

DRAFT

Somers Board of Education Meeting Minutes
October 29, 2018 7:00 PM
Board of Education Room

Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM

Present Board Members: Jan Martin, Sarah Bollinger, Barbara Capuano, Bruce Devlin, Rick Lees, Jeremy Anderson, Kate McLellan, Anne Kirkpatrick

Absent Board Members: David Palmer

Others: Bill Boutwell, Dr. Irene Zytka, Dr. Denise Messina, Edwin Genece, Donovan Ocasio

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT

Discussion: Somers High School representatives, Edwin Genece and Donovan Ocasio, updated the Board on SHS events. The Varsity Boys Soccer team won 5-2 on 10/18/18 and is currently ranked first in the State. Spirit week was hosted by Sophomores. The SHS Pops Concert will be held on Thursday, 11/1/18, and Friday, 11/2/18. Kylie Raymond won the XC State Championship. The Seniors are planning the semiformal. Many students are auditioning for the Eastern Regional Festival. The Interact Club is raising funds to supply the Somers Public Library with a telescope. The SHS French teacher, Mrs. Gustafson, has been welcomed as the new Assistant Principal. Ms. Meyers has spent her first week at SHS as the new French teacher. The NHS Induction Ceremony will be held at SHS on 11/5/18 and is welcoming 20 new members. Students Against Destructive Decisions finished their Ribbon Week last week where students pledged to be drug free.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1. Approval of Board's Minutes of October 15, 2018

Rationale: Approval of Board's Minutes of October 15, 2018

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the minutes of the 10/15/18 Board of Education Meeting passed with a motion by Barbara Capuano and a second by Jan Martin. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

5. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS

6. CORRESPONDENCE

7. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

Motion Passed: Motion to delete item 9.3 (1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 3511 – Contracts) passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Sarah Bollinger. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the whole consent agenda as presented passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Sarah Bollinger. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

8.1. Warrant of October 29, 2018

Rationale: Warrant of October 29, 2018 in the amount of \$200,467.64.

8.2. Resignation of Attendance Secretary at Somers High School

Rationale: Mrs. Rhonda Rawlinitis, Attendance Secretary at Somers High School, has put in her resignation letter with her last day being October 26, 2018.

8.3. 2nd Warning New Textbook - "Hidden Roots" by Joseph Bruchac - 8th Grade Language Arts

Rationale: 2nd Warning New Textbook - "Hidden Roots" by Joseph Bruchac - 8th Grade Language Arts. Board Curriculum Committee members will answer any questions.

8.4. 2nd Warning New Textbook - "How Navy SEAL's Lead and WIN" by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin - Academic and College English 12

Rationale: 2nd Warning New Textbook - "How Navy SEAL's Lead and WIN" by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin - Academic and College English 12. Board Curriculum Committee members will answer any questions.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Approval of 2019-20 Budget Process and Calendar

Rationale: Superintendent will present the 2019-20 Budget Process and Calendar to the Board.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the 2019-20 Budget Process and Calendar as presented but subject to change if needed passed with a motion by Jan Martin and a second by Jeremy Anderson. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

9.2. 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 3324.1 - Business Contracts

Rationale: 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 3324.1 - Business Contracts

Discussion: Questions may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or any member of the Policy Committee.

9.3. 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4112.1 Staff Contracts

Rationale: 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4112.1 Staff Contracts

Discussion: Questions may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or any member of the Policy Committee.

9.4. 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4112.2 Staff Certification

Rationale: 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4112.2 Staff Certification

Discussion: Questions may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or any member of the Policy Committee.

9.5. 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4113.2 Cert. Change of Status

Rationale: 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4113.2 Cert. Change of Status

Discussion: Questions may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or any member of the Policy Committee.

9.6. 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4115 - Personnel Certified - Evaluations

Rationale: 1st Warning of Somers Policy DBS 4115 - Personnel Certified – Evaluations

Discussion: Questions may be directed to Anne Kirkpatrick or any member of the Policy Committee.

10. OLD BUSINESS

11. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

11.1. Curriculum Report on Math

Rationale: Dr. Zytka will present to the Board the Curriculum Report on Math.

Discussion: Dr. Irene Zytka, Director of Curriculum, reported on the Math curriculum. SES and MBA are examining current math textbooks to purchase next year. SES continues to focus on the Math workshop model. Geometry at SHS is slated for new textbooks for the 2019-20 school year. SHS is also examining a new Math semester course for 2020-21. Dr. Zytka discussed a new IXL feature called Diagnostic which examines students' progress and recommends areas of practice. Dr. Zytka would like to include this new IXL feature during a PD day.

