

TOWN OF SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

April 26, 2022

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Tariffville School cafeteria.

Roll Call:

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

Members absent: Mrs. Lydia Tedone and Mr. Brian Watson.

Also present: Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan, Director of Finance Amy Meriwether, BOE Student Representative Alex Picoult and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

RECOGNITIONS

Jeff Pinney, Director of Athletics & Activities, introduced Bob Hale, Director of Unified Sports at the CT Association of Schools (CAS). Mr. Hale stated that Unified Sports is a registered program of Special Olympics. He presented the unified sports program in Simsbury with a banner recognizing them as a National Unified Champion School.

Recognitions

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, read a quote from Desmond Tutu. She noted this year's SEL dogma and questioned if teachers doing group therapy does more harm than good.

Public Audience

Katie Boyle, Latimer Lane parent, expressed concern that there will be larger 3rd grade classes next year. She noted the benefits of smaller class sizes.

Liz Peterson, 32 Fox Den Road, stated that the audience cannot hear the public audience comments and she suggested that BOE meetings be held in the HJMS auditorium.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Picoult reported on the Radium Girls performances at SHS last weekend. He noted that NGSS testing is on Thursday and the junior prom will be held on Saturday. Mr. Picoult reported on events at the elementary schools.

Committee Reports/BOE Communications

Ms. Thomas congratulated SHS students receiving honors and high honors. She stated that 10 students participated in the Congressional Art Award program through Jahana Hayes office. Ms. Batchelar reported that the Policy Committee met to review one policy that will come before the board at the next meeting.

Mr. Sullivan reported on the districtwide staff recognition ceremony. He noted that Lisa Pugmeyer at Tariffville School was named the Paraeducator of the Year. Mr. Sullivan stated that COVID numbers have increased and we are watching three clusters in one school.

Ms. Lemke addressed the 2022-23 school calendar, stating that the first three days will be half days for students as this has been beneficial in the past.

Ms. Salina stated she attended the staff recognition ceremony, noting the number of years of service for our staff members. She addressed the audience, stating that the board likes to visit the schools over the course of the year for their meetings.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of March 22, 2022 Meeting

Mr. Tindall: MOVE to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

B. Approval of Minutes of March 31, 2022 Special Meeting

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2022 special meeting.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved. Ms. Batchelar and Ms. Thomas abstained.

C. Personnel

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Kristen Pomery and Nysheria Sims-Oliver effective June 30, 2022.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirements of Marcia Gibbs, Debra Lotstein, and Tracy Zeiner effective June 30, 2022.

Ms. Batcher: Seconded. So moved.

D. Adoption of Healthy Food & Beverage for 2022-23

Mr. Burrick: Move that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Simsbury Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdictions, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school store, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Tindall: MOVE that pursuant to Sections 10-215f of the C.G.S., the Simsbury Board of Education hereby will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the

Approval of
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2022-23

following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The “school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the C.G.S. provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An “event” is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The “school day” is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. “Location” means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

E. Acceptance of Gift from Tariffville School

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the proposed gift of \$2,000 to Tariffville School by the Tariffville School Parent-Teacher Organization be approved.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

F. Acceptance of Gift to SHS Hall of Fame

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the proposed gift of funds from Tracy Hagan Mallory to fund SHS Hall of Fame events be accepted.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

G. Acceptance of Gift to the SHS Baseball Booster Club

Mr. Tindall: MOVE that the proposed gift of \$5,000 from the Cordani Family be approved.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

H. Acceptance of Gift to the PTO Cultural Enrichment Committee

Gift from
Tariffville School

Gift to SHS Hall
of Fame

Gift to SHS
Baseball
Boosters

Gift to PTO
Cultural

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the proposed gift of funds from all the elementary school parent-teacher organizations to provide cultural programming to elementary school students be accepted.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Tariffville School Report

Steve Matyczek, Principal, introduced School Psychologist Jan Hanlon and Social Worker Erin Naspo. He stated that this evening they will discuss the similarities and differences in the jobs. Mr. Matyczek noted that the supports they provide to students is vital to the school and its culture. Ms. Hanlon and Ms. Naspo discussed the areas in which their jobs overlap. This includes Tier 1 consultations, Tier 2 counseling, 504 counseling and risk/threat assessments.

Ms. Hanlon stated that she participates in all levels of student intervention. Students who continue to struggle after intervention are referred for a special ed educational assessment. Ms. Hanlon stated she develops 504 plans, provides IEP driven counseling, behavioral plans, and behavior de-escalation and management.

Ms. Naspo stated that her role includes a lot of family outreach to see that student needs are being met. Mr. Burrick asked how families know to reach out to you. Ms. Naspo responded that word of mouth, school listserv communications and teachers inform parents. She noted the outreach programs that run through her office. This includes home visits, food/clothing/holiday/resource support, community referrals, Open Choice support, mentor coordination and attendance monitoring. Ms. Hanlon stated that it is great having a social worker in the building to meet the needs of children.

B. Athletics and Activities Report

Jeff Pinney, Director of Athletics and Activities provided an update on the department. He stated the importance of providing opportunities for students outside of the classroom, as much of the high school experience is outside of school hours. Mr. Pinney stated that the success of the department is measured based on offerings, participation and accomplishments.

Mr. Pinney noted that SHS has 38 varsity sports and a total of 86 teams. Additionally, 65 clubs and activities are offered after school. Mr. Pinney provided statistics on the number of students participating in athletics. In 2021-22, 61% of individual students participate in athletics which is a total of 783 students. Total participation this year, including multi-sport athletes, is 1,453.

Mr. Pinney reviewed the varsity team accomplishments over the course of the year, individual student-athlete accomplishments, as well as staff/department accomplishments. He provided an overview of the coaching training requirements and the role of volunteers. He stated that there are 101 paid coaching positions and 23 volunteers. Mr. Pinney reviewed the department's accomplishments over the past year and the goals moving forward. He reviewed his 2021-22 budget and those items paid through the Pay-to-Participate program. In response to Ms. Salina, Mr.

Enrichment
Committee

Tariffville School
Report

Athletics &
Activities Report

Pinney provided an update on the bleacher project. He stated that due to supply issues the work will begin after the fall season.

C. Quarterly Budget Analysis

Ms. Meriwether addressed the budget deficit which is currently around \$500,000. A budget freeze has been instituted that should provide \$100,000 in savings. Ms. Meriwether stated that the additional \$400,000 can be taken from the non-lapsing fund. In fiscal year 2022-23 we are anticipating an increase in our Open Choice fund of \$370,000 which will allow us to replenish those funds and leaves a net use of non-lapsing funds of \$30,000.

Ms. Meriwether noted that causes for the deficit include the addition of 3 teachers, special education needs, the social and emotional learning supports put in place, and the issues we have had with transportation this year. She stated that when the books are closed out in April she will provide an update if anything changes significantly.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Liz Peterson, 32 Fox Den Road, stated that she does not think the BOE conference room is an appropriate venue for board meetings and not normal for how a board meeting should function.

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, questioned whether committee meetings are open to the public. She expressed concern with some of the teacher assignments as she feels some are not appropriate for teachers to teach our children.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to enter Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. to discuss the evaluation of the superintendent.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

Jennifer Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary

Quarterly
Budget Analysis

Public Audience

Executive
Session

Adjournment