

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. These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education meeting.

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

REGULAR MEETING

MAY 24, 2018

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, May 24, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room, 200 North Main Street, Southington, Connecticut and an Executive Session scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

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

Administration present: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent; and Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION ~ STUDENT AND PERSONNEL MATTERS

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 and Personnel Matters, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Goralski declared Executive Session ended at 6:55 p.m.

3. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Goralski reconvened the Board of Education Regular Session at 7:00 p.m.

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

Administration present: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent; and Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business and Finance.

Student Representatives present were Bianca Spataro, Joseph Martin and Sean Young.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The student representatives led in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Goralski called for a moment of silence in memory of: 1) Beverly Tooley who recently passed away. She was hired in May 1970 as a teacher aide at Milldale School and retired as a Paraprofessional at Plantsville School in 1997. 2) The Santa Fe, Texas victims and community for the recent school shooting and, 3) Memorial Day on May 28, 2018 honoring deceased veterans.

5. CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

In Celebration of Excellence, the Southington High School FIRST Robotics Team 195 was recognized as the Robotics Global Champions, Curie Division Champions, New England District Champions (four consecutive years) and World Championship-Einstein Field fourth place out of 600 teams. Mr. Brian Stranieri, Principal of Southington High School introduced the advisors Dr. Gino Brino, Mrs. Sandy Brino, and Mr. Ed Barry along with Team 195. Mrs. Brino summarized the accomplishments of the team including the team’s sportsmanship and helping other teams at competitions. Three (3) students comprised the “Presentation Team” and spoke to a PowerPoint presentation on everything that Team 195 does both on and off the field. Andrew Bauer, Captain of FIRST Robotics Team 195, explained the demonstration of the 2018 robot “The Dark Knight” that was built to play the 2018 game “FIRST Power-Up!” Mr. Goralski presented the team with a Certificate of Excellence on behalf of the Board of Education.

Mr. Goralski called for a recess at 7:20 p.m.

Mr. Goralski reconvened regular session at 7:36 p.m.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ May 10, 2018

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

“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of May 10, 2018, as submitted.”

Motion carried by voice vote with Mr. Brown abstaining.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

There was no audience communication.

b. Communication from Board Members

Mr. Brown reported that the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) State Teacher Union held its annual representative assembly. The only New Business agenda item that they passed was Mr. Brown’s idea to create a taskforce to study the impact of poverty on children and propose legislation to alleviate poverty. Clearinghouse groups would be formed to collect ideas

and then a conference would be held next year to bring these groups together to implement the ideas and try to educate the public.

Mr. Baczewski spoke of how proud he was when he observed Southington students being respectful when the National Anthem was played.

Mr. Goralski announced that on June 6, 2018, J. F. Kennedy Middle School was holding a dedication of a statue in the courtyard to recognize a former teacher.

c. Communication from Administration

Administration reported on the following:

1. Technology: Mr. Connellan explained that last year the Technology Department collected laptops that were the property of the school district. Laptops that needed repair, which were under warranty, resulted in district savings. This year, the Mobile Device Management Plan tasks the technology analysts with auditing all devices in-house and have them repaired under warranty; saving the district money. Fiber installation at the high school will take place this summer. The computer terminals in the high school library will be relocated so they can be direct wired to make them more efficient and faster.
2. Scholarship Night: Mr. Connellan stated that Scholarship Night was held at the high school on May 17. Mr. Oshana pointed out that he had the honor of presenting the first annual scholarship honoring his father that went to a student furthering their studies in education.
3. Military Luncheon: Mr. Connellan reported that 17 Southington High School students entering the military were honored with a Military Luncheon on Tuesday, May 22, 2018.
4. Vision of a Graduate – Community Engagement: Mr. Madancy reported that on Monday, May 21, 18 people from the original community engagement group returned to look at the latest version of the “Vision of a Graduate” from input received throughout the year. The group gave feedback on the latest version that will be brought before the full Board in June for an endorsement.

Mr. Goralski stated that there were 18 Southington students entering the military recognized at the Military Luncheon including a student from Wilcox Tech, who is a twin brother of a Southington student being recognized and also entering the military. The Southington American Legion Veterans’ group presented all the students entering the military with a Military Honors Cord to be worn at graduation and a Military Coin Medallion.

d. Communications from Student Representatives:

Mr. Martin reported on the following:

- Southington High School Art Show was held in mid-May highlighting the talent of the high school students.
- Scholarship Night was held on May 17 with 286 scholarships presented by 159 organizations to 144 students and over \$250,000 awarded.
- Senior Prom was held on May 19.
- AP testing was completed this month.
- On Friday, May 18, the Project Lead the Way class participated in the ED Advanced Skills 21 Competition at the Oakdale Theater in Wallingford with the Southington teams winning both second and first place.

