

Board of Education Special Meeting  
Suffield High School Media Center  
and via Zoom Webinar  
April 3, 2023

Call to Order

Board Chair Sattan called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Present: Board members Terry Antrum, Josh Barrows (via Zoom), Tracy Cloyd, Jamie Drzyzga (via Zoom), Melissa Finnigan, Brian Fry, James Mol and Maureen Sattan; and Superintendent Timothy Van Tassel

Absent: Glenn Gazdik

Executive Session

Board Chair Sattan moved to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the non-renewal of contracts and invited Superintendent Van Tassel to join the session. Board member Finnigan seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The executive session ended at 6:35 p.m. The regular meeting resumed and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, Business Manager Bill Hoff and SHS Student Representatives Sophia Mormino (via Zoom) and Milo Graham joined the regular meeting in addition to those listed above.

Recognition

Carrie Apanovitch, Suffield High School Principal, introduced Suffield High School Class of 2023 students Tyson Tucker and Myiah Rusczyk who provided overviews of their Capstone projects. Principal Apanovitch said the students reflected on how the Portrait of the Graduate skills related to them personally and how it provided them opportunities to do some work outside of the classroom. The students shared their experiences of volunteer work and provided examples of how the project has helped them to become stronger communicators, contributors, critical thinkers and collaborators. The students believe their work on the Capstone project will help them achieve their future goals and their potential future careers. Principal Apanovitch shared Avery Becker's, Class of 2023, Capstone project. Principal Apanovitch said she is excited by the first year of Capstone and looks forward to seeing the project grow.

Suffield High School Student Representatives

Milo Graham, Class of 2024, shared the news and events at McAlister Intermediate School and A.Ward Spaulding School. Student Representative Graham said Read Across America was a success. Grades 3 and 4 visited the CT Historical Society. Second and third graders are preparing for the Soup and Sing on May 4. AWS and MIS will be receiving book bags, courtesy of the Voisine Kindness Matters Grant, put together by Student Representative Graham and MIS Library Media Specialist Joy Tierney. The bags include books to help start conversations about kindness, diversity, inclusivity and more.

Sophia Mormino, Class of 2023, shared the news and events at Suffield High School and Suffield Middle School. Student Representative Mormino said SMS softball tryouts are taking

place April 3-6 and outdoor track will start soon. The SHS VBM and Trivia Night were huge successes. The SHS Drama Club put on the production of The Addams Family and performed to large audiences. Unified Theater will be starting on April 17.

***Milo Graham left at 7:20 p.m.***

Public Comment

None

Board Member Comment

- Board member Drzyzga and Barrows thanked the students who presented on Capstone.
- Board member Finnigan thanked Todd Zenczak, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, for scheduling Jarvis Miller, former Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker and SHS Class of 2015 graduate, to visit Mrs. Hanson's third grade classroom. A parent of one of the students in Mrs. Hanson's class has been advocating to get a football field put in near MIS/SMS and Mr. Zenczak went above and beyond to bring some football to the classroom. Board member Finnigan said she attended Trivia Night and thanked everyone involved with putting it together.
- Board member Fry said April 21 is the deadline for scholarship applications.
- Board member Mol said his child is in the third grade class that was visited by Jarvis Miller and was happy to hear how excited the students were by his visit.

Reports to the Board

• Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Van Tassel thanked Board Chair Sattan, Vice Chair Gazdik and Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Chair Finnigan for presenting the BOE FY24 Budget Proposal to the BOF. The presentation can be found on the district website. He congratulated the SMS FCCLA (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America) team, coached by Julia Porter, SMS FACS teacher, on winning the Food Innovation category at this year's annual competition. SMS students Maya Johnson and Marielle Aryee were two students who won their category, qualifying them for the National FCCLA competition. Superintendent Van Tassel thanked the SFES for awarding a grant of \$10,425 to Mark Beigel for his program titled "Biotechnology-Genetic/DNA Editing in the High School Classroom." He also thanked Mark Beigel for coming up with the idea and for applying for this substantial grant. Superintendent Van Tassel congratulated Dr. Laura LaFlamme for successfully defending her dissertation on *Cultural relevance for all. Redesigning supervised agriculture experience. The effects of a professional learning community*. Superintendent Van Tassel said April is Autism Awareness month.

• Board Chair's Report

March was BOE Appreciation month and a Spotlight video featuring the BOE can be found on the district website. She said the budget presentation to the Board of Finance was given last Monday and their deliberations will begin next Monday.

- Business Manager's Report

Business Manager Bill Hoff said the presentation given to the BOF can be found on the district website. He reviewed a section of the presentation that covered total expenditures and grant revenue offsets. Grant revenue is down by \$837,360, which is 2.48% of our proposed 5.96% increase. Board Chair Sattan said she asked Mr. Hoff to share this with the BOE today because it had been put together after the Board met in advance of presenting it to the BOF.

