TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings | Regular Meeting | November 9, 2021

Ms. Susan Salina called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. in the Board of Education conference room.

Roll Call:
Members present: Mmes. Susan Salina, Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone and Jen Batchelar. Messrs. Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson. Ms. Sharon Thomas arrived at 6:50 p.m.

Members absent: Mr. Todd Burrick

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

PUBLIC AUDIENCE — Public Audience

Mike Smith, 44 Climax Road, asked if CRT is being taught at Simsbury High School.

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, read portions of an article regarding the effect of face wearing on students that prohibits them from seeing facial expressions and how that affects their development. She suggested that people are putting adult anxiety onto their children, noting that the growth and development of K-12 children is a onetime process.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS — Communications

Ms. Salina thanked retiring SCTV station manager, Karen Handville, for her work in keeping the community informed, noting that she is owned a debit of gratitude.
Ms. Antidormi reported on activities at the elementary, middle and high school level. She noted that HJMS is joining SHS in the annual Freedom Pen-a-thon later this week.

Ms. Tedone reported on the Communications Committee meeting during which the Communications Coordinator/Webmaster position was discussed. She noted that Friday is the CABE/CAPSS Convention with the Delegate Assembly Thursday. Ms. Tedone stated that the Legislative Breakfast will be held in February.

Mr. Tindall noted that the Jack Bannon Turkey Trot is being held again this year. He pointed out the service of Jack Bannon during his time as a teacher in Simsbury, as well as his service to our country. Mr. Tindall encouraged everyone to support the Turkey Trot food collection.

Ms. Lemke reported that all schools will be holding a special event for Veterans Day in order to celebrate and give thanks to members of the military. Mr. Sullivan reviewed the new Screen & Stay protocols from the state. He noted that the intent is to reduce the number of quarantines and keep more students in school. Mr. Curtis stated that this is a step in the right direction as Governor Lamont stated they would look at data and masking in December. Mr. Sullivan reported that the Farmington

Valley Health District is sponsoring 5 clinics in the Farmington Valley for ages 5+. The 1200 slots available were filled within an hour.

Ms. Thomas asked the number of students in Project Lead the Way and suggested a presentation on the program. She also asked if the Latimer Lane School renovation project will be net zero. Mr. Sullivan stated that the architect will be presenting an update on the Latimer Lane School project at the December board meeting.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of October 26, 2021 Regular Meeting — Approval of Minutes of October 26, 2021 Meeting

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the October 26, 2021 regular meeting.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved. Ms. Salina and Ms. Tedone abstained.

B. Personnel — Personnel

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Erica Morawski effective November 5, 2021.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

C. Cancellation of November 23, 2021 Regular Meeting — Cancellation of November 23, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Watson: MOVE to cancel the Board of Education meeting scheduled on November 23, 2021.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Legislative Update — Legislative Update

Mr. Curtis stated that during the 2021 legislative session there was substantial legislation affecting school districts, many of which fall under the Office of Teaching & Learning. Ms. Lemke reviewed legislation by category. Under the category of mental, behavioral and physical supports, post pandemic legislation includes the creation of a Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health to look into racial disparities and increased access to mobile crisis services.

Ms Lemke stated that under the category of social equity, health and safety, the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) will develop standards for virtual learning, virtual/telephonic conferences will be permitted, mental health expansions for students in what they can access will be provided, more specifically the establishment of a youth suicide training program, and there is now a requirement for professional development in the area of social-emotional learning. Further, in the area of social and emotional learning, a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Collaborative will be formed, the CSDE will develop an annual assessment of students' SEL including the care and support they need. The SEL Collaborative will create standards for grades 4-12 inclusive of supports that include culturally

responsive and restorative practices. School resource officers are now required to participate in SEL training.

