

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

January 14, 2020

Ms. Susan Salina called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room.

Roll Call:

**Members present:** Mmes. Tara Willerup, Susan Salina, Lydia Tedone and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

**Members absent:** Mrs. Jen Batchelar and Mr. Todd Burrick.

**Also present:** Assistant Superintendent Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan, BOE Student Representative Josh Picoult and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

RECOGNITION

Ms. Murray stated that the student from SHS who was awarded the CAPSS Superintendent award is present this evening. Steve Patrina, SHS Interim Principal, introduced SHS senior Patch Barnard. He spoke about Patch's passion and pride in all things he accomplishes.

Recognition

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Picoult reported on activities at the elementary, middle and high school. Ms. Thomas reported that she met with State Representative John Hampton and the 2020 legislative session is February 5<sup>th</sup> through May 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Tedone reported that the CABA legislative priorities have been sent out. She will attend a CREC meeting tomorrow during which the Sheff settlement will be discussed. Ms. Tedone stated she will attend the NSBA Advocacy Institute in Washington D.C. in late January. Ms. Salina stated she is interested in how the funding will work with the new Sheff settlement.

Communications

Ms. Willerup stated that on Monday, MLK Day will be celebrated at the First Church of Christ at 2:00 p.m. and is open to the public. Jahana Hayes is the keynote speaker. Mr. Tindall noted the remarkable band concerts at Squadron Line School and HJMS as a result of our outstanding arts program. He reported on the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force. The task force will meet next on January 30<sup>th</sup> and a few times over the next few months. Tecton Architects will present updated proposals at the January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Ms. Salina stated that the Equity Council is scheduled to meet next Thursday. Mr. Sullivan reported on the SHS Hall of Fame dinner where 6 former athletes were inducted. Ms. Murray reviewed the faculty building based professional development that will take place Friday afternoon.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

<p>A. Approval of Minutes of the December 10, 2019</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2019 meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Watson: Seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Thomas asked that the word “great” be replaced with “informational” in the communications portion of the minutes.</p> <p>The motion carried.</p>	<p>Approval of Minutes of the December 10, 2019</p>
<p>B. Personnel</p> <p>Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the request for non-salaried, guaranteed leave of absence for Raquel Martinez Carrillo effective January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020.</p> <p>Mr. Watson: Seconded. So moved.</p>	<p>Personnel</p>
<p>C. Approval of Gregory Gowans Memorial Scholarship</p> <p>Mr. Tindall: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Gregory Gowans Memorial Scholarship, to be disbursed in 2020.</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.</p>	<p>Approval of Gregory Gowans Memorial Scholarship</p>
<p>D. Approval of Simsbury High School Graduation Date</p> <p>Ms. Murray noted that on July 1, 2019 the state passed a Public Act allowing public schools to set their high school graduation date on the 180<sup>th</sup> day or later of the approved school calendar.</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Simsbury High School graduation date be established on June 12, 2020.</p> <p>Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.</p>	<p>Approval of SHS Graduation Date</p>
<p><u>INFORMATION AND REPORTS</u></p>	
<p>A. 2020-21 Budget – Special Education Program Review</p> <p>Ms. Lemke introduced her leadership team who was present at the meeting. She reviewed the Special Education Department mission, and addressed each of the items in the Big Five. Ms. Lemke provided results of SBAC and SAT testing for students identified with a disability. Simsbury continues to rank high in DRG B for these students scoring at/above goal. Ms. Lemke provided a comparison of general education versus special education student performance for both Simsbury and the state. She pointed out that Simsbury special education students are closing in on the state average for general education students. In each grade category, Simsbury special education students are performing better on these standardized tests year over year.</p>	<p>2020-21 Budget/ Special Ed Program Review</p>

Ms. Lemke addressed reading/dyslexia, stating that in each building we have developed experts who bring special education and general education staff together to discuss the best approach for students. She stated that we continue to work with students on transitions after they leave the Simsbury Public Schools. Staff is working with child psychologist Lynn Lyons regarding students' mental health. Service delivery, providing specialized instruction to our students, now has a district best practice group of educators. Ms. Lemke spoke about the Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO) and their work over the past year.

Nancy Forsberg, Supervisor of Special Education Instruction, stated that the district is required to provide a plan to the state as to how we are doing around 16 indicators that create the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). This plan is submitted every 6 years and is required in order to receive IDEA funding. Simsbury has met these requirements.

Ms. Murray pointed out that board members received their budget binders this evening as the board begins their budget process. Ms. Lemke addressed the special education budget. She noted that the current budget is \$18,214,686 which is 24.49% of all BOE expenditures. The four budget drivers are salaries/benefits, out-of-district tuition, transportation and purchased services and supplies. Simsbury receives IDEA grant funding of \$1.1 million and approximately \$1.2 million through the Excess Cost Grant.

Ms. Lemke provided a 5 year staffing history, noting that staff has increased by 5.6 FTE. She reviewed the specific positions that have been added with accompanying program enhancements. Ms. Lemke described the process by which children move from the state Birth to Three program into the public school. She reviewed the district's preschool enrollment history with comparisons of September and June enrollment. The trend for enrollment of preschool students with disabilities continues to rise.

Ms. Lemke reviewed her budget request for an additional .5 FTE special education teacher at Latimer Lane School. She noted that there has been an increase of 20 special education students at the school over the past 5 years, causing caseloads to be higher compared to the district averages. There are currently 2.0 FTE special education teachers at Latimer Lane School.

**B. Six Year Capital Improvement Plan**

6 Year CIP

Mr. Sullivan stated that there are 2 capital projects in the first year of the 2021-2026 plan. He noted that every other year we fund network infrastructure maintenance from the capital budget. On the opposite years we fund district security improvements. This year's request is for \$400,000 to upgrade our network servers.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the second request is for athletic improvements to replace the existing home side bleachers and press box on Holden Field. The existing bleachers are 52 years old and we've done structural repairs over time. Mr. Sullivan noted that there are no large items on the plan until we have finalized a long term master plan resulting from the work of Tecton Architects. He stated that Latimer Lane School is the first elementary school requiring attention.

Ms. Salina thanked the students who created holiday cards for board members. She noted that the list of BOE committees has been updated with Ms. Willerup taking the seats that Ms. Salina previously held. A substantive review of the committee will be done prior to the start of the next school year.

**Frank Salls**, 20 Hazelmeadow Place, questioned the results of the Administrative Council meeting when the facilities master plan was discussed. He asked who sits on Administrative Council. Mr. Sullivan responded that the school district administrators, including principals, assistant principals and district leaders are members of Administrative Council.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Tedone: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

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Jen Batchelar  
Secretary

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Katie Wilde  
Recording Secretary

Adjournment