

*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](http://www.southingtonschools.org). These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education meeting.*

## **SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

**OCTOBER 10, 2019**

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The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education (Committee of the Whole-Operations) was held on Thursday, October 10, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut and an Executive Session was held at 6:30 p.m.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Board members present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Ms. Lisa Cammuso, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Brian Goralski, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen.

Administration present: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent.

#### **2. EXECUTIVE SESSION – STUDENT MATTERS, PERSONNEL UNAFFILIATED ATHLETIC DIRECTOR SEARCH AND EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS 2018-2019**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Derynoski, seconded by Mr. Brown:

**"Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Student Matters, Personnel (Unaffiliated Athletic Director) and Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools 2018-2019, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

*Mr. Goralski declared a recess of Executive Session at 7:00 p.m.*

#### **3. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION**

*Mr. Goralski, Chairperson, reconvened the Board of Education Regular Session at 7:06 p.m.*

Board members present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Ms. Lisa Cammuso, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Brian Goralski, Mr. Zaya Oshana and Mrs. Patricia Queen.

Administration present: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business & Finance, and Ms. Margaret Walsh, Director of Pupil Services.

Student representatives present were Trevor Messina, Amrit Kaur and Brett Sheldrick.

Mr. Goralski announced a change to the agenda because of the late arrival of people involved in the Celebration of Excellence. Once the people arrive, the Celebration of Excellence would begin.

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The student representatives led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE – Postponed to later in the meeting**

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ September 26, 2019**

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

**“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of September 26, 2019, as submitted.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**7. COMMUNICATIONS**

**a. Communications from Public**

There was no public communication.

**b. Communication from Board of Education Members**

Mrs. Queen addressed a meeting with the SMSAA (Southington Middle School Athletic Association) booster club that she attended with Mrs. DiNello. Discussed was improvement in recruiting more engaged volunteers, fundraisers, communication between SMSAA and administration, funding expectations and timelines (*Attachment #1*). Mrs. DiNello stated that most of the fundraising would start in late fall and early winter. Administration proposed changing the dates from expecting SMAA's full payment for winter coaches' salaries on November 1st and instead have a \$14,000 deposit made by SMSAA for November 1<sup>st</sup> with the balance of \$10,000 by February 15<sup>th</sup>. The \$24,000 would be in-hand prior to making the payment of the winter coaches' salaries. By April 1<sup>st</sup>, the SMSAA would fund the balance that they would need to get through the year for the spring coaches' salaries. Mrs. DiNello thought that it would be beneficial to the SMSAA to make two payments for winter coaching salaries. She added that another concern of the SMSAA was the interest in cheerleading because only Kennedy Middle School had a cheerleading team last year. Mrs. DiNello planned to meet with



the principals of the middle schools and invite anyone interested in participating in cheerleading so they could determine if it was something that they wanted to continue funding moving forward. The SMSAA was very appreciative that the Board contributed \$15,000 towards middle school sports this school year. The Board discussed deadlines, funding, sustainability and engaged parents.

Mr. Derynoski discussed the Apple Harvest Festival Parade and the participation by the schools including bands and floats.

Mr. Goralski gave a STEPS Advisory Committee meeting update and the continued relationship between the Boards along with the ABC Classrooms and Parent University and the partnership and collaboration with Youth Services for the children in the community. The Drug Task Force “Red Ribbon Rally” is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2019, 6:45 p.m.-8:00 p.m. on the Town Green with the keynote speaker Mr. Frank Pepe, Principal of Southington High School and Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools. No Board of Education members will be speaking. Anti-bullying Unity Day will be held on October 23 with STEPS representatives in the schools talking to students.

Mr. Goralski reported that STEPS had evolved into a drug prevention model and one of their focuses would be on drug misuse, rather than abuse. The new direction for drug awareness and prevention would be about drug misuse with prescription drugs a gateway to abuse. Mr. Goralski praised the Youth Advisory Council comprised of high school and middle school students who were bringing awareness to drug prevention. The National “Take Back Day” is on October 26, 2019, at Walmart from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., where drugs can be dropped off for disposal as well as the police department.

