

Sunapee School Board Meeting

SMHS Gymnasium

November 1, 2023

Call to Order:

Chair Andersen called the School Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Kerri McCaul Claus
Andy Nichols - Absent
Edward Andersen
Amanda Spears
Scott Ritzman

Others Present:

Russell Holden, Superintendent
Kelly Wessells, Business Administrator
Sean Moynihan, SMHS Principal
Meagan Reed, SMHS Asst. Principal
Patrick Gordon, SCES Principal
Amanda Hughlock, Director of Student Services

Pledge of Allegiance:

Chair Andersen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Scott Ritzmann moved to approve the public minutes of the October 4, 2023 school board meeting as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Agenda Review:

None

School State Testing Overview:

Principals Moynihan and Gordon gave the following presentation:

SMHS-

Principal Moynihan stated:

- SMHS typically does very well on the SATs and they did again this past year.
- The average Sunapee score is 1095 and the average State score is 995.
- All students in NH are required to take the SATs as part of State testing.
- In math, Sunapee scores 70 points higher than the State average.
- Out of 79 public high schools in NH, Sunapee ranks #7.
- Grades sixth through eighth take the NHSAS. Sunapee is proficient in all levels.
- Sunapee is typically double digits over the State scores.
 - ELA 63%/State 53%
 - Math 60%/State 42%
- Last year's seventh graders came in 1% below the State average in reading.
- Last year's eighth graders scored 80% proficient in ELA and 70% in math.
- SMHS reviews the scores of all grades from year to year and the State averages from year to year.
- They cannot accurately review the 9th grade scores due to an influx of many tuition students during the ninth grade year.
- In grade 10, students take the NWEA, so they are able to reassess students more accurately.

It was asked if the SAT was going away as it has become optional by many colleges. Principal Moynihan replied no, because many colleges are finding it difficult to find another way to assess prospective students and are going back to the SAT and AP courses. Plus, there is a lot of money tied to SAT scores for financial aid.

- The NH School Funding Project did a study on AP courses in NH from 2018-2021. 19% of students in NH took AP exams with Sunapee being the 8th highest in the State for participation.
- 81.9% of Sunapee students who took the exam received scores of 3,4 or 5, which is considered successful. Sunapee was the 5th highest scoring school.
- It is difficult to find teachers to teach AP courses as they take a lot of time and planning. For instance, Thomas Coverdale is retiring this year and teaches AP Literature. Next year, two teachers will share the responsibility for teaching the course.

Principal Gordon stated -

- On the NH SAS, the 5th grade was 73% proficient compared to the State average of 30%.

- In third, fourth, and fifth grades, compared to similar schools in the region, only Grantham outperformed SCES. Grade 3 in Sunapee received 67% proficient in reading, while Grantham received an 83%. The Literacy Group will be visiting Grantham to learn what practices they are putting into place.
- The cohort of grades 3-5 are holding steady with an average reading score of 80% from each grade. This includes five tuition students.
- He reviewed the overall performance on the NHSAS from 17-18 to now. In 17-18 the average proficiency score in reading was 71% and has since recovered to pre pandemic levels, unfortunately, math scores have not recovered.
- SCES adopted the IReady Math program last year. Growth is flat and they are working on what they need to do to grow the students. Math was fractured, but starting this year teachers in grades K-8 are taking professional development on the IReady Math program.
- The fifth graders last year scored:
 - 88% in Reading
 - 73% in Math (State avg was 38%)
 - 70% in Science (State avg was 36%)
- A new science curriculum was implemented two years ago in third and fourth grade.
- Mystery Science is conducted in the lower grades and Amplify in the upper grades.
- The NHSAS science test is very rigorous and abstract.

Superintendent Holden noted that test scores in Sunapee show the quality of teaching at both schools.

Public Forum:

None

SCES Good News:

Principal Gordon gave the following report to the Board:

- Recognized his amazing staff for their can-do attitude and helpfulness when so many have been out due to illness and professional development opportunities.
- The Book Fair was held at the beginning of last month and they crushed sales and received \$2500 for the library program.
- Ralph Fletcher, author, visited last week. He writes books for teachers and students and worked with both sets while he was here.
- The Playground Committee has met twice and are working with two vendors on proposals. They originally contacted eight companies, but most stated that production is

woefully behind and would not be able to construct in the timeline given. These two companies stated they could. The plan is to design, fundraise, and build.

