

*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 on the video recording of the Board meeting, please contact the Superintendent of Schools. These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education meeting.*

## **SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

#### **REGULAR MEETING ~ Via Combined Video and Teleconference**

**JUNE 11, 2020 (Rev. 06-23-20)**

---

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education (Committee of the Whole – Operations) was held via combined video and teleconference on Thursday, June 11, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. with an Executive Session held prior at 6:30 p.m.

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

Mrs. Terri Carmody, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Board members present were Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. James Chrzanowski, Mrs. Missy Cipriano, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. David Falvo, and Mr. Zaya Oshana

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

#### **2. EXECUTIVE SESSION ~ SEA CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

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

**"Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Southington Education Association (SEA) Contract Negotiations, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

*Mrs. Carmody ended Executive Session at 6:40 p.m.*

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

*Mrs. Carmody reconvened the Board of Education Regular Session at 7:02 p.m.*

Roll Call of Board members present Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. James Chrzanowski, Mrs. Missy Cipriano, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. David Falvo, and Mr. Zaya Oshana.

Administrators present were Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Margaret Walsh, Director of Pupil Services (via

phone); Ms. Dianne Holst-Grubbe, SHS Assistant Principal; Ms. Leah Clark, SHS Assistant Principal; Ms. Jennifer Discenza, SHS Guidance Director; Mr. Steven Risser, Athletic Director.

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

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Trevor Messina led in reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE**

- a. CIAC Scholar Athletes**
- b. SHS Girls’ Gymnastics Team 2019-2020 CIAC State Open & Class Champions**
- c. Southington eCybermission Winners (JAD & JFK Schools)**
- d. 2020 Valedictorian, Salutatorian and Essayist**
- e. Trevor Messina, Student Board Representative**

For the Celebration of Excellence, the Board of Education recognized students for their excellence in the groups listed above (*Attachment #1*). The honorees were virtually present and had already received their Certificates of Excellence in advance of the meeting.

*The meeting was recessed at 7:47 p.m. and reconvened at 7:51 p.m.*

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

**“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of May 28, 2020, as submitted.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**7. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**

**a. Communications from Public**

There was no communication from the public.

**b. Communications from Board Members**

The Board members reported the following:

- On Friday, June 5, 2020, Mr. Brown participated in a CDC (Center for Disease Control) webinar and on Monday, June 8, 2020 he participated in a webinar with the State Board of Education Commissioner. His takeaway from the webinars was that the Board members had to make many challenging decisions between now and the reopening of school in the fall.
- Mr. Brown encouraged the public to read the letter recently released by the Social Justice Committee which has a link at the bottom of the letter that connects to some of the work that has already been done to date. He explained the difficult work that the

Social Justice Committee had worked on for the last 18 months such as analyzing curriculum, examining minority hiring practices, asking teachers and staff to self-evaluate their levels of bias, training teachers on how to teach about racism and how to handle student biased behaviors, review challenging articles and books, and partnering with **SERC (State Education Resource Center)** to address these issues. The Board will continue the difficult work on social justice.

- Mrs. Cipriano reported that DePaolo student, Maddie Landry, dropped off a check to Bread for Life recently from the proceeds of her Science Project that raised money. Madison Mathews, a Grade 8 DePaolo student, made masks and sold them. She bought groceries with the proceeds and delivered them to Bread for Life for students in need.
- Mrs. Cipriano noted that it was the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day and that her father-in-law honorably served his country. She thanked the veterans and their families who have sacrificed. She addressed the current racial tensions occurring in the United States and spoke from her heart as a dedicated, black woman serving the community along with the other Board members to ensure that students are heard and inequities addressed to make long lasting change for future generations. She addressed a quote from Nelson Mandela, *“No one is born hating another person because of the color of their skin, his background or his religious belief; it is a learned hate.”* Mrs. Cipriano thought if people can learn to hate, they can also learn to love.
- Mr. Oshana and Mr. Falvo both attended the virtual award ceremony for DePaolo Middle School students on Tuesday, June 9, 2020 and thanked Mr. Christopher Palmieri, Principal, for making it a special event.
- Mr. Derynoski thanked Trevor Messina, student representative, for his participation on the Board, his leadership and humor.
- Mr. Falvo stated that he graduated from Southington High School five years ago. He addressed his experiences as a minority Columbian/Latino student that included racism, bullying, name calling, and homophobia by some misguided individuals. He thanked Mr. Connellan and Mr. Madancy for the diversity and equity training of the staff and the Social Justice Coalition. He noted that it was PRIDE month and addressed the LBGTQ students to never be ashamed of their sexuality and gender and to embrace it. He stated that the Board members were their allies and through the power of education they could achieve a more equitable future for all.
- Mr. Baczewski stated that he was proud to be serving with all the Board members. He addressed the current racial climate since the death of Mr. George Floyd in Minnesota and that it only takes one person to intervene to change outcomes. He thought that parents should teach and empower their children to speak up to stop bullying behavior, to take an active role as an upstander, not a bystander.

