

*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 13, 2022**

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The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education (Committee of the Whole - Operations) was held on Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. as a public meeting in the John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut with an Executive Session preceding at 6:30 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Colleen Clark, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Board members present: Mrs. Dawn Anastasio, Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Sean Carson (*arrived 6:38 p.m.*), Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Zaya Oshana. Absent were Mr. Jasper Williams and Mr. James Chrzanowski.

Cabinet administrators present: Mr. Steven Madancy, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent.

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Unaffiliated Compensation-Tutors and Student Matters**

**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 Unaffiliated Compensation-Tutors and Student Matters, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

*Mrs. Clark ended Executive Session at 6:41 p.m.*

*The Regular Board Meeting was reconvened at 7:03 p.m.*

**3. RECONVENE MEETING – REGULAR SESSION**

Board members present: Mrs. Dawn Anastasio, Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Sean Carson, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Zaya Oshana, and Mr. Jasper Williams. Absent was Mr. James Chrzanowski.

Cabinet administrators present: Mr. Steven Madancy, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent; and Mrs. Jennifer Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance.

Student Representatives present were Angelina Micacci, Uptej Singh, and Ryan Ogren.

#### **4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The student representatives led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Clark called for a moment of silence in memory of the following:

- Theresa O'Connor who passed away on September 22, 2022. She was a teacher at Southington High School and Yearbook Advisor for many years. She retired in 2011. She was also a member and former Chair of the Southington Library Board.
- Sgt. Dustin DeMonte and Officer Alex Hamzy from the Bristol Police Department who lost their lives that morning (10-13-22) in the line of duty and for Officer Alec Iurato, who was home recovering.

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

**“Move to add Agenda Item 10.b ‘Student Expulsion #2021-2022-24’ to the agenda.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

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

**“Move to add Agenda Item 10.c ‘Unaffiliated Compensation for Tutors’ to the agenda.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

#### **5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 22, 2022**

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

**“Move to approve the Regular Board of Education Minutes of September 22, 2022, as submitted.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

#### **6. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **a. Communications from Student Board Representatives**

Uptej Singh reported on SHS activities including Soup Nite; Fall Concert; 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade presentation by Dan Blanchard, an award-winning author, speaker, and educator, who spoke on overcoming obstacles in school; SHS students and clubs took part in the Apple Harvest Festival two weekends in October volunteering and marching in the parade.

Ryan Ogren reported that the Blue Knights Marching Band placed first in their division and will be hosting the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Music of the Knight Band Competition on October 22. He gave a detailed update on the SHS Fall Athletic programs: Girls Swim & Dive Team, Girls Volleyball, Field Hockey, Girls Soccer, Boys Soccer, and the Blue Knights Football Team that was rated #1 in the state.

Angelina Micacci reported on DePaolo (JAD) and Kennedy (JFK) Middle School activities. DePaolo: Over 300 students volunteered at the JAD Alex's Lemonade Stand Booth at the Apple Harvest Festival raising over \$14,000 for pediatric cancer research; the Yellow Team took a field trip to LEAF (Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm) for team building activities; Grade 7 Spanish students created and sent decorative butterflies to Mexico in conjunction with a program titled 'Journey North'; the Leadership Program began this week with students volunteering to assist at the Calendar House during lunch. Kennedy: Diversity Training Consultants Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson visited the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade classrooms encouraging students to listen, observe, and ask questions to get to know those around them with the focus on immigration; the First Advisory Lesson starts tomorrow with students developing Advisory Group Charters; Clubs are busy with afterschool activities; the color guard and marching band took part in the Apple Harvest Festival Parade and received the Best Middle School Band Award and will perform at the SHS Music of the Knight; JFK school Picture Day was October 17.

**b. Communications from Board Members**

Mrs. Anastasio stated that the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Red Ribbon Rally would be held on Tuesday, October 18 at 6:45 p.m. on the Town Green with the theme "Drug Free Looks Like Me". Assistant Superintendent Frank Pepe is the Keynote speaker.

Mr. Derynoski reported that the Technology Advisory Committee recently met and had established good partnerships between staff and community businesses. He noted that this would be the first Red Ribbon Rally in 31 years that he would miss attending due to another commitment.

**c. Communications from Administration**

Mr. Pepe introduced high school teachers Mrs. Sara Levinthal, Art teacher, and Mrs. Amy Corvi, Special Education ACHIEVE teacher, who gave a presentation on "Flash Friends Photography" for special education students. The presentation featured a video of unique photographs / artwork taken by talented students in the "Flash Friends Photography" program, which included self-portrait images. Mrs. Levinthal had sent a letter to Mr. Kazuto Ogawa, President and CEO of Canon Americas with her programming vision for "Flash Friends Photography" to open doors of communication between challenged students and their typical peers. Mr. Ogawa donated 15 gently used cameras to support the program. Mrs. Corvi noted that art is the reflection of the artist's thinking and imagination that cannot always be expressed in words.

