

SIMSBURY BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
May 24, 2022
Latimer Lane School
6:30 p.m.
AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. RECOGNITIONS
- III. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS
- V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
 - A. Approval of Minutes of May 10, 2022 Meeting EXHIBIT I
 - B. Personnel EXHIBIT II
 - C. Approval of Unaffiliated Salary Adjustments EXHIBIT III
 - D. Approval of Non-Lapsing Account Expenditures EXHIBIT IV
- VI. INFORMATION AND REPORTS
 - A. Latimer Lane School Report EXHIBIT V
 - B. Proposed 2022-23 Textbooks EXHIBIT VI
 - C. 2020-21 Audit Report EXHIBIT VII
 - D. Policy Second Reading EXHIBIT VIII
- VII. PUBLIC AUDIENCE
- VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

It is anticipated that the Board of Education will enter Executive Session to discuss the evaluation of the superintendent.
- IX. FUTURE BUSINESS
 - A. Next Board Meeting, Tuesday, June 14, 2022,
BOE Conference Room

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**TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Record of Proceedings

Regular Meeting

May 10, 2022

Ms. Tara Willerup called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board of Education conference room.

Roll Call:

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

Members absent: Mrs. Susan Salina and Mr. Jeff Tindall.

Also present: Superintendent Matt Curtis, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan, BOE Student Representative Alex Picoult and Recording Secretary Katie Wilde.

RECOGNITIONS

Shannon Gagne, Art Department Supervisor K-12, introduced the recipient of the CT Association of Schools (CAS) Scholar Artist Paulina Ganych and the Scholar Performing Artist Alex Vargas. Ms. Gagne provided a presentation of the Scholastic Art Award winners from SHS and HJMS.

Board members recognized students with framed artwork in the conference room that will remain for a two year period. Students present who were recognized: Avery Payson, Madeline Griggs, Luke Ferreira, Elaine Reffie, Brielle Incillo, Grace Wollenberg, Emily Panaro and Benjamin Keller. Those not present: Brooke Duncan, Dara Casale, Gavin Roberts, Henry Pugliese and Keely Sullivan.

Mr. Picoult presented his AP Art exam submission and walked everyone through his processes for each project he submitted.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

April Smith, 44 Climax Road, suggested that critical race theory has infiltrated the school system. She expressed concern with the book Gender Queer being available in the SHS library, and suggested that it is pornographic material. Ms. Smith suggested that this book will further confuse students going through puberty.

Jennifer Wilson, 23 Worcester Road, suggested that recent events at SHS are symptoms of a bigger problem. She stated that safety at SHS is concerning, noting that school climate is the most important element of school. Ms. Wilson questioned the lack of adult support at the scene of these incidents and stated that voices from students, staff, board members and the administration need to be heard.

COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOE COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Picoult reported that this is the second week of AP exams. He noted the upcoming events at SHS, as well as activities at HJMS and the elementary schools.

Ms. Tedone provided a summary of this year's legislative highlights affecting schools. Ms. Thomas suggested a climate and culture committee should come together and hear input from students.

Recognitions

Public Audience

Communications

Mr. Sullivan stated that since the April recess seven new teachers have been hired and more are coming in this week to sign contracts. He reported that the Board of Selectmen passed a resolution that the town will cover the deficit should bid estimates for the Latimer Lane renovation project come in over budget. The design drawings will be complete July 1 and then the project can go out to bid.

Ms. Willerup noted that the school district does send out climate surveys but going forward we need to make sure we are reaching all students. Mr. Curtis stated that over the past two years the district has sent a lot of push notifications due to Covid, and we need to now engage in receiving input from the community.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A. Approval of Minutes of April 26, 2022

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2022 meeting.

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

B. Acceptance of Donation from Central School PTO

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE that the proposed gift of \$2,500 to Central School by the Central School Parent-Teacher Organization be approved.

Mr. Burrick: Seconded. So moved.

C. Acceptance of Donation from Latimer Lane School PTO

Ms. Thomas: MOVE that the proposed gift of \$2,719 to Latimer Lane School Parent-Teacher Organization be approved.

