

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

September 24, 2019

Ms. Tara Willerup called the regular meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Board of Education Conference Room.

Roll Call:

**Members present:** Mmes. Tara Willerup, Susan Salina, Jen Batchelar and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

**Members absent:** Mrs. Lydia Tedone

**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.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Willerup welcomed Sharon Thomas, a new board member sworn in today. Ms. Huie reported on events and activities at the elementary schools and high school. Mr. Sullivan reported that negotiations with the teacher and administrator bargaining units have begun. Ms. Murray stated that during last week's half day of professional development, teachers worked on aligning their professional growth plans to the BOE goals, strategic plan and school goals. Mr. Curtis reported that the Equity Council held their kickoff meeting last week. It was a very engaging environment with 25 stakeholders attending. Mr. Curtis noted that the format for the meeting will be replicated with administrators during the next administrative council meeting.

Communications

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of September 10, 2019 Meeting

Mr. Tindall: MOVE to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2019 meeting, as amended.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

Minutes of  
September 10,  
2019

B. Acceptance of BOE Member Resignation

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE to accept the resignation of Tom Frank from the Board of Education.

Ms. Salina: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Willerup noted that Mr. Frank has recently moved to Avon.

BOE Member  
Resignation

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

### A. Continuing Education Report

Dave Krum, Director of Continuing Education, reviewed adult programming provided by the Department of Continuing Education. Evening classes are offered in the following areas: financial & legal, home & garden, cooking, recreation & hobbies, personal enrichment, and Ed2go online classes. Mr. Krum stated that the department offers classes that instructors want to teach and they also reach out to local businesses to teach classes.

Mr. Krum noted the state mandated programs that are required by CT General Statutes. These include Adult Basic Education (ABE), Citizenship, GED test preparation, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The Department of Continuing Education offers programs at three times over the course of a year.

Continuing Education teacher Mike Angellilo shared anecdotes about his experience over his 45 years of teaching, in particular the citizenship class. No one has failed the citizenship test who has taken the class with Mr. Angellilo. Mr. Krum stated that the department also works with veteran's who want to receive a high school diploma but didn't because they were serving in the military during World War III, the Korean conflict or the Vietnamese conflict.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the Department of Continuing Education underwent a state audit this year. The audit resulted in 4 recommendations: (1) continued implementation of recruiting initiatives, (2) refining our GED test preparation curriculum, (3) staying current on requirements for U.S. citizenship, and (4) growing community connections to serve more students.

Mr. Sullivan introduced Shannon Gagne, Art Department Supervisor K-12, who runs the Simsbury Arts Academy. He noted that most of our summer programs are now enrichment programs. Ms. Gagne spoke about the Simsbury Arts Academy (SAA) summer program for students in grades 4-12. She stated that the 3 week program is structured around the performing and visual arts. This past summer 90 students were enrolled in SAA and programs were provided by 16 faculty members and 6 interns.

Nikki Mahan, Continuing Education Director of Youth Services, spoke about The Children's Academy preschool program. The preschool accepts students between the ages of 3 and 5 and the program uses multi-age classrooms. Current enrollment is 107 students with 13 faculty members. Parents are given partial, half and full day options for their children. Twelve seats are offered to Open Choice students each year. The curriculum is play based and there is currently a waitlist of 22 children.

Ms. Mahan presented information on the Simsbury Enrichment & Extended Day (SEED) program. This is a before and after school program with before care available at Squadron Line School and after care available at all 5 elementary schools. There are currently 83 students enrolled in before school care and 379 students in after school care. All do not attend 5 days a week. There are 26 staff members for the program and there is a waiting list for students to attend.

Kelly Curtis, SEED Program Coordinator, stated that the after school program runs until 6:00 p.m. at all elementary schools. The before care program at Squadron Line School starts at 7:00 a.m. Programs are also run during times when school is not in

Continuing  
Education

session or there are snow days. Ms Mahan noted that the staff to student ratio is between 1:7 and 1:8. The industry standard is 1:10. Mr. Sullivan pointed out that SEED is the largest Continuing Education program and is self-sustaining.

B. Sandy Hook Promise

Mr. Sullivan stated that Simsbury Public Schools has partnered with the Sandy Hook Promise organization. The mission of Sandy Hook Promise is to prevent violence before it happens. They run four “Know the Signs” programs: Start with Hello, Say Something, Safety Assessment & Intervention, and a Signs of Suicide (SOS) program. Simsbury has been participating in the Start with Hello program at all elementary schools. The focus of this program is making connections and inclusivity. The district is participating in the Start with Hello campaign this week.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the Say Something program is for middle and high school students. This program assists in students recognizing warning signs of threats to self, and others and saying something to a trusted adult. This program also has an anonymous reporting element that can be done via email, text or a phone call. School personnel have been trained about the Say Something program and it will be rolled out to students at HJMS and SHS next month. Mr. Sullivan pointed out that if the call center determines that the level of call requires immediate attention they will notify Simsbury police dispatch, in addition to administrators.

Ms. Lemke spoke about the school district’s involvement in the Safety Assessment & Intervention program. Simsbury held training on this program, for administrators and school mental health professionals, on September 16<sup>th</sup>. This program assists with building skills to identify, assess, and respond to threats of violence/at-risk behavior before a tragedy. It also covers how to determine if the threat is substantiated. Ms. Lemke stated that the Signs of Suicide training is yet to be determined. She noted that the district and town have partnered with Tom Steen on this subject.

Mr. Sullivan stated that these programs will be embedded in the health curriculum. He noted that these programs are offered at no charge to the district. Ms. Batchelar asked if the Sandy Hook Promise offers a program for parents. Ms. Lemke responded that they do not have a specific program for parents, but the town/school district offers many evening parent training programs.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Batchelar:MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

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Todd Burrick  
Secretary

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Katie Wilde  
Recording Secretary

Sandy Hook  
Promise

Public Audience

Adjournment