

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

September 10, 2019

Ms. Tara Willerup called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room.

Roll Call:

**Members present:** Mmes. Tara Willerup, Susan Salina, Lydia Tedone and Jen Batchelar. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Tom Frank, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

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

RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Sullivan introduced the Director of Safety & Security, Mark Critz. Mr. Critz told the board his background including 25 years with the Simsbury Police Department. Mr. Sullivan introduced the new School Resource Officer at SHS, Laurel Harrington. Ms. Harrington also spoke about her background with the Simsbury Police Department and her work with the CT Special Olympics.

Mr. Curtis introduced Simsbury's Teacher of the Year, Susan Mollica. Ms. Mollica is a 40 year veteran music teacher who has worked at 6 of the schools in Simsbury. Mr. Curtis pointed out that Ms. Mollica has been chosen as a semifinalist for the CT Teacher of the Year and will be interviewed later this week.

Ms. Willerup noted attendance of this year's BOE student representatives, SHS seniors Calah Huie and Josh Picoult.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Batchelar reported on the successful SHS Open House for parents. Ms. Tedone reported on the CAFE Board of Directors meeting at which the new Connecticut Commissioner of Education, Miguel Cardona, spoke. She stated that she has been elected to another 3 year term on the Board of Directors of the National School Boards Association.

Mr. Tindall reported on the work of the town's Sustainability Committee of which he is a member. Their work began in May and they were able to get their application into the state by the August 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Simsbury has applied for the silver level for sustainability by the state.

Ms. Lemke reported on the work of the Community for Care, noting that a suicide prevention program will be held tomorrow evening. Ethel Walker School is bringing in Lynn Lyons who spoke in Simsbury last year. She is an anxiety expert. Ethel Walker attended our program last year, and said we can invite our parents and students to attend their program.

Recognitions

Public Audience

Communications

Mr. Sullivan stated that the Personnel & Negotiations Committee met earlier tonight to prepare for teacher and administrator negotiations. Mr. LaClair reported that the second phase of the HJMS construction grant has been approved and the bids for furniture are ready to go out.

Mr. Curtis stated that the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force will meet on October 1 and 30 to discuss the study being done by Tecton Architects. He noted that last year the current conditions study was completed and was presented to the Facilities & Enrollment Task Force, the BOE and at a public forum. Tecton is now working on a 10 year master plan and reconfiguration study which will be vetted through the task force and then brought to the BOE and public for input.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

##### A. Approval of Minutes of June 11, 2019

Ms. Salina: MOVE to approve the minutes of the July 11, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Frank: Seconded. So moved.

##### B. Approval of Minutes of June 28, 2019 Special Meeting

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2019 special meeting.

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

##### C. Approval of Minutes of August 8, 2019 Special Meeting

Mr. Frank: MOVE to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2019 special meeting.

Ms. Salina: Seconded. So moved.

##### D. Personnel

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the notice of intent to retire of Sandy LeFebvre effective June 30, 2022.

Mr. Frank: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignations of Kaitlyn Kenney effective June 30, 2019 and Georgia Austin effective August 7, 2019.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the request for non-salaried, guaranteed leave of absence for Andrea Dew effective August 26, 2019 – June 30, 2020.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Sullivan provided a presentation of the 18 new teachers that were hired for the

Minutes of June  
11, 2019

Minutes of June  
28, 2019

Minutes of  
August 8, 2019

Personnel

start of the school year.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. School Opening Report

School Opening Report

Mr. Curtis stated that the school opening report will review the work accomplished over the summer and the focal areas for the new year. Ms. Murray reviewed the summer curriculum work that involved 60 educators in the district. She noted the success of the elementary summer academies and the Simsbury Arts Academy summer program.

Ms. Murray discussed the instructional technology highlights for 2019-20. These include the HJMS 1:1 Chromebook project; the increase in iPads K-2 resulting in a 2:1 ratio; STEM expansion; and First Lego League Teams at the elementary levels with support from the SHS First Robotics Team. She noted that the district will be migrating to a Gmail platform over the course of the next two years.

