

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
Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2021

Chairperson Brynn Lipstreu called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. Present were Board members Sherry Smardon, Steven Kurcinik, Cassidy Martin, Scott Sears and Rod Perry. Administrators present were Superintendent Dr. Francis Baran, Principal Dr. Catherine Pinsonneault and Finance Coordinator Tim Smith. Unable to attend was Board member Bill Trudelle.

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. CELEBRATIONS/RECOGNITION:

Until today, there was a whole week of school with no snow days.

4. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: None

5. COMMUNICATION WITH THE AUDIENCE: None

6. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – ADDITIONAL BUSINESS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT A REGULAR MEETING UPON 2/3 VOTE OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT AND VOTING, PER STATE STATUTE: None

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

#1-20/21 Motion to approve the minutes from February 17, 2021, was made by Scott Sears, seconded by Sherry Smardon and carried unanimously.

8. FINANCE COORDINATOR REPORT:

A. Financial Report:

There is no update since the last meeting two weeks ago. The administrators are looking forward to the ESSR II Grant and waiting for definitions on how to spend (Tim Smith will attend a webinar).

B. Approval of Financial Statement: No Report

9. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:

A. 2020-21 Calendar Update:

There were 5 snow days and 1 academic day for transition to remote learning. The last day for students will be June 17th and June 18th for staff. The State BOE reduced the number of required days from 180 to 177. If June 17th is the last day, the total number of days will be 178.

B. 2021-22 School Calendar:

The 2021-22 School Calendar was presented at the last meeting.

#2-21/22 Motion to approve the 2021-22 School Calendar, was made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Steve Kurcinik and carried unanimously.

C. Solar Panel Update:

The Board was emailed the Solar Panel Update that is following the same pattern as last year. Overall, the solar panels produced more than used last year (received a credit) and expect the same this year.

D. Lunch Program Update:

The Board was emailed the Lunch Program Update with the average for Breakfast and Lunch in range (13 days in February with several snow days) and includes additional meals for remote days.

E. Update on Afterschool Grant:

There is no update yet and some staff have expressed an interest. Dr. Pinsonneault responded to Brynn Lipstreu regarding home collection bags (including science kit and craft kits) that can be done if spearheaded by staff and is being discussed.

F. Teacher Evaluation (TEVAL) Update:

Meetings are being held with teachers to set and adjust goals.

G. COVID-19 Expense Update:

The Board was emailed the Covid-19 Expense Update. Tim Smith responded to Rod Perry regarding supplies that are being received including backorders. Dr. Pinsonneault responded to Sherry Smardon regarding phone sanitizers that is a large bucket of wipes.

H. COVID-19 Learning Environment Survey: The Committee hasn't met.

I. Other:

Dr. Baran responded to Scott Sears regarding Ms. Belliveau's position that is being advertised with one applicant received to date.

10. PRINCIPAL REPORT:

A. Professional Development Opportunities:

Three PreK staff have been signed up for an evening Literacy Workshop for next week via Zoom.

B. Current Enrollment:

Enrollment has increased by 1 and one remote student will return to in-person learning.

C. Other:

- Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held this Thursday and Friday either by Zoom or phone.
- The 2nd trimester was moved out 5 days.
- Professional Development on March 19th – the staff will be getting the Covid Vaccine at Parish Hill in the morning and will work on report cards.

Brynn Lipstreu asked for a breakdown on the number of students that are home-schooled. Dr. Pinsonneault will get the breakdown for the next meeting and hopes these students will return to school when Covid is over.

11. FRIENDS OF SES REPORT: No Report

12. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Budget 2021-2022:

The Board was presented with the 2021-22 Budget that has an increase of 1.43% (about \$36,000) with some items still outstanding including: Propane (not locked in yet due to high cost) that would add between \$3,000 and \$3,200 to the budget. Sherry Smardon suggested adding a cushion for field trips that are expected for next year. Rod Perry suggested checking with other propane companies.

- Dr. Baran responded to Rod Perry regarding Health Insurance, Speech Pathology and Legal Fees. Health Insurance has an increase of 4% with an adjustment to the number of participants that may not be as big of an impact. The Speech Pathologist has retired and the administration is looking at contracted services (Sherry Smardon suggested reaching out to area towns such as Canterbury and Sprague). Legal Fees was increased due to upcoming negotiations.
- Dr. Baran responded to Sherry Smardon regarding contractual services for Technology and School Psychologist. Savage Systems is working well for technology with great response and one person dedicated to Scotland Elementary. Psychological testing is done through PPT Services.
- Dr. Baran responded to Cassidy Martin regarding the Specials Schedule that is working this year and is the same for this budget.

