# SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING September 22, 2020 SHS Auditorium 6:30 p.m. AGENDA

1	CALL	TO	ORD	FR
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- II. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- III. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS
- IV. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of September 8, 2020 Meeting
B. Personnel

EXHIBIT I

EXHIBIT II

V. INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. School Opening Update EXHIBIT III
B. Year End Results EXHIBIT IV

Food Service Update

COVID Expenditures

C. Review of Face Mask Policy EXHIBIT V

- VI. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- VII. FUTURE BUSINESS
  - A. Next Board Meeting, Tuesday, October 13, 2020, Board of Education Conference Room

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# TOWN OF SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Record of Proceedings 2020

Special Meeting

September 8,

Ms. Susan Salina called the special meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. in the Simsbury High School auditorium.

## Roll Call:

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

<u>Also present</u>: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Erin Murray, Assistant Superintendent Sue Homrok-Lemke, Director of Personnel Neil Sullivan, Director of Finance Amy Meriwether, BOE Student Representatives Katherine Bonnell and Shannon Zeilman, and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

## **PUBLIC AUDIENCE**

None

**Public Audience** 

## BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Willerup stated that in honor of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Simsbury there are banners along Iron Horse Boulevard representing people and events over the past 350 years. Ms. Tedone reported on the opening of tech schools, CREC, CABE and NSBA.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the original guidance from the state was that we needed mask protocols in our schools. Recently we were advised that our mask protocols need to be adopted as BOE policy. The Policy Committee will convene virtually next week and bring the policy forward to the board for adoption.

Mr. Curtis thanked staff and students for a smooth opening to school. He stated that he and Ms. Meriwether had a follow-up discussion with Jeff Wysznski at Tecton Architects to define necessary steps, should the facilities plan go to referendum in the spring. A meeting will be arranged with the state to review the long term facilities plan that will include Mr. Curtis, Ms. Meriwether and Mr. Casey.

Ms. Salina expressed her thanks and appreciation for all of the work that went into opening our schools this fall.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2020 Special Meeting

Approval of Minutes of

Communications

Ms. Willerup: MOVE to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2020 special meeting.

August 20, 2020 Special Meeting

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

B. Personnel

Personnel

Mr. Burrick: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Cassidy

Considine effective August 21, 2020 and Jason Stammen effective

September 30, 2020.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

Ms. Willerup: MOVE that the Board of Education accept the retirement of Joncia

Lytwynec effective November 1, 2020.

Mr. Tindall: Seconded. So moved.

#### INFORMATION AND REPORTS

## A. School Opening Report

Mr. Curtis reviewed the four guiding beliefs that frame the school opening updates. He reviewed the public health data markers that are provided weekly from the Farmington Valley Health District, noting that the markers are tied to instructional models.

Mr. Sullivan reviewed school opening enrollment K-12. He stated that 17%-18% of students are enrolled in distance learning. Total enrollment is 3,952, which is below the projected 4,025, although families are continuing to enroll. Mr. Sullivan reviewed the number of distance learning students by grade level. Currently there are 2 teachers in grades K, 5 and 6. There are 3 teachers in grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. It is likely a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher will be added due to class size.

Mr. Sullivan discussed the mitigation strategies in place for the health and safety of students and staff. He reviewed the operational adjustments that have been made at the schools, which include changes to: drop off/dismissal, recess/lunch, nurse's office/isolation rooms, hallway traffic, bathroom capacity, plexiglass barriers, and outdoor spaces.

Mr. Sullivan shared highlights of the return to school for both elementary and secondary students. He noted that at the end of the summer more students moved into the distance learning program and classes became larger. This continues to be a fluid situation. Mr. Sullivan reviewed the hybrid to full in-person transition timeline.

School Opening Report

Ms. Batchelar asked if a date has been set for secondary students to return to full in-person learning. Mr. Sullivan stated that the situation continues to be monitored and a decision will be made later in September. Ms. Batchelar noted the importance of the soft opening relative to the mental health of students and teachers. She asked if Kindergarten enrollment is down. Mr. Sullivan responded that Kindergarten enrollment is down, but not by an outrageous number. Ms. Batchelar asked if more students are walking or riding their bikes to school at the secondary level. Mr. Sullivan stated that he has not been tracking that number. Mr. Curtis noted that bus ridership is low.

