

The minutes presented within this document provide a summary of the discussion that took place at the Board of Education meeting. For the complete discussion of the agenda items, please view the video of the Board meeting on our website at www.southingtonschools.org.

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

SEPTEMBER 10, 2015

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, September 10, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. in the Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut with Executive Session scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Present from the Board: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mrs. Patricia Queen and Mr. Zaya Oshana.

Present from Administration: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance (*left at 6:22 p.m.*).

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mrs. Clark:

“Move to add a Student Matter to the Executive Session Agenda.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mrs. Clark:

"Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Teacher Negotiations, Personnel Matters, and a Student Matter, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS TEACHER NEGOTIATIONS, PERSONNEL MATTERS AND A STUDENT MATTER

Mr. Goralski declared Executive Session ended at 6:47 p.m. and the Board returned to public session.

3. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

At 7:05 p.m., the Board of Education members recognized Mrs. Jill Notar-Francesco, who recently moved out of Southington and resigned from the Board of Education, for her outstanding leadership, service and dedication to the Southington Board of Education and students of Southington for the past eight years. She was presented with her nameplate, a plaque, bouquet of flowers and praises from each Board member.

Mr. Goralski called for a recess at 7:15 p.m.

4. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

The regular session was reconvened at 7:32 p.m. by Mr. Goralski, Chairperson. Board members present were: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mrs. Patricia Johnson, Mrs. Terry Lombardi, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen.

Present from the administration were: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance; Mr. Peter Romano, Director of Operations; and Ms. Margaret Walsh, Director of Pupil Services.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Miss Samantha Martins, student representative.

Mr. Goralski called for a moment of silence in memory of the following:

- Mr. Robert Beeney, a retired Southington High School Technology Education teacher for 15 years who recently passed away.
- Mrs. Annecarol Hubeny, a retired school district secretary who recently passed away.
- The tragedy of September 11, 2001 that affected our nation with the loss of many lives.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ August 13, 2015

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. David Derynoski:

“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of August 13, 2015, as submitted.”

Motion carried by voice vote with Mr. Oshana and Mr. Goralski abstaining.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

There was no communication from the audience.

b. Communication from Board Members

MOTION: by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mrs. Clark:

“Move to move Agenda Item #10.c ‘Summer School 2015’ to Agenda Item #7.e.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mrs. Carmody announced that the dedication reception for “Dom D’Angelo Way” will be held Friday, October 30, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. followed by a football game.

Mrs. Lombardi announced that the Southington Education Foundation (SEF) Gala will be held Friday, September 25, 2015 at Aqua Turf, which is the SEF’s major fundraiser. The students of the Southington Public Schools benefit from the proceeds of this fundraiser, especially for the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) initiatives in the district.

Some Board members addressed events at their “Adopted” Schools.

a. Acceptance of Letter of Resignation from Jill-Notar-Francesco, Board Member

Mr. Goralski requested that Mrs. Notar-Francesco’s letter of resignation be entered on record:

Dear Brian, “Effective today, August 25, 2015, I resign my position on the Southington Board of Education as my husband and I will be both retiring to the Connecticut shoreline. I consider my eight-years of service on the Board of Education to have been a great privilege and honor, and I wish to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Southington community for the opportunity to do the Board’s challenging work. Knowing you and our seven other colleagues on the Board of Education, I trust with confidence that Southington Public Schools will continue to celebrate excellence in education for its students under this group’s outstanding leadership.” Sincerely, Jill Notar-Francesco

c. Communication from Administration

Mr. Connellan, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Madancy, Assistant Superintendent, addressed the following:

1. Accommodations due to Weather
2. School Year 2015-2016 Opening Activities
3. Smarter Balanced Assessment Results
4. Open Choice Capital Grant
5. Grand Opening ~ Middle Schools

d. Communications from Student Representatives

Mr. Iverson reported on the following:

- This week was Spirit Week at the high school.
- The first football game of the season is scheduled for Friday, September 11.
- He praised the Board members on their decision to hire Mr. Greg Ferry as the new Athletic Director.

Mr. Brino reported on the following;

- Opening day for all fall sports is Friday, September 11, 2015.
- The College Fair is September 15, 2015, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., with 110 colleges to be represented.

