

TOWN OF SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

February 13, 2018

Mrs. Willerup called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room.

Roll Call:

Members present: Mmes. Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone and Jennifer Batchelar. Messrs. Mike Goman, Todd Burrick and Tom Frank.

Members absent: Mrs. Susan Salina and Mr. Jeff Tindall

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Business Manager Burke LaClair, Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan, Student Representative Isabelle Dorman and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

Ms. Dorman reported on events at the elementary schools. She noted that HJMS took a group of 65 students on a successful trip to Quebec. 17 girls from HJMS participated in the Girls in Engineering program at SHS. Ms. Dorman reported on the success of the SHS production of Mary Poppins and noted that the Battle of the Bands will take place on February 23rd.

Ms. Tedone reported on activities at the federal level with the National Association of School Boards. She noted that the legislative session in CT has begun and the Legislative Breakfast will be held February 15th. Mr. Curtis stated that the wealth index for the new ECS formula does not place Simsbury in the group of 30 districts receiving reductions of 25%. With this formula Simsbury is projected to receive an increase in ECS funds next year.

Ms. Lemke reported on the Unified Arts course at SHS. In response to Mr. Burrick, she stated that there are 5 Unified Sports and Theater options available as extracurricular activities. Currently Unified Art and Unified Health are offered as courses at SHS, with the possibility of Unified Music in the fall.

Mr. Sullivan introduced those teachers in attendance who are participating in an education leadership program. He stated that the Adult Education division of the Continuing Education Department is going through their first audit, which is mandated by the state. Mr. Sullivan noted that 26 students are registered for the GED and English as a Second Language programs through Continuing Education.

Ms. Murray reported that Friday is a half-day for students and building-based professional development will take place in the afternoon. Mr. Curtis stated that administrators will all meet together next week to do work around the Vision of the Graduate, as well as check in with where we are in our work and plan for the remainder of the year.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of January 23, 2018

Mr. Goman: MOVE to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2018 meeting.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved. Mr. Burrick abstained.

B. Approval of Minutes of February 6, 2018 Meeting

Mr. Frank: MOVE to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2018 meeting.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved. Mrs. Willerup, Mrs. Tedone, Mr. Goman and Mr. Burrick abstained.

C. Personnel

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirement of Susan Eblen effective June 30, 2018.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the request for a non-salaried, guaranteed leave of absence for Carla MacNeil effective March 14, 2018 – June 30, 2018.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

D. Acceptance of Gift from Simsbury Badminton Club

Mr. Frank: MOVE that the proposed gift to HJMS from the Simsbury Badminton Club be approved.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

E. Acceptance of Gift from United Technologies

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the proposed gift to the FIRST Robotics Team at SHS from United Technologies totaling \$4,000 be approved.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

F. Acceptance of Gift from Squadron Line PTO

Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the proposed gift of a traversing wall to Squadron Line School be approved.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

G. Approval of Best Buddies Award Scholarship

Mr. Frank: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Best Buddies Award to be disbursed beginning in 2018.

Approval of
Minutes of
January 23,
2017

Approval of
Minutes of
February 6,
2018

Personnel

Gift from
Simsbury
Badminton Club

Gift from United
Technologies

Gift from
Squadron Line
PTO

Best Buddies
Scholarship

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

H. Approval of Six Year Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. LaClair stated that this is the fourth version of the capital plan presented to the board. He highlighted the projects potentially funded in the upcoming budget year. He noted that after meeting with the state and architect about the HJMS Phase III project it appears the estimated reimbursement is more than the amount that was budgeted conservatively.

Mr. Curtis noted that he and Mr. LaClair met with the Town Manager and Finance Director today and will have a follow-up meeting to see how all of the projects fit within the 6.7%-7% debt line.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education Six Year Capital Improvement Plan for the period 2019-2024 be adopted.