Mr. Watson noted the advantageous class sizes with an average of 15.4 students per class in the hybrid model. Mr. Sullivan stated that the district worked to cap the in-person class sizes at 18. Ms. Tedone asked if there are parents who do not want to return to full in-person learning. Mr. Sullivan responded that there are parents on both sides, but the most effective model is in-school instruction.

Ms. Lemke discussed delivering high quality, engaging instruction for all students. She reviewed the distribution of technology devices to students and teachers. Over the summer the district increased its bandwidth capacity to handle increased usage. There have been technological glitches during the time school has been in session that we continue to address, as well as delays in receiving shipments from vendors.

Ms. Gunsalus addressed elementary distance learning. Currently there are 403 students and 20 teachers in the distance learning program. Materials have been distributed to these students. Ms. Gunsalus reviewed the focus for week one of the program, which was centered on relationship building. She discussed the specials rotation, balancing use of paper/pencil with digital practices, and the use of both whole class and small group instruction.

Ms. Lemke reviewed social and emotional health and support systems that have been put in place. Multiple sessions on staff self-care and how to support students have occurred. A faculty/staff playbook was created. Specific staff/student baseline information was collected. Follow-up sessions at faculty meetings and future professional development will continue throughout the year.

Mr. Burrick questioned whether staff was comfortable returning to school. Ms. Lemke responded that there was a range of responses. Some staff members were concerned about returning and that is why we provided professional development, so that staff could feel as safe and comfortable as possible. Mr. Curtis stated that there continues to be a consistent dialog with the SEA leadership. Ms. Thomas noted that some staff members were anxious and concerned coming back to school. She suggested that we should be checking to see if staff members are feeling better

Ms. Salina asked if the social/emotional supports carried through to the distance

learning teachers. Ms. Lemke responded in the affirmative. Ms. Batchelar questioned the pacing for those in distance learning versus hybrid. Ms. Lemke stated that both groups are following the same curriculum units and practices will continue to evolve. Ms. Batchelar noted that no longer are there Connects class at HJ and SHS, she asked how teachers are connecting with students. Ms. Lemke responded that content area teachers are engaging students at the end of class for the purpose of creating connections. Staff is also aware of which students they need to check in with.

Ms. Lemke stated that the board adopted Equity Statement was shared at new teacher orientation and will be shared and discussed during faculty meetings. The next Equity Council meeting is scheduled on September 17 during which members will look at culture and climate data from across the district.

Ms. Lemke addressed the return of students with special needs. Students with intensive special programming have already returned to in-person. All elementary students with IEP's have been offered full in-person instruction 4 days per week in order to access programming outlined in their IEP. Communication will be sent to HJMS and SHS families this week. Ms. Lemke reviewed the special education distance learning data. The number of special education students in grades K-6 is 47; grades 7-8 is 12; and grades 9-12 is 47.

Ms. Lemke noted that 42% of our Choice students are participating in distance learning. She stat that we are working with our Choice liaison, social workers and school psychologists to ensure we are checking in with every family.

## B. COVID Expenditures

Ms. Meriwether reviewed fiscal year 2020 expenditures, expenditures for fiscal year 2021 to date, and estimated additional 2021 expenditures. She noted that the \$20,000 cost for the increased bandwidth is now being offered as a free program in CT, so there are no longer dollars associated with the upgrade. Ms. Meriwether stated that there has been a reduction in funding from the state as they initially used an incorrect formula and the \$462,000 expected has been reduced to \$292,000. In fiscal year 2021 the budget is \$120,000 over due to COVID expenditures. That will be offset by non-lapsing funds, leaving \$260,000 in the non-lapsing account.

Mr. Burrick asked if the cost for the 3 new custodians is included in the personnel line item amount. Ms. Meriwether responded that the only custodial cost included is overtime. Mr. Curtis noted that the October 1 report will true up the numbers as it is a fluid situation and there will be additional personnel costs. Mr. Burrick as if we have any new personnel costs since the start of the year due to COVID. Mr. Curtis responded that we have additional costs. The state talked about reimbursing districts for personnel costs due to COVID, but then said they would only provide reimbursement to those districts with more than 40% free and

COVID Expenditures

reduced. In response to Ms. Salina, Mr personnel line item is for 5 teachers who		
PUBLIC AUDIENCE Elizabeth Peterson, 32 Fox Den Road SHS. The bike rack is small, so student bike to a pole or bring it to the office. As increasing bike rack capacity.	Public Audience	
ADJOURNMENT Ms. Willerup: MOVE to adjourn the mee	Adjournment	
Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.		
Jennifer Batchelar	Katie Wilde	
Secretary	Recording Secretary	

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis

DATE: September 22, 2020

RE: Personnel Recommendations

## I. Resignations

**Alden Paye** 

Assignment Math Coach, Central School

Simsbury Exp 7 years

Effective October 8, 2020

## **BOARD MOTION:**

"MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignation of Alden Paye effective October 8, 2020."

