+M in the pre-construction process to ensure the project remains on schedule, addresses logistical concerns, is planned efficiently, and makes the best use of available funding. Once the company is in the construction phase, O&G is responsible for the bidding process and recommending the most qualified bidder to the board. O&G maintains the schedule, stays within the budget, and manages warranties. Mr. Cravanzola also explained there will be three onsite supervisors on the project full-time every day. Mr. Moore noted that O&G suggested a way for students to get involved during the construction, to help encourage communication between students and staff throughout the process. Many high school students are interested in construction management and engineering, and this would be an educational opportunity for them.

Mrs. Dahlheimer made a motion to vote to approve the award of RFP 2025-003 Construction Manager at Risk for the renovation and addition to Memorial School to O&G Industries

Motion approved by Mr. Moore and seconded by Mr. Mennone.

Roll Call Vote:

- **Mrs. Hurlbert** – Aye
- **Mrs. Caramanello** – Absent
- **Mr. Stone** – Aye
- **Mrs. Petrella** – Aye
- **Mr. Moore** – Aye
- **Mrs. Dahlheimer** – Aye
- **Mr. Roraback** – Aye
- **Mr. Mennone** – Aye
- **Dr. Darcy** – Aye
- **Mr. DelVecchio** – Absent

Result: *Motion passed (8 Ayes, 2 Absent)*

Approval of Minutes

- A. Board of Education Work Session – March 26, 2025**
- B. Board of Education Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes - April 2, 2025**
- C. Board of Education Special Meeting - April 9, 2025**

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Petrella, to approve the minutes of the Board of Education Work Session of March 26, 2025, the Board of Education Meeting & Public Hearing of April 2, 2025, and the Board of Education Special Meeting of April 9, 2025.

In favor of approving the minutes of the Board of Education Work Session of March 26, 2025, the Board of Education Meeting & Public Hearing of April 2, 2025, and the Board of Education Special Meeting of April 9, 2025: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mr. Roraback, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

The Board then took a five-minute recess.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Charles recognized Deb Waz, former recorder of the minutes for Regional School District 13 for the past nine years. She thanked Ms. Waz for her service and outstanding work. Dr. Charles introduced Jennifer Scarrozzo, the new recorder of the minutes for the district. Ms. Scarrozzo is grateful for the opportunity and looking forward to working with the district.

Dr. Charles reviewed the specifications of meeting minutes, stating that there is no specific format for minutes but there are requirements. The minutes must include: when the meeting was convened, the members of the Board of Education who were present, a short description of the business transacted, a list of any action taken by the board or committee specifying any votes taken and listing how each board member voted, any executive sessions held with the statement of the reasons for the executive session and who was in attendance, and when the meeting was adjourned.

Dr. Charles reported that the Middlesex Consortium and the Middlesex Chamber of Commerce held a career fair for the high school sophomores at Wesleyan University on April 24, 2025. There were over one hundred businesses for the students to speak with in each career cluster. Throughout the day the students engaged in mock interviews, sharpened their communication skills, and gained real world insight into the job application process. Dr. Charles stated that Regional School District 13 is an active participant in the Middlesex Consortium, and it provides professional development for principals, curriculum leaders, and superintendents in Middletown, Cromwell, Portland, East Haddam, and East Hampton. Dr. Charles thanked Lynn Schofield, Leslie Stratton, and Matt Thompson for their involvement.

Interviews for the principal of Strong School will start on May 15, 2025. Dr. Charles noted there are forty applications and an excellent pool of candidates.

Dr. Charles reviewed the current extracurricular events happening in schools, including the high school jazz night, Brewster art show, and Strong and Memorial Spring concerts. Dr. Charles praised the Lyman art show and encouraged the board to attend these events.

Mrs. Dahlheimer expressed her appreciation to the board for their involvement in the principal selection process for Strong School. Dr. Charles added that Dr. Leggett will be participating in the process as well. Mr. Moore suggested sending a thank you gift to Ms. Waz. The board agreed.

