

**Special Somers Board of Education Meeting
Teleconferencing on Zoom
August 06, 2020
7:00 PM**

Video of this meeting may be accessed at:
www.somers.k12.ct.us

Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM:

Present Board Members: Sarah Bollinger, Jeremy Anderson, Krista Cherry, Bruce Devlin, Anne Kirkpatrick, Marissa Marks, Jan Martin, Kate McLellan

Absent Board Members: David Palmer (Jan Martin and Jeremy Anderson were disconnected from Zoom for Adjournment)

Others: Brian Czapla, Bill Boutwell, Dina Senecal, Margot Martello, Dr. Denise Messina, Lynda Thornton, Melissa Mucci, Gary Cotzin, Michael McDonnell

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Special Board of Education Meeting via teleconferencing on Zoom was called to order by Chairman Devlin at 7:01 p.m. For the sake of running the meeting smoothly, Chairman Devlin recommended two BOE members to make motions and second the motions this evening.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1. Draft Minutes of Special Board of Education Meeting on July 23, 2020

Rationale: Board to approve July 23, 2020 Minutes of Special Meeting

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the July 23, 2020 BOE Draft Minutes passed with a motion by Krista Cherry and a second by Anne Kirkpatrick.

8 Yeas - 0 Nays.

3. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1. Board to Approve Memorandum of Understanding with the SEA

Rationale: Board to Approve Memorandum of Understanding with the SEA

Discussion: Discussion ensued among BOE members for clarification regarding items #6, #8, #9, #12, #19, and #25. Superintendent Czapla answered the questions. He will bring forth the childcare discussion to the SEA. The BOE will be notified of any issues through the superintendent.

Motion Passed: Motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the

SEA as presented passed with a motion by Krista Cherry and a second by Anne Kirkpatrick. **7 Yeas - 0 Nays - 1 Abstained (Jeremy Anderson did not have time to review Memorandum thoroughly and would like to have a conversation with Salary & Negotiations).**

Motion Passed: Motion to amend the motion subject to the change in item 6 where the decision regarding childcare will default to the Superintendent passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Krista Cherry.

7 Yeas - 0 Nays - 1 Abstained (Jeremy Anderson did not have time to review Memorandum thoroughly and would like to have a conversation with Salary & Negotiations).

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

5.1. School Reopening Update by Superintendent

Rationale: Superintendent will give an update of schools reopening.

Discussion: Superintendent Czapla updated the BOE on the School Reopening. He gave total credit to the administrators for developing a variety of scenarios. He engaged with superintendents and the State Department of Education. The metrics are low, but there are strict guidelines to follow. The safety of all staff and students are at the forefront of any plan. Therefore, Superintendent Czapla concluded that there is no way to provide the optimal social distancing that is recommended and will bring the district back on a hybrid learning plan where there will be 50% of population at one time in the schools. He recognizes that this is an unpopular decision, but it is the safest measure. He introduced Dina Senecal, Director of Curriculum, to explain the mode of instruction for students and staff.

Dina Senecal updated the BOE on the Blended-Remote Learning plan. Students in grades K-12 will be divided into two cohorts for on-campus learning. Cohort A will consist of students with the last names A-J, and Cohort B will consist of students with the last names K-Z. While on-campus, students will have direct instruction from staff. The days that the students are remote learning, they will watch live instruction or work independently on assignments. The format and length of livestreaming will vary.

Students who choose Opt-Out Learning will be learning remotely from home. They will be issued devices and materials from school. Students in grades K-3 will be assigned a SES teacher. Students in grades 4-12 will be assigned a Cohort and will follow instruction via livestream. Instruction will vary by grade level in order to be age appropriate.

If the school plan falls to Remote Learning, students in grades K-12 will follow teachers daily on Zoom and will be assigned independent work. Grades K-5 will use Seesaw. Grades 6-12 will use Google Classroom and Showbie.

Teachers will start the year building communication and focusing on the social-emotional learning of the student before shifting fully to grade-level instruction. Teachers will have organized digital learning with clear expectations as well as digital lesson planning. They will continue engaging students to encourage them to move to student-driven instruction. There will be time during the Professional Development week to collaborate with the teachers and develop first units to teach.

Discussion ensued among BOE members regarding the definitions for homeschooling vs. opting-out, parent collaboration, parameters for livestreaming, attendance policies, and supporting/educating local daycares. Dina Senecal stated that she recorded a similar presentation that will be shared with parents and teachers. She feels confident about the plan and learning environment. Superintendent Czapla is confident that this plan will keep staff and students safe as well as provide the best opportunity for continuity of learning. Emails will be sent out to staff and students on 8/7/20.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1. CURRICULUM

Discussion: No report.

6.2. POLICY

Discussion: Anne Kirkpatrick reported that the committee is on hold and up to date.

6.3. SALARY & NEGOTIATION

Discussion: No report.

6.4. PLANNING

Discussion: No report.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Passed: Motion to adjourn the BOE meeting at 7:58 p.m. passed with a motion by Krista Cherry and a second by Anne Kirkpatrick. **6 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

Jan Martin, BOE Secretary

Date

Shannin Burns, BOE Recording Secretary