Ms. Tedone: Seconded. So moved

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

A. 2020-21 Audit Report

Ms. Batchelar: MOVE to table the 2020-21 audit report to the May 24, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Thomas: Seconded. So moved.

B. Policy First Reading

Mr. Sullivan stated this policy is part of the personnel series and relates to an alcohol and drug free workplace. Due to changes in the cannabis laws in Connecticut, the policy needs to be revised.

PUBLIC AUDIENCE

Lori Boyko, 15 Oakhurst Road, stated there is more discussion in the public forum than in board meetings regarding curriculum concerns. She expressed concern about the assault at SHS and noted this is not a left or right issue. Ms. Boyko

Approval of
Minutes of April
26, 2022

Acceptance of
Donation from
Central School
PTO

Acceptance of
Donation from
Latimer Lane
School PTO

2020-21 Audit
Report

Policy First
Reading

Public Audience

referenced BOE policy stating that the display or possession of pornography is prohibited. She questioned why the same policy does not apply to the reading material in the school library.

Karen Meyers, 42 Woodside Circle, asked if parents are asked to participate when there is a climate survey. Mr. Curtis responded that parents have been included, as well as staff. Ms. Meyers suggested that the SHS sports contract should include consequences for sexual harassment and certain postings on social media.

Ms. Willerup stated that continuous improvement is the board's philosophy. Mr. Burrick noted that the BOE policies are continually reviewed on a loop.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to enter executive session to discuss student matters and include Superintendent Curtis at 7:29 p.m.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Burrick: MOVE to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Ms. Batchelar: Seconded. So moved.

Executive Session

Adjournment

Jennifer Batchelar
Secretary

Katie Wilde
Recording Secretary

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew T. Curtis
DATE: May 24, 2022
RE: Personnel Recommendations

I. Resignation

Mikayla Alicandro

Assignment School Psychologist, Tootin' Hills
Simsbury Exp 1 year
Effective June 30, 2022

Kevin Snyder

Assignment Math Teacher, Simsbury High School
Simsbury Exp 7 years
Effective June 30, 2022

BOARD MOTION:

"MOVE that the Board of Education accept the resignations of Mikayla Alicandro and Kevin Snyder effective June 30, 2022."

II. Notice of Intent to Retire

Lori Martensen

Assignment Math Coach, Tootin' Hills School
Simsbury Exp Currently 20 years
Effective June 30, 2025

BOARD MOTION:

"MOVE that the Board of Education accept the notice of intent to retire of Lori Martensen effective June 30, 2025."

MTC:cdf

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools
DATE: May 24, 2022
RE: Approval of Unaffiliated Salary Adjustments

It is anticipated that the Chairman of the Board of Education Personnel and Negotiations Committee will recommend compensation for unaffiliated employees for the 2022-23 school year.

MTC\kw

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

RE: FY 2021-2022 Approval for Use of Non-Lapsing Fund

DATE: May 24, 2022

As previously reported, the Board of Education is expected to end FY 2021-2022 in a deficit position by an estimated \$575,000 due to increased costs related to the hiring of three teachers at the beginning of the school year to accommodate increased enrollment, special education/social emotional support services, and increased transportation costs. In accordance with Charter the budget cannot be overspent without a supplemental appropriation. Therefore, staff is requesting approval to utilize the non-lapsing fund up to the amount of the year end loss not to exceed the non-lapsing fund balance of \$651,308.

In an effort to potentially reduce the amount of the year-end loss, staff has put a spending freeze in place. In addition, the District was notified of additional Open Choice grant funding anticipated to be received in the FY 2022-2023 budget year for an estimated \$330,000. This grant funding will be used to offset FY 2022-2023 operating expenditures which will in turn free up funding to replenish the non-lapsing fund. This will allow non-lapsing fund funding levels sufficient to cover cliff funding in future budget years as originally intended during the FY 2022-2023 budget adoption plan.

