

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

September 25, 2018

Mrs. Willerup 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 and Jennifer Batchelar.
Messrs. Todd Burrick, Tom Frank and Jeff Tindall.

Members absent: Mrs. Lydia Tedone and Mr. Mike Goman.

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 Katie Galt and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Katie Galt, BOE Student Representative, thanked the board for letting her join the board meetings.

Communications

Ms. Salina reported on the Curriculum Committee meeting. She stated that they discussed possible changes to the SHS schedule. This will be a topic discussed by the SHS Leadership Team over the course of this year.

Ms. Lemke reported on the Community for Care Mindfulness program that was held. The next program, which is being co-sponsored with SEPTO, will be on the topic of anxiety on November 5th at HJMS.

Ms. Murray stated that during tomorrow's half day of professional development teachers will look at student data and evidence to inform instruction for our students this year.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of September 11, 2018 Meeting

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2018 meeting.

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

Approval of
Minutes of
September 11,
2018

B. Personnel

Personnel

Mr. Sullivan stated that there was a late resignation at SHS and Steve Nunes has been hired as a social studies teacher at SHS.

C. Gift from Latimer Lane PTO

Gift from Latimer
Lane PTO

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the proposed gift from the Latimer Lane School Parent-Teacher Organization be approved.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. SHS Academic Report

SHS Academic
Report

Ms. Murray presented an overview of the presentation. Andy O'Brien, SHS Principal, discussed the Core Values and Beliefs at SHS: Preparation, Passion and Personal Growth. He reviewed the academic success of students at SHS, noting that it is one of the best high schools in Connecticut. Mr. O'Brien pointed out the college success rate, the percentage of students earning a college degree within 6 year of graduation, has increased from 69% in 2010 to 76% in 2012.

Mr. O'Brien reviewed academic indicators of success, which include SAT and AP results, noting the high performance of SHS students compared to other DRG B school districts. He addressed the achievement gap data, noting that this is still an area of focus for the school. Ms. Lemke stated that during tomorrow's professional development special education teachers will look at individual student scores in order to address thematic areas for students.

Mr. O'Brien addressed post-secondary plans for the class of 2018. He discussed trends in elective areas offered at SHS. Mr. O'Brien reviewed some of the results of the school culture survey given to seniors in the spring. He noted that there has been improvement in most areas except for Respect for Differences. Mr. O'Brien stated that a Diversity Committee has been formed this year and this will be an area of focus during the school year. He spoke about the positive efforts of groups and students who are compassionate and have done things such as the French NHS raising \$400 for Doctors without Borders to sponsor the education of a student in Haiti; collecting 244 toys for children during the Stuff a Cruiser event; the Wounded Vets Strong /Freedom Pen-a-thon raising \$6119.00 for the Fisher House; and Holiday Cabaret performances raised \$8358.00 for Loaves and Fishes.

Mr. O'Brien provided a 2019-20 budget preview. His personnel request will include an additional social worker and an internship coordinator. In addition he would like to add walkways through the courtyard and make upgrades to the athletic facilities.

Mr. O'Brien addressed the areas of focus for SHS in 2018-19. These include setting learning targets for each class; holding PD sessions related to meeting the needs of all learners; PLC meetings focused on positive teams and supporting individuals who struggle; making sure the intervention centers are fine-tuned; and addressing cultural competency. The school schedule will be discussed with the SHS Leadership Team over the course of the year. Based on the competencies outlined in the Vision of a Graduate, departmental audits of current practices will be conducted.

B. School Start Time Study Status

School Start
Time Study
Status

Ms. Murray discussed last year's work of the SHS Leadership Team in considering a change in school start time. She noted the areas that need further investigation. These include a stakeholder survey, looking at athletic facility needs, Choice transportation, homework, reconfigured transportation routes, and the benefits other

districts have found from making the change. Ms. Murray noted that last year a preliminary stakeholder survey was done. Now with more research and information, a more specific survey will be designed. The results of the survey will define next steps in the school start time study process. Mr. Curtis pointed out that transportation is a big factor in this equation in order to remain cost neutral.