Mr. Goralski announced that the Zaya A. Oshana Elementary School dedication ceremony would be held on October 24, 2019 at the end of the school day.

Mr. Goralski announced that the Southington Education Foundation would be holding their Trivia Bee fundraiser on November 7, 2019.

### **c. Communication from Administration**

1. Feedback on Middle School Cross Country: Mr. Connellan read a letter that he received from the Kennedy Middle School Head Coach in Enfield, Connecticut praising Coaches Thomas Zenowitz, Richard Niro and Bill Lombardi for hosting the Middle School Distance Open at Camp Sloper on September 20, 2019 and the Southington High School student-athletes who volunteered their time to assist in running the meet.

2. Partnership and Collaboration with the Southington Public Library: Mr. Madancy explained that a couple of years ago, they started an effort to try to get all incoming Kindergarten students a library card at the Southington Public Library with the library staff going to the Open Houses at the schools to register students. He explained the e-Resource cards that are available to teachers, which are designed to be used in the classroom to provide access to all the library digital databases.

3. Bio-recycling at Southington Public Schools: Mrs. DiNello updated the Board on the organic recycling of collecting food waste at the high school and middle schools within the kitchens of the cafeteria. Last year, at Thalberg Elementary School, they began with the fourth and fifth graders providing the opportunity to start gathering the food waste at the school. Kennedy Middle School would like to roll-out that program with the students in their cafeteria.



Administration is working with HQ Dumpsters & Recycling to begin the process. HQ provides the barrels at no charge to start the collection. There is a curriculum component on informing students on how recycling works.

4. Supplemental Perkins Grants: Mrs. DiNello explained that through the work of teachers Bill Chisholm and Mary Lynne Osborn at the high school, they recently received \$25,000 for the Work-Based Learning Grant with the goal to improve the Southington High School Career and Technical Education (CTE) students' employment skills and preparing them for high-demand and highly-skilled jobs in hospitality and tourism. Mrs. DiNello announced that through the work of Teresa Brooks and Sandra Spinello at the high school, the district was awarded the Student Organized Statewide Improvement Grant in the amount of \$896 with the goal of increasing opportunities to students to gain real world application experience that would translate into content and skills they learn in the classroom and better prepare them for career and college. They will be purchasing a heat press to start making custom apparel for sale in the DECA program, a large Slushies' Machine for the store, display case, cameras, an Amazon Echo and teambuilding for DECA leadership.

5. Collaborations with Partner School Districts: Ms. Walsh reported that they continue to reach out and collaborate with other school districts. Mrs. Sonya Kunkel, Special Education Coordinator, will be presenting co-teaching sessions to staff of the Hamden Public Schools for two days and Southington Public Schools staff attended Professional Development sessions that Hamden held at no cost to the district. On November 5, Election Day, Southington's school psychologists and social workers will be attending Plainville Public Schools full-day training session on trauma-based counseling and working with students who experience trauma.

#### **d. Communications from Student Representatives**

Trevor Messina reported the following:

- The Apple Harvest Host Committee was comprised of students directly involved with the Apple Harvest Festival. This year, the Queen was Brianna Harris, First Runner-up was Morgan Duling and the Second Runner-up was Kate Hardy. He was a host and found it an amazing and rewarding experience.
- The Marching Band would be hosting the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Music of the Knight on October 19<sup>th</sup> with 15 bands participating.
- The first fall concert of the Orchestra and Symphonic Band would be scheduled for October 24, 2019.

Brett Sheldrick reported the following:

- The SAT was administered at Southington High School on October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- On October 17<sup>th</sup>, the Red Ribbon Rally will be held on the Town Green.
- Bread for Life is hosting a Soup Nite at Southington High School on October 16, 2019 from 4:30-7:30 p.m.