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

Mr. Connellan announced that the final payment applications for the DePaolo and Kennedy Middle School construction projects had been accepted by the state.

Administration reported on the following:

1. Coalition for Social Justice Statement: Mr. Connellan thanked the Board members for their comments regarding the issues currently confronting society. He read a prepared statement (*Attachment #2*) and spoke about the Civil Rights Movement era of the 1960s that he experienced when he was a youth. He thought society would have come farther by now and was discouraged that it has not since it has been 52 years since Dr. Martin Luther King was

assassinated. He addressed what the school district has accomplished, and the steps taken to date. Mr. Connellan stated that to effect change, people should vote. He acknowledged that the Board needed to put together a systematic approach to dealing with the issues that they are faced with. He received eight emails within the last three weeks that were form letters and noted that form letters are not as effective as responding personally and emotionally. Mr. Connellan spoke at length regarding Social Justice. He noted that Mr. Madancy had done a tremendous amount of work and was an incredible force around the work that has been put forth by the Social Justice Coalition. Mr. Madancy stated that emotion creates energy but when emotion subsides, so does energy and he hoped that the energy would continue around this issue so lasting impact and change occurs.

2. Final Day for Students: Mr. Connellan stated that the last day of school was scheduled for Monday, June 15, 2020, the 180<sup>th</sup> day of school.

3. Class of 2020 Motorcade: Mr. Connellan announced that on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 starting at 6:30 p.m. there would be a motorcade for the graduating class. Mr. Frank Pepe, SHS Principal addressed parents and students via a PSA (Public Service Announcement) on the SHS webpage to regarding details of the senior motorcade. Mr. Connellan thanked Town Manager, Mark Sciota, Police Chief Jack Daly, and Regional Health Director Shane Lockwood for their partnership on the motorcade. On June 16, 2020, families will arrive in their vehicles at their assigned times at the high school. No senior would be allowed to drive for safety purposes.

#### **d. Communication from Student Representatives**

Amrit Kaur reported that she talked to Mr. Pepe, SHS Principal, who recently had surgery and he stated that he would do his best to take part in the motorcade. The student representatives were still interviewing for a replacement for Trevor Messina and that by the next Board meeting they should have someone to introduce to the Board. She thanked Trevor for his leadership and support.

Brett Sheldrick also thanked Trevor for guiding the student body through the Coronavirus pandemic and wished him the best at UConn. He stated that no final exams were taken this year and that the students were looking forward to graduation in August.

Trevor Messina hoped that his generation would be a generation of change regarding the current social climate and that their future would be determined by what they do today. He noted that actions speak louder than words. He thought that they were not fighting for the rights of people, but for the respect of people. On behalf of the senior class, he thanked everybody involved in putting together the motorcade for the graduates.

### **8. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

#### **a. Personnel Report**

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

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

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

### **9. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Town Government Communications**

Mr. Connellan reported that he participated in the Board of Finance meeting on Wednesday, June 10, 2020. The Board of Education had requested to establish a Non-lapsing Account not to exceed 2% of the BOE operating budget for 2019-2020, which was the statutory limit. The Board of Finance agreed to that request. He thanked the Board of Finance for their support and for all the compliments and positive comments regarding the efforts of staff and administration and the dedication of the Board of Education for all the work that has been required during the public health emergency. Mr. Connellan expressed his concern about a cost they do not know about yet regarding the reopening of school and what they would be required to do. Mr. Connellan announced that they finally bought the stage curtain for the high school auditorium stage to replace the original 1989 curtain using Non-lapsing Account funds.