In accordance with the Board of Education Non-Lapsing fund policy, "Authorization of expenditures from such account shall be approved jointly by both the Board of Education and the Board of Finance." If the Board of Education supports moving forward with the funding plan as outlined above, the following motion is in order:

"Move, effective May 24, 2022 to authorize the use of the Board of Education Non-Lapsing fund up to the amount of the FY 2021-2022 year end deficit not to exceed \$651,308."

If approved, this requested will be reviewed at the upcoming Board of Finance meeting on June 14, 2022.

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 24, 2022

RE: Latimer Lane School Report

Design drawings for the Latimer Lane expansion and renovate-as-new project are nearing completion, with Tecton Architects planning to submit finished documents to the state on or around July 1, 2022. Design meetings have been held every Wednesday afternoon for the past several months involving both the professional team and school-based personnel such as Mike Luzietti, Neil Sullivan, and Jason Casey. Other stakeholders were brought into the meetings as needed during design-decision meetings for the media center, kitchen, security, technology infrastructure, and interior design.

Design work calls for two additions at opposite ends of the building – one that is a classroom wing and a larger section that will house the core facilities (gymnasium, cafeteria, kitchen, etc.). Preliminary plans call for these areas to be the first phases of construction, and then subsequent parts of the building will be addressed based on the “renovate-as-new” standard. During that phase, the current cafeteria and a portion of the current gym will be transformed to a modern Library Media Center, and all classroom spaces will be renovated.

The professional team has also been involved in a process of reconciling estimates that resulted in some cost overruns to the construction budget. Through both value management and a strategy of bidding some aspects of the project as alternates, the team was able to reduce the amount of the overrun to \$1.3 million, and the Boards of Selectmen and Finance recently passed motions stating the town’s willingness to cover that amount of additional spending, thus allowing the project to get out to bid during the summer time frame.

Tonight, Principal Mike Luzietti will be presenting an update to the Board on progress with design work, the current phasing schedule once construction begins, and the school community’s plans to manage the teaching and learning environment during construction.

TO: Members of the Board of Education
FROM: Matthew T. Curtis, Superintendent
DATE: May 24, 2022
RE: TEXTBOOK ADOPTION, 2022-2023

Each spring, the Board of Education reviews and adopts new textbooks (which includes related supplementary materials and teacher resource kits) to be used by students and staff the following year. Textbooks recommended for adoption are initially selected by a department, committee, or staff member and are reviewed by the department supervisor, building principal and central office prior to submission to the Board for approval.

The attached list represents books that are required for all students to read in a specific course, grade, or ability level.

If any Board member wishes to review any of the books in more detail, this can be arranged by contacting the Assistant Superintendent's office.

Following tonight's discussion, this item will be placed on the June 14, 2022 agenda for action.

MTC:da

Att.

TEXTBOOK ADOPTION, 2022-2023

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>GRADE/LEVEL</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>PUBLISHER</u>	<u>PUB.DATE</u>
English	9	Black Enough	edited by Ibi Zoboi	Harper Collins	2019
<p>This is a supplemental text that fits into the Coming of Age unit in 9th grade and is used to study the devices of a short story. This collection of short stories features a wide variety of experiences of young black teens in America.</p>					
English	10	Long Way Down	Jason Reynolds	Simon & Schuster	2017
<p>This is a supplemental text that is entirely written in verse, and is a high interest and quick read for 10th graders Destiny Tragic Hero Unit. It will supplement Macbeth to facilitate the poetry and grammar section of the unit.</p>					
English	9	The Sun is Also a Star	Yoon, Nicola	Delacorte Press	2016
<p>Pairing this text with Romeo and Juliet will provide students with a modern example of "love at first sight" and forbidden or doomed love. Pairing contemporary texts with classic texts promotes student engagement with the classic text.</p>					
World Language	9-12	ASL Signing Naturally Units 1-6	Cheri Smith, Ella Mae Lentz, and Ken Mikos	Dawn Sign Press	2008
<p>The goal of this text is to bring a person unable to communicate in American Sign Language (ASL) to a basic level of communicative competency. Cultural information taught throughout this course allows students to interact with the Deaf community in a way that is respectful and aware.</p>					
World Language	10-12	ASL Signing Naturally Units 7-12	Cheri Smith, Ella Mae Lentz, and Ken Mikos	Dawn Sign Press	2014
<p>Students learn the advanced grammatical uses of ASL including how sign movements can be modified to change meaning; how and when facial expressions occur; and how body, head, and eye movements are used in phrasing and agreement.</p>					
Social Studies	12, AP	The Cultural Landscape: An Introduction to Human Geography	J. M. Rubenstein	Pearson	2020

This text covers the College Board created curriculum goals for the AP Human Geography course including geography, population, health, migration, languages, religions, ethnicities, food & agriculture, and other topics.