Amrit Kaur reported the following:

- Wednesday, October 16, would be a PSAT testing day for freshmen, sophomores and juniors. The seniors would have the day off.
- The first PTO meeting would be held at the high school at 6:00 p.m.
- NEASC would be visiting the high school on October 23 and 24, 2019.



Mr. Goralski called for a moment of silence in memory of Mr. Nicholas Tiscione who recently passed away and was a custodian in the school district for several years.

## 5. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

In Celebration of Excellence, DePaolo Middle School and Derynoski Elementary School were recognized by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Office of Veterans Affairs for their achievements and receiving the “Remembering Our Heroes: Teaching About Veterans School Recognition Program Award”. Mr. Steve Pintarich, a veteran, explained that a Southington Veterans Board of Education Committee was formed eight years ago, the partnership with the schools, and the many activities that they are involved in along with the veterans’ organizations that they support. He introduced Mr. Steve Armstrong from the State Board of Education Social Studies Department who reads all the applications and selects the schools, and Commissioner Thomas J. Saadi from the Department of Veterans Affairs, who presented to the schools “*The State of Connecticut and Department of Veterans Affairs Certificate of Distinction in Recognition of Excellence, the Second Annual Remembering Our Heroes and Teaching about Veterans Program*” Award.

Mr. Armstrong explained that every year they choose one person that they recognize individually. Commissioner Saadi announced that this year the “*Certificate of Distinction*” was being presented to Mr. Steve Pintarich, “*In Recognition of his Dedication and Commitment to Bringing the Lives and Stories of Veterans to Southington Students.*” Commissioner Saadi also presented a “Challenge Coin” to Mr. Pintarich.

Mr. Pintarich stated that it takes a team of veterans to do what they do in Southington and that he was proud to be a member of the team. He explained that the state and Office of Veterans Affairs awards only one elementary school, one middle school and one high school per community and that was why J. F. Kennedy Middle School was not recognized this year.

*Mr. Goralski called for a recess at 7:33 p.m.*

*Mr. Goralski reconvened the Regular Session at 7:47 p.m.*

## 8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### a. Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting – September 17, 2019

Mrs. Carmody reported that Jennifer Discenza, School Counseling Director, discussed the removal of class rank from transcripts. Ms. Chen Li, Mandarin teacher at the high school, shared the progress of students in the newly adopted Chinese language program. Mandarin is the only language spoken in the class with the students responding in Mandarin. Mr. Brown added that the students were speaking Mandarin and it was only three weeks into the school year. Mrs. Carmody reported that Ms. Amy Zappone, District Math Coordinator, updated the committee on district level mathematics work in the middle schools. Mrs. Evette Corujo-Aird, Special Education Coordinator, presented a draft for the recently developed STRIVE curriculum. The student’s classes will be individualized based on their IEP. The STRIVE class will replace the class previously known as Academic Support in a student’s schedule. The draft curriculum would be brought forward for formal adoption in the spring. Trevor Messina added that he has Academic Support and thought it was very beneficial that they were getting the extra half credit

for the class with graduation requirements increasing and that it was a very helpful environment to get work done.

## 9. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS

### a. Personnel Report

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

**“Move to approve the Personnel Report, as submitted.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

## 10. OLD BUSINESS

### a. Town Government Communications

Mr. Goralski gave an update on the Committee of the Chairs and thanked Mr. Palmieri for reigniting the committee and hoped that it would continue after elections. Mr. Goralski addressed budget workshops that the Board of Finance would like to hold in a different style where they do their work and share their goals and intentions and collaborate with the Board of Education instead of setting limits. Mr. Goralski stated that whoever replaces him as the chairperson of the Board of Education after the November election would find great value in that collaboration.

The Farm Heritage Committee hoped that a civic or school group would be able to use the Grosky Farm Stand this winter for selling Christmas trees and wreaths.

