

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

April 27, 2021

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. in the Tootin' Hills School cafeteria.

Roll Call:

**Members present:** Mmes. Susan Salina, Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone and Jen Batchelar. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson. Ms. Sharon Thomas arrived at 6:43 p.m.

**Also present:** Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan, Director of Finance Amy Meriwether and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None.

Public Audience

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Tedone noted that the CT senate is voting on the religious exemption for vaccinations tonight. She reported on appropriation bills before the legislature. Ms. Tedone stated that NSBA will be sending a poll across the country relative to education issues.

Communications

Ms. Lemke reported on the annual CT Writing Project. This year 27 of our elementary students were recognized, across all 5 elementary schools. Ms. Lemke stated that the Farmington Valley Health District is offering vaccinations to students age 16+. She noted that tomorrow is a half day of school for building based professional development.

Mr. Sullivan noted the amount of work that needs to be done to get a grant application into the state for the Latimer Lane School renovation project. He stated that last Friday there was a site visit with the CT Office of Grants and Construction. Mr. Sullivan reported that the Squadron Line School assistant principal hiring process is underway. Fifteen candidates, from a strong and diverse pool, participated in screening interviews. Mr. Sullivan reported that the Director of Equity and Access job posting is open until next Friday. At this point there are 45 applicants.

Mr. Curtis reported that the CT State Department of Education issued a memo to superintendents stating that there will not be a mandate to provide distance learning next year. Ms. Salina noted that the budget referendum is May 4 at the Simsbury Public Library.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- A. Approval of Minutes of March 23, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2021 meeting.

Approval of  
Minutes of  
March 23, 2021

<p>Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved. Ms. Tedone, Ms. Thomas and Ms. Willerup abstained.</p> <p>B. Personnel</p> <p>Mr. Watson: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirements of Marilyn Cannata and Margaret Griffin effective June 30, 2021.</p> <p>Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.</p> <p>Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of JoAnna Beernaert effective June 30, 2021.</p> <p>Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the requests for non-salaried, guaranteed leaves of absence for Melissa Leonard and Jenna Nalband effective August 30, 2021 – June 30, 2022.</p> <p>Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.</p>	<p>Personnel</p>
<p>C. Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers</p> <p>Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the contract of employment of the listed staff members be non-renewed effective June 30, 2021, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person(s) in writing of this action.</p> <p>Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.</p>	<p>Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers</p>
<p>D. Approval of 2022-23 School Calendar</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adopt the 2022-23 school calendar as presented.</p> <p>Ms. Tedone: Seconded.</p> <p>Ms. Thomas suggested that Columbus Day be renamed Indigenous Peoples Day on the school calendar.</p> <p>So moved.</p>	<p>Approval of 2022-23 School Calendar</p>
<p>E. Adoption of Healthy Food &amp; Beverage 2021-22</p> <p>Ms. Willerup: 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, <u>will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022.</u> 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</p>	<p>Adoption of Healthy Food &amp; Beverage 2021-22</p>

fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.

Mr. Watson: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Willerup: 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 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. Thomas: 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. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

F. Acceptance of Donation to SHS Baseball Booster Club

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

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Tootin’ Hills School Program

Ms. Lemke stated that Nancy Forsberg, Supervisor of Special Education Instruction, formed an elementary social emotional learning (SEL) committee with general and special education teachers, school psychologists, social workers and administrators over the summer. The committee made a Simsbury-specific playbook of what SEL practices could look like in the classrooms. They also developed a list of resources

SHS Baseball  
Booster Club  
Donation

Tootin’ Hills  
School Program

for teacher utilization, as well as developmentally appropriate classroom lessons on the specific SEL skill.

Anjanette Belmonte, Tootin' Hills School Principal, stated that when she arrived as principal she could see that students felt emotionally safe at Tootin' Hills School. Students are screened twice per year as to their social and emotional wellbeing. Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions are held, as well as professional development for staff to make sure they have the tools they need. Each day there is a 30 minute instructional block around SEL.

Haley Rice, Social Worker, reviewed the grade level SEL screenings of students that are done in the fall. She stated that these screenings drive interventions. These screenings were re-administered 4-6 weeks later and again after winter break. Ms. Rice provided an overview of tiered supports level 1, 2 and 3.

Ms. Belmonte reviewed the SEL resources and materials utilized by staff. She spoke about the need for staff self-care, making sure staff is healthy so they can take care of our students. Ms. Belmonte addressed the tenets of Tootin' Hills C.A.R.E.S. – connect, adapt, respect, empathize, self-care. She pointed out the focus on the character education program and the read alouds done by Library Media Specialist Susan Locandro.

Lisa Jacobs, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher, stated that each morning students check in with a mood meter where responses are collected in a Google form. This allows teachers the ability to check in with students daily and touch base with students when needed. Ms. Jacobs reviewed some of the ways in which the SEL block is used each day. This includes the incorporation of soft starts each day, a virtual calming room, student and staff reflection videos and yoga. Ms. Belmonte noted that the plan is to carry forward the SEL block next year.

Ms. Willerup asked if this is the practice in all of our schools. Ms. Lemke responded that this is the way Tootin' Hills School utilizes the program. The SEL work is being done in all of the schools. Ms. Salina asked if this same work is being done with distance learning students and those returning from distance learning. Ms. Lemke stated that this work is done with distance learning students. Ms. Jacobs stated that parent feedback is utilized for those returning from distance learning. She noted that parents are impressed and thankful for the program.

#### B. Quarterly Budget Analysis

Ms. Meriwether addressed changes to the quarterly report from the last quarter. In April, the district was notified of an additional Open Choice Academic and Social Support Grant award of \$7,000. The Open Choice Attendance and Early Learning Grant increased by \$25,932 over what was previously reported. The amount of the Special Education Excess Cost Grant has decreased by \$49,000 from what was previously reported. The Talent Development Grant (TEAM) decreased by \$713. There has been no change in the federal grant awards.

Ms. Meriwether stated that the expenditures have not changed and are mostly affected by the COVID expenditures. She noted that a spending freeze remains in effect through the end of the school year. A deficit of \$900,000 is anticipated and will be offset through the non-lapsing account and COVID grants.

Quarterly  
Budget Analysis

Public Audience  
None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to enter Executive Session at 7:54 p.m. and include Superintendent Curtis.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Ms. Batchelar:Seconded. So moved.

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Jennifer Batchelar  
Secretary

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Katie Wilde  
Recording Secretary

Public Audience

Executive  
Session

Adjournment