

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
Remote Meeting Minutes
July 7, 2020

Chairperson Brynn Lipstreu called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. Present were Board members Sherry Sardon, Steven Kurcinik, Cassidy Martin, Scott Sears, Rod Perry and Bill Trudelle. Administrators present were Superintendent Dr. Francis Baran, Principal Dr. Catherine Pinsonneault and Finance Coordinator Tim Smith. Others present was Technician Michael D'Amato.

2. **WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS:** None

3. **COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUDIENCE:** None

4. **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA: ADDITIONAL BUSINESS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT A REGULAR MEETING UPON A 2/3 VOTE OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT AND VOTING, PER STATE STATUTE:**
#1-20/21 Motion to add to agenda TEVAL as Item #9A, was made by Sherry Sardon, seconded by Cassidy Martin and carried unanimously.

#2-20-21 Motion to add to agenda Transportation Budget for SY 2019-20 as Item #9B, was made by Sherry Sardon, seconded by Rod Perry and carried unanimously.

#3-20-21 Motion to add to agenda Staff Scheduling as Item #8E, was made by Sherry Sardon, seconded by Cassidy Martin and carried unanimously.

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

#4-20/21 Motion to approve the remote regular meeting minutes from June 2, 2020, was made by Sherry Sardon, seconded by Scott Sears and carried unanimously.

#5-20-21 Motion to approve the special meeting minutes from June 25, 2020, was made by Sherry Sardon, seconded by Rod Perry and carried unanimously.

6. **FINANCE COORDINATOR REPORT:**

A. Financial Report:

The Financial Reports were reviewed with Tim Smith presenting the following to the Board:

- Approximately \$60,000 for Teacher Salaries (summer payments) was moved to regular instruction due to not receiving REAP budget for FY 2020.
- There are no more changes to Group Insurance with cost savings due to several people dropping coverage.
- Tuition Public (STEM school) had fewer number of students than anticipated.
- \$5,995.96 for Special Ed Instructional Aides was moved to the Readiness Grant to eliminate the problem from last year.

- The Windham BOE paid for a student to receive instruction at Scotland Elementary that resulted in an offset of \$18,065 to Instructional Aides.
- Special Education is under budget due to lack of services needed with Covid 19.
- Two PD courses for teachers were paid for from Improvement Instruction.
- Technology Other Salary is over budget due to extra time needed for Distance Learning and a downed server. EASTCONN came in to help with the downed server.
- Equipment is over budget with the purchase of 4 switches and ProBooks needed for the coming year.
- An extra \$436 for postage was purchased from School Office and moved to General Supplies.
- The June bill for electricity from Green Skies has not been received and is projected to be approximately \$2,000 to \$2,500.
- Pupil Transportation paid for the bus contract with no field trips and less fuel than expected due to the buses not running.
- Rod Perry asked about additional cost for Chromebooks. The total cost for 30 new Chromebooks has been encumbered to ensure the price.
- Sherry Smardon expressed concerns with budgeting more for next year than was spent for Group Insurance. Three new staff members are expected to take insurance which had a 2.7% increase as of July 1st. She also asked about Special Ed costs for STEM. There were 7 out of 10 Regular Ed students who attended and fewer Special Ed services were needed.
- Steve Kurcinik asked about the surplus to return to the town. The final amount will be determined after the audit with approximately \$200,000 projected to be returned to the town.
- Most of the Grant Funds not spent from FY 2019-20 are approved to carry over. The Readiness Grant for FY 2020 has all been spent except for \$17. The Office of Early Childhood will not be asking to return funds.

B. Approval of Financial Statement:

#6-20/21 Motion to approve the Financial Statement dated July 2, 2020, was made by Rod Perry, seconded by Sherry Smardon and carried unanimously.

7. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:

A. Food Service Update:

Meals are being served on a regular basis with a slight change for the July 4th holiday. There were 2,392 meals served from May 4th to June 30th with a slight dip in June (442 meals). Brynn Lipstreu asked about inquiries for the cards from the Department of Social Services. The cards are free SNAP cards (loaded with approximately \$364) per child to supplement food for students who qualify for free breakfast and lunch.

B. Green Skies Update:

The solar panels are producing electricity with one more invoice expected for June.

C. Other:

A parent from a neighboring town inquired about whether Scotland Elementary would be taking tuition students for next year. There is a parochial school in Windham that is closing. The Board was asked to make a decision based on the unique situation that all schools are in. Dr. Baran recommended limiting classes to 15 students in order to maintain social distancing guidelines. Sherry Smardon suggested capping the number of students to 15 per Dr. Baran's recommendation.

Brynn Lipstreu suggested capping the number of students to 14 to allow room for new Scotland students moving into town. Dr. Baran reported that a teacher asked if their regular classroom could be moved to the Science room that would give more room for social distancing.

#7-20-21 Motion for the Scotland BOE with concerns of social distancing procedures for the following years, to limit tuition students to a class size of 14 reserving a spot for 15 or more for a Scotland resident if needed, was made by Steve Kurcinik, seconded by Rod Perry and carried unanimously.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Line Item Transfer Report:

Line item transfers were presented in the Finance Coordinator's Report. Brynn Lipstreu requested a written report for the Board.

B. End of Year Purchases:

Dr. Baran will send a written report for end of year purchases that includes the following three categories:

- Covid 19 supplies to reopen school (masks, gloves, thermal scan thermometers, disinfectant supplies, instrument disinfectant, 2 backpack disinfectant sprayers and disinfectant, front office counter guard, signage with protocols, UV disinfecting wands, wash sinks, and online classroom platforms to enhance Distance Learning if needed, with some items provided by the local Health District and some items funded by the EESSER Grant.
- The oil tank was topped off at a much lower rate.
- 30 new Chromebooks were purchased.