### b. Superintendent's Goals 2018-2019 Final Update

**MOTION:** by Mr. Baczewski, seconded by Mrs. Queen:

**“Move to accept the final update of the Superintendent's 2018-2019 goals.”**

Mrs. Queen praised the sustainable changes that would be happening and done with fidelity. Mrs. Carmody requested that the Superintendent's goals are shared with the community and put on the district's website. Mr. Goralski thanked Mr. Connellan for his leadership and meeting the goals. He noted that the Superintendent's Goals for 2019-2020 would come before the Board at a future meeting.

Mr. Goralski addressed the Farm Heritage Committee and the property on Pleasant Street with Mr. Dave Marchesani, teacher at SHS, who has a three-stage plan with the students building sheds on the farmland through a grant they received.

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

## 11. NEW BUSINESS

### a. Budget Assumptions & Priorities 2020-2021



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

**“Move that the Board of Education adopt the Budget Assumptions and Priorities for 2020-2021, as presented.”**

Mr. Goralski pointed out the new bullet under “Priorities” regarding the district’s commitment to social justice. Mrs. Queen stated that when the Southington Women for Progress sponsored a discussion on social justice at Derynoski Elementary School, the Board of Education Commissioner Miguel Cardona stated that the difficult conversations that Southington was having was a model for other school districts in the state. She commended Mr. Connellan for addressing this topic head-on and that he was making it a priority in the budget.

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**b. SAT/AP College Report**

Ms. Jennifer Discenza, Director of School Counseling, gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Advanced Placement (AP), UConn Early College Experience (ECE), Class of 2019 College Acceptance and graduation data. She noted that three years ago the School Counseling department was called “Guidance” and the name was changed to “School Counseling.” They are mirroring the college terminology and calling it now the “Student Support Center.” She discussed in detail the three-year comparison of the SAT School Data and that 188 students took additional SAT testing. The PSAT was now being administered to all ninth-grade students and that they were offering more opportunities to practice for the SAT. The counselors are strategizing with departments to link students to the Kahn Academy. She discussed the Limon System. Mr. Goralski requested Ms. Discenza to add the slide that was missing from the Board’s packet (District Performance History and the percentage of students at or above goal over four years) and for Linda Blanchard, Recording Secretary, to post it online in the Board packet.

There are 21 Advanced Placement courses offered at the high school. There were 316 students in 2019 that sat for 605 AP exams at St. Aloysius Church and the high school. She provided a five-year school summary. Last year, the state universities decided that they would take a score of 3 or more; previously it was a score of 4 or 5. She discussed the changes to Advanced Placement.

Ms. Discenza highlighted the credited courses offered for the UConn Early College Experience (ECE) and the growth in enrollment and courses. Last year, there were 123 students participating for UConn ECE credit. Southington is ahead of Hartford County and the District Reference Group (DRG) for the number of students and courses offered.

Ms. Discenza provided graduate data for the Class of 2019 and that in a survey, 84% of students reported that they were going on to post-secondary educational institutions. She discussed the growth in the Vocational/Technical School and the College & Career Fair, which in the past was called the College Fair. The students are provided choices and options for their post-secondary plans.

Ms. Discenza addressed new changes with the College Board, first generation college students, the NCAA presentation, Naviance and the Alumni Tracker. The Board members had many questions including AP burnout by students for taking too many AP courses for class rank,



Naviance and career paths for students starting in middle school, multiple intelligence inventory surveys, and the perception of students who believe that taking more rigorous classes would look better to the college admissions officers. Mr. Madancy noted GPA, weighting, grading and leveling is deterring students because of the rules that the colleges are applying to their admissions process that are forcing students to play the game. Also discussed was the cost to attend college, the different levels of the classes CP, CCP, Honors, and AP impacting the students' GPA and class rank.

Mrs. Queen announced that on October 24, the College Board Landscape Tool webinar was being offered at noon through CABA (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education), discussing what colleges are looking for when they are looking at student applications.