Mr. Frank: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. 2018-19 Budget

Mr. Curtis reviewed the budget process and thanked his administrators who are always involved in the budget process. He stated the superintendent's proposed 2018-19 budget is in the amount of \$69,314,552, an increase of \$1,189,382 or 1.75% over last year's spending and operating costs. Mr. Curtis addressed balancing fiscal reality with educational excellence.

Mr. Curtis provided a budget increase history for the last 4 years; he noted that in 3 of the last 4 years there has been no tax increase to residents. He addressed per pupil expenditures and noted that Simsbury is a little below the DRG B average and well below the state average. Mr. Curtis discussed the current enrollment and the projected enrollment for next year. He pointed out that over 2 years the reduction in enrollment has been 114 students and 18.5 FTE.

Mr. Curtis reviewed the new budget process this year, during which principals were asked to submit a budget that included a 5% reduction in staffing and a 20% reduction in various accounts such as textbooks, supplies and equipment. The result of this exercise is a net savings of 6 FTE (\$500,000) and of \$221,000 in the supply accounts.

Mr. Curtis pointed out the return on investment is high across all areas of the organization and noted some specific areas of success. He noted that each school has a character education program and markets their program in different ways. Mr. Curtis provided high academic achievement data for the district.

Mr. Curtis addressed the drivers of the 2018-19 budget: contractual obligations, special education, insurance and pension, program improvements. Cost savings measures include capturing retirements, energy projects and zero base budget accounts. Mr. Curtis reviewed the contractual obligations resulting from union contracts and contracts yet to be settled. This equals an increase of \$1,395,673 or

Approval of 6
Year CIP

2018-19 Budget

2.01%. Mr. Curtis reviewed the special education program cost of \$16,520,127 which is 21.98% of the BOE operating budget. Mr. Curtis provided a comparison of insurance and pension costs in 2016-17 and 2017-18, along with projected costs for 2018-19. The projected increase in 2018-19 is \$700,000 or 1.03%. Mr. Curtis addressed the program improvement requests for an elementary math coach and a social worker. These positions have a total cost of \$175,002 or 0.26%.

Mr. Curtis reviewed the operation efficiencies utilized in the proposed budget. These include a reduction of 4 certified staff positions through captured retirements; the savings from 6 certified staff retirements being replaced by new staff; 1 additional certified staff reduction; 3 non-certified staff reductions; energy savings; and supplies equipment and textbooks based on a zero base budget. Mr. Curtis stated that the additional cost to the budget is 3.47%. With the proposed reductions of -1.72%, the total increase is 1.75%.

Mr. Curtis discussed the grants and revenues and the non-lapsing account. The projected Choice attendance grant of \$1,414,500 will continue to help reduce the operating budget for equipment by \$400,000. The funding in the non-lapsing account that was earmarked for out-of-district tuition will likely not be needed in 2017-18.

Mr. Frank questioned the \$700,000 increase in insurance. Mr. Curtis responded that he has spoken with Board of Finance members about supplementing the internal service fund with reserves in the amount of \$700,000 - \$1,000,000.

Mr. Curtis addressed the 2018-19 non-public school budget. This budget represents a decrease of .14% or \$776. The total budget is \$543,490 which covers the cost of nursing services and transportation services at the private schools, as well as some field maintenance. Mr. Curtis pointed out that next year the district will not be reimbursing Simsbury parents of students at Westminster for transportation as the school will not meet the threshold necessary based on state statute.

Mr. Goman pointed out that the last several rounds of negotiations have allowed us to keep contain costs. He suggested that per pupil expenditure should not be the only measure of how we are doing. He suggested that the number of classes have a closer relationship to enrollment. Mr. Goman stated that he will not be in attendance at the next BOE meeting, and he supports the budget as presented.

Mr. Burrick noted that families move to Simsbury for the education system. He stated that the presented budget, as well as the HJMS renovation project, maintains the quality of programs in Simsbury.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Frank: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Mr. Goman: Seconded. So moved.

Adjournment

Todd Burrick
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary