

Sunapee School Board Meeting

SMHS Gymnasium

February 7, 2024

Call to Order:

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

Roll Call:

Kerri McCaul Claus - Absent

Andy Nichols

Edward Andersen - Absent

Amanda Spears

Scott Ritzman

Others Present:

Russell Holden, Superintendent

Kelly Wessells, Business Administrator

Sean Moynihan, SMHS Principal

Meagan Reed, SMHS Asst. Principal - Absent

Patrick Gordon, SCES Principal

Amanda Hughlock, Director of Student Services

David Flater, Student Representative

Pledge of Allegiance:

Vice Chair Ritzmann led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Andy Nichols moved to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 School Board Budget Hearing as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Scott Ritzmann moved to approve the public minutes of the January 10, 2024 School Board meeting as presented.

Andy Nichols seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Andy Nichols moved to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2024 CIP meeting as presented.
Scott Ritzmann seconded the motion.
Vote unanimous.

Agenda Review:

None

SCES Presentation:

SCES Literacy Teacher, Jessica White, presented the following to the Board:

- The State Legislature passed a bill last year that required students in grades K-3 to be screened for dyslexia within the first 60 days of school.
- SCES is implementing the screening process. They follow-up with the screeners on the results within 30 days of the test. They then report to the families and create intervention plans for the students.
- Last year, the team conducted research on assessments. They spoke with reading and writing specialists and administrators around the State of NH.
- SCES chose to purchase the curriculum Renaissance Learning. It has tests that target dyslexia and other reading disorders, plus it meets the State requirements.
- The reports it gives are thorough and it gives help to parents.
- Each test cost \$7.50 per student the first year. There were 111 students and with the additional cost of professional development, the total for the assessment was \$1,300.
- Next year the cost for each test per student will be \$11.50. There will be professional development for more teachers and on reporting. It should total around \$1,700.
- The test is a fluency measurement that assesses how quickly a student can demonstrate the targeted skills. It is a computer adaptive test and takes about 30-40 minutes per grade level, which is about 2.5hrs for all grades together.
- 31% of students qualified for additional screening. This means they take three to eight 1:1 subtests. The tests are one minute each or 10-30 minutes for each child. In total, it takes approximately 8.5 hrs to complete all the follow-up testing.
- 24% of students out of 31% didn't meet the targeted goals and need interventions, while the other 8% are on "watch". 20% of the national population is diagnosed with dyslexia.
- The ELA Committee is in the review process right now and will have their goals to the Board by June.
- This new assessment has not changed the way the ELA staff operates, but validated where they thought students were and illuminated other areas of instruction.

- The feedback from the assessments are good conversation starters with parents about their child and helps to build a guide for them.

Public Forum:

None

SCES Good News:

Principal Gordon gave the following report to the Board:

- The school is in the midst of mid-year assessments. They are reviewing the results from One Ready Math. This helps identify students who need focused help.
- On the professional development day an attorney specializing in special education law came to speak with staff as did a specialist on cybersecurity.
- SCES had a staff member pass unexpectedly. She was a paraeducator who worked in the preschool and across the grade levels. The celebration of life will be held next Friday.
- A dyslexia specialist will be onsite next month and they will review growth.
- Valentine's Day is next Wednesday. Gift bags were made for senior citizens. Between 70-80 residents will receive a custom bag from students.

Student Representative Report:

David Flater gave the Board the following good news:

- He will be leaving early to attend a scholarship meeting.
- Winter sports are starting to wind down.
- The middle school is preparing for their Valentine's Day dance.
- High school students are preparing for their Broadway trip.
- High school students are expressing stress and poor mental health. Mental health was important to the previous representative, Cam Messenger. David would like to know what support has been offered and how he can help.

Superintendent Holden stated that a second SEL position was added at SCES and there is an adjustment counselor at the high school. He hopes that each student at Sunapee has a trusted adult in the building to talk to or a counselor to help traverse the college/post-secondary process.

Principal Moynihan stated SMHS has provided more resources, but not many students take advantage of them. Some may not be accessing services through the school, but outside of it.

SMHS Good News:

Principal Moynihan gave the Board the following report:

- Shadow Day was held for incoming tuition students. They are recruiting more from Unity this coming year and not as many from Lempster and the Montessori School.
- The Service Club is mentoring students in the third grade.
- The Broadway trip is full. There are 48 students and 8 chaperones attending.
- The Master Schedule is almost complete.

Superintendent Report:

Superintendent Holden gave the Board the following report:

- In 2018, bill 1421 was passed by the legislature, which works to get lead out of drinking water. Schools are required to have their water tested. In October, the District tested and 19 areas came back over the limit. These areas have been taken out of commission until remediation is completed. A letter has been sent to the State for guidance on remediation. Luckily, all the water fountains were found to be fine. The buildings are old, so the piping is too. They have had to buy filters for the kitchens to continue the lunch program. There is some money available and he will work with the State for assistance. All areas will need to be retested after measures are put in place.
- Discussed the new law requiring dyslexia testing. While it supports students at SCES it is still an unfunded mandate by the State that adds a financial burden to the districts around the State.

School Board Topics:

Vice Chair Ritzmann asked if the Board will be having a meeting with Croydon to discuss tuition. Superintendent Holden stated there is a non-meeting (no actions will be taken) on February 22, 2024.

Approve Proposed 2024-2025 School Calendar:

Andy Nichols moved to approve the proposed 2024-2025 school calendar as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Superintendent Holden stated the calendar is aligned with the CTE schedule and professional development days were adjusted.

Approve Proposed 2024-2025 Tuition Rates:

Scott Ritzmann moved to approve the proposed 2024-2025 tuition rates as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Superintendent Holden stated the tuition rates are remaining at the same level. They are doing this as Lempster has a low tuition rate and if they raise it, students currently attending would be negatively impacted. The rates will be \$15,000 for K-8 and \$16,000 for 9-12.

Deliberative Session Review:

Vice Chair Ritzmann stated the meeting went well and appreciated those that came out to attend. It was only 47 minutes long.

Amanda Spears thanked Amanda Hughlock and her team for doing a great job.

Meagan Reed asked what would happen to the heating system at SMHS if the biomass boiler does not pass. Andy Nichols responded that a \$1.2M propane system would need to be installed.

Superintendent Holden explained that the District currently doesn't have enough money in reserves to cover a new system, so it would have to come out of the approved budget and then put in the following year's budget. If the biomass is not approved this year, the district will lose out on the \$400,000 grant. It only needs to pass by 50% of the vote.

A discussion ensued about the installation plans for the biomass, how SMHS will lose parking spaces and why it is being installed in that specific area.

Manifest:

Andy Nichols moved to approve the A/P and payroll manifests as presented.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Agenda for March 6, 2024:

- Goodbye to Scott Ritzmann

Adjournment:

Scott Ritzmann moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

Amanda Spears seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kate O'Connor

School Board Secretary