

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, October 20, 2016
Final Minutes

Present: Katie Fiander, Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Steve Sullivan, members; Fred Steinberg, Chair; Jackie Mendonsa, Principal; Aaron Osborne, Director of Finance and Operations; Jennifer Haggerty, Superintendent; Public Guests

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

B. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar

SSC members added items to the agenda under New Business.

C. Warrants and Gifts: None.

D. Approval of Minutes from September 15, 2016.

KATIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2016. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

E. Public Comments and Announcements:

Librarian Heather Lobenstine spoke about the Library's Annual Report as well as the reading culture at the school. She reviewed the reading achievements and interests of each grade. However, the Library's collection is somewhat out of date, which might be discouraging younger readers especially because they have to ferret out the books that interest them among many that don't. In addition, older non-fiction books may be out of date and topics in the science curriculum have been shifting among grades, leading to a mismatch between grade-appropriate books and topics. Another issue is lack of access to a database, Pebble Go, that doesn't require reading, which would allow younger children to pursue their interests. She hoped that SSC would consider increasing the Library's budget in order to address these concerns.

Jennifer praised Heather for all the work she put into this report, and Jackie explained that Heather wears many hats at SES, and being able to get fresh, new literature would be enormously beneficial to SES students. SSC members also praised the Heather for her work.

F. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. Family Handbook – Vote: Fred pointed out that some email addresses needed to be updated.

FRED MOVED TO APPROVE 2016-2017 FAMILY HANDBOOK. LAUREN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

2. Discussion of Public Use of School Facilities – Library: Fred said that Dan Hayes was interested in possibly offering access to school facilities such as the library and gym after hours to Shutesbury residents. Jackie noted there's a number of security and liability concerns attached to such a proposal, although SES has always welcomed residents who wanted to book a room for some community event, such as yoga, music, etc. Aaron confirmed that the liability issue is huge; if someone uses the kitchen and doesn't properly sanitize and kids get sick, for example.... SSC will wait until Dan comes forth with a more specific proposal so we can begin to discuss the issue.

3. School Improvement Plan – Vote:

KATIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

4. Charter School Resolution: Jennifer said that LES and SRS have signed onto this resolution advocating a No vote on Question 2 this fall. The resolution has been forwarded to state administrators and legislative representatives. SSC is fully aware of the significant impact new charter schools will have on enrollment at SES as well as town finances, as charter school kids require far more money going out than School Choice ones.

LAUREN MOVED THAT SSC SUPPORT THE “NO ON QUESTION 2” VOTE. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

5. All Boards Meeting October 25, 2016: SSC did not direct Fred to convey any specific information at this meeting.

6. Non-Discrimination Policy Update: Jennifer said that she spoke with counsel, who recommends that the Non-Discrimination Policy contain the specific language it currently does.

G. Unfinished Business / Updates: None.

H. Policy Review

First Reading on:

1. ADDA-R – DCJIS Model CORI, ADDA – Background Checks MASC Version
2. KFR – Community Use of School Facilities
3. KHC – Notice Distribution Policy

KHC was tabled for the November SSC meeting.

Second Reading, First Vote On:

1. IMD – Observation of Religious Holidays

KATIE MOVED TO ACCEPT POLICY IMD – OBSERVATION OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

2. JFBB – School Choice

KATIE MOVED TO ACCEPT POLICY JFBB – SCHOOL CHOICE. FRED SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Vote to Delete:

1. IHA – E – Access to Equal Educational Opportunity in the Basic Instructional Program

FRED MOVED TO DELETE POLICY IHA-E – ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

I. Reports

1. Principal's Report

Jackie shared highlights from her report. The SIP is a living, breathing document, literally what we're actually doing at the school, which is helpful because it translates directly into her own evaluation. The Apple Store was held but not apple picking due to the drought. The Book Fair was held as well, with funds going to Scholastic credit to be used for Library materials. A Costume Day is coming up; students brainstorm difficult vocabulary words, then create costumes that express those words. Last year, SSC voted to raise prices for breakfast and lunch, and those prices will be applied Jan. 1. The Arist-in-Residence this year is Circus Smirkus; students will get around four classes of circus arts, and we'll turn the gym into a Big Top so they can share what they've learned. Grade 4 finished their SAFE program. Conferences are coming up. Enrollment is dropping by six next week due to relocation. So far, we only have two School Choice kids coming in. Chelsea Dan has started work as a Social Worker/Counselor (rather than a School Psychologist); this position could bring a lot of helpful resources into play for students and their families. It's hard to fill the Psychologist position on a part-time basis. As always, SES staff has been amazing with their willingness to jump in, wear many hats, and make sure the kids get what they need.

2. Superintendent's Report

Jennifer reported that she got to be substitute Principal at SES last week; it was so lovely, a great day. The Leadership Team has been helping her craft their Strategic Plan, the global portions of which are shared among all four schools with initiatives tailored to each individual school. We're continuing to work with Chip Wood on building our adult community, being mindful, look carefully at norms, and deep listening. Stephen Cass has been offered the job of interim Director of Finance and Operations.

3. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report

Steve reported that the RSC hasn't met since their retreat on Sept 14 since they had to wait for Amherst and Leverett to appoint new members; currently there is no RSC chair. The insurance company has agreed to pay for at least half of the new gym floor; someone will be monitoring it as it's pulled up so that we can possibly make a case for replacing the whole thing. At the retreat, RSC spent four hours working as a group, and the five members who sent the letter to DESE didn't inform the rest of the committee that they'd done that, which Steve found very upsetting. Steve has also joined the Amherst Center Recreation Group, which focuses mostly on the middle and high school because of the fields they own. Amherst may come to the towns in two or three years for money to update these fields, some of which need to be reseeded.

Katie asked about how the dining services are coming along in Amherst; she's been hearing about very bad quality and kids not wanting to eat. Steve said that everything is packaged or premade; nothing is fresh. But he thinks we're getting there slowly.

4. Director of Finance and Operations Report

Aaron reported that for a number of years, SES supported an out-of-district student, which cost a lot of money, and we'll be having Circuit Breaker funds flow back to the town for the next few years (about \$46,000 this year). The money stays with the school for two years, then goes back to the town. We might want to think of using some of this money for one-time or capital purchases, which is how some towns deal with this. Currently, there's a modest surplus in salaries this year owing to an increased CPC grant (which offset the loss of a Kindergarten grant). Aaron is working with Steve to work on the first draft of the budget, and he stressed that he's at U#28's disposal should they need clarification or advice on the budget.

5. Union #28 Report – including Budget and Personnel

Jennifer reported that B&P is working on an emergency contingency plan in case of the incapacity of the Superintendent. She also received her evaluation, which was enormously positive.

6. CES Report: None.

J. Future Business

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, November 17, 2016, 6:30 P.M.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, November 17, 2016, 7 P.M.
- Budget and Personnel Committee – Monday, October 26, 2016 6:30 P.M. Central Office.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – TBD, 2016. LES
- Future agenda items

K. Adjournment: 8:20

LAUREN MOVED TO ADJOURN. STEVE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.