- The two companies are O'Brien and Sons and Multi-Play. They both came and reviewed the site and sent in proposals. The committee provided feedback to both companies, which are now working on revisions to the original proposals. They should have the recommended proposal to the School Board at the Dec/Jan Board meeting.
- The Annual Cereal Drive broke records with 546 boxes being donated for local food banks.
- He has met with the Village Afterschool Program on the emergency school plan in place and also the policy.
- The dyslexia screening was conducted on 111 students and 35 students were highlighted for additional assessments.
- There are currently a group of teachers attending the first day of a three day training on inclusive systems for student success behavioral systems. Three classroom teachers, an OT, and a special education teacher are in attendance.

Student Representative Report:

David Flater gave the Board the following good news:

- Fall sports have wound down and students are preparing for winter sports.
- The Empty Bowl Charity event has sold out.
- There are concerns from students that there is only a single music teacher for all grades K-12, which means no one-on-one help is available.
- Also, due to the lack of a French teacher students either had to switch to Spanish or take French on VLACS. This has been a bad experience for many students.

Superintendent Holden noted that the student representative is elected by the student body. David will be attending a student representative training through the NHSBA on a Saturday in December. Principal Moynihan noted the election of a student representative has been moved to the spring, so they can attend Board meetings starting in August of the following year.

SMHS Good News:

Principal Moynihan gave the Board the following report:

- Spirit Week was held the last week of fall sports and Student Council held theme days in celebration.
- The drama production, A Midsummer's Night Dream (set in the 1980's) is being performed soon.
- The eighth graders took a field trip to Boston today.
- The NHS induction ceremony was held last Sunday.

Superintendent Report:

Superintendent Holden gave the Board the following report:

- The administration has been preparing the budget for next year. The first budget meeting with the School Board was held tonight. The first meeting with the ABC will be held next Wednesday at 5pm in the SMHS library.
- There are currently 95 bills being reviewed by the House Education Committee.
- Sunapee is focusing on school safety in terms of cybersecurity. A specialist is coming for the Professional Development Day in January.
- He held his first Communicating with the Community meeting. At it, he spoke about cybersecurity and the emergency operations plan. The police chief was in attendance. Also, the new adjustment counselor and SEL specialist attended and explained their roles in the District.
- He noted there is an open food service position in the District.

School Board Topics:

None.

Policy - Second Reading:

Scott Ritzmann moved to approve the second reading of policies -

- ACN – Nursing Mothers Accommodations
- BEDG – Meeting Minutes
- EBCC – False Alarms, Bomb, Active Shooter and Other Such Threats
- EHAB – Data Governance and Security
- FA – Facilities Development Goals and Preparation of Capital Improvement Plan
- GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal History Records Check
- IIA - Book and Material Selection Policy
- JCA – Change of Class or School Assignment, Best Interests and Manifest Hardship
- JKAA – Use of Restraints and Seclusion
- KCD – Public Gifts/Donations

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Approve Proposed Extra-Curricular Positions:

Kerri McCaul Claus moved to approve the proposed extra-curricular positions as presented.

Scott Ritzmann seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

SCES Project Update:

Kerri McCaul Claus stated the final walkthrough was completed two weeks ago. They reviewed the punch list and only small items were left, like painting.

Superintendent Holden stated that most of the painting and a fix on the fire panel will be completed by Thanksgiving. The boiler is working well for both the gym and SCES. There is a little bit of foundation work that will need to be done at the base of the biomass boiler.

NESDEC Enrollment Projections:

Superintendent Holden stated the projections show a consistent 65 tuition students each year with enrollment increasing over the next five years. They show by 2030, 430 students in the District. The NESDEC projections have been posted to the website.

Manifest:

Kerri McCaul Claus moved to approve the A/P and payroll manifests as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Agenda for December 6, 2023:

- Budget Update

Adjournment:

Kerri McCaul Claus moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kate O'Connor

School Board Secretary