MTC:cdf

MEMO TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis

Superintendent of Schools

DATE: September 22, 2020

RE: School Opening Update

The School Opening Update will include information on public health markers, COVID case protocols, and transition planning, as well as the status of our secondary distance learners. We continue to ground our plan in the following four guiding principles:

- Health and safety of students and staff
- High-quality, engaging instruction for all students
- Social and emotional health and support
- Access and equity

This evening Erin Murray, Neil Sullivan and Sue Homrok-Lemke will present the School Opening Update. There will be an opportunity for board questions and comments.

MTC:kdw

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

RE: FY19/20 Year End Financial Results and COVID-19 Expenditure Update

DATE: September 22, 2020

Below are the year-end operating budget results of the Simsbury Public Schools for the fiscal year 2019-20.

#### **General Fund**

#### Revenues

Fiscal year 2019/2020 Board of Education revenues were budgeted at \$6,225,964. Actual receipts thru June 30, 2020 totaled \$6,316,102, an increase over budget of \$90,138. The Education Cost Sharing Grant and tuition revenue came in higher than anticipated by \$65,834 and \$19,009 respectively.

#### **Expenditures**

General Fund	Revised Budget	2019-20 YTD Expenditures	<u>Balance</u>	% Spent	2018-19 <u>% Spent</u>
General Control	2,139,719.00	2,183,407.71	(43,688.71)	102.04%	98.62%
Instruction	43,804,265.00	43,561,169.98	243,095.02	99.45%	99.78%
Health Services	707,359.00	735,552.31	(28,193.31)	103.99%	98.88%
Pupil Transportation	2,742,365.00	2,238,822.04	503,542.96	81.64%	100.01%
Operation of Plant	4,669,893.00	4,741,574.85	(71,681.85)	101.53%	100.53%
Maint of Plant/Equipment	1,276,522.00	1,180,080.93	96,441.07	92.45%	93.40%
Insurance/Pension	13,230,953.00	13,286,790.06	(55,837.06)	100.42%	99.62%
Food Services	8,575.00	108,574.90	(99,999.90)	1266.18%	99.46%
Student Body Activities	678,084.00	659,471.31	18,612.69	97.26%	103.41%
Community Services	32,563.00	15,273.20	17,289.80	46.90%	90.06%
Equipment-New/Replace	198,680.00	172,197.50	26,482.50	86.67%	91.86%
Out of District Tuition	1,392,000.00	1,763,316.55	(371,316.55)	126.68%	116.51%
Total Public Budget	70,880,978.00	70,646,231.34	234,746.66	99.67%	99.99%
Total Non-Public Budget	546,432.00	514,870.34	31,561.66	94.22%	99.76%
Total General Fund	71,427,410.00	71,161,101.68	266,308.32	99.63%	99.99%

Board of Education expenditures were budgeted at \$71,427,410. Actual expenditures thru June 30, 2020 totaled \$71,161,102, savings to the Board of Education of \$266,308. This savings was made up of various budget line item variances but the major drivers were as follows:

- General Control There was a budget deficit in this group of \$43,689 due to 3 staff retirements during the year
  that overlapped with the onboarding of the new staff members. There were also additional expenditures for
  individuals taking on responsibilities of the Business Manager during his leave.
- Instruction There was budget savings in this group of \$243,095 mainly related to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. There was significant savings in instructional supplies, textbooks, staff training and conferences. Unrelated to COVID, there was staff savings in the salary line item at high school. This was due to staff transitions and vacancies.
- Health Services There was a budget deficit in this group of \$28,193 due to bulk purchases of COVID-19 PPE supplies.
- Pupil Transportation There was budget savings in this group of \$503,543 related to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. The Board of Education was able to re-negotiate it's contract with the transportation vendor to achieve these savings.
- Operation of Plant There was a budget deficit in this group of \$71,682 due to the bulk purchases of COVID-19 PPE supplies, cleaning supplies, sanitizers etc.
- Maint of Plant/Equipment There was budget savings of \$96,441 related to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. School buildings were not in use from March – June as they typically would have been reducing the amount of maintenance and repair during this time.
- Insurance/Pension There was a budget deficit in this group of \$55,837 mainly related to an increase in
  unemployment costs over budget due to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. Unrelated to COVID19, medical insurance was over budget along with social security and workers comp insurance line items due to
  staff transitions and retirements during the year.
- Food Services There was a budget deficit in this group of \$100,000 related to the impact of COVID-19. Schools closed, however, food services was still operating free of charge to all Simsbury families. This item will be discussed further in the "Food Services" section of this report.
- Student Body Activities There was budget savings in this group of \$18,613 related to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. All student activities ceased in March.
- Community Services There was budget savings in this group of \$17,299 related to the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19. This group would typically fund the overtime for custodians when there are activities in school buildings. All activities ceased in March and therefore, less overtime was utilized during the year.
- Equipment New/Replacement There was budget savings in this group of \$26,482 from the impact of COVID-19.
   Staff focus transitioned from regular instructional and maintenance purchases to COVID related purchases. In addition, since the school buildings were closed from March June there were less equipment replacements performed as no staff were in the buildings during this time.
- Out of District Tuition There was a budget deficit in this group of \$371,316 due to an increase in special
  education students during the year combined with an increase in cost for services provided to special education
  students during the year.
- Non-Public Budget There was budget savings in this group of \$31,561 mainly related to transportation savings from the closing of schools in March due to COVID-19.

#### **Food Services Fund**

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the Board of Education's Food Services Fund. See below financial statement. During fiscal years 2015/2016 – 2018/2019 the fund was holding steady with small surpluses or deficits from year to year. In fiscal year 2019/2020 the fund lost \$80,100. This loss was after a funding transfer of \$100,000 from the Board of Education General Fund into the Food Services Fund to reduce the actual loss of \$180,100 during the year. If the \$100,000 transfer had not been made, the fund would have ended in an overall deficit position with a negative fund balance. This fund is considered to be insolvent as it can no longer sustain itself.

There were two factors that contributed to the \$180,100 loss in this fund. The main factor was the pandemic. As noted above, schools closed but the food program was still operating free of charge to all Simsbury families. There was not enough of a decrease in expenditures to make up for the loss of revenue during this time. The portion of the fund loss related to the pandemic was about \$150,000. The remaining loss of \$30,000 was attributable to the State required increase in the minimum wage rate.

Staff is making the Board of Education aware of this situation as we will need to continue to closely monitor going forward. The ongoing COVID impact on this fund is unknown at present. But we do know that there will be a further minimum wage impact on the fund in upcoming years as minimum wage will increase to \$15.00/hour by FY22/23. Currently, minimum wage is \$12.00/hour. The next minimum wage increase will be August 1, 2021 to \$13.00/hour, followed by another increase starting July 1, 2022 to \$14.00 and a final increase starting June 1, 2023 to \$15.00/hour.

Staff would like to address the status of this fund with the Board of Finance at their next meeting on October 20, 2020 as it is anticipated that the fund will likely close the current fiscal year in another deficit position based on preliminary lunch data. If this does happen, the Board will need an additional appropriation from the Town General Fund or BOE Non-Lapsing fund to cover the loss.

Staff will collaborate with the Food Services Director during the upcoming budget process to identify long term solutions for the solvency of this program.

