

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Special Meeting

April 23, 2020

Ms. Susan Salina called the virtual meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Roll Call:

Members present: Mmes. Susan Salina, Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone, Jen Batchelar and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis and Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Board of Education enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter and to include Superintendent Matt Curtis and Mr. Sullivan.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Ms. Batchelar:Seconded. So moved.

Jennifer Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary

Executive
Session

Adjournment

**TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

April 28, 2020

Ms. Susan Salina called the virtual meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Roll Call:

Members present: Mmes. Susan Salina, Tara Willerup, Lydia Tedone, Jen Batchelar and Sharon Thomas. Messrs. Todd Burrick, Jeff Tindall and Brian Watson.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan, Director of Technology Jason Casey, Tecton Architects Principal Jeff Wyszynski, and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

None

Public Audience

BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Willerup complimented the district on their efforts and progress with the distance learning program. Ms. Tedone stated that Commissioner Cardona is chairing a subgroup of Governor Lamont's Reopening Task Force. The subgroup includes representation from superintendents, CABE and the CT BOE.

Communications

Ms. Murray reported that the distance learning plan continues to move forward and a survey will be sent out tomorrow to obtain feedback on the plan from parents. Mr. Sullivan stated that it is hiring season, and through a virtual interview process we have signed our first teacher for next school year. She will be a special education teacher at Central School. Ms. Lemke reported that equity planning continues to move forward and an update will be provided at the next board meeting.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- A. Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2020 Meeting

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2020 meeting.

Ms. Batchelar:Seconded. So moved. Ms. Tedone abstained.

Approval of
Minutes of
February 25,
2020

- B. Approval of Minutes of March 12, 2020 Meeting

Mr. Tindall: MOVE to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2020 meeting.

Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.

Approval of
Minutes of
March 12, 2020
Meeting

- C. Approval of Minutes of April 14, 202 Meeting

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the final plans and project manual dated February 28, 2020, and the professional cost estimate dated January 27, 2020, for the Simsbury High School reroofing project.

Approval of
Minutes of April
14, 2020
Meeting

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.

<p>Mr. Burrick: MOVE to amend the minutes of the April 14, 2020 meeting to reflect the new motion on the approval of the SHS roof replacement specifications.</p>	
<p>Ms. Willerup: Seconded. So moved.</p>	
<p>D. Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers</p>	
<p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the contract of employment of Lynne Lipkin, .4 SHS World Language, be non-renewed effective June 30, 2020, and the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person in writing of this action.</p>	<p>Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Teachers</p>
<p>Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved.</p>	
<p>E. Approval of Pursuit of Passion Scholarship</p>	
<p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Pursuit of Passion Scholarship, to be disbursed in 2020.</p>	<p>Pursuit of Passion Scholarship</p>
<p>Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.</p>	
<p>F. Approval of Simsbury Community Band Scholarship</p>	
<p>Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the Board of Education approve the Simsbury Community Band Scholarship, to be disbursed in 2020.</p>	<p>Simsbury Community Band Scholarship</p>
<p>Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.</p>	
<p>G. Adoption of Healthy Food and Beverage 2020-21</p>	
<p>Ms. Tedone: MOVE that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Simsbury Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdictions, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school store, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups.</p>	<p>Adoption of Healthy Food and Beverage 2020-21</p>
<p>Mr. Watson: Seconded. So moved.</p>	
<p>Ms. Willerup: MOVE that pursuant to Sections 10-215f of the C.G.S., the Simsbury Board of Education hereby will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the</p>	

end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education will allow the sale to students of beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the C.G.S. provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. The "school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held, and must be the same place as the food sales.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. Facilities Master Plan Update

Mr. Tindall expressed gratitude to all who have been involved in this process. He stated that the BOE is close to finishing their work on the plan. The immediate facilities need is at Latimer Lane School and a solution needs to be decided to address that issue.

Mr. Sullivan provided a recap of the March 4th Public Forum. At the forum the public was informed that the grade 5/6 school and status quo approaches had been eliminated from consideration. Feedback from the neighborhood meetings was shared, as well as the results of the staff and community survey. Mr. Sullivan noted that the professional feedback supported 6th grade at HJMS, the community feedback was more mixed. During the forum Ms. Murray and HJMS Principal Scott Baker presented research, at a national level, on the appropriate location for 6th grade. Mr. Sullivan pointed out that Simsbury is one of few districts that still utilize the Grade K-6 model.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the two options still under consideration. Option 1 includes adding a 6th grade addition to HJMS and renovate as new at Latimer Lane School. This option eventually reconfigures, renovates, or adds to all 5 elementary schools (making them grades K-5), distributes the Ready, Set, Go program to 3 elementary schools, and includes the option to add Pre-K at each school. This option has an estimated cost of \$66 million; \$49 million after state reimbursement.

