

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

SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

The regular meeting of the Southington Board of Education was held on Thursday, September 27, 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 was held at 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Brian Goralski, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Board members present: Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Robert Brown, Ms. Lisa Cammuso, Mrs. Colleen Clark (*arrived at 6:32 p.m.*), Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Brian Goralski, Mr. Zaya Oshana (*arrived at 6:40 p.m.*), and Mrs. Patricia Queen (*arrived at 6:31 p.m.*). Absent was Mr. Joseph Baczewski.

Administration present: Mr. Timothy Connellan, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Steven Madancy, Assistant Superintendent (*left executive session at 6:42 p.m.*) and Mrs. Sherri DiNello, Director of Business & Finance (*left executive session at 6:42 p.m.*).

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION ~ EVALUATION OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS 2017-2018 AND SEA NEGOTIATIONS

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 the evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools 2017-2018 and SEA (Southington Education Association) Negotiations, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session."

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Goralski declared Executive Session ended at 7:20 p.m.

3. RECONVENE MEETING ~ REGULAR SESSION

Mr. Goralski reconvened the Board of Education Regular Session at 7:29 p.m.

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

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

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 Rosemary Champagne who recently passed away. She was a community volunteer and role model and was selected Parade Marshal along with her husband and daughter for this year’s Apple Harvest Parade. Mr. Goralski also requested those present to keep the Perez family, from South End School, in their thoughts, who were recently in an automobile accident.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES ~ September 13, 2018

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

“Move to approve the regular Board of Education minutes of September 13, 2018, as submitted.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Summer School Update 2018

Mr. Madancy introduced Mr. David DeStefano, Summer School Director for the past seven years. The Enrichment program continues to grow each year and sustain itself through the revenue generated.

Mr. DeStefano gave a PowerPoint presentation and overview of the 2018 Summer School and Camp Invention programs. He explained the program highlights for elementary, middle school and high school enrichment including enrollment data; elementary schools that were represented by students; number of sessions and subject area; and comparison of this year’s enrollment versus last year 2017. The Southington Community Services provided financial assistance to eight (8) families totaling \$2,025 in coverage. Mr. DeStefano explained that the high school credit recovery enrollment numbers were low this year, which he attributed to student success during the school year. He reported that six (6) Cheshire High School students were enrolled in the high school credit recovery program. He discussed the high school enrollment and class data for credit recovery. Mr. DeStefano offered recommendations for the 2019 Summer School program for both enrichment and credit recovery courses. He gave credit to the staff who came up with great ideas and were very resourceful for the success of the enrichment programs.

Mr. DeStefano highlighted the 2018 Camp Invention program that had 118 participants, and had full enrollment for the past five years. It was held at Strong Elementary School. Four scholarships were offered totaling \$910 in tuition reduction.

b. ESY Update

Ms. Walsh reported that the Extended School Year (ESY) program provided services for 175 students with identified special needs for the summer of 2018. She highlighted some of the programs that were offered this summer. The programs were housed at Hatton and the high school for 16 days in July from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Some of the funding comes from Jump Start (formerly known as Head Start) with the rest of the funding from the district. She provided a glossary of the acronyms of the various programs and breakdown of student enrollment in each program. Ms. Walsh spoke to the staffing, tutoring, Camp Sloper, and Camp Rise programs and Farm Camp at Lewis Farms.

c. Smarter Balanced Test Results Presentation

The district Math Coordinator, Amy Zappone, and district English Language Arts Coordinator, Stephanie Lawlor, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Smarter Balanced Test Results from last year's academic year 2017-2018. This is an annual overview of the results of state assessment tests, which are state mandated and an outcome of "No Child Left Behind", which was then changed to "Race to the Top" and now is called the "Every Student Succeeds Act". It was pointed out that the teachers do not teach to the test.

The coordinators spoke in detail on the test results, scale scores, vertical scale scores, achievement levels, background information on the Summative Assessment for ELA and math, Rough Cohort data, and the next steps. They explained how Southington compared to the 22 districts in DRG "C" (District Reference Group) to which Southington belonged. The coordinators emphasized that the Smarter Balanced Assessment is one data point and other forms of assessment were used to monitor student learning in real time.

The Board members had numerous questions. Mr. Brown stated that he was not a fan of one-time state mandated tests that do not count. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of students take the test with the remainder of students opting out. It was pointed out that special education students have alternative forms of assessment for students with disabilities depending on the disability. The coordinators stated that the curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standard (CCSS), which aligns with this assessment. The alignment is there; however, it is about the implementation. Districts cannot teach to the test because the test is computer adaptive and every child sitting for the test has a different question.