Chairman Update

Mrs. Dahlheimer stated the high school presented the Durham Volunteer Fire Company and the Middlefield Fire Company with the Connecticut Association of Schools 2025 Distinguished Friend of Education Award. The award honors a person or organization for distinguished service to education in Connecticut. Middlefield Chief Peter Tyc, Durham Chief Terry Wall, and their personnel were nominated by Mrs. Stone and Ms. Trainer for their ongoing commitment to the safety of Regional School District 13

students and staff, along with the success of the fire science program. Mr. Mennone added that Ethan, a former student of Coginchaug, was just hired by the Meriden Fire Department.

Staff Report

A. Director of Finance – Kim Neubig

Mrs. Neubig informed the board that, as of April, 79.5 percent of the budget has been expended and 100 percent encumbered. Eighty-five percent of the budgeted revenue has been received.

B. Other

Mrs. Dahlheimer congratulated and thanked Mrs. Petrella and Dr. Darcy on their re-election, noting that their new terms will extend through 2028.

New Business

A. Discussion and vote to approve Building Committee member

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to approve Gregory Putnam onto the Regional School District 13 Building Committee.

In favor of approving Gregory Putnam onto the Regional School District 13 Building Committee: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Mrs. Dahlheimer stated that Gregory Putnam, a parent in the district, will be a new member of the Building Committee. Mr. Moore added that Mr. Putnam was one of the principals of one of the competing firms for construction manager.

B. Approve CRHS Field Trip Request – Disney

Mrs. Debra Stone explained that Tim Fisher and Erin Schilling will be taking a group of students on the Disney field trip in April 2026 to perform and attend workshops. Funding for the field trip is provided by POPS and fundraising. Mr. Roraback inquired whether there was still a program available to support students who may lack the funds to participate. Mrs. Stone explained that an alumni fund is in place to assist in cases of financial hardship.

Mr. Stone made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Hurlburt, to approve the CRHS field trip request for Disney. In favor of approving the CRHS field trip for Disney: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried.

C. Approve CRHS Field Trip Request - Southern Iceland

Mrs. Rachel Mann explained she has been to Iceland and would love to share the experience with the students through a science camp in May 2026. There will be a tour company called GeoCamp Iceland that will lead the students. Mrs. Mann stated there will be a limit of thirty students for the trip, and May would be the ideal time based on weather conditions.

Dr. Darcy asked if chaperones have been chosen. Mrs. Mann explained she would ideally like to offer chaperone positions to the other Geoscience teacher, an administrator, and science teachers ahead of other staff. Dr. Darcy suggested that the chaperones add to the funding for the trip. Mrs. Stone added that Mrs. Mann has already started fundraising. Mrs. Dahlheimer asked if priority will be given to students who haven't been on trips abroad in the past. Mrs. Stone answered yes, that will be considered.

Mr. Mennone made a motion, seconded by Mr. Stone, to approve the CRHS field trip request for Southern Iceland.

In favor of approving the CRHS field trip for Southern Iceland: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Hurlburt, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, and Mr. Roraback. Motion carried.

D. Policy Review**1. Second read and possible vote on series 6000 (part 2)**

- a. Advanced Course or Program and Challenging Curriculum - Shipman**
- b. Credit for Online Courses - Shipman**
- c. Parent-Teacher Communication – Shipman**

Mr. Moore reviewed the changes that were proposed to the above-listed policies.

Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mennone, to adopt the above-listed policies.

In favor of adopting the above-listed policies: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Dr. Darcy, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

Committee Reports**A. Building Committee Meeting - April 9, 2025**

Mr. Moore stated the Building Committee met April 9, 2025, and interviewed construction managers, which lead to the hiring of O&G Industries.