**d. Communication from Public**

Eight (8) community members spoke (*Attachment #1 - only 5 signed in the laptop to speak*) on the topics of Critical Race Theory (CRT), curriculum, and the controversial worksheet from the University of Arizona on "*Vocabulary for Conversations about Race, Gender, Equality and Inclusivity*" that was distributed to students in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade high school English class on the first day of school. Discussed were supporting students and parents who had alternative viewpoints, making one-sided statements, CCSU response to the SCSU faculty letter, indoctrination, parental rights, teaching of sensitive topics, genderism, trust, moral authority, politicizing issues, policy change with zero tolerance, college-level material, state statute Profile Report, mixed race households, 2006 Garcetti v. Ceballos Supreme Court decision on First

Amendment free speech by government employees, thanking the Board and teachers for the “Flash Friends Photography” program for challenged students.

The YouTube video of the meeting is posted on both the Board of Education and Town of Southington websites for detailed information.

**7. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no Committee Reports.

**8. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

**a. Personnel Report**

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

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

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Town Government Communications**

There was no Town Government Communications to report.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Special Education Tuition – Follow-up**

Mr. Madancy stated that this was a follow-up to the Special Education Audit Report at the last Board meeting on comparison costs between in-district programs vs. out-of-district placement (*Attachment #2*). He explained the in-district programs currently provided for 105 students who would otherwise be outplaced. He addressed related services (i.e., OT/PT, speech, social worker, psychologist, etc.), which was a challenge to quantify, the program names, number of students in each program, and an analysis for the costs including transportation, total compensation packages for teachers, paraeducators and ABA Therapists (salaries, social security, Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS), and health insurance) compared to the tuition and transportation costs to send the students out-of-district. He thanked the Special Education Department, Payroll and Human Resources for their help in compiling this information. The final analysis was a total of \$13,402,709 for out-of-district costs vs. \$5,322,557 for in-district costs for an annual savings to Southington of \$8,080,152.

Mr. Oshana stated that these in-district programs have been in place for years and has amounted to a substantial cost savings to the town over the years. Mr. Baczewski noted that during the budget season this savings should be pointed out how the Board has been fiscally responsible. He was happy that these programs were able to keep the students in Southington and part of the schools and community. Mr. Derynoski noted that 25 years ago, when the Board tried to keep the special needs students in Southington, there was unbelievable pushback from the other Town Boards. The Town Boards need to be reminded of the savings in outplaced students

when they look at the in-district special education budget costs. He agreed that the students belong in town. Mr. Derynoski questioned MERS and the percentage of 18%. Mr. Madancy explained that it is set by the retirement system in January and the school district does not have any input. Mrs. Carmody and Mr. Derynoski praised the Special Education Department and their programs. Mr. Madancy pointed out that for budgeting purposes the staff Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) are not new staff requested or approved over the course of the year due to reallocation or attrition that was made. Existing staff is used without staff being added when staffing needs arise.

**b. Student Expulsion**

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

**“Move to expel Student #2021-2022-24, as stipulated by the administration.”**

**Motion carried by voice vote with Mr. Williams abstaining.**

**c. Unaffiliated Compensation – Tutors**

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

**“Move to adjust compensation for tutors from \$21.77 to \$25.00 per hour.”**

**Motion carried by voice vote with Mr. Carson and Mr. Williams abstaining.**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**“Move to adjourn.”**

**Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Blanchard*

Recording Secretary

**ATTACHMENT #1**  
**Public Communications Speakers**  
**October 13, 2022**

10/13/2022 18:43:14	Patty Tavalozzi	99 Westbrook Rd Plantsville	CRT
10/13/2022 18:45:30	Matthew Nowack	201 Berlin Ave	Critical Race Theory
10/13/2022 18:59:41	tyler young	48 berkley ave	curriculum
10/13/2022 19:00:30	Susan Zabohonski	28 Werking St	CUrriculum
10/13/2022 19:03:31	michael kryzanski	27 hitching post drive	controversial high school english teacher handout

Emily ?	120 Spring Hill Road
Kyle ?	269 River Street
Patrick ?	176 North Main Street

**ATTACHMENT #2**

**SPECIAL EDUCATION TUITION COMPARISON**

**October 13, 2022**



Special Education In District vs Outplaced Program Cost Analysis\_.pdf