- Project Lead the Way Senior Night was held on Tuesday, May 22 in the high school auditorium with a Trade Fair that included all nine teams who then gave a presentation. Team Nine received a \$1,500 scholarship with each team member receiving \$375. Mr. Martin will be pursuing Civil Engineering in college.

Miss Spataro reported on the following:

- May 23 was the Club Activities Fair for eighth graders. The Interact Club received over 50 names of interested students.
- The Agriculture Science Banquet was held on May 23.
- May 24 is the Alta Banquet.
- Class Night is Thursday, May 31 in the high school cafeteria. The theme is, “A Sweet Goodbye.”
- Class Day is June 1 at High Meadows where there will be swimming, sports, food and games for the seniors.

Mr. Young reported on the following:

- June 6 is the Youth Honor Day luncheon.
- Southington students were recognized at the FOX 61 Student News Award ceremony on May 23.
- May 26 the UNICO Top 25 dinner will be held as well as the Italian Honor Society Induction.
- The AP Expo is Tuesday, June 12 with 200 displays of all Advanced Placement students.
- Wednesday, June 13 is the Unified Sports Banquet.
- The Top 10 Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 13.

Mr. Brown questioned the venue change for Class Night that the student representatives stated will be held in the high school cafeteria for the second year because it is cheaper than going to the Oakdale Theatre, which was done in the past.

Mr. Goralski stated that the two new student representatives would be introduced at the next Board of Education meeting in June.

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

“Move to add ‘Student Expulsion’ to the agenda as Item 9.f.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Town Government Communications

Mr. Goralski stated that the Town Council adopted the 2018-2019 budget and the Board of Finance voted not to increase the mill rate for 2018-2019. The State Legislators returned the \$2 million that Governor Malloy had taken away from Southington last year with the Town Council restoring some funds to the Board of Education. He thanked the Town Council for working with the Board of Education.

Mr. Goralski reported that the Farm Heritage Committee is moving forward with their plans for the land next to DePaolo Middle School. There will be a gate installed for DePaolo Middle School to have an easier access to the property. Milone and MacBroom is putting together a Master Plan for the Farm Heritage Committee for the property next to DePaolo and the Grosky Farm property at the end of East Street and Berlin Street. The Master Plan will be tied into the Vocational Agriculture program at the high school. Mr. Stranieri, SHS Principal, has a group of tech students and staff who will be renovating and improving the Grosky Farm Stand through donated funds.

b. Budget 2017-2018

Mrs. DiNello reported that since the last Board meeting the Board of Finance and Town Council approved two additional appropriations to the Board of Education operating budget in the amounts of \$213,640 and \$187,000. The third installment of the \$850,000 appropriation is anticipated in June. There is a shortfall of approximately \$74,000 with administration working to close that gap so they do not need to ask for an additional appropriation for the end of the year.

Mrs. Queen requested to have an ongoing agenda item under Old Business addressing the ongoing changes in the educational transformation work in the school district. Mr. Connellan suggested having it on the agenda for the second Board of Education meeting each month under Old Business or his Administrative Report. Mr. Goralski requested that administration decide what to name the agenda item and have it on the "Committee of the Whole ~ Instructions" agenda as recurring item under Old Business.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. Emotional Intelligence Presentation

Mr. Madancy introduced the five members of the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Committee, Mr. Stephen Bergin, Principal of Plantsville School; Ms. Kara Sievel, Literacy Specialist at Kennedy Middle School; Mrs. Sue Vitcavage, Assistant Principal at Kennedy Middle School; Mrs. Melissa Barbuto, Principal of Strong School, and Mr. Christopher Palmieri, Assistant Principal at DePaolo Middle School. The committee has been working on the logical entry point in the district and the timeline for implementation of EI district-wide. Emotional Intelligence is a tool to foster students to understand one another, the teacher to have an understanding of the students, and that they have a connection.

Mrs. Barbuto started by reading a quote from Maya Angelou, *"I have learned that people will forget what you said; people will forget what you did; but, people will never forget how you made them feel."*

The committee gave a PowerPoint presentation on Emotional Intelligence (Attachment #1) highlighting the following:

- How emotions influence everyday life for both students and teachers.
- What constitutes Emotional Intelligence, which is the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions that drive learning, decision-making, creativity, relationships and health.
- The RULER approach to social emotional learning.
- The Mood Meter on how a person is feeling.

- Qualities of Leaders and Teachers with higher emotional intelligence.
- Benefits the students achieve with higher emotional intelligence.
- Strengths of the Southington Public Schools Vision of the 21st Century Graduate with emotional intelligence.
- Action Plan, Train the Trainer, and Three-year Implementation Plan with the goal to include parents.
- DePaolo Middle School is one year behind Kennedy Middle School implementing EI with only staff trained at this point, not students.
- Plans for expansion.

