

Board of Education Special Meeting  
Suffield High School Library Media Center  
and via Zoom Webinar  
July 22, 2024

**Call to Order**

Board Chair Sattan called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Board members Debra Dudack, Melissa Finnigan, Brian Fry, James Mol, Gianna Rossi, Maureen Sattan, Gregory Sparzo and Sam Toskin; and Superintendent Matthew Dunbar; Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, Business Manager Eric Remington, and Director of Special Education Diana Kelley, Ed.D.

Absent: Josh Barrows

**Recognition**

Chair Sattan introduced the new Superintendent of Suffield Schools, Matt Dunbar. Superintendent Dunbar thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with a wonderful district. Chair Sattan introduced Gianna Rossi and Greg Sparzo, recently appointed members of the Board of Education. Both Board members expressed thanks for the appointment and are looking forward to contributing to the Board.

**Public Comment**

None

**Board Member Comment**

- Board member Finnigan welcomed Board members Rossi and Sparzo and wished Tracy Cloyd and Glenn Gazdik the best.
- Board member Dudack welcomed Board members Rossi and Sparzo and Superintendent Dunbar and thanked Glastonbury Public Schools for his smooth transition. She highlighted the Music Department for the wonderful Summer Band Camp concert.
- Board member Fry welcomed Board members Rossi and Sparzo and said he believes they will find the work rewarding.
- Board members Mol and Toskin welcomed Superintendent Dunbar and Board members Rossi and Sparzo. They thanked the Music Department for the incredible summer program and concert.
- Board member Rossi thanked the Board for the warm welcome.

**Reports to the Board**

A. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Dunbar thanked Kathy Carney, Director of Human Resources, for the successful job fair held at Central Office on July 17. He attended the Permanent Building Commission (PBC) meeting with Eric Remington, Business Manager, and Larry Plano, Director of Facilities. A meeting with the PBC Chairs will be held this week to discuss the HVAC grant. Superintendent Dunbar asked Mr. Remington to share information on the Suffield Middle School (SMS) gymnasium floor

refinishing project. The flooring project at Suffield High School (SHS) should be complete by mid-August. Playground surfacing at A. Ward Spaulding School (AWS) and McAlister Intermediate School (MIS) will begin next week. Kindergarten enrollment currently stands at 122 students. Class size will be monitored at all grade levels.

#### B. Board Chair's Report

Board Chair Sattan thanked Board member Finnigan for her graduation speech. Board member Rossi received an orientation for new members and Board member Sparzo is scheduled for this week. Introductory meetings with Superintendent Dunbar were held with Attorney Jessica Ritter and First Selectman Colin Moll. An introductory meeting with Eric Harrington, Board of Finance, will be scheduled. Superintendent Dunbar met individually with Chief James Canon, Suffield Police Department, and Chief Scott Cunningham, Suffield Fire Department. Board Chair Sattan requested Board members indicate their availability throughout the summer to help with planning.

#### C. Business Manager's Report

Business Manager Eric Remington is waiting to finalize end of year financials. The amount for the non-lapsing fund will be determined after the year-end financials have been finalized. He reported on unbudgeted FY24 purchases and said there is nothing significant to report on the FY25 budget. Work will soon begin on the FY26 budget. Succession planning for the Accounting Coordinator position has begun. Food Service staffing remains an issue and he is not anticipating breakfast to be free next year which will result in revenue reduction. The outstanding balance for lunch charges stands at \$12,000 and he continues to pursue recovering those funds. M&J Transportation is working on bus routes.

#### D. Board of Selectmen's Report

None

#### E. Board of Finance Liaison's Report

None

### **Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION #25-03:** Dudack moved, Mol seconded to approve the Board of Education meeting minutes of June 3, June 21, and June 27, 2024. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

### **Consent Agenda**

**MOTION #24-04:** Sattan moved, Fry seconded to separate Policy #6113 Senior Privileges from the Consent Agenda to allow for discussion, Fry seconded. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

**MOTION #25-05:** Mol moved to approve the following on the consent agenda:

1. Policy #5122.3 Assignment of Former Home-Schooled Students
2. Policy #6146 Graduation Requirements
3. Policy #6172.6 Virtual/Online Learning

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

Superintendent Dunbar explained that Policy #6113 was separated from the Consent Agenda to allow for a small technical change. With 25 credits needed to graduate, students will need 18.5 credits by the end of their Junior year to be eligible for Senior privileges, not 18 credits as originally stated.

**MOTION #24-06:** Fry moved to accept the policy changes made to Series 6000, Policy #6113, to reflect a change in Section 1. A. (3) from 17.5 credits, to what was expected to be 18 credits, to now a corrected 18.5 credits completed by the end of Junior year. Dudack seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion passed **8-0-0**.

### **Discussion/Action Items**

#### **A. Discussion and Possible Action on Non-Lapsing Account**

No discussion or action taken.

#### **B. Summer School Update**

Michelle Zawawi, Assistant Superintendent, provided an update on the summer programs currently being offered by Suffield Public Schools. Dr. Diana Kelley provided an update on the Extended School Year (ESY) program. Board members discussed ESY funding, fees for families, enrollment and attendance figures.

#### **C. Staffing Update**

Superintendent Dunbar provided an update on district staffing.

AWS is expected to start the year with seven sections of kindergarten instead of eight originally projected due to lower than expected enrollment, which will result in cost savings. The SHS Library Media Specialist position and the 1-year Social Worker position have been filled. A late resignation was received from a SHS business teacher and interviews will take place this week. The SMS Math Interventionist has been hired. A Grade 1 position at AWS will need to be filled.

Board members discussed kindergarten class size and the Athletic Director position.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

Board Chair Sattan said subcommittees have not met since the last business meeting and there are no individual subcommittee reports. Subcommittees have been restructured to fill vacancies from the board members who recently resigned. Board member Toskin has agreed to chair the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee. Board member Rossi will join the Community Engagement and Public Relations (CEPR) Subcommittee and the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee. Board member Sparzo will join the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee and the Policy Subcommittee.

### **Board Liaison Reports**

A. Capital Region Education Council (CREC) – No report

B. Agriscience – No report

C. Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) – Board member Finnigan said she is attending a school funding webinar on August 13.

### **Future Business**

No new requests

### **Public Comment**

None

**Board Member Comment**

- Board member Dudack said she hopes the upcoming Roles and Responsibilities workshop will be required for all Board members.
- Board member Fry said M&J Transportation had staffing issues last year and he is worried about transportation this year. He encourages a push towards more buses and is concerned that more families will drive instead of taking the bus, which impacts traffic at our schools.
- Board member Sattan said she was grateful for Glenn Gazdik and Tracy Cloyd serving on the board and the impacts they made.

**Adjournment**

Dudack moved, Mol seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. All members voted in favor.

Click here to view the meeting: [22JUL2024 BOE Meeting \(Recording #1\)](#)  
[22JUL2024 BOE Meeting \(Recording #2\)](#)

*Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of September 3, 2024.*

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Dudack  
Secretary