Rod Perry suggested coordinating with the First Selectmen for reimbursement from the state for Covid 19 related expenditures which is being done.

C. Transportation Contract:

The Board asked Joe Savino to the meeting to answer questions regarding the cost breakdown for the FY 2019-20 bus contract. Rod Perry asked if insurance could be reduced since the buses are not running (EASTCONN has reduced their insurance coverage). Joe Savino reported that after some research was done the buses are financed with insurance structured for the year. Sherry Smardon is looking for a clear statement of the actual costs for Scotland. Joe Savino reported that besides fuel that is not being used, the expenses (still there even though the buses are not running) include maintenance, insurance, salaries, property tax, professional fees and leases for fueling infrastructure. Cassidy Martin asked about written documentation that the drivers are being paid. Dr. Baran reported that the documentation was received and sent to the Board. Full-time drivers are being paid and part-time drivers that do field trips and team runs are not being paid. Sherry Smardon asked about the \$60,000 charge for parts and repairs when there are three new buses covered under warranty. There were two exhaust repairs (one for the spare bus) and a break repair. Sherry Smardon requested a written breakdown dollar per dollar of what was paid for staffing and insurance from March through June 30th to be able to defend to the taxpayers and auditor what was paid and why.

D. School Reentry Plan:

The Governor and Commissioner of Education expect all schools in the state to reopen for 5 days a week in the fall. There is a 50-page report and an 8-page template with requirements from the

state that requests a Reentry Plan be submitted by July 24th. The Reopen Committee consists of First Selectman Gary Greenburg (Town), Joe Savino (Transportation), Mr. Gaudreau (Facilities), Rod Perry (BOE), Mrs. Sweat, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Cote (Teachers), Mrs. Blish, Mrs. Trudelle (Parents) and Mrs. Petrone (Nurse). A survey was sent out to parents with a response requested by July 9th. 87% of families have responded to date with approximately 50% of parents that will transport their children to school. Eight of the households are not equipped with technology or Wi-Fi. More surveys will be sent out to parents pertaining to curriculum and instruction. Sherry Smardon expressed concerns with destroying the Science room to turn into a classroom. Dr. Baran reported the Science Room has 4 sinks and all possibilities are being considered.

E. Staff Scheduling:

Sherry Smardon expressed concerns with the flexibility of scheduling and not enough time for class and planning for Health/PE. Dr. Baran reported that Health/PE was reduced from 4 days to 3-1/2 days and meets contractual education time. Cassidy Martin expressed concerns with less classroom time to teach due to the increase in some specials. She suggested Dr. Baran include Dr. Pinsonneault, who is involved in the day to day operations and should have had a big role in the scheduling process with the teachers as well.

9. OLD BUSINESS:

A. TEVAL:

Sherry Smardon requested a copy of the state approved Scotland Teacher Evaluation Plan and when it was last submitted.

Cassidy Martin left the meeting at 8:40 PM.

B. Transportation Budget for School Year 2019-20: Covered under Item #8C

10. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

Wendy Sears asked how many parents responded that they would not be sending their children to school and suggested the survey ask if parents are considering not sending their children to school. She also asked about the following: new Chromebooks, how they will be distributed and price per unit, how the 4th and 6th grade teachers handled working with the 5th grade students this year with the difficulty in change to distance learning that worked itself out, were the teachers comfortable with the work they did with the 5th grade, suggested combining classes be considered in the future for budget savings (worked well with this year's 5th grade), asked if the Chromebooks had been purchased yet as the demand is high right now, asked how many computers were purchased for the Computer Lab, expressed concerns with the lack of use in the computer lab where expertise is needed and suggested contracting out for services (needs to be a priority), asked how Band that is an important part of education (can be difficult to schedule) would fit into this year's schedule .

Dr. Baran reported that 8 families (needs to be clarified) have responded that they won't be sending their children to school, new Chromebooks will go to the 1st grade students who didn't have any this year and to replace damaged units, the cost of the Chromebooks is \$279 each including the license, the 4th and 6th grade teachers did a very nice job with the 5th grade students, the teachers were comfortable with their work with the 5th grade that went well, Dr. Baran is not in favor of combining classes for budget constraints and suggested the Middle School Concept that has been in use at

Scotland Elementary since 2014, the Chromebooks have been purchased to secure the price thanks to the persistence of Mrs. Belliveau and Mrs. Wright, the memory in the computers was upgraded to handle SBAC testing, Dr. Baran will discuss contracting out for Technology Services with the Board, there are open slots which students could be pulled out of academics for Band instruction.

Michelle Murray expressed concerns with the Grading Policy for the Middle School being at the discretion of the teacher and concerns with an outdated Chromebook. She also asked how students will be challenged moving forward with a focus on students who are behind when they return to school and if surveys will be on specific topics.

Dr. Baran reported the Grading Policy will be presented to parents at the beginning of the school year for every grade level, the returned Chromebooks will be evaluated for their use and condition and replaced if needed (there are funds in the budget to cover), the focus will be on all students to assess where they are and how to challenge them moving forward, the surveys will be short and pertain to specific areas.

11. NEXT STEP HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS:

- Dr. Baran will email End of Year Purchase Report to the Board.
- Dr. Baran will reach out to Joe Savino for a further cost breakdown of the transportation contract specifically for Scotland and email to the Board.
- Dr. Baran will obtain the last submitted and state approved Scotland Teacher Evaluation Plan.
- Tim Smith will email the Line Item Transfer Report to the Board.

12. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

- Reopening Plan
- TEVAL
- Technology
- Principal Report
- Staff Scheduling
- Bus Contract Cost Breakdown

The next meeting will be held on August 4th.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

#8-20/21 Motion to adjourn (9:18 PM) was made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Scott Sears and carried unanimously.

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