The committee showed a video created by Mr. Rit Campbell, AV Technician, on “*I wish people knew about me...*”

The Board and administration spoke at length about Emotional Intelligence. Some areas discussed were morale, culture change, impact on students, lack of emotional intelligence by many people, plans for expansion to the high school, and attending the Yale Seedling Institute. Also discussed were partnering with another high school that has already implemented EI, mindfulness, techniques used, a charter, program metrics, creating an emotionally safe environment, and lack of emotional intelligence in the workplace. Home life and parent training, PTOs, Mood Meters in homes, social media, common sense, teaching empathy, getting parents engaged, assisting with bad parenting, and expanding out into the community were discussed.

Mr. Madancy announced that Ms. Kara Sievel applied for the fellowship program and partnered with the district’s grant writer this year applying for the program “Funds for Teachers.” In April, Ms. Sievel was notified that she would be attending the Mindfulness Clinic in Bali this summer with all expenses paid. The clinic is to aid in the creation of innovative training for teachers in effective social and emotional learning curriculum that focuses on reducing stress and building greater self-awareness to strengthen the social, emotional and academic needs of all students.

b. Appointment of SEA Negotiating Committee

Mr. Goralski named the following Board members to the Southington Education Association (SEA) teacher Negotiating Committee: Mrs. Queen, Mrs. Clark, Mr. Oshana and Miss Cammuso.

c. Policy and Regulation #3541 – Transportation ~ Second Reading

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

“Move to approve Policy and Regulation #3541 – Transportation as recommended by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

d. Policy #3324 – Preferential Bidding Procedures ~ Second Reading

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

“Move to approve Policy #3324 – Preferential Bidding Procedures, as recommended by the Policy and Personnel Committee.”

Mr. Oshana stated that the committee prepared this policy to align with the Town; however, he does not necessarily agree with the Town’s policy and it puts the Board of Education in an awkward position at times. Mr. Goralski stated that on behalf of the Board of Education, he did not like or support the Town ordinance. He did not want the policy to deter the administration from getting the right person and hoped that they continue to do the right thing.

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

e. 2018-2019 Operating Budget Reallocation / Adoption

Mr. Connellan explained that since the Board last saw a “draft” Reallocation Plan several things had occurred. The General Assembly and the Town Council, along with the ability to reduce the health insurance payment by \$670,000, restored funding to the budget. However, there are still reductions on the current Reallocation Plan of (\$988,800) to bring the Board of Education budget in balance with the Town Council approved budget. Mr. Connellan, Mr. Madancy and Mrs. DiNello spent many hours to come up with a budget that would have the least impact on the students in the classrooms and staff members. Last year, the school district lost 14 positions and this year it is the equivalent of six positions from retirements and changes for a total of 20 positions lost over two years. Elementary student enrollment is projected to increase by 200 students over the next eight years. Mr. Connellan thanked Mr. Mark Sciota, Town Manager, for the work that he did in helping the Board of Education 2017-2018 budget and the 2018-2019 budget. The Town Council approved the Board of Education budget at \$95,827,529 for 2018-2019.

Mrs. DiNello distributed a “draft” handout on the Proposed Reallocation Plan for the Board of Education Operating Budget 2018-2019 (Attachment #2). She discussed in detail reductions in salaries (administration, teachers, non-certified staff), benefits, purchased services, supplies and high school special education costs with an increase of \$157,268 as a placeholder in outplaced student tuitions and an increase of \$41,711 for contracted custodial services for a total reduction of (\$988,800) to balance the budget. In addition, the Board of Education had previously cut (\$495,000), which is a total reduction to the current level services budget of approximately \$1.5 million.

Mr. Derynoski stated that the Board did not receive the “Draft” Proposed Reallocation Plan until last night, which did not give him time to review it in detail. He was not comfortable voting on the Reallocation Plan at this time.

Mrs. Queen had a question regarding the supply line items and Mrs. DiNello addressed some misconceptions by the public and discussed in detail each supply item being reduced.

MOTION: By Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Baczewski:

“Move that the Board of Education adopt the 2018-2019 Operating Budget adjustments as presented by the administration.”

Mr. Goralski understood Mr. Derynoski’s concerns about receiving the Reallocation Plan last night; however, he wanted to vote on the budget to alleviate the angst that staff has felt.

Mrs. Queen clarified that the reductions in Self Insurance (Health Insurance) did not come about because of budget problems; they were made independently with fidelity. She has been on the Self Insurance Committee for three years and noted that the committee has been very conservative to make sure there was enough money in the fund. The movement to the High Deductible Health Plan by all the Board of Education and Town employees has been a big cost savings/avoidance, which was supported by the Health Insurance consultant.

ROLL CALL VOTE: YES – Mrs. Carmody, Mr. Brown, Mr. Baczewski, Miss Cammuso, Mr. Oshana, Mrs. Queen, Mr. Goralski. NO – Mr. Derynoski.

Motion carried with seven in favor and one nay.

f. Student Expulsion

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

“Move to expel Student 2017-2018-07 as stipulated by the Superintendent of Schools.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Blanchard
Recording Secretary