**b. Distance Learning Final Update**

Mr. Madancy thanked all school employees for a heroic effort the final three months of school in doing everything that they could to benefit the students. He thanked Mr. Connellan for being calm and steady, which is needed in a leader during a time of crisis.

Mr. Madancy stated that the following curriculum units were a second reading that were left off the last Board of Education meeting agenda and required motions. They were previously discussed two meetings ago as a first read.

**c. Science Curriculum Units for Grades 3, 4, 8 Earth Science and Biology – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Cipriano:

**“Move to approve the Science Curriculum Units for Grades 3, 4, 8 Earth Science, and Biology, as recommended by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**d. ELA K-2 Phonics Units of Study – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Cipriano:

**“Move to approve the ELA K-2 Phonics Units of Study, as recommended by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**e. SHS MUSH Curriculum – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Cipriano:

**“Move to approve the SHS Modern U.S. History (MUSH) Curriculum, as recommended by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**f. Introduction to Piano, Ukulele and Guitar – Second Reading**

**MOTION:** by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mrs. Cipriano:

**“Move to approve the SHS Introduction to Piano, Ukulele and Guitar Curriculum, as recommended by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**10. NEW BUSINESS****a. Athletic Feasibility Study**

Mr. Derynoski stated that he read all the proposals, which covered a wide variety of items such as soil sampling and questioned why they would do soil sampling when it had nothing to do with Title IX Equal Opportunities. Mr. Connellan stated that they were trying to address the concerns that were raised and to do that they needed to take a holistic view of the facilities because of a ripple effect. There would be different phases. The soil samplings would be something that they would have to do later. A major influence is the softball field. The money is in the Capital Improvement Plan to work on the softball field. The Feasibility Study takes everything into account. Mr. Derynoski noted that there were three proposals and he was not in favor of spending money just for the sake of spending it. He would like to spend money to satisfy the needs that they currently had and did not think it was necessary to do soil sampling. Mr. Connellan thought that it had to be done within the scope of a comprehensive plan for improvements. The bottom line that they would be spending was not more than \$30,000. Mr. Connellan explained in detail the funding and study. Mr. Derynoski thought the focus should be on the Title IX issue. Mr. Brown questioned that once the study was finished if they could pick parts of it to do over time. Mr. Connellan spoke at length about the various fields and the disparities that needed to be addressed from the report from the State Department of Education after a Civil Rights Facility Review regarding the softball field.

Mr. Baczewski questioned if there were changes being made to the softball field that would affect spacing to the whole athletic complex. Mr. Risser, Athletic Director, acknowledged that a lot of this was long-term Capital Planning. When the Turf Field was installed in 2012, no other improvements had been made in the surrounding facilities since then. Softball was the first field that needed to be addressed because of Title IX. The first phase would encompass softball and then look at everything else on the campus. Mr. Risser spoke in detail about the proposals which 1) evaluate where they are; 2) assess what needs to be done; and 3) help build a capital plan on how to lay things out over the years because they were not going to do it all at once. They want to have a plan instead of just patching things. He noted that they did not need to do soil samplings because the town could do that; however, that was included as part of a comprehensive proposal. They would not get a full schematic until Phase II.

Mrs. Clark explained that when the Turf Field was done and the facilities renovated, there was no plan. Things were done without consulting the people involved. She thought that it was in the best interest of the taxpayers to have a plan in place. She noted that the track should have been eight lanes when it was renovated. Mr. Derynoski explained why they could not add more lanes on the track at that time.

Mr. Derynoski thought that this Feasibility Study should have gone before the BOE Finance Committee to review and then brought before the full Board. Mr. Connellan acknowledged that because of timing, administration brought it directly to the Board and that was why he provided the full proposals to all Board members.

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

**“Move that the Board of Education waive the bid process and authorize the Superintendent of Schools in collaboration with the Director of Operations, the Athletic Director and the High School Principal to select a provider for the Athletic Feasibility Study and enter into a contract to perform the professional services identified in that contract in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.”**

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mr. Baczewski, Mr. Brown, Mr. Chrzanowski, Mrs. Cipriano, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Falvo, Mr. Oshana, Mrs. Carmody. NO – Mr. Derynoski.