Miss Martins reported on the following:

- The Open House at the high school is September 17, 2015.
- She met with Mr. Stranieri and Mrs. Holyst-Grubbe with three other students to discuss the Student Dress Code.

e. Summer School 2015 Report *(formerly Agenda Item 10.c.)*

Mr. David DeStefano gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2015 Summer School program and the 2015 Camp Invention program. He highlighted the following;

- Dates in July that the Summer School programs are held.
- Elementary, middle school and high school enrichment enrollment and courses.
- 100% of high school students were able to recover course credits.
- Growth of enrollment and success of the Summer School program over the years.
- Camp Invention site, dates and staff.
- Camp Invention enrollment, timeline, milestones and classes.
- Camp Invention Parent Survey.
- Special visit from Patsy Eldridge, Camp Invention Regional Development Manager.
- Use the Camp Invention \$600 stipend bonus that was awarded to the district to have a nurse on staff and/or start a Scholarship Account.

The Board members discussed various areas of the report. Mrs. Lombardi announced that she would like to sponsor an elementary child to attend Camp Invention so Mr. DeStefano could set-up a Scholarship Account.

8. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

a. Personnel Report

MOTION: by Mr. Derynoski, Mr. Oshana:

“Move to accept the Personnel Report, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

9. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mrs. Queen gave a report on the Facilities Advisory Committee that met on August 26, 2015. The Facilities Advisory Committee discussed a new gate added on the north end of the field by the Vocational-Agriculture building, advertising on school grounds and placement of

signs, viewing of sample signs, the Superintendent of Schools approval of signs, fundraising bricks, 10-year warranty on the Turf Field, and the Concession Stand.

Mr. Goralski and Mr. Connellan are pursuing a meeting with Mr. Riccio, Town Council Chair; Attorney Sciota, Town Attorney; and Mr. Brumback, Town Manager, to discuss and clarify the Facilities Advisory Committee's role in advising other Boards, not just the Town Council.

Discussion took place on the funds raised, the current balance, and the installation of the new gate and fencing. The Board of Education paid for the new gate from the "Repairs and Maintenance Account" for a nominal fee and the fence was funded in the original installation.

b. Construction Update

Mr. Romano reported that the construction is complete at both middle schools with some landscaping and punch list items to be addressed. The grand openings of both middle schools will be held on Sunday, September 13, 2015, 1:00 p.m. at Kennedy Middle School and 3:00 p.m. at DePaolo Middle School.

c. Enrollment Update

Mr. Connellan noted that elementary enrollment stabilized and he did not have any additional recommendations at this time regarding elementary class sizes. However, he recommended increasing a .6 FTE position to a .8 FTE in order to solve the problem of high enrollment at the high school in the Algebra I CP class section.

MOTION: by Mrs. Lombardi, seconded by Mrs. Queen:

"Move to approve a .2 FTE to increase the current .6 FTE Certified Position to a .8 FTE Certified Position."

Mrs. Johnson was concerned with the average class sizes in fourth grade at Derynoski with an average size of 24 students and the third grade at Flanders with an average size of 23 students because they are Title I schools and she felt that they needed additional staff in those classrooms. The Board members and administration discussed her concerns. Mr. Connellan stated that it was a disservice to paint an entire school or grade level as needing assistance because it is a Title I school and that they needed to look at the composition of the classes and grade level. At this point in time, they have a lot of information on the students and teachers are engaging in their initial benchmarking. Administrators in those buildings have not notified central office administration on any concern regarding those class sizes.

Mr. Goralski liked the new Average Class Sizes chart, which is a public document, along with the old grid for the Board of Education to work with when looking at funding budgetary items. If parents want greater detail regarding class sizes for their school, they can follow the chain of command and contact the school administration, then central office and, ultimately, the Board of Education.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS**a. 2014-2015 School Resource Officer Annual Report**

Mr. Connellan reported that the high school was transitioning to a new School Resource Officer this year and the officers were not able to attend tonight's meeting; however, if the Board members have any questions, he would get them to the Resource Officers and report back to the Board at the next meeting with their answers. Mr. Goralski thanked outgoing Resource Officer Mackenzie for the relationships he built with the students and his colleagues at the high school as well as being a role model. The new School Resource Officer is Officer Butler.

b. School Opening 2015-2016

Mr. Connellan noted that this information was covered earlier in the meeting.

c. Summer School 2015 (*Moved to Agenda Item #7.e.*)**d. Budget Assumptions and Priorities for 2016-2017**

MOTION: by Mrs. Queen, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move that the Board of Education adopt the Budget Assumptions and Priorities for the 2016-2017 school year, as presented.”

