

Note: Per C.G.S. 10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at the next regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and voted upon.

SCOTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Scotland, Connecticut
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2024

Chair Cassidy Martin called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Board members present were Clark Stearns, Brittany Santiago, Beth Troeger, Gracie Martin (online), Kaitlyn Shafer and Lisa LaBelle. Administrators present were Superintendent Valerie Bruneau, Principal Ann Knowles and Finance Coordinator Michele Demicco (online).

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance; Chair read Intro Statement.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: None

3. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD: None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of March 5, 2024:

#1-23/24 Motion to approve March 5, 2024 regular meeting minutes, made by Brittany Santiago, seconded by Kaitlyn Shafer and carried with abstentions by Gracie Martin and Lisa LaBelle.

5. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD OR DELETE AGENDA ITEMS: None

6. CELEBRATIONS: None

7. REPORTS

A. Chairperson's Oral Report: None

B. Superintendent's Report:

- New IDEA TSA Grant (\$5,000) used to compensate or recoup expenditures related to mandated PMT Training for paras (reimbursed \$750 so far with remainder to be used by October 1st – will offer after July 1st on their own time to go towards next year's training).
- In the process of planning Sensory Mental Health Program through Summer Mental Health Grant with Bloom's help (2 weeks that includes up to 4 of their staff – waiting to confirm dates) and try to overlap with ESY (Extended School Year). Clark Stearns asked what Sensory Mental Health is (students serviced in the Sensory Room for anxiety and services received for OT/PT that may be related to autism). Hampton asked about possibility to tuition in their students for ESY (maintenance and repairs being done at their building).
- Working on finishing this year's Afterschool Grant - Samuel Huntington House (calligraphy, candle making, ways to promote activities with family membership); how to get kids to work as part of a team making Welcome to Scotland signs (grant will cover supplies – will check with woodworking shop at Parish Hill for template); Library (help to promote summer activities with family activities sponsored by the school).
- Still working on Draft Diversity Policy (many old polices reviewed but not changed).
- Head Custodian Greg resigned last week effective immediately (no letter). Posted the position and received numerous applicants (difficult to fill due to no Town pension and salary). Some candidates were looking for extra hours to supplement their regular job (using part-time to fill in).

- Reviewing applicants (strong candidates) for the Special Ed Director position (Maggie has accepted full-time position elsewhere and has completed all PPTs for March).
- Working on support services – Guidance Counselor position (background in Special Ed and Psych testing). Looking at making current Special Ed Team different.
- Presented Bell Curve Data from Talented & Gifted testing to determine if a student needs enrichment (results for 5th grade – at or above grade level). Lisa LaBelle asked if percentage of absenteeism has gone up since Covid (problem existed before Covid – afterschool program has increased attendance). Clark Stearns asked about students below the 50th percentile (within the norm on Talented & Gifted test).

C. Principal's Report:

- Enrollment is at 100 students (3 students left in March).
- Seeing lots of enthusiasm that feels more like a school family. March Madness game with staff versus students was lots of fun with great sportsmanship. Afterschool activities are connecting kids across grade levels, bringing in teachers and community members to teach, and bringing in parents.
- Doing practice testing for SBAC grades 3-6 (will bring back Typing Skills program).
- Busy preparing for NAEYC accreditation with visit to PreK and Kindergarten between April 22nd and May 3rd (partnering with EASTCONN to come weekly for spot checks and to offer ideas).
- Para positions are filled (30-day trial basis paid as a substitute).
- The PTO will freshen up some areas outside with flower boxes (great partnership with this group).

D. Special Education Report: Presented under Superintendent's Report

E. Financial Report:

67.2% of the budget spent to date. Clark Stearns asked if still predicting \$500 surplus at the end of the year (will change in the next few months with accounts and grants).

#2-23/24 Motion to approve Financial Report, made by Clark Stearns, seconded by Brittany Santiago and carried unanimously.

F. Shared Services updates: None

G. Liaison Reports including Readiness Council:

Regional Issues – RD11 in final interviews for hiring Superintendent (down to 2 candidates). Parish Hill started an EMT program partnering with the Scotland Fire Department. Students in the Fire Department recognized by RD11 BOE for responding to a recent incident at the school.

EASTCONN – no updates.

There is a grant at Parish Hill for tobacco prevention. Students and Parents/Guardians were surveyed - results show vaping started at an early age (under age 10 to age 12) with #1 reason for starting due to stress and #2 reason a desire to fit in; results from high school students on most effective tobacco prevention education program: #1 - activities with parents/guardians, #2 - peer support, #3 – social media platforms. Parish Hill working on prevention, stress management and will focus on education for parents (students are writing a vaping policy to present to the BOE). Valerie Bruneau suggested hosting a Family Health and Wellness Fair in the fall (including: Fire Department, Parish Hill, Rec Committee, directory of resources, local sports, resources from United Services).

Gracie Martin left the meeting at 8:22 PM.

PTO – Planetarium setup in the gym was great with programs for the younger group and the older group with a little more information. Spring Fest (similar to the Harvest Fest) will be held April 12th with stations, theme snacks and goodie bags for PreK. Earth Day activities will be seed paper greeting cards and planters outside. The next spring fundraiser will be Butter Braids. Coffee station hutch was setup in the Teacher's Lounge and rolls into afterschool activity making mugs for the teachers. Talked

about Summer Reading program including: Beanstack Reading Challenge (can do with the elementary schools and Parish Hill) and a Book Swap for National School Library month. Clark Stearns asked if doing anything for the solar eclipse (doing afterschool program with protective glasses).
School Readiness Council – Early HeadStart presented services offered outside the school for ways to help parents know what to look for before getting to PreK (in-home services available).

8. BOARD BUSINESS

A. Item: 24/25 SY BOE Budget (Discussion & Action):

No change from proposed budget presented last month with a 4.2% increase.

#3-23/24 Motion to approve 24/25 SY BOE Budget, made by Clark Stearns, seconded by Brittany Santiago and carried unanimously.

B. Item: Bus Contract Extension (Discussion & Action):

Met with Joe Savino and the First Selectman to discuss proposed bus contract for next year for Scotland Elementary and Parish Hill combined (agreed to divide 50/50 with 1-year extension).

#4 23/24 Motion to accept contract extension for 1 year with increase to \$206,388 divided 50/50 between Parish Hill and Scotland Elementary, made by Kaitlyn Shafer, seconded by Clark Stearns and carried unanimously.

9. OLD BUSINESS UPDATES - Newsletter:

Deb Wright working on prototype for the next issue (Kaitlyn suggested Student or Teacher of the Month, Brittany suggested brief summary on the budget).

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS: None

11. OTHER ACTION ITEMS: None

12. UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Regular Board Meeting May 7, 2024
- Items for Next Meeting and Assignments: Policies updates, Student updates (in-person)

13. ADJOURNMENT:

#5-23/24 Motion to adjourn (8:55 PM) made by Clark Stearns, seconded by Lisa LaBelle and carried unanimously.

***Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Clerk***