**Motion passed with eight in favor and one opposed.**

**b. School Counselor Agriculture Science**

Mr. Connellan explained that the Agriculture Science and Technology Program is grant-funded and self-sustaining. The student tuitions are paid by surrounding towns, which goes to the town of Southington and is used on the revenue side. The School Counselor position would serve the varied and complex needs of Ag-Sci students in grades 9-12 in special education that require special accommodations. This would be a grant-funded position housed in the school counselor’s suite in the main office.

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

**“Move that the Board of Education create a 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent School Counselor position funded by the Agricultural Sciences and Technology Education (ASTE) Grant.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**c. CREC Teacher Residency Program**

Mr. Madancy explained that one of the goals was to diversify the teaching staff. It is challenging to recruit and hire school professionals of color in Connecticut where only approximately 8% of certified staff represent that segment of the workforce. This CREC (Capital Regional Education Council) Residency Program is unique and would be funded by the Open Choice Grant. There are two minority Paraeducators in-district who have bachelor’s degrees and would be called “Teachers in Residence”. They would start their course work during the summer and work side-by-side with a Master teacher all next school year and do their coursework in the evening into next summer and finish that experience as Certified Educators. They would be eligible for a teaching job in district upon completion. If Southington does not have a job available to them at the end of the program, CREC assured him that they would be glad to hire these candidates. Southington is one of four towns in Connecticut taking advantage of this program although all towns were offered this opportunity. There would be no cost to the school district. Mrs. Cipriano thought this was a great opportunity to start opening doors for

minorities that have degrees and questioned what Southington was going to do to continue that progression. Mr. Madancy explained in detail that Mrs. Michelle Passamano, Human Resources Manager, was involved in minority hiring, teacher recruitment and retention practices. This program was just another effort in addition to what was already started 18 months ago. Coalition members, including minorities, serve on hiring interview committees.

Mr. Derynoski questioned if the two Teachers in Residence would be classed as a teacher or a paraeducator. Mr. Madancy explained that they would be unaffiliated staff and resigning from their paraeducator positions. They would make the same rate of pay as they if were paraeducators, but for 12-months instead of the school year, which was approved by the paraeducator bargaining unit.

Mr. Falvo stated that he participated in a virtual minority teacher recruitment event, which involved various school districts throughout Connecticut. He noticed that Southington was not represented and questioned what Southington was doing regarding recruitment. He thought it would be good idea for Southington to host a job fair to recruit minority teachers and do something for the minority students to encourage and entice them to become teachers. Mr. Madancy explained that administration did attend several minority teacher recruitment events to which they are made aware. They had solicited names of minority teachers that they met at the Job Fairs and invited them to apply to vacancies in district personally. Many times, minority candidates have been advised not to put their ethnicity on resumes. Southington is putting statements on job postings that they are encouraging minority candidates to apply. Mr. Madancy explained that in the past there was a Chamber of Commerce program called, "Train for Tomorrow". This year, administration was starting to meet with the new Chamber of Commerce leadership to explore continuing the partnership in order to provide students job shadowing experiences for professions that students were interested in.

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

**"Move that the Board of Education approve two (2) 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent, 12-month Teacher Resident positions as described in the attached documentation funded by the Open Choice Grant at the rate of pay proposed by the Administration."**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**"Move to adjourn."**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Linda Blanchard*  
Recording Secretary



**ATTACHMENT #1**  
**SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2019-2020 AWARDS**  
**STUDENT NAME & AWARD**

**Sarah Meade - VALEDICTORIAN – Class of 2020 – Attending UConn**

**Zachary Kohli - SALUTATORIAN - Class of 2020 and Class of 2020 Historian - Attending George Washington University**

**Emily Swanson - ESSAYIST - Class of 2020 - Attending University of New Haven**

**Trevor Messina Outgoing SPS BOE Student Representative from 2018-2020 (Class of 2020) - Attending UConn-Music Education.**

**JFK Grade 6: Ananya Rajeev    JFK Grade 6: Isabella Rees    JFK Grade 6: Victoria Cascio**

**eCybermission Winners - 2nd Place in CT- The Green Girls - Designed recycling bin that could clean the plastic for the restaurants. Each student awarded \$500 Savings Bond by eCybermission a web-based STEM Competition. Teacher: Katie Soltys**