Mrs. Lombardi wanted to remind the public and town officials that as they prepare this document they are going forward with estimates under “Assumptions” and that they are creating this document nine months before the actual budget cycle ends and 20 months before implementation. There are variables that are moving targets for the Board. She noted that to support any increases, a level of detail is expected in terms of documentation versus blanket statements.

Under Assumptions, Mrs. Johnson requested that in the second bullet the word “legislation” be kept in the paragraph instead of deleted. The Board members agreed with her recommendation. Mr. Goralski and Mr. Derynoski agreed that this bullet was important because every year the state and federal financial support of education does not keep pace with increased mandates that are unfunded.

Mr. Goralski requested administration to share this document with the chairs of the other elected town boards once the Board passes the motion.

AMENDED MOTION: by Mrs. Queen, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move that the Board of Education adopt the Budget Assumptions and Priorities for the 2016-2017 school year, as amended.”

Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

e. Athletic Director Job Description ~ Second Reading

MOTION: by Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move to approve the job description for the position of Athletic Director, as recommended by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

f. Computer Teacher Job Description ~ Second Reading

MOTION: by Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mr. Derynoski:

“Move to approve the job description for the position of Computer Teacher, as recommended by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

g. Community Relations Policy ~ Second Reading

MOTION: by Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mrs. Carmody:

“Move to approve the draft Community Relations Policy #1325, Advertising and Promoting in the School System, as presented by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

Mrs. Queen reported that she presented this policy to the Facility Advisory Committee at their last meeting and that they questioned the language, *“Banners will become Town of Southington property upon placement within/upon facilities.”* A committee member questioned why it is not Board of Education property. She noted that Mr. Connellan answered that everything is Town of Southington property and that the Board of Education is the steward of that property.

Mr. Goralski questioned where they were allowing signs to be placed. Mr. Connellan indicated that the Facility Advisory Committee would like to have the signs placed across the home and visitors bleachers on the football field facing in towards the field. He noted that if it does not work, they can change it.

The Board members and administrators discussed at length the placement of advertising signage, replacement of damaged signs, identifying areas where advertising signs would be banned, denial of advertising signage, equity of advertising signage, digital advertising, and collaboration and cooperation.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Derynoski, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Lombardi, Mrs. Queen, Mr. Goralski. NO – Mr. Oshana. **Motion passed with seven in favor and one opposed.**

h. Participation in Athletics and Other Co-Curricular Activities ~ Second Reading

MOTION: by Mrs. Clark, seconded by Mr. Oshana:

“Move to approve the draft Policy #5133, Athletics and Other Co-Curricular Activities, as presented by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

The Board members noted that this policy was long overdue and affects all co-curricular activities, not just athletics. The impact of the consequences affects all students and is consistent, fair, and is spelled out so the students and parents would know what the result would be for unacceptable behavior.

The Board members and administration spoke at length regarding this policy including the wording in the policy (changing the word “may” to “will”) and whether the penalty would be enforceable depending on the time of year and the type of co-curricular activity. Mr. Connellan pointed out that in the revised handbooks the penalty for a suspension is 25% of the scheduled activity (games, meets, functions, matches, meetings, etc.) with the intent of treating every co-curricular area equally that is why they have the percentage in the revised handbooks versus the old handbook, which had 14-academic calendar days. He noted that the administration also has some discretion.

Mr. Goralski added that the only right that a student has is to an education and everything else is a privilege and that by taking the word “may” and making it “will” makes it clear. He noted that a very thorough review over the summer was done for the Southington High School Student Handbook and the Athletic Parent Handbook, which both now match the intent of this policy and are being clearly communicated for the first time in 12 years. He noted that they needed to start taking away privileges of students who embarrass the community with their behavior outside of school.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES ~ Mrs. Carmody, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Derynoski, Mrs. Lombardi, Mr. Oshana, Mrs. Queen, and Mr. Goralski. NO – Mrs. Johnson. **Motion carried with seven in favor and one opposed.**

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Mr. Oshana, seconded by Mrs. Clark:

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Blanchard

Recording Secretary