

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, November 21, 2024
Final Minutes

Present: Jen Taylor, Nate Longcope, Leah Jack, Anna Heard, members; Jeremy Mailloux, Chair; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance & Operations; Anne Magill, Principal; Shannon White-Cleveland, Superintendent; Public Guests.

A. Meeting Called to Order by Jeremy at 7:05 P.M.

B. Public Hearings: None.

C. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar:

Jeremy noted we're getting ready for Four Town budget meetings soon.

D. Warrants and Gifts:

Accounts Payable:

3009	10/29/2024	\$28,589.38
3010	11/12/2024	\$17,339.07

Payroll:

309	10/29/2024	\$94,369.96
310	11/12/2024	\$94,070.45

Gifts: None.

Grants:

Shutesbury- FY25 IDEA

- **FC240 - \$43,919**
- **FC262 - \$2,549**

Shutesbury – FY25 ESSA (Title Grants)

- **Title I FC1 305 - \$ 18,112**
- **Title II FC 140 - \$2,480**
- **Title IV FC309 - \$10,000**

ANNA MOVED TO ACCEPT THE IDEA AND ESSA GRANTS AS PRESENTED. LEAH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

E. Approval of Minutes from October 17, 2024:

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 17, 2024. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

F. Unfinished Business / Updates:

1. Capital Projects/Building Process - Discussion (Roof, Boilers, Kitchen Floor, etc.):

Nate reported that he sat down with Anne to discuss capital planning. The driveway and sidewalk are the only issues at this point. The sidewalk is fixed and we're working on a grant to take care of the driveway.

G. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. PTO/School Committee Outreach - Discussion:

Anne asked SSC for ideas about reaching out to parents/caregivers. SSC offered ideas including opening up the building to caregivers after school and being available to meet with them.

2. Woodland Path

Jeremy described an idea about a woodland path that would connect the school with the new library, which would let students get there without walking on the busy road. It would require several easements. A big advantage is letting students get to the library after school if they want to go there. The PTO might discuss this, and SSC might want to take a position on or think about this.

H. Reports:

1. Superintendent's Report:

Shannon reported that Shutesbury has great strengths right now, and Anne has aligned the Strategic Plan around areas of growth. Shannon presented her Superintendent's Goals to JSC recently and got some good feedback. She'll be updating and presenting again in December. U#28 has a membership with the Massachusetts Partnerships for Youth, which provides additional specialized PD (especially content-specific) and support. There are excellent resources we can access through our membership here. This organization usually bills by district, but they agreed to build the Union as a single district (each district contributes to this). Shannon has been attending many Superintendent meetings, where she hears about legislative updates.

The Circuit Breaker funding has come in much lower than anticipated, leaving about a \$64 million gap in districts across the state. Superintendents have been lobbying for full funding, and we're looking to get some of the surplus from the Millionaires Tax. SCs are being asked to write to our legislators to advocate here because many other groups are trying to get some of those monies as well. She has a template to share with SSC if they'd like to participate. Also, DESE is doing facilities checks in every school and have scheduled visits for every U#28 district. LES and SES are being visited next Tuesday morning; the visit will focus on ensuring a safe and healthy learning environment for all students. Collectively, we need to make our voices heard when we have unfunded mandates from the state; MASC has been leading on this. The next fiscal year looks like a difficult one, and we need to speak about our needs to legislators. At SES, we're about \$10K under what we were expecting for Circuit Breaker. Anna noted our representatives are already very supportive on this issue; the question is one of reaching out to other legislators and the governor. If we just preach to the choir, how does that help?

2. Director of Finance and Operations:

FY26 Shutesbury Elementary School Draft Budget:

Caitlin reported that a change to accounting practices (pulling grant expenditures out of the budget and tracking them separately) will make the budget look a little different this year, with a spending difference of -3.93%. Grants are not counted as revenue as a result. The net total for Town appropriation is 4.94%. Of course, the majority of our budget is salaries (around 80%). The U#28 budget was passed at JSC this week, and SES's contribution to that has seen the largest increase of the five Towns due to our enrollment increase. Budget drivers include a new copier contract, some personnel changes, and PD (moved to some grants).

Caitlin clarified parts of the budget for SSC, particularly around the use of School Choice funds. We're trying to shift away from using Choice funds for essential expenses like positions.

LEAH MOVED TO ALLOW THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE EOY CERTIFICATION STATEMENT. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

3. Principal's Report:

Anne reported on enrollment (minor change) and noted the Town paid for our new roof (thank you!). Our Safety Committee has met twice now and are working on drafting our safety responses to things that might happen. We've completed two fire drills in record time as well as a lockdown drill. Student Council is up and running, busy planning school events including a Pride parade and creating a Gratitude Chain. A Color Engagement Day is coming up too. Finally, planning for the Talent Show is underway. School Council is meeting too, working on the School Improvement Plan. We're working on family engagement events too. Recent fun events include the PTO sponsoring a Latin dance workshop, a walk to the apple orchard followed by our annual Apple Store (a fundraiser for field trips), and various celebrations of being in school.

4. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report:

Anna reported that the new Superintendent has uncovered what she might call "subpar" financial management procedures in the Region. She's trying to revamp how the Finance Office is being run. A very nasty letter was sent to SC members that released information about a district employee, so there's a lot of fallout from that as well. She has a lot on her plate, perhaps more than she anticipated. Hopefully she won't be burned out by the end of the year. There's a lot to keep up with in the Region. Jeremy asked whether the Superintendent has the support of the SC: Yes, definitely. Also the support of the APEA (the Art Teachers union).

5. Union #28 Report, including Budget & Personnel:

Jeremy reviewed the last JSC meeting. Shannon made a request to JSC about what to do about the recent efficiency study, which emphasized regionalization but also included a number of steps we could take to improve efficiency as a Union as well. A subcommittee was formed to review the report and decide on steps we could take toward greater efficiency. Jeremy offered SSC members the opportunity to sit on this

subcommittee, which needs a few more members. Leah commented on the Director of Curriculum and Instruction's helpful presentation and noted that we passed the U#28 Budget.

6. CES Report: None.

I. Policy Review:

First Reading for Deletion:

IE – Organization of Instruction
JBA – Student-to-Student Harassment

First Reading On:

ACAB – Sex-Based Harassment/Discrimination (Title IX)
IGA/IGD - Curriculum Development
JIC- Student Discipline
JICFB – Bullying Prevention

Second Reading, First Vote On:

LBC – Relations with Nonpublic Schools
JLCC – Communicable Diseases
KLG – Relations with Police Authorities

Final Vote On:

JFABE – Educational Opportunities for Military Children
JFABF – Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care
JH – Student Absences and Excuses

Leah asked about IGA/IGD: Is it typical for SCs to approve curricula? It can be, but just broad curricula, not picking the books used in classrooms, etc. We should remove the reference to “high school” as well.

Jeremy noted someone reached out to him to ask about the role of the Resource Officer at the school.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY LBC – RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JLCC – COMMUNICABLE DISEASES. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY KLG – RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES. JEN SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JFABE – EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JFABF – EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE POLICY JH – STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

J. Executive Session: Not necessary.

K. Future Business:

- Shutesbury Policy Committee – Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, December 19, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – January 13, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.
- Future agenda items –

L. Adjournment at 8:29

ANNA MOVED TO ADJOURN. NATE SECONDED. VOICE VOTES ALL AYE.