B. Student Achievement Committee Meeting – April 30, 2025

Mrs. Petrella stated the Student Achievement Committee met on April 30, 2025. Mrs. Petrella noted that Dr. Siegel updated the committee on the summer plan for the curriculum writing for approved high school courses. Over thirty teachers expressed interest in contributing. Curriculum development will include those approved high school courses running next year. Mrs. Petrella explained Dr. Siegel will be creating

a training slide deck and accompanying video to ensure consistency in expectations and process for this summer's curriculum work. The curriculum handbook has been updated, which now includes the new course proposal process as well as a list of staff currently involved in curriculum development teams. The handbook also includes a calendar that outlines each subject area's progression through the four phases of curriculum development. The calendar focuses on one core subject each year along with two additional subjects to support a thorough and manageable review cycle. Mrs. Petrella noted that any area that needs document and assessment updating due to the pause in curriculum work will be done separate from the review cycle. A general training slide deck and video for staff are also being developed by Dr. Siegel in order to provide an overview of the curriculum development process district wide. The strategic action plan stipends for 2026 will focus on curriculum, instruction, and technology integration. Mrs. Petrella added that Dr. Siegel's two long-term goals are: to enhance access to curriculum related resources and to provide opportunities for interdisciplinary inquiry-driven learning opportunities, supporting flexible pathways for students to demonstrate growth.

Mrs. Petrella reported that Ms. Jen Penney, the eighth-grade math teacher, wanted to address the mistaken perception in previous Student Achievement and board meetings that there was no progress being made by the students in grade eight math. Ms. Penney presented data at the Student Achievement meeting highlighting the improvement of the students. In the fall, there were only 34 students scoring at or above 700, and in the spring that number jumped to 64 students. Mrs. Petrella shared a graph presented by Ms. Penney showing the progress students have made.

Lastly, Mrs. Petrella shared scheduling changes presented in the Student Achievement meeting by Ms. Gonzalez. There will be 7, 52-minute periods every day. The periods will rotate each day so students will have classes in each subject area at different times. There will be no study halls or homeroom. Students will have all their core subjects each day all year, and instruction time will increase from 210 minutes per week to 250 minutes per week. There will also be an increase in homework. Sixth graders will have Spanish for a quarter of the year, French for a quarter, enrichment for a quarter, and advisory once a week. All sixth graders will now take a music class. Seventh and eighth graders will have world languages year-round, as well as band and chorus three times per week. There will also be an increase in electives for seventh and eighth graders. The fifth-grade schedule will not change. Lastly, students will be allowed to have a snack during the day due to the complexities of the lunch schedule.

Mr. Mennone inquired about whether Dr. Charles agrees with the schedule changes for Strong School. Dr. Charles answered yes, this schedule will create more instructional time and consistency.

Mrs. Dahlheimer praised the changes and progress that Ms. Gonzalez and the Student Achievement Committee are making. She also emphasized the importance of analyzing data accurately, as demonstrated by Ms. Penney. Mr. Mennone emphasized the importance of closely monitoring the progress of students who struggle with learning disabilities in the classroom as well.

Board Communications and Professional Development

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that Kendrick Moore has been with the district for approximately eight weeks and has met with administration, high school leaders, and members of Strong School. Mr. Moore works for

the CIAC. He is the Assistant Director of Equity and Leadership and a motivational speaker. A community forum was held, and the response was positive.

Mr. Mennone reminded the board that May 15, 2025, is senior night for baseball. Eight out of nine starters for the team will be recognized.

Mr. Mennone also inquired as to whether the students could fulfill community hours by helping the teachers move into their classrooms in August. Dr. Charles responded that she would look into the matter and follow up.

Mr. Moore stated that for the past seven years there has been a scholarship from the Board of Education and suggested donations.

Mrs. Dahlheimer reminded the board that Old Homes Day is on June 7, 2025, and will be sending out a link for volunteers.

Mrs. Dahlheimer noted that the new lighting on the track has been finished.

Public Comment

A. In-person public comment

None.

B. Remote public comment

None.

Adjournment

Dr. Darcy made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Petrella, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education.