Mr. Sullivan outlined Option 2 which maintains existing school grade configurations and provides additions and renovations to Latimer Lane School. This option eventually renovates, adds, or potentially proposes new construction at all 5 elementary schools, geographically distributes the Ready, Set, Go program to 3 elementary schools, and includes the option to add Pre-K at each school. This option has an estimated cost of \$45 million; \$31 million after reimbursement from the state.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed the feedback from the Public Forum. Many stated that the

Facilities Master
Plan Update

discussion should be focused on what is best for students. Concerns were raised about the extent and frequency of redistricting. Several people cited national research on the location of 6th grade. Participants expressed the need for the district to communicate the cost for the full 20 year plan. They urged the district to give more thought to student's transitioning from one school to another. Comments were made about addressing the capacity of schools in the near term. Parent support the idea of adding Pre-K in all of the elementary schools.

Mr. Sullivan addressed next steps. He suggested a Curriculum Committee meeting be held during which he and Erin would discuss the outcomes of their discussions with all of the 6th grade teachers. Most of who spoke positively about 6th grade in the middle school model. Mr. Sullivan spoke to the flyer that was developed after the public forum that will be used to update the BOS, BOF and Facilities & Enrollment Task Force. Once the BOE decides on which option, the administration will work with the BOF to model debt structure related to the reconfiguration options.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the next step for the BOE is to decide on where 6th grade should be located. Ms. Salina noted that the Latimer Lane School issues need to be resolved. Mr. Burrick asked if there are staff efficiencies with moving 6th grade to the middle school. Mr. Curtis stated that there would be some efficiency, but coupled with the possible need for administrative support, the cost savings would not be significant.

Ms. Batchelar asked what our specialists recommend relative to the location of 6th grade. Mr. Sullivan stated that the vast majority of 6th grade teachers feel 6th grade is more appropriately placed at the middle school for academic and social/emotional reasons. By 6th grade students have outgrown the elementary model and need a different experience. Mr. Sullivan did note that some of the teachers are very attached to their elementary school. Ms. Murray pointed out that 6th grade teachers have the ability to collaborate when they are in one location. A key question is whether it is best to transition after 5th or 6th grade. Mr. Tindall noted that the survey results were in favor of moving 6th grade to the middle school. Ms. Thomas stated that she needs a better understanding of the transition piece in order to make a decision.

Ms. Batchelar asked if the town can financially move forward with either of these options given the current times. Mr. Curtis responded that we may or may not be able to move forward right now, but we still need a long term plan. We need to define first steps and then have a conversation with the BOF about their thoughts moving forward. Ms. Salina pointed out that the school district's needs aren't going to go away as enrollment continues to increase at the elementary level. Ms. Thomas stated that the board should not let a date drive a decision without understanding the impact. Ms. Salina noted that the date is when we run out of room at Latimer Lane School. She stated that what is best for kids needs to drive the plan, not the cost. Ms. Batchelar stated we should move forward on a plan and have a Plan B if the project is delayed. Mr. Tindall noted that everyone appears to be on the same page.

B. HJMS Project Update

The board meeting time was limited to one hour due to SCTV recording another meeting at 7:30 p.m.

HJMS Project Update

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to table the HJMS Project Update tot the May 12, 2020 meeting,

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

Jen Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary

Adjournment

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew Curtis, Superintendent of Schools
DATE: May 12, 2020
RE: Gift to the Simsbury Public Schools / Latimer Lane

In keeping with the Board of Education Policy 2311, Gifts from the Public, Board approval is required for any gift to the school system which exceeds \$1,500.

The administration is requesting Board of Education approval of a gift to Latimer Lane School from its PTO of a Commemorative Sugar Maple at the cost of \$2,883.00, including planting. This new shade tree will replace the diseased tree that was recently removed from the primary playground.

“MOVE that the proposed gift of a commemorative sugar maple tree from the Latimer Lane PTO be approved.”

/cm

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: End of Year Authorizations

- I. In order to comply with regulations which govern state and federal grants and the transfer of funds within the education budget, the Board of Education must vote to give authorization to the Superintendent to act on the Board's behalf. Below are the motions for the Board to approve for granting said authorizations.
 1. State and Federal Grants
"MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to act as the Board's agent in renewing applications for state and federally funded programs."
 2. Transfer of Funds
"MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to transfer funds from those accounts in which a surplus is anticipated into those accounts in which a deficit is anticipated."

"MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to request Board of Finance approval for the deposit of unexpended funds at the close of the fiscal year into the non-lapsing account for Unexpended Education Funds Account; as authorized by state law, the amount of said deposit will be no more than 2% of the Board's current year operating budget. Unexpended funds over the 2% threshold will be returned to the Town General Fund Balance."

"MOVE that the Simsbury Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent (or designee), with Board of Finance approval, to approve any and all expenditures from the non-lapsing account for Unexpended Education Funds Account."
- II. It has been the past practice of the Board of Education to authorize the Superintendent to employ teachers during the months of July and August. The administration seeks authorization to hire staff during the months of July and August, even though the employment of staff could result in a deficit in the teacher salary account.
 1. "MOVE that the Superintendent, with the approval of the Board Chairman, be authorized to hire staff for the 2020-21 school year during the period of July and August when the Board is not in session."

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: HJMS Phase III Project Update

The current school closure has allowed progress to accelerate. Construction workers are wearing masks and practicing social distancing on the jobsite and disinfecting rooms as part of the cleanup process. The first two phases of the project, which included the LMC and classroom renovations, are now complete. Phase 3 of the project (March – May) includes the new auditorium and classroom renovations, which are all on or ahead of schedule. Some classroom renovations, originally scheduled for phase 4, were moved into the phase 3 timeline. Additionally, last week, some of the deliverables scheduled for phase 5 were also moved into the phase 3 timeline. The project is now estimated to be over 75% complete and is still on schedule and on budget.

This evening Director of Technology Jason Casey will provide an update on the status of the project with the board.

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: Equity Update

Equity continues to be at the forefront of our district strategic planning and action steps, especially in this time of the pandemic. Tonight, Ms. Sue Homrok-Lemke will be providing an update relative to the accomplished work of the Equity Council thus far, and projected deliverables moving forward in the coming months. Specifically, Ms. Homrok-Lemke will share the:

- proposed district equity definition, stance and core beliefs
- description of how the definition, stance and core beliefs will be used in our strategic planning
- anticipated Equity Council outcomes for the remainder of this school year
- recommended next steps for the 2020-2021 school year

There will be opportunity for your questions and feedback.

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew Curtis
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: 2020 Distant Learning Parent/Guardian Survey Results

The survey was designed to evaluate our current distance learning program around a variety of items such as student adjustment and participation, amount of work and feedback received, opportunities to participate in video conferencing (recorded or live) with teachers, as well as establishing connections with classmates.

The feedback received will assist us in ongoing improvement efforts with our distance learning program, so that the design and implementation continues to meet the needs of families, students, and teachers. We continue to make adjustments, so that we can deliver the most effective educational program for our students. Parent feedback is an essential part of our continuous improvement effort.

The survey results will also provide important information so we can make short term adjustments, as well as longer term adjustments now that Governor Lamont announced schools will be closed through the end of the year.

With over 1,700 responses, parent/guardian participation was high, and the input received is extremely valuable. The survey data validated areas of strength and also provided input on where we need to improve. The information received will help us adjust as we move into the home stretch of the school year and look toward the future, should we need to engage in some form of distance learning this summer or fall.

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 12, 2020

RE: Proposed Fee Schedule for Use of Public Schools

Attached for your review is the proposed fee schedule for the use of Simsbury Public School buildings. The proposed fees would increase by approximately 2% and would go into effect on July 1, 2020. The 2020-21 building fees reflect changes projected due to increased costs. After tonight's review, it will be placed on the next Board of Education agenda for action.

/cm

TO: Members of the Board of Education
 FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools
 RE: Financial Report/Quarterly Budget Analysis
 DATE: May 12, 2020

Below is the third quarter budget analysis of the Simsbury Public Schools for the fiscal year 2019-20.

Revenues

As reported in the second quarter, the final restricted state and federal grant award notices on our education grants were received in early January. In late March/early April, the district received additional Choice entitlement awards totaling \$57,579. The final determination of the impact of statewide caps for Simsbury's excess cost grant will be reported sometime mid to late May.

The district's 2019-20 ECS entitlement of \$6,129,867 has not changed and reflects an increase of \$3,752 from the original Town/BOE revenue budget of \$6,126,115.

Because of the federal waivers allowed under the CARE Act, we do not anticipate any loss in federal grant revenue. However, one of our more restrictive state Choice grants may result in a turn back of funds between \$20,000 to \$30,000 which less than 1% of our total 2019-20 state awards. Due to the COVID-19 shutdown, building usage revenue will have a projected deficit of approximately \$10,640. However, unrelated to the shutdown, it is projected that school tuition revenue will have a year-end surplus of \$10,007.

