TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings | Regular Meeting | May 25, 2021

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. in the Tariffville School cafeteria.

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

Members absent: Mr. Brian Watson.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE — Public Audience
None

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS — Communications
Ms. Tedone reported on the CSDE forum where the department is requesting input on how they are doing. Ms. Tedone noted that she has been elected once again as Chairperson at CREC. The CABE Legislative Wrap-up will be held on June 14. She reported that NSBA will be hosting an Advocacy Institute online June 8-10.

Ms. Thomas noted that today is the annual remembrance of George Floyd and the board paused for a moment of silence. She stated that Avon is hosting a voices of equity event this evening and hopefully next year Simsbury can do something similar. Ms. Thomas reported that the Equity Council is finishing their work resulting from the data composition and will bring recommendations to the board.

Ms. Batchelar reported on the success of the prom and the senior outing. She praised the 6th grade teachers for incorporating distance learning into their classrooms. Ms. Willerup commended Ms. Lemke for running the Equity Council that has been a working group for a long time. She noted that the council is really making headway.

Mr. Sullivan reported that last Thursday the district celebrated staff recognition for 2020-21, including the recognition of this year's retirees. Mr. Curtis noted that the timing of the Equity Council recommendations is perfect as we look to reboot the strategic plan in the fall. He reported on positive COVID news with high vaccine rates in the Farmington Valley and a positive outlook for the fall from the Farmington Valley Health District. Mr. Curtis pointed out that the mask mandate is still in place for schools. He introduced Alex Picoult, one of the new BOE student reps for next year.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Appointment of Squadron Line Assistant Principal

Appointment of Squadron Line Assistant Principal

Mr. Curtis stated his recommendation of Nysheria Sims-Oliver to the position of Squadron Line Assistant Principal. He reviewed the hiring process which included a screening interview and then two committee interview rounds. Ms. Sims-Oliver was chosen from a pool of more than 100 applicants and brings a multitude of skills that will benefit the district.

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the Board of Education appoint Nysheria Sims-Oliver to the position of Assistant Principal for Squadron Line School with an effective date of July 1, 2021.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Sims-Oliver stated that she is grateful to be chosen for this position and she is excited to begin her work in this special place.

B. Approval of Minutes of May 11, 2021 Meeting

Approval of Minutes of May 11, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Tindall: MOVE to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2021 meeting.

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

C. Personnel

Personnel

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirements of Burke LaClair effective May 31, 2021 and Jane Ellen Peregrin effective June 30, 2021.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Suzanne Szekeres effective June 30, 2021.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the notice of intent to retire of Kim Roth effective June 30, 2024.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

D. Approval of Unaffiliated Salary Adjustments

Approval of Unaffiliated Salary Adjustments

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the salary range for the unaffiliated Board of Education employees and salaries for the Central Office Administrators be increased by 2.50% for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

E. Approval of Latimer Lane Education Specifications

Approval of Latimer Lane

Mr. Sullivan noted that the board received a presentation on the specifications at their last meeting.

Education Specifications

Mr. Tindall: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Latimer Lane Education Specifications.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

F. Approval of 2021-22 Textbooks

Approval of 2021-22 Textbooks

Ms. Lemke noted that the board was presented with the AP Statistics textbook at their last meeting.

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the Board approve the textbook adoption for the 2021-22 school year as submitted by the administration.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

G. Adoption of Fee Schedule for Use of Public Schools

Adoption of Fee Schedule for use of Public Schools

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the fee schedule for use of the public schools for 2021-22 be approved as submitted by the administration.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Tariffville School Program

Tariffville School Program

Mr. Curtis stated that this evening's program focuses on the culture and well-being of our students which is a tenet of the district's strategic plan. Mr. Matyczyk introduced sixth grade teachers Kim Wolf and Chris Liss, as well as sixth grade students Aoibheann Browne and Madeline Padin. He noted the four character traits that are the foundation of everything done at Tariffville School: caring, respect, responsibility and citizenship. Mr. Matyczyk, Ms. Roth and Ms. Liss reviewed the brochure for the character education (CLIMB) program at Tariffville School. CLIMB stands for Character Lives In My Behavior. They discussed various parts of the program such as charms given to students who exhibit positive behavior, service projects, student recognition and Better Choice slips. Ms. Browne and Ms. Padin spoke about what the CLIMB program means to them and the school mascot, Kip, assisted the students in distributing charms to board members.

B. Spirit Council Recommendations

Spirit Council Recommendations

Mr. Curtis noted that as a result of the racial incident at SHS the equity work began at the education level and the community level. Cheryl Cook, Co-Chair of the Spirit Council, stated that Spirit stands for Simsbury Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together. The purpose of the council is to give residents a community forum to be heard. Ms. Cook stated that Ms. Lemke has been an invaluable partner as liaison to the Spirit Council.

Nicole Kodak, Co-Chair of the Spirit Council, briefly reviewed the history of the Spirit Council that was formed two years ago. She noted that in September 2020 the BOS passed a resolution to declare racism a public health crisis. Ms. Kodak

reviewed the vision and mission of the council, as well as its 18 members. She stated that there are four subcommittees: Events, Outreach, Data/Audit and Housing. The council has five focus areas: Education, Food Security, Health, Housing and Criminal Justice. Ms. Kodak noted the events that the Spirit Council has held each month.

Lloyd Huie, Spirit Council member, discussed the work of the Outreach Subcommittee. The subcommittee goals include connecting with organizations in Simsbury, facilitation of a racial history discussion series, partnering with Simsbury groups also working on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, and collaboration with regional and state entities.

Mr. Huie discussed the work of the Data/Audit Subcommittee. The council has engaged DataHaven and Health Equity Solutions to assist with gathering and analyzing multi-faceted context specific data from the community. Mr. Huie noted that if the state passes a public health resolution the state will be required to collect data. The council will measure progress based on the data collected. Spirit Council student member, Umikka Chopra, stated she would like to get more students involved in the Spirit Council and increase the council's presence on social media. She noted the formation of the Students of Color Alliance, a new club at SHS. The club discusses the inequities at SHS and things they want to change.

Ms. Cook stated that looking at how we can work together as a community is important. Mr. Curtis noted that both the Equity Council and the Spirit Council have data as a focus and that will help with messaging. He pointed out that it is important that both groups have measures for their data. Ms. Lemke noted what statistical information relative to education can be shared with the town. Ms. Kodak stated the importance of qualitative data in order to understand people's stories.

Ms. Salina asked how the town is collecting their data. Ms. Kodak responded that the data companies were hired to help define how the data will be collected. She stated that they would welcome the contribution of questions from the Board of Education. Ms. Lemke pointed out there are overlapping members in the Equity Council and Spirit Council. Ms. Salina noted that shared members allow us all to be informed.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to enter Executive Session at 8:11 p.m. and include Superintendent Curtis.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

Executive Session

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Ms. Batchelar:Seconded. So moved.

Adjournment

_____ Jennifer Batchelar Secretary	_____ Katie Wilde Recording Secretary