

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, September 17, 2020
FINAL Minutes

Present: Lauren Thomas-Paquin, Steve Sullivan, Jen Malcolm-Brown, Katie Fiander, 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:

Dan congratulated Jackie on accepting another 3-year contract.

C. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar: None.

D. Warrants and Gifts:

Payroll

#301 \$64,184.51
#302 \$66,425.79
#303 \$69,238.46
#304 \$64,991.63
#305 \$68,118.64
#306 \$68,459.26

Vendor

#3025 \$38,671.78
#3026 \$51,659.56
#3027 \$16,498.95
#3001 \$4,025.13
#3002 \$26,680.76
#3003 \$8,312.37 incl. \$2,368.25 CARES Act
#3004 \$7,432.34
#3005 \$221.05 FY20 encumbered
#3006 \$11,611.74

E. Approval of Minutes from August 5, 2020:

**LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 5, 2020. KATIE SECONDED.
UNANIMOUS.**

F. Unfinished Business / Updates:

Dan updated the committee on Morse Hill School: he's received no further documents or criteria that SSC could review and vote on. It looks from their website that they might be going in a home school direction.

G. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. Amended FY21 Academic Calendar - Vote:

Jennifer noted that we need an official calendar vote. We changed the start date to 8/28 and added the 10 extra days the state has added for teacher preparation, which brought the first day of school for students to 9/16. The last day of school will be June 17.

LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FY21 ACADEMIC CALENDAR AS AMENDED. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

2. Home School Applications - Discussion and Vote:

Dan said there were 10 home school applications. Jennifer recommends all of them to the committee. Jackie noted that the concerns expressed by the families who submitted applications included the lack of flexibility around time, having children in front of screens for so long, etc. They all expressed great love for SES, however; they just have reservations about the remote teaching paradigm. Lauren noted that names have been redacted from these applications; Jennifer said after legal consultation, she redacted names so they would not be entered into the public record.

LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE ALL HOME SCHOOL APPLICATIONS AS PRESENTED. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS. (ONE ABSTENTION.)

Katie noted that negotiations with the teacher's union is ongoing, and she requested that an executive session be scheduled.

H. Reports:

1. Superintendent's Report: Jennifer reported we recently had our first-ever virtual Opening Day, full of music, merriment, stories, and good cheer. She praised D.J. Jackie's taste in music. We had fabulous trainings from our School Nurses and Technology Coordinators as well as some outdoor education training from Antioch University. There was a bit of a technical glitch later on, but overall, it was a huge success. She also praised Jackie for her warmth and excellent leadership, which Lauren echoed.

2. Director of Finance and Operations: Bruce reported that late summer has been busy. He's been working on cleaning protocols and updates to HVAC so that air circulation is up to speed. He's also in touch with the Town about use of CARES money for school purposes as well as reviewed safety protocols. We applied for and received approval for CARES money to support students (an allotment of \$225/student). We're set to start the school year in a safe and healthy way. Jackie noted that we had our air ventilation examined in the summer, and while it was sufficient, we improved it by installing better filters that will be changed more frequently. Bruce said we ended the previous year strong, turning \$19K back in to the Town. The meals we're serving through the Food Service are being reimbursed through a nutrition waiver.

3. Principal's Report: Jackie reported that school started yesterday, and it was great! It was really awesome to finally see the kids after months of planning. She gave a shout-out to the entire staff at the school; they're the most amazing group of people, so positive and so supportive of each other. Three students who qualify for in-person services are coming to the school to get those services with staff. We have two new

staff members: Mike Kortina (music) and James Parsons (4th Grade). We said goodbye to another teacher who accepted a position at Swift River School. We're serving breakfast and lunch to about 30 families, who seem very happy with with the quality of food they're getting. We've bought desks and tents with COVID money, although we might need to exchange the tents for fire-resistant ones. We're getting water filling stations as well, and lots of materials in bins. She thanked the "angel of the school" Debbie Lee for her steadiness and her knowledge, without which we would not be where we are. Families too are being incredibly supportive. She thanked everyone for being so supportive.

Dan agreed with Jackie that SES staff are incredible! We've been handed a very difficult challenge, and it's amazing to see how positively we're responding to it. He thanked leadership for setting the tone and said we're fortunate to have them and to have made good hiring decisions over time that laid the ground for this success.

4. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report: Steve reported that RSC has been meeting less frequently. They most recently deliberated over which sports to approve (no football, no golf). On Oct 1, Preschool and Grades 1-2 as well as special education will be in school five days a week, with more grades added in subsequent weeks for varying days over the week.

5. Union #28 Report, including Budget & Personnel: No report. Lauren will be presenting the Superintendent Evaluation Report on Monday, when JSC meets next.

6. CES Report: Dan reported that the Executive Director search has been delayed. There will be an interim director until we can conduct a search next summer, which will also generate some cost savings. We opened Tech Academy, a school for special needs students, for six students who wanted to come back. PPE and safety protocols will be in place to protect teachers. We're starting our Strategic Plan for the next phase of the Collaborative.

I. Policy Review:

Vote to Waive School Committee Policy: BGB Policy Adoption for the purpose of adopting Policy EBCFA - Face Coverings in one vote - Discussion and Vote:

LAUREN MOVED TO WAIVE POLICY BGB POLICY ADOPTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADOPTING POLICY EBCFA - FACE COVERINGS. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

Reading and Final Vote on:

EBCFA - Face Coverings

Jennifer noted that our policy differs from the state template in that we're requiring all students wear masks.

LAUREN MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY EBCFA - FACE COVERINGS AS EMENDED. KATIE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

J. Future Business:

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, October 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory Policy Committee – Monday, September 21, 2020 - 6:15 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – Monday, September 21, 2020 - 6:30 p.m.
- Budget and Personnel Committee – October 2020
- Future agenda items –

Dan and Jennifer praised Pam effusively for her organizational acumen and willingness to help whenever it's needed.

SSC discussed scheduling an Executive Session. It will be held Wednesday, 9/23 at 5:30 p.m.

K. Adjournment at 7:58 P.M.