Expenditures

<u>General Fund</u>	2019-20				2018-19
	<u>Revised Budget</u>	<u>YTD Expenditures</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% Spent</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
General Control	2,157,216.00	1,686,966.89	470,249.11	78.20%	76.93%
Instruction	43,786,768.00	29,619,036.68	14,167,731.32	67.64%	68.16%
Health Services	707,359.00	506,210.33	201,148.67	71.56%	71.73%
Pupil Transportation	2,742,365.00	1,825,919.46	916,445.54	66.58%	66.97%
Operation of Plant	4,669,893.00	3,596,047.70	1,073,845.30	77.00%	74.83%
Maint of Plant/Equipment	1,276,522.00	1,091,367.00	185,155.00	85.50%	81.11%
Insurance/Pension	13,230,953.00	10,559,610.04	2,671,342.96	79.81%	76.62%
Food Services	8,575.00	6,433.00	2,142.00	75.02%	75.02%
Student Body Activities	678,084.00	383,827.19	294,256.81	56.60%	56.63%
Community Services	32,563.00	15,273.20	17,289.80	46.90%	49.14%
Equipment-New/Replace	198,680.00	198,680.00	0.00	100.00%	100.00%
Out of District Tuition	1,392,000.00	712,812.71	679,187.29	51.21%	44.29%
Total Public Budget	70,880,978.00	50,202,184.20	20,678,793.80	70.83%	70.11%

Enrollment Comparison 2019-20 to 2018-19

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Actual 10/1/2019</u>	<u>Actual 10/1/2018</u>	<u>Difference</u>
K-6	2038	1989	49
7-8	633	610	23
9-12	1354	1419	-65
Total	4025	4018	7

Staffing Comparison (FTE)

	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
Certified Teaching Staff	370.45	370.35
Certified Administrators	18.00	17.00
Custodial/Maintenance	38.00	38.00
Nurses	10.67	10.67
Clerical/Paraprofessionals	146.48	147.33
Unaffiliated	46.99	44.99
Tutors	13.65	13.60
Total	644.24	641.94

Review of Experience and Trends

Overall spending pace as compared to the third quarter of the prior fiscal year is almost equal (less than 1% higher than last year). Below are some areas we are highlighting in our major categories:

General Control – As stated in the first two quarters of 2019-20, the primary reason for the higher pace of spending is the salary costs of 3 staff retirements/replacements at the Central Office. We also experienced additional costs relating to staffing needs for the Business Office. Savings related to the COVID-19 shutdown (less overtime and other costs such as supplies) will partially offset the projected deficit in this area.

Instruction – As outlined in the October 1 enrollment report, there was an overall increase of 7 students and 24 more students than originally projected. Overall elementary enrollment continues to increase. As a result, additional tutors were hired to support our large kindergarten classes. In addition, we added 1 classroom teaching position at Latimer Lane. The effect of these added costs has been offset due to an unfilled opening for the SHS principal position. Due to the COVID-19 shutdown, there will be additional savings from the certified and non-certified substitute budgets, decreased spending in supplies, textbooks and professional development.

Transportation – The pace of spending is down due to the timing of invoice processing and payment because of pending Executive Order 7R negotiations. Those negotiations with our transportation provider will yield a year-end surplus.

Insurance and Pension – Since the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2018-19, overall participation in the health insurance program has decreased by 3 active participants. Over the same period, enrollment in the High Deductible Health Plan has increased by 29 active participants to a total of 319, while the PPO and HMO Plans have decreased by 32 active participants to 177. Second quarter reporting projected \$150,000 of nonlapsing dollars would be needed to cover any potential deficits in this area, however savings from the COVID-19 shutdown should provide sufficient surpluses in other budgets and therefore use of nonlapsing is not needed.

Operation of Plant – Spending is up because of the retirement and replacement of key administrative staff.

Maintenance of Plant and Equipment – The pace of spending is higher because of summer projects in the first quarter and due to the timing of invoice processing and payment.

Equipment – The equipment category is projected to be fully expended because more than half of our overall budget (\$400,000) is funded through the Choice Attendance grant revenues as planned in the 2019-20 budget development process.

Out of District Tuition – Overall special education 2019-20 costs have increased over 2018-19 levels, however we did receive higher level of reimbursement from the district's excess cost grant award. The projected deficit is estimated to be approximately 25% higher than the 2018-19 overage.