Ms. Murray stated that all of the information from the study is accessible on the district website. Ms. Salina noted that a change in the SHS schedule would also be a factor. Mr. Tindall stated that the effect of a change in start time on elementary students also needs to be considered. Mr. Frank asked if the survey should include a question as to whether parents would be willing to pay more to have a later start time for secondary students with no change for elementary schools. Mr. Curtis responded that Salter's Express would not be able to accommodate that scenario.

C. 2019-20 Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Curtis stated that the majority of items on the six year plan are related to athletics. In the past few years the most significant work in the capital plan has been at HJMS. Mr. Curtis noted that the Master Facilities Plan will be utilized to address capital projects over time. Additional items are still to be added to the 2020-2015 CIP for security and cooling systems.

Mr. LaClair noted that the first year of the plan includes the SHS partial roof replacement; SHS turf field #2 and the HJMS tennis court replacement. Jeff Pinney, Director of Athletics & Student Activities, pointed out the second turf field has been on the CIP for 3 years. He noted the work that has been recently completed which includes new tennis courts at SHS, repainting and refinishing of the SHS gold gym floor and replacement of the scoreboard on Holden Field.

Mr. Pinney addressed the need for a second turf field. He discussed the issue of limited space for the number of teams who need to use them: 13 teams in the fall and 16 teams in the spring. Grass fields are not usable in inclement weather, only the turf field or practice indoors is possible. Mr. Pinney presented multi-use field summary of comparable schools in Connecticut. He pointed out that the average is 21 teams who have access to 5.25 fields. In Simsbury there are 28 teams with access to 2 fields, one turf and one grass.

Ms. Salina noted that in the Farmington Valley the only district with 2 turf fields is Granby. Ms. Willerup asked if we are looking at utilizing other grass fields. Mr. Pinney noted that Memorial Field is currently used. He pointed out that an additional turf field provides the ability to improve scheduling both student life and parent life. An additional turf field would also improve relationships between youth athletic programs and SHS.

Mr. Pinney addressed lighting of the second turf field. He stated that grants and additional funding methods are being researched. Mr. Curtis asked how the current turf field is being utilized by youth programs. Mr. Pinney responded that the turf field is available on Sundays for youth programs and is used by youth field hockey on Saturday afternoons. It is also used for youth lacrosse clinics.

Ms. Salina asked if bleachers are included in the request. Mr. Pinney stated that temporary bleachers, similar to what we have now, would be included in the project. Mr. Burrick asked if consideration had been given to placing the second turf field at

2019-20 Capital
Improvement
Plan

HJMS. Mr. Pinney noted that the field at HJMS is a Parks & Recreation Department field. He suggested that the field would not have the same impact if located at HJMS rather than SHS.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Rich Harper, 12 Brook Bridge, stated that he is the father of 5 children who all played sports. He expressed support for a second turf field and noted the importance of building sports programs K-12.

Bryan Bulger, 15 Drumlin Road, President of Youth Lacrosse, noted the importance of building a relationship between youth sports and high school sports. He pointed out that Simsbury lacrosse helps student's to get into and play lacrosse in college. Mr. Bulger said that currently the teams need to rent space from Ethel Walker and Westminster for try-outs. He recommended moving forward with the second turf field.

Ben Berger, 11 Elaine Drive, Vice President Soccer Club, stated that they have 1,000 members who play soccer in the fall. He noted that they pay for lights to accommodate teams in the fall. Mr. Berger stated his support for the second turf field.

Sam Zulla, Woodhaven Drive, youth girl's lacrosse and boys' basketball coach, noted the difficulty with getting field time and full practices in. He expressed concern with the safety of youth girls playing lacrosse if they are not sufficiently prepared to play games against teams who have regular full practices.

Dave Masters, Barry Lane, SHS football and baseball coach, stated that he has 120 football players who play on the grass and go inside the gym if it rains so that others can use the turf. He noted the importance of building youth programs and providing interaction between high school and youth football. Mr. Masters pointed out that there is a community in athletics.

Brooke Bulmer, 14 Bickford Street, SHS field hockey coach, stated that now there are 5th and 6th grade field hockey teams in addition to 7th and 8th grade teams. These teams practice at SHS whenever possible. She noted that field hockey needs to play on a flat surface so every bit of field space would help.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Frank: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Ms. Salina: Seconded. So moved.

Todd Burrick
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary

Public Audience

Adjournment