The Board was asked to review the budget and email any questions or feedback to Dr. Baran. A special meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 24th at 7pm to review the budget.

B. Technology Plan:

Dr. Pinsonneault is talking to teachers about what is needed and hopes to present at the next meeting.

13. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Accept Staff Resignations:

- **Principal:**
#3-21/22 Motion to accept with regret resignation from Principal Dr. Catherine Pinsonneault, with great appreciation for all she has done at Scotland Elementary, was made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Scott Sears and carried unanimously.
- **Contracted Maintenance:**
#4-21/22 Motion to accept with regret retirement from Contracted Maintenance Jim Naumec, with great appreciation for all he has done at Scotland Elementary and will be sorely missed, was made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Steve Kurcinik and carried unanimously.

B. “How’s It Going” Check-in:

Dr. Baran reported that things are going as well as can be expected. He gave a lot of credit to Superintendent Henrici for pushing the Eastern Highlands Health District to setup a Covid Vaccine Clinic for March 19th (PD Day with 31 SES staff members that will attend). Brynn Lipstreu suggested planning a remote day for the day after the 2nd dose of the vaccine in case it is not a Friday. The staff is still doing everything they can with outreach to the parents and students under unique circumstances.

C. Bus Contract:

The contract is being executed per written directions and the buses still have bus monitors. Dr. Baran responded to Rod Perry regarding bus monitors that are not in the upcoming budget and plans to write the cost into the ESSR Gant and other grant funding that becomes available.

D. Shared Services:

A Committee (commissioned by a Hampton Selectperson) met to discuss shared services with Scotland and Hampton for cost savings to the towns. They will look at budgets and contracted services. The Superintendents will meet to identify cost savings.

E. Citizen’s Advisory Committee:

A tentative meeting via Zoom has been scheduled for March 10th. Scott Sears will reach out to the Committee to confirm the date and attend the meeting.

F. School Reentry Plan:

The administration is sticking to the plan as much as possible and dealing with unique circumstances as they arise. Extra time from the Specials Schedule is being used as duty time and has come in handy covering the main office.

G. Technology Update:

Dr. Pinsonneault is talking to staff for input on needs and technology is going well with one IT person dedicated to Scotland Elementary.

14. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Tri-Town BOE meeting update: No Report

B. CABE/EASTCONN:

Rod Perry reported that EASTCONN is ending the consortium for healthcare due to the high cost (Thompson has pulled out). A slide show was developed for helping people deal with stress and will be emailed to the Board. Sherry Smardon suggested displaying the slide show in the office and staff room. A retreat will be held on March 15th.

C. Readiness Council Report:

The liaison met with the Office of Early Childhood and provided information regarding funding. 2021 funding was the same as 2019-20 but with fewer students. Funding for next year is expected to remain the same but will be based on the number of students. Enrollment is down and the difference will need to be made up in the budget. Dr. Baran reported that this will have a significant impact to the budget. Dr. Pinsonneault reported that the Numerator Report is no longer and the PreK Screening can help estimate the number of students. Brynn Lipstreu reported that only the First Selectmen can submit a request for the number of children born. Dr. Baran will follow up with the First Selectmen for the number of children born in 2017 and 2018.

D. Policies Committee: None

E. Personnel Committee: None

F. Technology Committee: None

15. SECOND AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS:

Joe Savino urged the Board to continue with bus monitors moving forward even if there are no more masks. The monitors help to reduce discipline issues and help to relieve potential stress for parents. There has been talk of Scotland collaborating with Hampton to combine the two school into one that

would be a win/win for both towns. Mr. Savino implored the Board to speed up the process and make it happen as the cost per pupil will skyrocket with the shrinking population.

16. NEXT STEP HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS:

- Dr. Baran will contact the First Selectmen regarding the number of children born in 2017 and 2018.
- Scott Sears will confirm the meeting date for the Citizen’s Advisory Committee.
- The Board will review the budget and email any questions or feedback to Dr. Baran.

17. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

Same items on the current agenda except the 2021-22 Calendar and Staff Resignations.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION ANTICIPATED:

A. Superintendent’s Contract:

B. Principal Search:

#5-20/21 Motion to enter into Executive Session (8:17 PM) for the purpose of discussing Superintendent’s Contract and Principal Search and invite the Superintendent to attend, was made by Sherry Smardon, seconded by Cassidy Martin and carried unanimously.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:15 PM.

19. ADJOURNMENT:

#6-20/21 Motion to adjourn (9:16 PM) was made Sherry Smardon, seconded by Cassidy Martin and carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Clerk*