Ms. Lemke addressed legislation relative to dyslexia and reading preparedness. A CSDE Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities will be developed and is directed to accomplish the following: January 2022 – Office will develop a voluntary family history questionnaire for students who may be at risk for reading challenges, as there is a genetic component to dyslexia. July 2022 – Office will develop K-3 identification measures for those below reading proficiency. This is something that the Simsbury school district already has in place. January 2023 – Office will offer guidance on reading assessment appropriateness, use, and administration. They will provide state measures for all districts.

Ms. Lemke stated the most impactful legislation is the development of model curriculum. The CSDE is required to develop a model K-8 curriculum by January 2023, but the curriculum is not required to be used by districts. Ms. Lemke stated that The Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success will recommend at least five curriculum models/programs that must be used by BOEs. The district curriculum will need to be in line with one of the models or file a waiver. Implementation of a program/curriculum or an approved waiver must be completed in January 2023.

Ms. Thomas asked the number of mental health professionals we have in district. Ms. Lemke responded that we have 2 school psychologists at SHS, 1 at HJMS and 1 at each elementary school with 2 at Squadron Line. There are 2 social workers at SHS, 1 at HJMS and 3 across the 5 elementary schools. She noted that additional supports have been added due to COVID. Mr. Curtis stated that the administration is aware that the need for mental health supports is increasing and is being looked at in the current year, as well as during budget discussions for next year. Ms. Lemke stated that school psychologists and social workers support both general ed and special ed students.

6 Year CIP

B. Six Year Capital Improvement Plan

Mr. Curtis stated that the capital improvement plan is based off of the capital needs outlined in the Tecton Facilities Study. This evening priorities in year 1 will be discussed.

Mr. Casey stated the need for partial roof replacements at Central and Tariffville Schools. Preliminary numbers have the cost for Central School at $300,000 and Tariffville School $900,000. Mr. Casey noted that Tecton identified the upgrade of electrical systems at Central School and SHS due to their age. Cost for Central School is estimated at $386,468 and SHS at $321,000. Mr. Casey stated that Tecton also recommended that the upgrade of the aging plumbing infrastructure at Tootin' Hills and Squadron Line be addressed. Upgrade of the internal water distribution and drainage systems at Tootin' Hills School is estimated at $403,147 and at Squadron Line School is estimated at $1,288,190. Due to the number of repairs needed at Squadron Line consideration will need to be given to the long term plan for that school.

Mr. Casey stated that the district network infrastructure funding of $400,000 is a recurring biennial capital fund which provides for upgrades and improvement to the district's network infrastructure. This year the wireless infrastructure will be

upgraded, as well as the addition of redundant power improvements in the network server room.

Mr. Casey provided an update on the SHS bleacher project. The Zoning Board of Appeals has requested a new proposal with shorter and wider bleachers. Work is being done by the architect to re-engineer the project and stay within budget. There is an issue with the concrete storage unit under the bleachers if the design shortens the height of the bleachers. Ms. Willerup questioned whether spectators will be able to see the game if the bleachers are not tall enough. She asked if the current bleachers could just be stabilized. Mr. Casey responded that improvements to the existing bleachers could not get certified due to their age. He stated that they hope to begin the project by demolishing the existing bleachers in December. The project will be presented to the Zoning Commission on November 15, with possible approval on December 6.

2022-23 Budget Calendar

C. 2022-23 Budget Calendar

Mr. Curtis briefly reviewed the budget meeting dates and discussed the layout for the Saturday budget workshop.

Policy Second Reading

D. Policy Second Reading

Mr. Sullivan stated that recent legislative updates have required these policy changes. They will be brought forward to the board for approval at the next meeting.

Public Audience

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Mark Scully, 29 Notch Road, stated that he is the Chairman of the Sustainability Committee and the Clean Energy Task Force. He explained that the Clean Energy Task Force has set a plan for Simsbury that will be presented to the Board of Selectmen in January. Mr. Scully stated that he spoke with the Public Building Committee, architect and engineer regarding the Latimer Lane School Renovation project and has encouraged them to consider a net zero building.

Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Thomas: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

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Jennifer Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary