

**Somers Board of Education Meeting
Board of Education Room
March 25, 2019
7:00 PM**

Attendance Taken at 7:01 PM:

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

Absent Board Members: Bruce Devlin

Others: Brian Czapla, Bill Boutwell, Dr. Irene Zytka, Rob Wilson, Donovan Ocasio

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Vice Chairman Palmer at 7:01 p.m. in the Mabelle B. Avery Board of Education meeting room.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT

Discussion: Donovan Ocasio, SHS Student Representative, updated the BOE on events. He reported that Juniors will be taking the SATs this Wednesday, 3/27/19. The AP History class is getting ready for their Washington D.C. trip. The third quarter is coming to an end, and the phone policy will begin in the fourth quarter. Last week, SHS celebrated March Madness Spirit Week and held a pep rally. SADD raised about \$50. Spring sports have begun with the first baseball game scheduled on Friday, 3/29/19. The Winter Sports Awards will be held on 4/1/19. The Drama Club performed "The Drowsy Chaperone," and they are excited to announce next year's show. Beta Club Induction will be held on 4/3/19. The All District Concert will be held on Wednesday, 3/27/19, with band and chorus from each school. The SHS Variety Show will be held on 4/27/19. Mrs. Gustafson is revamping the Advisory system to be more efficient and beneficial. It will include a new Board with student representatives to pitch ideas.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1. Draft of March 11, 2019 Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes of March 11, 2019.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve minutes from the 3/11/19 Board of Education meeting passed with a motion by Jan Martin and a second by Barbara Capuano.

8 Yeas - 0 Nays.

4.2. Draft Minutes of Public Hearing on March 11, 2019

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes of the Public Hearing on March 11, 2019.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve minutes from the 3/11/19 Public Hearing passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Barbara Capuano. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

5. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS**6. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS****7. CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the entire Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Jeremy Anderson and a second by Jan Martin. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

7.1. Warrant of March 25, 2019

Rationale: The Board is to review Warrant of March 25, 2019 in the amount of \$285,526.32 and give consent.

7.2. Resignation of Caroline Thompson, 5th Grade Teacher

Rationale: Ms. Caroline Thompson, a 5th grade teacher, has handed in her resignation for the end of this school year.

7.3. 2nd Warning of Somers DBS 5131.81 - Students Electronic Devices

Rationale: Board will ask Policy Committee any questions they have on 2nd Warning of Somers DBS 5131.81 - Students Electronic Devices.

7.4. 2nd Warning of Somers Policy DBS 9325.2 - Board ByLaws Meeting

Rationale: Board will ask Policy Committee if they have any questions on 2nd Warning of Somers Policy DBS 9325.2 - Board ByLaws Meeting.

7.5. 2nd Warning on Somers Policy DBS 4112 (4212) Personnel - Employment

Rationale: Board will ask Policy Committee if they have any questions on Somers Policy DBS 4112 (4212) Personnel - Employment.

7.6. 2nd Warning on Textbook for Somers High School English

Rationale: 2nd Warning on Textbook for Somers High School English. This is Grade 12 Academic English - "The Things They Carried."

8. NEW BUSINESS**8.1. Board to Approve Job Share for 4th Grade**

Rationale: Board will review the continuing Grade 4 Job Share program of Melissa Shannon and Nicole Dzicek for the 2019-2020 year.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve Grade 4 Job Share as presented passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Jan Martin. **8 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

10.1. Curriculum Report - PE and Music

Rationale: Dr. Irene Zytka will present the Board the Curriculum Report on PE and Music.

Discussion: Dr. Irene Zytka, Director of Curriculum, updated the BOE on the PE and Music curricula. There has not been a lot of change to the PE program; however, Sex Education has been added to the PE curriculum rather than presented by general education teachers. Mr. McCarthy is applying for a SEF Grant to fund heart rate monitors in order to instruct students on heart health. There is equipment at SES and SHS (weight room) that need to be updated. There was discussion regarding students learning the use of an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator).

Dr. Zytka reported that the Music Department has been busy. At SES, Kindergarten meets twice a week now. They held their Winter Concert. Dr. Zytka stated that Mr. Loftus has done an amazing job teaching the 4th and 5th grades ukuleles, and there has been an increasing number of students participating in chorus. MBA and SHS had a guest conductor, Dr. Robert Schwartz, visit and conduct the bands. MBA and SHS have also had successful concerts. At SHS, five students have been accepted into Eastern Regionals and two students have been accepted into the All State Festival. Mrs. Wolf has been accepted into the American Band College Master's program. The Honors Choir will be performing with the University of Connecticut's Chamber Ensemble on 4/5/19 at 7:30 p.m. at the Somers Congregational Church. No tickets are needed, and donations will be accepted at the door. At MBA, 6th grade chorus lessons were removed due to academic needs. Future plans include a long-term instrument replacement plan for MBA and SHS, and there has been discussion regarding additional staffing for MBA and SHS. At SES, there is a plan to add outdoor musical instruments to both playgrounds.

10.2. Annual Technology Report

Rationale: Mr. Rob Wilson will give the Board the annual report on Technology in the district.

Discussion: Mr. Rob Wilson, Director of Technology and Information Services, updated the BOE on technology within the District. Student data privacy is a paramount priority. He stated that Visitor Entrance Stations were added at each school where visitors are scanned and background checks are instantly obtained by scanning driver's licenses. It has been a prudent and reliable benefit which has been well received by office staff. He stated that the wired and wireless networks that were installed in 2014 are in good shape and meeting needs. SPS continues to have plenty of space regarding internet usage. Students in Kindergarten utilize an iPad cart; grades 1-3 use iPad Air 2; grades 4-8 are in their second year of using Chromebooks; and, grades 9-12 are in their third year of using

Chromebooks. Students will be receiving the same device moving forward. Teachers are all provided MacBooks. SHS and MBA teachers received new devices recently. SES teachers will receive new laptops by the end of the year. The support staff have been greatly affected. Their devices are roughly ten years old. This will be addressed next year. This has been the second year of self-insurance and has been working well. Online services for parents are on par from last year and include InfoSnap (online student registration), athletic registration, and an online payment system for the cafeteria. The focus of this year has been more behind the scenes in integrating a number of different databases into a primary source (Google or PowerSchool). It has been much more efficient for the staff. Out of the 2018 Improvement Plan goals, four have been or will be met this year including SES Teacher laptops, Chromebooks for the 4th and 5th grades, a new District website, and a new phone system. The goal that continues to be in transition is improving the Professional Development plan. The IT Department would like to link their Professional Development to the Curriculum Department's PD plans. The 2019 Project Goals include:

- Upgrading SHS Auditorium Lighting--this work will be done over the summer to include more energy efficient lighting. This project was part of the approved bond.
- New iPads at SES
- Internal Webfilter--this will give the District more control and allow devices to be filtered on and off campus.
- Student Device Monitoring Tool--this will give teachers the ability to monitor and control the devices while in their classroom.
- New Laptops for Support Staff
- Electronic Report Cards

Mr. Wilson showed a picture of ways in which students utilize technology in the classrooms. He thanked the BOE and the superintendent for their continued support.

10.3. 2017-2018 Next Generation Accountability Results

Rationale: Mr. Czapla will go over the results with the Board.

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla updated the BOE on the 2017-2018 Next Generation Accountability results. This is a tool that was implemented in March 2016. There are a set of indicators that analyze how a school prepares students for future success. This is a necessary tool to satisfy state and federal requirements. Academic achievement and academic growth are not where the superintendent wants them to be. There are plans in place to work on academic performance. Chronic absenteeism is a major concern. This may be in direct relation to mental health issues. Dr. Denise Messina, Director of Pupil Services, will address this issue with the BOE this spring. Increasing emotional interventions may alleviate chronic absenteeism as well as communication with parents and enforcing loss of credit at SHS. Physical fitness is also not on

target. Graduation and Arts Access are on track. This is the first time SPS has seen this report. It will be updated every year.

10.4. Superintendent Update

Rationale: Superintendent Update
2019-2020 Budget Update

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla reported that he attended the BOF meeting. There has been no vote on the budget. The BOF suggested that the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education "scrub" their budgets. Superintendent Czapla also stated that one of the governor's proposals is for the town to absorb teacher retirement costs at 25% over a three-year period. Somers would have to incur a \$70,000 hit. This proposal has not yet been passed. There will be a BOF meeting on 4/10/19.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.1. CURRICULUM

Discussion: Kate McLellan reported that the committee met on 3/25/19 to discuss the elimination of the SES Exploratory Spanish and World Language Program and the creation of a Grade 6 seminar. The BOE will be updated in the future.

11.2. POLICY

Discussion: Anne Kirkpatrick reported that the committee is on hold.

11.3. SALARY & NEGOTIATION

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla reported that three negotiations will begin next year.

11.4. PLANNING

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla reported that the surveyors for the track project visited on 3/25/19. SMRT will give their presentation to the BOE on 4/22/19. A Special BOE meeting for the public will be held on 4/29/19 to discuss SMRT's presentation. Superintendent Czapla will send out a message regarding the Special Meeting on 4/1/19. The BOE will be asked to approve the recommendations on 5/13/19. Timelines will be discussed. Bids will go out in July, and contracts will be ready by 7/25/19.

12. CREC UPDATE

Discussion: Anne Kirkpatrick reported that there was a short meeting held last Wednesday. The bill regarding the tuition for CREC schools is moving on to the next step.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Passed: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 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