**JAD Grade 6: Ethan Hoffman    JAD Grade 6: Sean O'Sullivan    JAD Grade 6: Nelson Dong**

**eCybermission Winners - 1st Place in CT and Regional Finalists - Echo Saviors. Investigated sinkholes and designed solution running a pipe from areas of heavy runoff and pooling that would allow the weather to flow underground and away from areas that the water would pool underground with a PVC pipe cut in half lengthwise with holes in the bottom and cheesecloth over the top to assist with filtration. Each student awarded \$2,000 Savings Bond by eCybermission a web-based STEM Competition. Teacher: Toni-Ann Rock**

**Sarah Meade, SHS CIAC Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year - Girls' Swimming and Diving - Attending UConn**

**Jacob DelMonte, SHS CIAC Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year - Football and Baseball - Attending WPI and playing baseball**

**SHS Girls' Gymnastics Team -19-20 CIAC State Open Champion (1st time in SHS history) and Class L Champions**

**Katherine Drechsler - Grade 12**

**Elizabeth Beaulieu - Grade 11**

**Haley Derwin, Team Manager - Grade 11**

**Kaylin Leifert - Grade 11**

**Kelly Perrotti - Grade 11**

**Natalie Reeves - Grade 11**

**Kacie Fusco - Grade 10**

**Rylee LeClair - Grade 10**

**Katherine Beaulieu - Grade 9**

**Madison Beidler - Grade 9**

**Samantha Freyler - Grade 9**

**Tori Harrington - Grade 9**

**Taylor Kelly - Grade 9**

**Kelsey Lamson - Grade 9**

**Kelsey Salerno - Grade 9**

**Vanessa Stein - Grade 9**

**Cassidy Chamberland, SHS Gymnastics Coach and Marilyn Sporbert, Assistant Coach - The team also qualified for the New England Championship, which was cancelled due to the pandemic.**

**Attachment #2****Superintendent's Statement – BOE Meeting 6-11-20**

Since the incident that resulted in the death of George Floyd, we have all witnessed an upwelling of emotion that highlighted the frustration and fears and sense of injustice that many in our communities feel. Mr. Sciota and I issued a joint statement on behalf of our community condemning racism and violence in all forms. The Southington Public Schools Coalition for Social Justice issued a statement this past week and provided resources and context for our work. We have received communications from community members acknowledging some of the actions in which the schools have engaged to address these issues and urging additional actions. The actions mentioned in the emails are just a small fraction of many learning activities focused on diversity and cultural sensitivity that have been provided to Southington Public School students over the past three years. I am sure that many in our community are not aware of this work with students, but it is ongoing.

On a larger scale, the District initiated actions to create the systems within the schools that will lead to fundamental changes. If you have not had the opportunity, please take a few minutes to read the statement from the Southington Public Schools Coalition for Social Justice that was sent out to all families, staff members and Board of Education members this past week. Within the document are links to a variety of resources that the Coalition has shared. At the end of the document is a link to an action plan produced by the Coalition. Many of the goals and actions are in the initial implementation stages. Professional learning opportunities for staff are key ingredients of this plan. This fall approximately eighty educators volunteered to become members of School-Based Equity Leadership Teams. The intent was and is to develop a system within the District that will be sustainable over time. The elementary cohort engaged in a series of professional learning activities and was on the verge of implementing training in their own schools with their colleagues when the pandemic interfered with those plans. The secondary cohort was scheduled for the same professional learning activities, but of course those plans were put on hold as well. These initiatives will begin again as soon as schools return to a somewhat normal schedule.

Throughout, we have worked collaboratively with our partners at the State Education Resource Center and the Capital Region Education Council. The collective members that comprise the Coalition have engaged in professional and personal learning opportunities together for the past year and one half. The intent all along has been to build systemically to insure sustainable actions and change. One shot workshops or presentations or assemblies might sound great on the surface, but to produce real change the infrastructure must be in place that supports that change. That does not happen instantaneously, but rather with diligence and actions that are intentional, it grows over time. The members of the Coalition believe that the result of our collective actions will be systemic in nature and will promote real and long-lasting change. Our actions will speak louder than our words.

Please feel free to reach out to any member of the Coalition for additional information or dialogue. Thank you.