

**Somers Board of Education Meeting
Board of Education Chambers
May 10, 2021
7:00 PM**

Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM:

Present Board Members: Bruce Devlin, Anne Kirkpatrick, Jan Martin, Kate McLellan (arrived at 7:07 p.m.), Sarah Bollinger, Marissa Marks, Krista Cherry (left at 7:47 p.m.), David Palmer

Absent Board Members: Jeremy Anderson

Others: Brian Czapla, Bill Boutwell, Dina Senecal, Rob Wilson, Margot Martello, Jim Formica, Samantha Mira, Juliette Mira

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Devlin at 7:00 p.m. in the Mabelle B. Avery Board of Education meeting room.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

3.1. MBA CABA Leadership Awards

Rationale: Mrs. Margot Martello, Principal of Mabelle B. Avery Middle School, will present the MBA CABA Awards with the Board.

Discussion: Mrs. Margot Martello, MBA Principal, presented the CABA Student Leadership Award to Juliette Mira, 8th Grade student. Ms. Mira was nominated by her teachers who described her as one of the kindest students with whom they've had the pleasure of teaching. She was described as helpful, motivated, fully engaged, a hard worker, and one who helps others beyond her community. She loves sports and states her Catholic religion plays an important role in her life. Ms. Mira thanked the BOE for the opportunity.

A second CABA Leadership Award will be presented to another student at a time to be determined.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1. Draft Minutes of April 26, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

Rationale: Draft of Board April 26, 2021 minutes to review and approve.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the April 26, 2021 Draft Minutes passed with a motion by David Palmer and a second by Jan Martin. **7 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

5. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS

Discussion: Jim Formica of 48 Franklin Woods Dr. addressed the BOE with concerns of SHS ranking.

6. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Discussion: The BOE noted that the retirement of Bill Boutwell, Director of Business Services, will be a huge loss for the district and wished him the best in retirement for his years of service to SPS. Mr. Boutwell appreciated the opportunity.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by David Palmer and a second by Krista Cherry. **7 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

7.1. Warning of May 10, 2021 Warrant

Rationale: The Board will review and approve the Warrant of May 10, 2021 in the amount of \$356,519.80.

7.2. Retirement of Director of Business Services

Rationale: Mr. William Boutwell will be retiring on August 27, 2021 from Somers Public Schools after 23 years in his position.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1. CHOICE Program Update and Board Approval of 20 Slots

Rationale: CHOICE Open Slots for 2021-2022. Board to vote on approval of 20 Slots.

Discussion: Superintendent Czaplá stated that this is the annual approval for Hartford to participate in SPS. There has not been a change in the number of openings. Discussion ensued.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the CHOICE program open slots passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Jan Martin. **7 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

8.2. 1st Warning of DBS 4118.5 - Equipment - Staff Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 4118.5 - Equipment – Staff Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

Discussion: Chairman Devlin stated that any questions for the first warnings (agenda items 8.2-8.9) may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or another member of the Policy Committee.

8.3. 1st Warning of DBS 4118.51 - Employees Responsibility for Social Networking Websites

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 4118.51 – Employees Responsibility for Social Networking Websites. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.4. 1st Warning of DBS 5125.3 - Student Health/Medical Records.

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 5125.3 – Student Health/Medical Records. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.5. 1st Warning of DBS 6141.321- Instruction - Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 6141.321- Instruction - Student Telecommunications Acceptable Use Policy. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.6. 1st Warning of DBS - 6141.32 Appendix A - Standards for District and Schools - www sites hosted on School Property

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 6141.32 Appendix A - Standards for District and Schools - www sites hosted on School Property. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.7. 1st Warning of DBS 6141.322 - Instruction - Computers: Web Sites/Pages/Social Media

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 6141.322 – Instruction - Computers: Web Sites/Pages/Social Media. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.8. 1st Warning DBS - 9132 - BYLAWS of the Board - Standing Committees

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 9132 - BYLAWS of the Board - Standing Committees. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

8.9. 1st Warning of DBS 9326.1 - BYLAWS of the Board - Minutes

Rationale: The Board will review the 1st Warning of DBS 9326.1 - BYLAWS of the Board - Minutes. Policy Committee is available for any questions.

9. OLD BUSINESS**10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS****10.1. Budget Update for Third Quarter**

Rationale: Third Quarter Budget Updates including COVID-19 expenses.