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew Curtis
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 24, 2022

RE: 2020-21 Audit Report

The firm of CliftonLarsonAllen LLP has completed its 2021 audit report for the Town of Simsbury. The entire report, including the management advisory letter, is available in the Superintendent's office.

Below is a summarization of the changes in the Town's General Fund balance for the year ended June 30, 2021, as presented in the audit report:

	<u>Final Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Revenues	\$ 103,404,989	\$ 104,396,636	\$ 991,647
Expenditures	\$ 100,692,509	\$ 100,692,509	\$ 0*
Surplus (Deficit)	<u>\$ 2,712,480</u>	<u>\$ 3,704,127</u>	<u>\$ 991,647</u>

- (*) The Board of Education's contribution to the end of the year operating expenditure budget balance was \$0; \$(6,870) from the public school budget and \$6,870 from the non-public school budget.

Excess of revenues over expenditures (GAAP basis)	\$ 4,348,445
Net transfers to other funds	\$ (5,271,945)
General Fund balance at July 1, 2020	<u>\$ 18,904,280</u>
General Fund balance at June 30, 2021	\$ 17,980,780
Non-spendable \$158,914	
Committed \$651,308	
Assigned \$215,191	
	<u>\$ (1,025,413)</u>
Unassigned General Fund balance available for appropriation at July 1, 2021	<u>\$ 16,955,367</u>

A summary of changes in fund balance for the Reserve Fund for Capital and Non-Recurring expenditures is presented below:

Fund balance at June 30, 2020	\$ 1,662,683
Revenue and other sources	\$ 2,568,121
Expenditures and other uses	\$ (2,535,583)
Fund Balance at June 30, 2021	<u>\$ 1,695,221</u>

The auditor's June 30, 2021 management advisory letter for the Board of Education addressed the 2021 status of the 2020 comments.

Accounting Procedures Manual:

- "We recommend the Town and Board of Education consider the development of a comprehensive accounting procedures manual for their finance offices."

2021 Update: The Town has started to accumulate all current relevant written procedures/instructions into one common subdirectory on the Finance Department network drive. The majority of procedures will change with the current implementation of the new Munis accounting system. Once implementation has been completed, procedures for the Town and Board of Education will mirror each other, and one manual for both entities created. Full completion is estimated during 2023.

Fraud Risk Assessment

- We recommend that both the Town and Board of Education have a Fraud Risk Assessment performed. A Fraud Risk Assessment is designed to proactively identify fraud risk, pinpoint opportunities to reduce the cost of fraud, determine if adequate fraud prevention exists and to help create cost effective fraud prevention and detection policies and procedures.

2021 Update: The funding request for a Fraud Risk Assessment was made during the FY20 budget process. It has been included in year three (FY24) of the six-year capital plan for the Town of Simsbury.

EXHIBIT VIII

MEMORANDUM TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Matthew T. Curtis
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: May 24, 2022

RE: Board of Education Policies – Second Reading

The Policy Committee recently reviewed revised policy based on state legislative requirements. The policy revision is part of the 4000 Personnel series. The Policy Committee is recommending adoption of the following policies:

- 4500 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

A copy of the recommended policy has been provided to you this evening for your review. Following any discussion, this policy will be brought forward for adoption at the June 14th Board of Education meeting.