11.2. Curriculum Report on World Languages

Rationale: Dr. Zytka will present to the Board the Curriculum Report on World Languages.

Discussion: Dr. Irene Zytka, Director of Curriculum, updated the Board on the World Languages curriculum. The sixth grade World Language teacher transferred to SHS to fill the French position since C. Gustafson was appointed Assistant Principal at SHS. An experienced long-term substitute was hired to fill the sixth grade World Language position for the remainder of the year. Ms. Meyers completed the course curriculum, so the MBA transition should be smooth. Dr. Zytka will be examining the K-6 program and will update the BOE in the spring.

11.3. Forecast of Pupil Services Challenges

Rationale: Dr. Messina will present her report, "Forecast of Pupil Services Challenges," to the Board.

Discussion: Dr. Denise Messina, Director of Pupil Services, updated the BOE on the trends and forecast for Pupil Services. She explained that Pupil Services Personnel refers to counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists to provide assessment, diagnosis, and support access to public education. Dr. Messina first discussed the Somers Public Schools 504 Plan which is a law extending protection to individuals with disabilities not covered under IDEA. The general educators are obligated to provide reasonable accommodations. The Director of Pupil Services is the district's 504 coordinator. In each school building, the Principal is the 504 coordinator or designates a 504 coordinator. There has been a 74% increase in referral caseloads since 2015-16 (SES-41 students, MBA-35 students, SHS-32 students, Magnet-7 students). An increased caseload leads to increased demands on administration. The causes/trends leading to increased caseloads stem from expanded legal compliance guidance; increased referral rate from staff; increased referral rate from parents, pediatricians, therapists; and, increased eligibility due to mental health demands primarily from ADHD, ASD, and anxiety. There has been a 17% increase in anxiety disorder diagnosis by health care providers in the past ten years. She discussed various reasons and causes of increased anxiety as well as numerous anxiety disorders. Dr. Messina discussed the Pupil Services infrastructure within each school and who is designated as the 504 coordinator. SES carries the biggest demand with the highest population out of the three schools and only one counselor (504 coordinator), one school psychologist, and two administrators. She also explained how there is a big demand on the classroom teachers since it is the general educators' obligation to fulfill 504 accommodations. Dr. Messina reported that there has been a statewide increase in Special Ed/IEP's from 11.45% in 2008 to 14.5% in 2017 with SPS increasing by 3.9% over nine years. This rise is due to an increase in referral rate; a shift from "truancy" to school avoidance/anxiety; an increase in 603/DCF foster assignment, McKinney Vento identification, psychiatric hospitalization, EMPS/211 referrals; changes in identification of diagnoses; and, legal compliance guidance. There has been a shift in the way educators look at misbehavior. At SPS, there has been a 370% increase regarding ADD/ADHD/Anxiety over nine years, a 93% increase of Autism Spectrum Disorder over nine years, and a near 69% decrease in Emotional Disturbance over nine years. The total cost of Out of District/High Cost Tuition and Transportation in 2017-2018 was \$1,108,340 of which 25% was transportation. There are 117 students on 504 plans and 202 students with IEP's which equals 23% of the total student population as of October 2018. At least 1 in 5 students have been identified with a disability in Somers. Superintendent Czaplá stated that this is a national issue.

11.4. Somers Public Schools Organizational Chart

Rationale: The 2018-19 Somers Public Schools Organizational Chart is presented to the Board for review.

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla stated that the organizational chart was provided for informational purposes.

11.5. Superintendent's Update

Rationale: Superintendent will update the Board on recent events.

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla reported that he sent out an update on Friday and that there was no new information to report.

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

12.1. CURRICULUM

Discussion: No report.

12.2. POLICY

Discussion: Anne Kirkpatrick reported that the committee met prior to the Board of Education meeting on 10/29/18 and will have four policies to warn at the next BOE meeting. The next Policy Committee meeting will be held on 11/26/18 at 6:15 p.m.

12.3. SALARY & NEGOTIATION

Discussion: No report.

12.4. PLANNING

Discussion: Chairman Devlin reported that there will be a meeting next week.

13. OTHER

Discussion: Sarah Bollinger reported that she has heard of parents complaining about the weight of backpacks and if anything can be done to reduce the weight. Superintendent Czapla stated that SPS is attempting to reduce textbooks while utilizing more online resources.

Anne Kirkpatrick reminded the BOE of Election Day next week.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Passed: Motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. passed with a motion by Jan Martin and a second by Sarah Bollinger. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

Rick Lees, Board of Education Secretary Date

Shannin Burns, BOE Recording Secretary