Nicholas Mangene, student representative, stated that when he took the test in eighth grade, the students did not take it as seriously as the elementary students did and thought it was a time to get out of class. Mrs. Zappone stated that in some districts there are pep rallies for standardized testing and parent involvement depending on how different districts approach the testing. Bianca Spataro, student representative, noted that as the students get older, they see that the test is not going to affect their grade, so there is not as much effort put into it. Mr. Goralski stated that he thought state standardized testing was disrespectful and abusive towards children with special needs. Mr. Connellan added that the Smarter Balanced Assessments are federally

mandated, so the state must do it to be in compliance with the “Every Student Succeeds Act” and it is passed down to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to comply.

Trevor Messina, student representative, added that he is in special education and agreed that standardized testing and sitting in front of a computer for two hours can be like torture. However, Southington teachers modify testing for each special education student so they can succeed. He receives extended time and can go in a separate room to take a test. The special education teachers have done a very good job to try to accommodate around the different circumstances for each individual student and considers their situation. Mr. Goralski noted that the student representatives’ voices are more powerful than his words, especially at budget time.

Mrs. Zappone stated that she planned to continue to educate parents and community members regarding math instruction and new math. She announced that Mr. Greg Tang was returning to the district to give a math presentation on Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 5:30-6:30 p.m. at DePaolo Middle School.

d. Budget Assumptions / Priorities 2019-2020

Mr. Goralski stated that the Budget Assumptions and Priorities for 2019-2020 were a first read and would come before the next Board of Education meeting for action. Mrs. DiNello stated that she needed to get the 2019-2020 Budget Handbook to the administrators and would include the Budget Assumptions and Priorities as a draft document in the handbook. The Budget Assumptions and Priorities are the same as last year.

e. Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools 2017-2018

Mr. Goralski reported that the evaluation of the superintendent of schools was held in executive session and there would be a statement forthcoming from the Board. He stated that the Board was happy with the direction of the district. He thanked Mr. Connellan for his calm, focused, professional leadership that he provides for the district.

7. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications from Audience

There was no audience communication.

b. Communication from Board Members

Board members discussed the following:

- Mr. Brown reported that the Wall of Honor Committee had established April 9, 2019 for the ceremony with four people who will be receiving recognition along with seven veterans from World War II.
- Mr. Derynoski stated that the Technology Advisory Committee had to cancel their last meeting. They had started working on the Manufacturing and Trades Job Fair. In November, there will be a Career Fair at Kennedy Middle School with local manufacturers and trades people speaking to the seventh-grade students. The Board members agreed that there is a need for quality tradesmen.

- Mr. Goralski stated that he would be at Hatton Elementary School PTO meeting on Monday, October 1, to present facts on the pathway to Hatton.

c. Communication from Administration

Administration reported on the following:

1. Interagency School Safety Committee: Mr. Connellan reported that last week the committee met and that there will be some additional training for the school office staff and for paraeducators with the Southington Police Department for school safety. There will be a review of some plan changes. Every other year they are required to look at various types of hazards and a group of individuals including the Director of Health, the police and fire departments will go through that for each of the schools, which is part of the plan review. The resubmission for the Safety Plan review is November 1, which will come before the Board in Executive Session in October. Grant funds will be available; however, the RFP (Request for Proposals) is not out. The committee plans to apply for a grant this year.
2. PSAT / SAT October Administration: Mr. Madancy reported that there was a slight change of the early release day schedule for January so they could align the release days with the testing dates. The PSAT and SAT testing dates in October are established by the College Board and are not a date that the district gets to choose. He explained in detail the complexities and logics to accommodate for the testing. The administration's recommendation is to let the students leave for the day when the testing is complete, which is a $\frac{3}{4}$ day for the students and the seniors not go to school that test day. The student representatives agreed that it was a great idea to have the seniors not go to school that day.

Mr. Derynoski asked if there was an update on the status of the Title IX review from the state. Mr. Connellan stated that it was submitted to the state in the spring, as required, and they have yet not received a response from the state yet. Mr. Connellan thought that the district would be okay as long as they demonstrate progress was made on a number of the items. The biggest issue in that plan is still the softball field.

d. Communication from Students Representatives

Mr. Nick Mangene reported on the following:

- The DECA officers for 2018-2019 were inducted at their last meeting.
- The Southington High School Open House was successful with good attendance.

Miss Spataro reported on the following:

- Financial Aid Night was planned for Thursday, October 4 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Mr. Trevor Messina reported on the following:

- The PSAT test for grades 9, 10, and 11 would be held on Wednesday, October 10, which would be a half-day of school and seniors would not be attending school on that day.

8. ADJOURNMENT

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

“Move to adjourn.”

Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Blanchard
Recording Secretary