Ms. Lemke reported on the Pupil Services Department. She stated that 175 students participated in the Extended School Year (ESY) program. This program includes students K-FVTA and assists them with a variety of skills at a variety of sites. Ms. Lemke discussed professional development with certified staff that reinforced the strategic goals and their alignment with the Vision of a Graduate. She pointed out the need to make sure that students walk away with the six competencies in the Vision of a Graduate. Professional development for paraeducators covered the same areas, as well as making sure students are as independent as possible.

Ms. Lemke reviewed her department focus looking back and forward. This includes addressing the achievement gap, behavioral/mental health supports, transition for students and facilitating the Equity Council. Ms. Lemke addressed the need to balance services with finances, noting that there has been an influx of students enrolling with IEP's, including 23 students in preschool.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the New Teacher Orientation program that took place in late August. He reviewed student enrollment as of August 30<sup>th</sup> noting that 4,021 were enrolled and the projection had been 4,001. This is an increase of 3 students over last year's October 1<sup>st</sup> number, which is the first time since 2004-05 that enrollment has increased. Mr. Sullivan stated that the increase resulted in adding a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Latimer Lane School, and Kindergarten tutor support at Squadron Line, Latimer Lane and Tootin' Hills schools. Mr. Sullivan reviewed elementary class size, noting that next year there made be a need to add some 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes.

Mr. Sullivan addressed the work of the Personnel Office for the coming year. He stated that negotiations with administrators and teachers are beginning. The Facilities & Enrollment Task Force will meet twice in October to discuss the School Facilities Master Plan and Reconfiguration Study. Mr. Sullivan stated that SHS had a great start, and timing for the high school principal search is being reviewed.

Under the category of safety and security, Mr. Sullivan noted the transition to a new Director of Safety & Security, involvement with the Sandy Hook Promise programming, and continued infrastructure improvements related to security. He stated the November full day of professional development will be focused on the

Vision of a Graduate and will allow teachers to define their own professional development.

Mr. LaClair provided an end of year fiscal status. He stated the BOE fiscal 2018-19 operating budget has an unaudited public school budget surplus of \$3,488.60 and a non-public school operating surplus of \$1,324.33. Mr. LaClair stated that over the summer, in support of the 1:1 Chromebook initiative at HJMS, 715 Chromebooks were prepared for distribution to students. 835 Chromebooks and 225 iPads were purchased and deployed in the district over the summer. Additionally, upgrades were completed to our computer network.

Mr. LaClair stated that the Fire Marshal annual inspections were completed at all 7 schools prior to the start of school. Mr. LaClair provided visuals of some of the improvement and maintenance project work over the summer. He addressed the projects for the year ahead. These include providing support for the School Facilities Master Plan and Reconfiguration Study; support for the Public Building Committee on the HJMS Phase III renovation project; further implementation of school security improvements; the SHS partial roof replacement; the Latimer Lane Boiler Project; and additional 6 year capital improvement development/planning.

Ms. Willerup reported that 2020 is the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Simsbury, and she would like there to be a connection with the schools for this event. Ms. Willerup stated that there is a foundation that is partnering older town residents with SHS students to build Adirondack chairs that when completed will be placed in pairs in town. She noted that the Tech Ed and Art Departments at SHS are involved in the project.

#### PUBLIC AUDIENCE

**Tim Kruger**, 102 Hedgehog Lane, asked why Squadron Line is not participating in the First Lego League Team program. Ms. Murray responded that 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Squadron, Dave Palinkas, has 6<sup>th</sup> graders working with K-1 students. She stated that she can look further at the Lego program. Mr. Tindall noted that Squadron Line has an extensive Lego club.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Tedone: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.

Ms. Salina: Seconded. So moved.

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Todd Burrick  
Secretary

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Katie Wilde  
Recording Secretary

Public Audience

Adjournment