# Simsbury Board of Education Food Services Fund Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance

	2016 Actual		)17 tual		2018 Actual		2019 Actual	2020 Actual
Revenues							_	 
Daily Sales	\$ 540,01	3 \$ 5	68,480	\$	576,991	\$	617,754	\$ 31,708
Breakfast Sales	44,14	5	44,209		43,968		43,080	27,243
Advanced Meal Pay	-		-		-		-	403,575
Advanced Sales	-		-		-		-	33,719
Adult Sales	216,15	1 1	95,177		166,959		152,835	4,580
Alacarte Sales	-		-		-		-	87,338
Catering Sales	5,54	5	5,558		4,519		5,533	1,942
Rebates - Café	-		-		-		-	339
Reduced Sales	-		-		-		-	3,381
Commodities	75,65	5	74,219		62,400		73,593	82,521
Vending Sales	4,48	5	4,656		5,678		7,081	3,316
Misc Revenue	2,76	5	1,243		1,506		209	53
State Grants	37,93	3 2	234,971		40,900		40,954	41,994
Federal Grants	236,18	3	43,229		250,050		291,196	 244,342
<b>Total Revenues</b>	1,162,87	7 1,1	71,742		1,152,972		1,232,235	 966,050
Expenditures								
Salaries	609,49	9 6	505,021		613,763		596,361	639,333
Benefits	45,44	5	44,937		45,251		43,886	47,144
Food	513,21	3 4	80,821		476,668		521,616	402,848
Supplies	18,10	7	26,830		29,096		30,346	 56,825
Total Expenditures	1,186,26	4 1,1	57,609		1,164,778		1,192,210	 1,146,151
Operating Transfers								
Transfers In	-		_		-		_	100,000
<b>Total Operating Transfers</b>	-		-	_	-	_	-	100,000
Net Change in Fund Balance	(23,38	7)	14,133		(11,806)		40,026	(80,100)
Fund Balance - 7/1	166,20	6 1	42,819		156,952		145,146	 185,171
Fund Balance - 6/30	\$ 142,81	9 \$1	56,952	\$	145,146	\$	185,171	\$ 105,071
Fund Balance Reserve for Inventory	24,12	1	25,340		30,304		30,291	45,562
Unrestricted Fund Balance	118,69	8 1	31,612		114,842		154,881	59,509

# **COVID Expenditures**

Below is the most recent breakdown of unbudgeted expenditures, anticipated revenue losses and savings estimates associated with COVID-19:

# **Board of Education - COVID-19 Impact**

		Actual @ FY21			
Expense/Program		6/30/20		To Date	Fund Impacted
Athletics Programs Revenue Loss (Pay to Play)	\$	(110,270.47)	\$	-	General Fund
Food Services Program Loss		(100,000.00)		-	General Fund
Desks		(55,750.00)		(5,915.00)	General Fund
Desk Shields		-		(76,460.52)	General Fund
PPE (Gloves, Masks, sanitizer, plexiglass)		(55,146.55)		(20,511.05)	General Fund
Cleaning Supplies		(39,537.01)		(28,918.71)	General Fund
Laptops		(16,904.63)		-	General Fund
Chromebooks/IPADS and Cases		(8,324.31)	(	(196,998.30)	General Fund
Distance Learning Software & Supplies		(7,662.94)		(65,083.66)	Grant Fund/General Fund
Signage		(2,427.06)		(4,943.41)	General Fund
Staff Time (Cleaning, Opening Prep Etc)		(1,768.81)		(40,621.83)	General Fund
Hot Spots		(992.32)		(960.32)	General Fund
					Capital Fund/General
Ventilation		-		(92,107.22)	Fund
Speakerphones, Headsets, Adapters, Micropones		-		(44,668.40)	General Fund
Tents		-		(25,601.95)	General Fund
Portable Sinks		-		(20,058.00)	General Fund
USB Charging Stations		-		(9,104.15)	General Fund
Instructional Supplies (Outdoor Learning)		-		(5,427.18)	General Fund
Teacher Carts		-		(4,625.26)	General Fund
Report Card Software		-		(3,000.00)	General Fund
Recess Equipment & Supplies		-		(2,859.31)	General Fund
Personnel (Teachers)	_		(	(275,000.00)	General Fund
Total Expenses & Loss in Revenues		(398,784.10)	(	(922,864.27)	
Transportation Savings		476,356.84		-	General Fund
Substitute Teacher Savings		162,378.32		-	General Fund
Instructional Supply Savings		113,690.24		-	General Fund
Conference & Education Savings		53,642.30		-	General Fund
Utilities Savings	_	126,842.23		-	General Fund
Total Savings		932,909.93		-	
Net Savings (Loss) to the Board of Education	\$	534,125.83	\$ (	(922,864.27)	

MEMO TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis

Superintendent of Schools

DATE: September 22, 2020

RE: Board of Education Policies

The Policy Committee recently reviewed the new Use of Face Coverings in School policy and accompanying regulations. This policy was created as a result of recent guidance from the CT State Department of Education. The same policy will reside in both the Personnel Series and Student Series of the district's policy book.

The Policy Committee is recommending adoption of the Use of Face Coverings policy which will be placed in the following two locations:

- 4220 Use of Face Coverings in School (Personnel Series)
- 5136 Use of Face Coverings in School (Student Series)

A copy of the recommended policy has been provided to you this evening for further review. Following any discussion, this policy will be brought forward for approval at the next Board of Education meeting.

MTC:kdw