- Board of Selectmen's Report

None

- Board of Finance Liaison's Report

None

#### Approval of Minutes

**MOTION #22-111:** James Mol moved, Tracy Cloyd seconded to approve the Board of Education meeting minutes of March 6, March 20 and March 23, 2023. Board Chair Sattan would like to her statement regarding Public Comments added to the March 6, 2023 minutes. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

#### Consent Agenda

**MOTION #22-112:** Brian Fry moved to approve the following on the consent agenda:

- A. Policy #4117.6 – Exit Interviews (Certified Personnel)
- B. Policy #4217.6 – Exit Interviews (Non-Certified Personnel)

Terry Antrum seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the consent agenda. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

#### Discussion/Action Items

- Roles and Responsibilities of School Nurses

**MOTION #22-113:** Board Chair Sattan moved to table this item to a future meeting. James Mol seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

- February Financial Report

Business Manager Bill Hoff reported on the general operating budget, federal and state grants, and food service income. The projected year end shows a net surplus of \$116,112.

- Discussion and possible approval of the SHS Agriscience Field Trip Request

Suffield High School Agriscience Department submitted a field trip request form for April 2024 to travel to Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris and London. Superintendent Van Tassel said the Connecticut Association of Agriculture is offering a multi chapter opportunity to travel to Europe in 2024. Iconic landmarks and museums will be visited. Chaperones at this point are not an issue as many parents are interested in chaperoning. The field trip is planned for April 9-17, 2024. A Board member said Dr. LaFlamme would be one of the chaperones and there is no cost to the district as student contributions pay toward the chaperones.

**MOTION #22-114:** Brian Fry moved to approve the SHS Agriscience Field Trip Request as presented. Tracy Cloyd seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

- Discussion and Possible Approval of the 2023-2024 Healthy Foods Certification  
Mr. Hoff said the state is requiring two motions to accept the Healthy Foods Certification and the Board needs to approve this for next year's program.

**MOTION #22-115:** Tracy Cloyd moved, Pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the Suffield Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, 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, 2023, through June 30, 2024. 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 stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. James Mol seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

**MOTION #22-116:** Melissa Finnigan moved that the Suffield Board of Education will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes 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 and beverage 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 "regular 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 and beverage sales. Terry Antrum seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

- Non-Renewal of Staff in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes

**MOTION #22-117:** Melissa Finnigan moved to approve the non-renewal of staff as presented in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes. Brian Fry seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

- Discussion and possible action on the appointment of Business Manager at Suffield Public Schools

**MOTION #22-118:** James Mol moved to approve the appointment of Eric Remington as Business Manager at Suffield Public Schools. Melissa Finnigan seconded the motion. Superintendent Van Tassel said Mr. Remington comes to SPS after 28 years in the private sector, he is a Certified Public Accountant, is a lifelong resident of Suffield, and has been serving as Director of Finance for the Town over the past year. Mr. Remington has been working closely with Mr. Hoff since he transitioned into his role with the town and has become familiar with

SPS. Board Chair Sattan said Mr. Remington will be a wonderful fit and we are lucky to have him. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

### Subcommittee Reports

- March 3, 2023 – Policy Subcommittee Meeting – the following Policy is being placed on a 30-day read: #3280 Gifts, Grants, and Bequests. Policy #6174 Summer Learning Academy is being revised and will be reviewed further at another meeting. Policy #5123.3 Graduation Ceremony was discussed with a focus on adornments worn by students, the language will be revised and reviewed further at another meeting.
- March 30 – Finance & Facilities – Board member Finnigan said the February Financial Report was reviewed. Larry Plano gave a facilities update on the LAF. Fencing will be put up around the schools to create barriers defining school areas. AWS and MIS playscape requests are currently with ACCE for final approval. SMS tennis courts will be finished over the next few months. The budget presentation to the BOF was positive, deliberations begin next Monday and the BOE should know by April 17 if any changes need to be made.

### Board Liaison Reports

- CREC – None
- Agriscience – Board member Fry said Agriscience Consultants will meet on Monday, April 24, 2023. Pebbles the goat is expecting and has created a lot of excitement in the Agriscience Department. At the time of this report, Pebbles the goat was delivering her kids.
- CABA – None

### Future Business

- Gifted and Talented Population (TBS)

Key: RTS (Referred to Subcommittee), SNT (Scheduled Near-Term),  
TBS (To Be Scheduled), HLD (On Hold)

### Public Comment

None

### Board Member Comment

- Board member Fry welcomed Pebble's three baby kids to the world. He welcomed Eric Remington to SPS, congratulated Dr. Laura LaFlamme on her academic achievement and thanked Board Chair Sattan for writing a letter to the PZC regarding the Board's unanimous support of the digital signage.
- Board member Mol echoed Board member Fry's comments and congratulated Pebbles.

### Adjournment

James Mol moved, Tracy Cloyd seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. All members voted in favor.

Click here to view the meeting: [03APR2023 BOE Meeting](#)

*Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of May 1, 2023.*

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Drzyzga  
Secretary