Discussion: Bill Boutwell, Director of Business Services, provided the BOE with the third quarter budget update. There is a projected positive variance of around \$70,000 which is subject to change. The Covid grants (CRF and ESSER) have been expended. Discussion ensued.

10.2. Update on Diversity and Equity

Rationale: Mrs. Senecal will be present to discuss the attachment of Diversity and Equity.

Discussion: Dina Senecal, Director of Curriculum, updated the BOE on Diversity and Equity at SPS. Mrs. Senecal has worked with Superintendent Czapla to make a plan for Diversity and Equity. She has met with administrators once a month and has had monthly meetings with a volunteer group of teachers throughout the district.

Professional Development continues to center around cultural consciousness, cultural responsiveness, and cultural advocacy. The purpose of professional development is to increase the capacity and aid conversations outside of advisory lessons. There are a multitude of resources that have been provided including books, articles, links, and videos. Teachers will continue with and build upon a social-emotional learning program that ties in with diversity and equity: building trust, managing stress, advancing equity, and developing efficacy. There is a link on SPS' homepage for "Diversity & Equity in Education."

Curricula will continue to be reviewed and developed in order to ensure historical accuracy and materials that represent all people. Curricula will include a Social Justice Standards framework with four criteria: identity, diversity, justice, and action. There will not be a sweeping curriculum reform because parts of the curriculum do not need to change. Changes that transpire will take a number of years in order to be done accurately. Discussion ensued.

10.3. Technology Year-end Update

Rationale: Mr. Rob Wilson will be present to discuss technology.

Discussion: Rob Wilson, Director of Technology, updated the BOE on the technology status at SPS. Mr. Wilson thanked the BOE and Superintendent Czapla for their support in backing programs. He also thanked his IT team for all of their efforts in order to make technology at SPS successful.

Technology was able to be transferred to the full distance environment almost seamlessly this year. The students' exposure to technology over the years aided in this transition. The technology department accomplished numerous tasks this year: setting up classrooms to support online learning, training teachers on new equipment, training staff on Zoom/Google meetings, providing hot spots for families with little or no Internet connection, and utilizing livestreaming for sports and events just to name a few. On top of the pandemic-related support, the technology department worked on their "normal" projects. A few of these projects included:

- providing new Chromebooks at SHS this year
- assisting in redefining the SHS Media Center Lab
- providing equipment for the eSports team
- assisting in the setup of the track team's new timing system
- assisting in the setup of the SHS Turf field scoreboard

Superintendent Czapla commended Mr. Wilson and his IT team for their incredible efforts over the past year including all of their preparations during the summer months. He stated that they handled individual staff needs as well as supported staff throughout the school year. Discussion ensued among BOE members including the use of technology interns. The technology department does not have interns, but they want to institute a student help desk.

10.4. Superintendent Update

Rationale: The Superintendent will update the Board on current events.

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla stated that he and Bill Boutwell, Director of Business Services, attended the first ARP meeting. SPS is expecting an allocation of \$435,000. Superintendent Czapla stated that SPS is in good shape. The federal government requires a reentry plan to be in place, and SPS has had a plan since last August. This may need to be edited at times. The funds need to be expended by 2024. Superintendent Czapla stated that the best use of the money is to bring in staff on a temporary basis for high quality tutoring and reducing class sizes. The plan will be brought to the 6/28/21 BOE meeting for approval.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.1. CURRICULUM

Discussion: Kate McLellan stated that the committee met on 5/10/21 to discuss new novels and textbooks. They will be warned at the next BOE meeting.

11.2. POLICY

Discussion: Anne Kirkpatrick stated that the first warnings of policies were on the 5/10/21 BOE agenda. The next committee meeting will be held in two weeks with the time TBD.

11.3. SALARY & NEGOTIATION

Discussion: David Palmer stated that there will be an Executive Session at the end of the BOE meeting on 5/10/21. The committee met prior to the 5/10/21 BOE meeting, and nonaffiliated staff recommendations will be brought to the next meeting.

11.4. PLANNING

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla stated that the next meeting will be pushed off to the fall.

12. CREC UPDATE

Discussion: No report.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Rationale: The Board will go into Executive Session to discuss the tentative 2021-2024 SESA Contract agreement. The Board will invite the Superintendent and the Director of Business Services into Executive Session.

