

Board of Education Regular Meeting  
Suffield High School Library Media Center  
October 21, 2024

Call to Order

Board Chair Sattan called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Present: Board members Debra Dudack, Melissa Finnigan (arrived at 6:36 pm), Brian Fry, Maureen Sattan, Gregory Sparzo, Sam Toskin; and Superintendent Matthew Dunbar, Assistant Superintendent Michelle Zawawi, and Business Manager Eric Remington

Absent: Josh Barrows, James Mol and Gianna Rossi

Discussion/Action Items

A. Student Achievement Results: Suffield Middle School and McAlister Intermediate School

Suffield Middle School Principal Ken Smith and McAlister Intermediate School Principal Kris Pryce gave a presentation on the Spring 2024 Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) test results for grades 3-8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. They reviewed the percentages of students who scored at or above goals by 1) grade level, 2) cohorts, 3) District Reference Group (DRG) C - which is a state-assigned grouping of districts with similar socio-economic positions, and 4) select districts in Hartford County. Principal Pryce and Principal Smith shared administrators' responses to the data, including actions being taken to improve the understanding and retention of ELA and Math learning. In addition, they reviewed the percentages of students who scored at or above goals by grade level on the Spring 2024 Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) tests for grades 5, 8 and 11.

Remington left the meeting at 7:14 pm and returned at 7:18 pm.

Toskin left the meeting at 7:28 pm and returned at 7:42 pm.

Superintendent Dunbar stated that he is impressed by the efforts of district administrators and curriculum coaches to review the SBAC and NGSS data and develop new strategies to implement curriculum with fidelity and enhance student learning. He emphasized the district's focus on improving the multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) process to ensure students at all levels have support to address any learning gaps. He noted the need for budgetary support to continue proper implementation of the new ELA and Math programs at A. Ward Spaulding School and McAlister Intermediate School. He also stressed the importance of accountability for himself and administrators - noting that all are committed to improving student learning in our schools.

Board members discussed the achievement results, asked questions about the assessment tool's grade level expectations, expressed concern over segments of the achievement data, and expressed support of the Administration's future plans for improvement.

Sattan left the meeting at 8:02 pm and returned at 8:06 pm.

## B. Suffield Middle School Update and School Advancement Plan

Principal Smith reviewed objectives in the Suffield Middle School Advancement Plan, which include measuring instructional practices, further enhancing MTSS practices to increase student achievement, enhancing collaborative time for teachers, and implementing new evaluation plans. He also reviewed corresponding action steps and indicators of success for each objective.

Board members asked questions related to the teaming model, special education, the recent elimination of the double block of ELA, honors or accelerated courses, the impact of hybrid teams in grades 7 and 8, and the school climate.

Sparzo left the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Zawawi left the meeting at 8:47 pm and returned at 8:50 pm.

## C. 2025-2026 Budget Process Discussion

Board members reviewed a potential budget timeline in comparison to past budget timelines. Board members discussed their desire to make the budget process more efficient while still allowing for the necessary transparency to ensure Board and public support of the plan. Board members expressed support for proposed changes to the budget approval process and noted the importance of finalizing a process in collaboration with Superintendent Dunbar and Business Manager Remington.

Toskin left the meeting at 9:06 pm.

### Adjournment

Sattan moved, Fry seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 pm. All members voted in favor.

*Minutes are subject to approval at the regular meeting of November 4, 2024.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Dudack  
Secretary