In favor of adjourning the regular meeting of the Board of Education: Mrs. Dahlheimer, Mrs. Hurlbert, Mr. Mennone, Mr. Moore, Mr. Roraback, and Mr. Stone. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 PM.

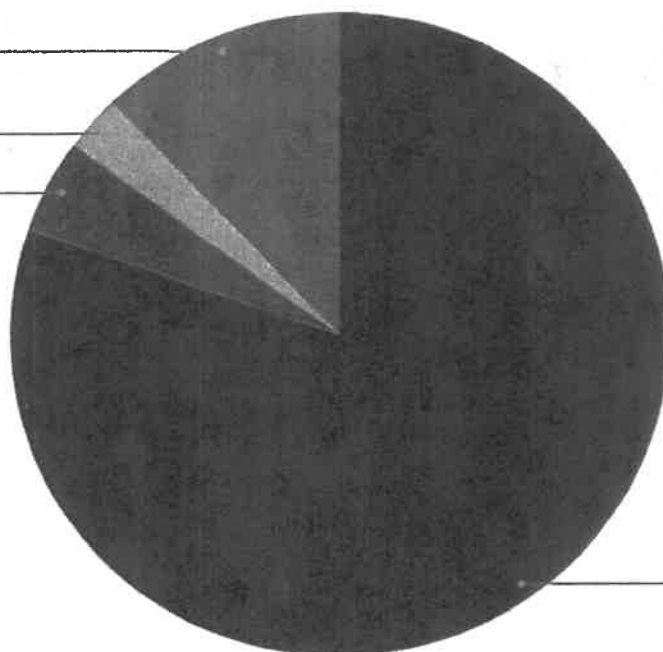
Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Scarozzo

March Statistics	
students showing growth	86
students remaining at the max score	5
students remaining at their starting score	3
students not showing growth	13

Went down
12.1%

Same Score
2.8%

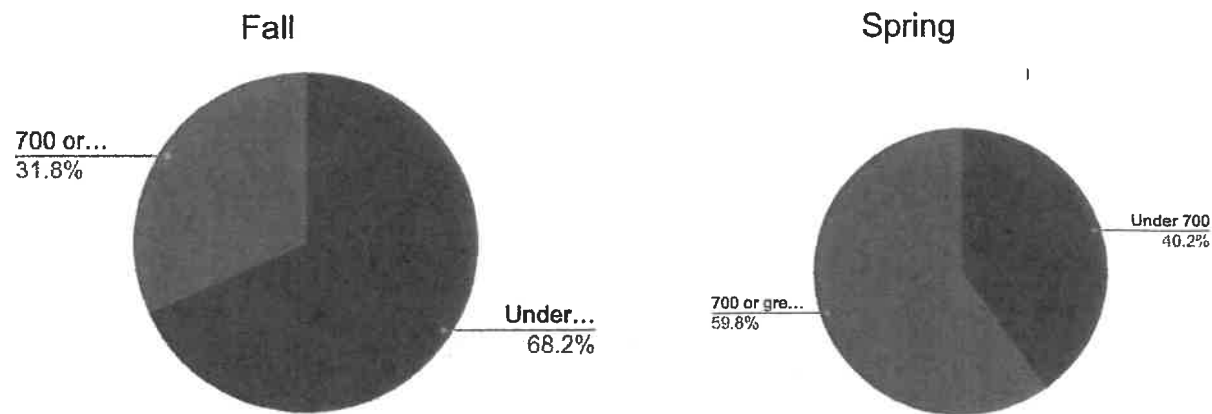
Same Score (max)
4.7%



Growth from Sept...
80.4%

Here is the data for the 107 8th graders that I teach for the 2024-2025 SY:

Diagnostic	Fall	Spring
students with a score <i>at or above</i> 700	34	64
students with a score <i>below</i> 700	73	43



Students with an IEP - 24 (22.4%)
Students with a 504 - 18 (16.8%)