TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings | Regular Meeting | September 13, 2022

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the BOE Conference Room.

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

Members absent: Ms. Sharon Thomas.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan, Director of Infrastructure & Technology Jason Casey, Director of Instructional Technology Maggie Seidel, BOE Student Representative Emilie Carroll and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

RECOGNITIONS — Recognitions

Mr. Curtis introduced SHS Band Director, Lisa Abel, the 2022-23 Simsbury Teacher of the Year. He stated that Ms. Abel has been band director in Simsbury for 17 years, noting that during her Convocation speech she spoke about the importance of building your "community" both inside and outside of school.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE — Public Audience

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS — Communications

Ms. Carroll provided an update on opening activities at SHS, noting that the first week of school went well as did freshman orientation. She stated the new hallway expectations are going smoothly. There are a lot of new improvements at the school and things are getting back to normal. She noted that it is currently spirit week.

Ms. Willerup reported on the Communications Committee meeting during which the new communications platform was shared with the committee. She noted this will be reported on this evening as part of the School Opening Report.

Ms. Tedone reported on the summer leadership sessions with NSBA and CABE, as well as CREC's Convocation. Mr. Tindall stated that as the parent of a freshman, the new orientation program was great.

Mr. Burrick reported that the Personnel & Negotiations Committee has been meeting as part of negotiations with the teachers' union. He noted that the board will vote this evening on the custodial/maintenance contract for 2022-2025.

Mr. Sullivan reported on the Latimer Lane building project, noting the work that was done over the summer. He stated the early procurement phase has been completed with the Public Building Committee awarding contracts on September 12 for those items that are delayed due to supply chain issues. These bids came in $200,000 below the $2,000,000 budgeted. Mr. Sullivan stated that due to delays at the state

level, bids for the remainder of the project went out this afternoon and are due in four weeks. The project management firm needs a few weeks to reconcile with bidders and it is anticipated a tri-board meeting will be held in November to discuss the budget, if needed.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2022 Special Meeting

Approval of Minutes of August 15, 2022

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the August 15, 2022 special meeting.

Mr. Watson: Seconded. So moved. Mr. Burrick and Ms. Tedone abstained.

B. Personnel

Personnel

Ms. Tedone: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignations of Tisa Beaudoin, Briana Clough, Elise DeCarolis, Jeannine Fossett-Nash, and Erica Martino effective June 30, 2022; Gregory Gallo and David Salonia effective July 12, 2022; Mackensie Mulvihill effective July 29, 2022; Justin Farrell effective August 9, 2022; and Charlene Savino effective August 23, 2022.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirement of Rebecca Rosenthal effective August 8, 2022.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the intent to retire of Paul Smith effective June 30, 2025.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the approximately 40 new hires, noting those that were added through the budget process, the addition of 3 elementary classes due to class size, and the replacement of staff who resigned.

C. Approval of Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement Between the Simsbury Board of Education and the National Association of Municipal Employees Local R1-260

Approval of NAGE contract

Mr. Sullivan pointed out the changes to the prior contract.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education ratify the proposed changes in the collective bargaining agreement between the Simsbury Board of Education and the National Association of Governmental Employees Local R1-260 for the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

D. Acceptance of Gift from Simsbury GridIron Club

Acceptance of Gift from GridIron Club

Mr. Tindall: MOVE that the proposed gift of $15,950 from the GridIron Club be approved.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

E. Acceptance of Gift from SHS Girls Soccer Booster Club

Acceptance of Gift from SHS Girls Booster Club

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the proposed gift of $2,165 from the Girls Soccer Booster Club be approved.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. School Opening Report

School Opening Report

Mr. Curtis noted that there is a more normal feel to this year's school opening and the theme that will be woven through this year is engagement. Ms. Lemke reviewed the strategic plan priorities for 2022-23 and noted that the professional development during the first three days of school was focused on engagement aligned with the strategic plan priorities.

Ms. Lemke reviewed student learning data based on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). She noted that there was consistent performance in the Math and ELA SBA for grades 3-6. Grade 4 performance in both ELA and Math ranked #2 in our District Reference Group (DRG) B. There is a discrepancy in the ELA and Math scores in grades 7-8 and Principal Baker is looking at the areas of concern.

Ms. Lemke reviewed the NGSS data, noting that grades 8 and 11 scored #1 in the state. Grade 5 ranked 15 in DRG B and more work needs to be done at this grade level as there was much focus on Math and ELA last year. SAT testing resulted in a #2 DRG B ranking in ELA and #3 in Math. Ms. Lemke noted that the spread is tight at the top of the DRG B. Ms. Batchelar requested an achievement data comparison with pre-pandemic results.

Ms. Lemke discussed the results of the climate survey from last spring. The survey was distributed to Grade 5, 7 and 11 students, as well as all district families and staff. Ms. Lemke addressed the questions related to school fit, school culture and climate, and premier workforce. She noted that some responses may be a result of the effect of the pandemic. Ms. Lemke stated the administration will look at the areas where we want favorable responses to increase.

Ms. Seidel, Director of Instructional Technology, provided an update on changes to how the district communicates, centered around the theme of engagement. She reviewed the new district custom app, the new emergency text messaging feature, and the new teacher communication app that will also be used by coaches. Ms. Seidel stated that she will be attending PTO meetings to talk about the new communication methods. Ms. Salina asked if we have access to data on the usages of the app so that it can be tailored as we go forward. Ms. Seidel responded that we have access to the data relative to these communication tools.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed what occurred during new teacher orientation which takes place the week before school starts. He noted the levels of experience for our new staff, as well as their level of academic preparation.

Mr. Sullivan addressed enrollment for the start of the year. He compared the September 3, 2022 enrollment to the October 1, 2021 enrollment data. Mr. Sullivan noted that the elementary trend continues to see increased enrollment, while the trend at the high school is decreased enrollment. The overall increase in enrollment is 39 students which is 12 over projections. Mr. Tindall pointed out that the number of elementary students has increased by over 100 in the past 2 years, resulting in the hiring of 6-7 teachers.

Mr. Sullivan providing a summary of his department's accomplishments in 2021-22 and priorities for 2022-23. Areas of focus include the Latimer Lane School project, elementary space considerations, addressing staffing and staff satisfaction, as well as teacher and secretary/paraprofessional bargaining unit negotiations. Mr. Burrick suggested a page specific to the Latimer Lane project be created on the district website.

Mr. Casey, Director of Infrastructure & Technology, noted that the Fire Marshal completed the inspection of each school prior to school opening. He provided updates on summer improvement projects at each of the schools. Mr. Casey addressed technology upgrades that include the addition of 850 Chromebooks and moving to centralized copying at Central, Squadron Line, Tariffville and Tootin' Hills schools. He noted the projects he will be working on in the year ahead. These include the Latimer Lane School project, AC for the SHS 3rd floor and auditorium, the bleacher project at SHS, planning for the partial roof replacements at Central and Tariffville schools, Tootin' Hills plumbing and drainage improvements, and 6 year capital improvement project development and planning.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, stated she appreciates the update on the mobile device communications and Chromebooks. She pointed out that teachers should not assume that every SHS student has a mobile phone. Ms. Boyko requested that during committee reports more details be shared regarding what was discussed at the committee meetings. She questioned how the reports relative to the organizations of NSBA and CABE align with our district priorities.

Public Audience

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to enter executive session to discuss a student matter and possible land acquisition, and include Superintendent Curtis, at 8:15 p.m.

Executive Session

Mr. Watson: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Watson: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Adjournment

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

_____ Jennifer Batchelar Secretary	_____ Katie Wilde Recording Secretary