MTC:kdw

4500 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a workplace that is free of the effects of alcohol and second-hand smoke, and free from drug abuse. By accomplishing this purpose, the Board of Education (the "Board") also seeks to promote a safe, healthy working environment for all employees and to reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and other job performance problems that may be caused by alcohol and/or drug abuse. This policy is adopted in accordance with state law and the Drug Free Workplace Act.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

Employees shall not be involved with the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal drug, a controlled substance, or alcohol, and shall not be under the influence of such substances while on school property or while conducting Board business on or off school property. Any employee who discovers illegal drugs, a controlled substance, or alcohol on school property shall notify the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee who shall investigate the matter.

An employee must report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off school property while on Board business to the Superintendent or his/her designee within five (5) days after the conviction. The Board will notify any agency awarding a grant to the Board of such conviction within ten (10) days thereafter.

Employees shall only use prescription drugs on school property, or during the conduct of Board business, that have been prescribed to them by a licensed medical practitioner, and such drugs shall be used only as prescribed. However, in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-408a through 408q, the Board specifically prohibits the palliative use of marijuana on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or during the conduct of Board business, and specifically prohibits employees from being under the influence of intoxicating substances, including marijuana used for palliative purposes, during work hours.

The Board prohibits smoking, including smoking using an electronic nicotine delivery system (e.g., e-cigarettes), electronic cannabis delivery system, or vapor product, and the use of tobacco products in any area of a school building, on school property, including property owned, leased, contracted for, or utilized by the Board, or at any school-sponsored activity.

While Connecticut law allows for the legal use of marijuana under certain circumstances, because marijuana use is still prohibited under federal law, the use

of marijuana at work, or outside of work if it impairs an employee's ability to perform their job, constitutes a violation of this policy.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

DEFINITIONS

"Any area" means the interior of a school building and the outside area within twenty-five feet of any doorway, operable window or air intake vent of a school building.

"Cannabis" means marijuana, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-240.

"Controlled substance" means a controlled substance in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970 (21 U.S.C. 812), including marijuana.

"Electronic cannabis delivery system" means an electronic device that may be used to simulate smoking in the delivery of cannabis to a person inhaling the device and includes, but is not limited to, a vaporizer, electronic pipe, electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device.

"Electronic nicotine delivery system" means an electronic device used in the delivery of nicotine to a person inhaling from the device, and includes, but is not limited to, an electronic cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe or electronic hookah and any related device and any cartridge or other component of such device, including, but not limited to, electronic cigarette liquid or synthetic nicotine.

"School property" means any land and all temporary and permanent structures comprising the district's school and administrative office buildings and includes, but is not limited to, classrooms, hallways, storage facilities, theatres, gymnasiums, fields, and parking lots.

"School-sponsored activity" means any activity sponsored, recognized, or authorized by a board of education and includes activities conducted on or off school property.

"Smoke" or "smoking" means the burning of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe or any other similar device, whether containing, wholly or in part, tobacco, cannabis or hemp.

"Vapor product" means any product that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit or other electronic, chemical or mechanical means,

regardless of shape or size, to produce a vapor that may or may not include nicotine or cannabis and is inhaled by the user of such product.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

In appropriate circumstances, the Board shall provide an employee with an opportunity for rehabilitation in overcoming addiction to, dependence upon or other problem with alcohol or drugs.

Employees who feel they have developed an addiction to, dependence upon, or other problem with alcohol or drugs are encouraged to seek assistance. Certain benefits for alcoholism or drug addiction are provided under the Board's group medical insurance plan. An employee may be given an opportunity to participate in a rehabilitation program that requires absence from work for bona fide treatment. Such absence may be charged to the employee's accrued and unused sick leave, subject to the provisions of the employee's collective bargaining agreement and/or any applicable Board policies and regulations.

Any request for assistance with a drug or alcohol problem will be treated as confidential and only those persons "needing to know" will be made aware of such request.

Legal References:

Connecticut General Statutes:

- Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-233a(h) (definition of school-sponsored activity)
- Conn. Gen. Stat. § 19a-342
- Conn. Gen. Stat. § 19a-342a
- Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-408a through 408q (palliative use of marijuana)
- June Special Session, Public Act No. 21-1

United States Code:

- Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7973, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, Public Law 114-95, § 4001
- Drug Free Workplace Act, 41 U.S.C. § 8101 et seq.

Revised June 14, 2022