### c. Smarter Balanced Test Results Presentation

Mrs. Stephanie Lawlor, Language Arts Coordinator, and Mrs. Amy Zappone, Math Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the district-wide results of the Smarter Balanced Assessments, which described student achievement and growth of student learning as part of program evaluation and school, district, and state accountability systems. They highlighted and discussed in detail background information on the Summative Assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, defining Scale Scores and Achievement Levels, the results comparing Southington to state and DRG (District Reference Group) scores, growth and achievement data and the next steps in ELA and math.

Mrs. Lawlor addressed the Scale Scores and four achievement levels noting that Southington is outperforming the state average at every grade level. She discussed the ELA district performance history achievement bands over five years that are remaining level, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding in each grade level tracking "rough cohorts", average vertical scale scores, and Southington ranks 10<sup>th</sup> out of 24 districts in our DRG meeting or exceeding the benchmark in ELA.

Mrs. Amy Zappone addressed the areas that compose the math scores for Smarter Balanced and the four levels of achievement. Southington was above the state average levels in math. She discussed the math district performance history and achievement bands over five years, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding in each grade level tracking "rough cohorts", average vertical scale scores, and that Southington ranks 9<sup>th</sup> out of 24 districts in math in our DRG.

The coordinators highlighted the district growth over time in math and ELA, district high needs subgroup performance (English Learners, Student with Disabilities, Free/Reduced Lunch), growth data targets achieved for all learners, and growth rate. The coordinators emphasized that the Smarter Balanced is just one data point indicator. They use other forms of assessment to monitor student learning in real time.

The Board members addressed phonetics, high needs students and separating out the economic factor and the learning disability factor, 54.4% of Southington students at or above goal in math on the SAT and use of math after high school.

*Mr. Goralski called for a recess at 9:24 p.m. for the Board members and Mr. Connellan, Superintendent of Schools to go back into Executive. The Board members and Mr. Connellan reconvened Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.*



Mr. Goralski declared Executive Session ended at 11:00 p.m. and the Board returned to Regular Session.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Oshana, seconded by Mr. Brown:

**“Move to adjourn.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Linda Blanchard*  
Recording Secretary





# **Saving Middle School Sports and Activities**

SMSAA Update/Overview  
Oct. 10, 2019

## **Topics to Review**

- **An Update on Current State**
  - Volunteers and engagement levels are up; improved visibility and communication
- **Fundraising goals, plans and events have been determined and are underway**
  - One of our largest fundraisers is currently underway (Calendar sale)
  - A healthy mix of fundraising activities are scheduled, with chairs in place and planning well underway
- **Next Steps**
  - New revenue streams are being explored



## **Volunteerism and engagement are up from previous year**

- 4 open board positions were filled, three of which are new to the committee
- Team chair positions are filled
- Additional new volunteers engaged and contributing
- Better communication - at least early on - via our coaches and team chairs, and through partnerships with the schools, coaches and administrators

## **Our Plan**

### **Fundraising Goal and Plan Set and Underway For the Fall Season**

- Calendar sale is in flight
- Healthy participation on Team SMSAA Apple Harvest Road Race Team
- JFK/DePaolo volleyball game fundraiser in late Oct
- Additional commitments from outside organizations and companies
- Applications to grants submitted



## **Our Plan**

### **Fundraising Plan is Set and Underway**

- Additional Fundraisers Planned for Winter and Spring
  - Hoop it Up (early Dec )
  - SYBA Thanksgiving tournament partnership fundraising opportunity (November)
  - Vacation drawing (Winter)
  - Flavors of Southington (Early March)
  - Glow Golf tournament (May)
  - Continued grant applications and business outreach
  - Shack a Can events at local eateries

## **Next Steps**

### **New revenue streams are in the works and will be tested**

- Online fundraising opportunities (e.g. Amazon Smile)
- Promoting company match programs
- Restaurant nights
- Expanded grant application and business/civic organization outreach
- Determining spring athlete/student fundraiser at next meeting