

**SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, March 18, 2021**  
**Final Minutes**

**Present: Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Katie Fiander, Stephen Sullivan, members; Dan Hayes, Chair; Jackie Mendonsa, Principal; Bruce Turner, Director of Finance & Operations; Jennifer Culkeen, Superintendent; Public Guests**

**A. Meeting Called to Order by Dan at 7:01 P.M.**

**B. Public Hearings: None.**

**C. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar:** No changes.

**D. Warrants and Gifts:**

#319 3/22/21 \$67,616.49

#3021 3/8/21 \$4,213.58

**E. Approval of Minutes from February 25, 2021:**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25. KATIE SECONDED.  
UNANIMOUS.**

**F. Unfinished Business / Updates:**

1. 2020-2021 Reopening:

Jennifer reported that Secretary Peyser gave Commissioner Riley permission on March 5 to mandate schools return to full in-person instruction. Elementary schools must return by April 5, middle schools by April 28, and high schools by a date in April yet to be determined. This mandate has the force of law and incorporates COVID guidelines recommended by the CDC. U#28 schools will all be in-person on April 5; after that date, hybrid and remote options won't count towards instructional time. This year only, families may elect to have their children continue learning remotely, however. Jennifer invited questions from SSC.

Dan invited Jennifer to deliver her Superintendent's Report early, and she did so: All U#28 schools are prepared to return to in-person instruction on or before April 5. MCAS has been pushed into May at this point, and MASC has sent a letter to DESE requesting that MCAS be reconsidered this year, as it doesn't seem the place to be focusing our energies after this enervating pandemic.

Dan then invited Jackie to give her report, as it complements Jennifer's. Jackie said the announcement to return to in-person instruction April 5 was a big surprise. We've been communicating with families all along, and as of now, there are only two students we haven't gotten confirmation from regarding their preference for remote learning, and we only have seven students opting to continue remote learning. Earlier, there were far more students who preferred remote learning, so this is a marked shift. Jackie noted that our Food Service is planning to serve lunches in bento boxes for all students; this will save on packaging and effort, as our kids will be eating outside. We're getting an outdoor tent for classes and

putting technology in place to extend the wifi signal farther outside, and we're keeping our separate entrances, exits, and bathrooms. Specials will be coming back in person, and we had to mix up classrooms to be able to provide enough space for everyone. For the most part, teachers are planning on being outside with students. More students are choosing transportation (38 now), although not nearly as many as during a normal year. A 6th Grade paraeducator is coming back from leave and will help to set up an outdoor learning program. Andrea Darby is retiring this year, so we will be posting for a Student Support teacher position soon. Our Secretary Jessica Carlson-Belanger is also leaving this year as she finishes her School Counselor degree, so we'll need to find a replacement as well for this vital job.

#### **G. New Business / Discussion Items:**

1. 2021-2022 Academic Calendar - Vote:

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2021-2022 ACADEMIC CALENDAR AS PRESENTED. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

2. Identification of School Choice Seats:

Jackie said there might only be two grade with Choice seats available; we expect to have very large Kindergarten and 2nd Grade classes.

3. MOA - Discussion and Vote: Moved to Executive Session.

#### **H. Reports:**

1. Superintendent's Report: See F above.

2. Director of Finance and Operations: Bruce reported that we're getting the Rural Aid numbers in and he'll be reviewing them. We've also got a figure for a repair/upgrade of the heating system (\$175K), a request that has been passed on to the Town.

Dan explained there was a meeting of the Capital Planning Committee last night. Steve reported on it: there are two proposals that are miles apart. The Capital Planning Committee decided they need to take a look at the system again before making a decision. Steve recommended SSC make their preference known to the Committee so the process can start. He also recommended that the elements of the delivery system be donated to a museum so they may be placed appropriately among the fossils of their extinct brethren. Bruce said he'll be applying to the state for help with both the roof and the boilers as soon as the application period begins. Dan clarified that SSC and administration want the heating system working reliably, efficiently, and cost-effectively, which requires a holistic look at the entire system when considering RFPs. He thought the meeting last night demonstrated that the Town understands the school's need. But it's also important to look at the entire system and everything we might need to fix it. Jackie agreed, noting that we will be having windows and doors open a lot of the time to get more air circulation. Dan praised Matt for all his expertise, attentiveness, effort, and work to keep the whole system running as well as it can.

3. Principal's Report: See F above.

4. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report:

Steve reported that he voted yes to flipping the start times in ARPS, which passed, so we'll feel an effect from that on SES and need to plan for that. He is also planning on voting for the current 65%, rolling 5-year average statutory assessment method. Jackie noted that the change in the start time might be a challenge because of the bus routes in town. Steve said he thinks we can make it work because it's one bus company. We've been involved in this conversation with the Amherst Superintendent on this issue as well. Jackie promised to keep SSC informed of her discussions with him.

5. Union #28 Report, including Budget & Personnel: No report.

6. CES Report: Dan said the search for the next CEO is continuing; they're heading into the interview stage now.

### **I. Policy Review:**

First Reading On:

- EBC – Emergency Plans
- EDCB – Emergency Closing of School Procedure
- EEAEC – Student Conduct on School Buses
- FA – Facilities Development Goals

Dan noted some grammatical errors in the first part of EBC; he recommended they be examined and corrected.

Second Reading, First Vote On:

- DA – Fiscal Management Goals
- DJ – Purchasing
- DJA – Purchasing Authority

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY DA – FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY DJ – PURCHASING. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY DJA – PURCHASING AUTHORITY. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

Final Vote On:

- BEDH – Public Comment at School Committee Meetings
- IHBEA – English Learner Education
- JB – Equal Educational Opportunities
- JBB – Educational Equity
- CHCA – Approval of Handbooks and Directives

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY BEDH - PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY IHBEA - ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JB - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JBB - EDUCATIONAL EQUITY. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY CHCA - APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.**

**J. Future Business:**

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – Monday, May 17, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.
- Budget and Personnel Committee – TBD
- Future agenda items –

**K. Executive Session to Discuss Strategy With Respect to Collective Bargaining or Litigation:**

**DAN MOVED TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OR LITIGATION, TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AFTERWARD. KATIE SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYES. UNANIMOUS.**

Upon returning to public session, the MOA between SES and the Shutesbury Elementary Educators was voted on.

**DAN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MOA BETWEEN SHUTESBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THE SHUTESBURY ELEMENTARY EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION. KATIE SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYES. UNANIMOUS.**

**L. Adjournment: 8:05**