

**Somers Board of Education Meeting  
Teleconferencing on Zoom  
March 08, 2021  
7:00 PM**

**Attendance Taken at 7:00 PM:**

Present Board Members: Bruce Devlin, Anne Kirkpatrick, Jan Martin, Jeremy Anderson (present on Zoom at 7:06 p.m.), David Palmer, Marissa Marks, Kate McLellan

Absent Board Members: Sarah Bollinger, Krista Cherry

Others: Brian Czapla, Bill Boutwell, Margot Martello, Erin Scholes, Dina Senecal, Michael Szafir, Jim Formica, Cynthia DeRoma, Kathleen Devlin, Liz Guerin

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chairman Devlin at 7:01 p.m. via Zoom.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**2.1. Draft minutes of February 22, 2021 Board Meeting**

**Rationale:** Board to review and approve draft minutes of February 22, 2021.

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the February 22, 2021 Draft Minutes passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Jan Martin.

**5 Yeas - 0 Nays - 1 Abstained (David Palmer with technical difficulties).**

**3. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS**

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Jan Martin.

**5 Yeas - 0 Nays - 1 Abstained (David Palmer with technical difficulties).**

**4.1. Warrant of March 8, 2021**

**Rationale:** Board to consent to warrant of March 8, 2021 in the amount of \$430,261.45.

**4.2. 2nd Warning of DBS 4134 Personnel - Certified - Tutoring**

**Rationale:** 2nd Warning of DBS 4134 Personnel - Certified - Tutoring for Board to consent to.

#### **4.3. 2nd Warning of DBS 4150 Personnel - Certified - Sick Leave, Vacation**

**Rationale:** 2nd Warning of DBS 4150 Personnel - Certified - Sick Leave, Vacation for the Board to consent to.

#### **4.4. 2nd Warning - DBS Code 4218.232 -Personnel - Smoke-Free Workplace**

**Rationale:** 2nd Warning - DBS Code 4218.232 Personnel - Smoke-Free Workplace for the Board to consent.

### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **6.1. 2021-2022 Somers Public School Budget**

**Rationale:** The Board will approve the 2021-22 SPS Budget and send it to the Board of Finance.

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the 2021-2022 SPS Budget and send it to the Board of Finance passed with a motion by Anne Kirkpatrick and a second by Jan Martin. **5 Yeas - 0 Nays. (David Palmer off of Zoom)**

### **7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

#### **7.1. Annual SBAC/NGSS Testing Update**

**Rationale:** Mrs. Dina Senecal will be present to discuss the Annual SBAC/NGSS Testing Update to the Board.

**Discussion:** Dina Senecal, Director of Curriculum, provided a report to the BOE members. She stated that students take part in standardized assessments annually. There are three Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) for grades 3-8 in Math and ELA. Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 participate in the Next Generation Science Standards Assessment (NGSS). The test window has been pushed back to allow students coming back on campus to acclimate from remote learning. The adjusted testing dates are as follows:

- SES: May 3 – 21
- MBA: May 3 – 28
- SHS: May 10 - 14 (Grade 11 NGSS Assessment)

The State Department of Education is requesting students to test on campus, but provisions may be made for remote proctoring for those who are fully remote. SPS will be sending out a survey to remote families questioning whether the student may return to campus during the standardized test administration. Remote learners would not have to be on campus for the entire testing window.

The CT State Department of Education submitted a waiver to the US Department of Education requesting that this year's test data not be used. If granted, this would prevent schools from being penalized. Currently, SPS is moving forward

with test administration this year. There were no standardized tests last year due to Covid-19 and school closures.

David Palmer returned on Zoom at 7:06 p.m.

## **7.2. Mabelle B. Avery Middle School Online Learning Presentation**

**Rationale:** Mr. Michael Szafir, Grade 8 Social Studies Teacher and Admin Intern, will present the MBA Online Learning Presentation. Mrs. Martello, MBA Principal, will also be present.

**Discussion:** Mrs. Martello, MBA Principal, introduced Michael Szafir, 8th Grade History Teacher and O92 Intern, and Erin Scholes, 7th Grade Math Teacher, to the BOE. Mr. Szafir and Mrs. Scholes presented the technology utilized at MBA for online learning. They invited BOE members to sign on using the application, Pear Deck, in order to visualize it from the students' perspectives. It is an interactive tool that may be used in remote or in-person learning. Texts may be read on Pear Deck which may be beneficial for those who are auditory learners or vision impaired. With Pear Deck, teachers can follow students' responses, but responses may also be shared anonymously. Technology needs to be effective in content delivery and assessments.

**New Technology:** Dual monitors have allowed staff to see a bigger vision in the classroom as well as enabling staff to see the remote students while sharing their screen. Document cameras project notes, art techniques, lab experiments, etc. on Zoom and on the board in the classroom.

**Content Delivery:** Content is delivered through multiple technology such as Showbie, Google Classroom, Zoom and Google Meet for remote learning, Newsela, Pear Deck, and Jamboard.

**Student Practice:** Technology is used to practice new skills. IXL and Khan Academy check students' work instantly so that they don't continue to practice their work incorrectly. Kahoot is used by teachers to test where students are in their practice and creates an engaging environment for students to participate. Classkick sets up panels for each student, and the teacher can then monitor their work and "pop" into their slide and send a private chat. It enables teachers to watch students' progress live. Scholastic Go is an online encyclopedia which the school has purchased. Noodle Tools is an online database that helps to use work cited and can be used through college.

**Social Emotional Learning:** Staff have built in mindfulness throughout the year. A Virtual Mindfulness Room has been created offering different sounds and music, exercises, puzzles, games, coloring, and yoga for those who need to decompress.

Superintendent Czapla thanked Mr. Szafir and Mrs. Scholes for their presentation and is appreciative of the entire staff who had to modify their teaching in such a short period of time.

### **7.3. Superintendent Update**

**Rationale:** The Superintendent will give the Board an update of events in Somers Public Schools.

**Discussion:** Superintendent Czapla updated the BOE on recent events. Last week was busy with the start of the vaccination clinic for staff members. Ancillary staff were able to attend clinics by Hartford Healthcare. As of April 1st, staff who chose to get the vaccinations will be fully vaccinated. The vaccinations have been a big relief and morale booster for the staff. Bill Boutwell, Director of Business Services, is greatly appreciative and acknowledged Superintendent Czapla's diligence and speed in coordinating the vaccination clinics for the staff. Superintendent Czapla stated that it was a team effort.

The announcement was made last Friday for SPS to return to full in-person learning as of March 22, 2021. Superintendent Czapla wants to allow a couple of weeks in order to handle logistics and preparations. Mitigation strategies have proven to be very effective in a controlled environment, and SPS will continue to utilize and enhance these strategies in order to be successful. Discussion ensued.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **8.1. CURRICULUM**

**Discussion:** Kate McLellan reported that the committee met on 3/8/21 to discuss four new textbooks at Somers High School. First warnings will be presented at the next BOE meeting.

### **8.2. POLICY**

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

### **8.3. SALARY & NEGOTIATION**

**Discussion:** David Palmer stated that there is nothing new to report.

### **8.4. PLANNING**

**Discussion:** David Palmer stated that there is nothing new to report.

## **9. CREC UPDATE**

**Discussion:** Krista Cherry was not present for a CREC update.

