

SHUTESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 17, 2024
Final Minutes

Present: Jen Taylor, Nate Longcope, Leah Jack, 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 7:03 P.M.

B. Public Hearings: None.

C. Review of Agenda and Perpetual Calendar:

Jeremy noted he had the deadline wrong for the last *Our Town*. We'll get something in the next edition for sure. He's adding two items to the agenda: Reporting on the Four Town Meeting, Discussion about a PTO Meet and Greet, and Discussion about Home School Policy.

D. Warrants and Gifts:

Accounts Payable

3007	10/1/2024	\$50,050.31
3008	10/15/2024	\$37,947.34

Payroll

307	9/30/2024	\$90,112.73
308	10/15/2024	\$109,792.07
308.1	10/15/2024	\$1,568.78

Gifts: None.

Grants: None.

E. Approval of Minutes from September 19, 2024:

Leah offered two emendations to the minutes.

LEAH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2024 AS EMENDED. NATE SECONDED. UNANIMOUS.

F. Unfinished Business / Updates:

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

Nate will arrange a time to meet with Anne to review capital projects. Shannon said there will be an update Nov 1 from MSBA about funding for capital projects; she's signed up for that webinar and will report out on that at the November SSC meeting.

G. New Business / Discussion Items:

1. MCAS and Accountability Presentation:

Anne said that it's incredible news what SES has accomplished in our accountability percentile. This is the result of all the hard work done by previous and current SES administration and staff. The school earned a percentage rate that has put us in a very distinguished category: a School of Distinction. She reviewed scores in each area of the MCAS, which is just one data point in our entire assessment activities. We have good results overall in ELA as well as Math, and the detailed breakdown of data in each grade helps us understand how our instruction is working and where we need to make adjustments. We should be very proud of where we're at. Shannon said the natural next step is to try to become a National Blue Ribbon school.

H. Reports:

1. Superintendent's Report:

Shannon reported all U#28 schools will participate in Curriculum Day soon, hosted at SRS. Our keynote speaker is giving us a talk about trauma-informed practices and will lead small-group work as well. It's an incredible opportunity for our instructors. We completed our first round of instructional walkthroughs and are starting our second round. We'll be coordinating a walkthrough that SC members can participate in to see how they're done. U#28 applied for and received a waiver for our CPAC (a Special Education Advisory Council); we did this in order to create a single CPAC for the entire Union. We'll be having our first Safety Drill soon (the first one is announced, and we'll have three over the course of the school year). We're subscribing to a database that lets us look at school district contracts across the state and compare with ours, which can help take the emotion out of negotiating some benefits, since we can see how we're doing compared to other districts. SES will be able to take advantage of this in the next bargaining cycle. Shannon attended a conference on cyber security with Debbie Lee and the tech person from EES. DESE is also offering training around physical security coming up, which will help inform our lockdown drills and procedures.

Caitlin explained more about the information we're able access through the contract database, including projections of the financial impact of various raises. We can also look at trends across the state. SSC expressed enthusiasm for what the contract database can do for us in the bargaining process.

2. Director of Finance and Operations:

FY24 End of Year Report - Submitted - Vote to Allow the Chair to Sign the EOY Certification Statement:

Caitlin reported that there was one payroll error that was quickly fixed. She explained how our budgeting process for JSC is going, then explained that the FY24 End of Year Report has been submitted, and SSC needs to vote to allow the Chair to sign a Certification Statement that asserts our numbers are accurate to the best of our knowledge, although we will be able to adjust these through filings in the future. Caitlin

reviewed the FY24 EOY report, explaining different lines. It's important to maintain and meet Maintenance of Effort for our Title grants; we've done so thus far.

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

3. Four Town Meeting:

Jeremy reported that the new Superintendent in Amherst is doing a great job so far, moving fast on solutions for the issues they've identified. At the Four Town Meeting, she presented around six different scenarios for ways to handle the deficit, which is a problem in all scenarios. She wants to move to a performance-based funding structure eventually, possibly including restructuring the Region, consolidating the Central Office, or shifting Grades 7-12 to a single building. One thing that's interesting is that the deficit in Amherst is about equivalent to what they pay out to charter schools. The Superintendent is focused on providing basic education to all students, then building on that. It's not sustainable for the Towns to increase their guard rail percentages to fund the Region. It's very early still, but there's evidence that they're doing a lot of serious work on this problem.

SSC discussed some of these potential solutions. Leah suggested consolidating the schools could open up the possibility for innovative programs. Shannon noted that having all grades in one school is common across Massachusetts; it's new to Amherst, but not to other communities.

4. Principal's Report: None.

5. Amherst-Pelham Representative's Report: None.

6. Union #28 Report, including Budget & Personnel: None

7. CES Report:

Jen reported on maintenance and building updates as well as upcoming PD for Health and Wellness. The state is trying to get all schools to a better place with supporting student mental health.

I. Policy Review:

First Reading On:

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

Second Reading, First Vote On:

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

Leah offered a correction to JLCC. SSC discussed niceties of approving curriculum for nonpublic schools via LBC.

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, November 21, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.
- Shutesbury School Committee – Thursday, November 21, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- Union #28 Joint Supervisory – November 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- Future agenda items –

L. Adjournment at 8:39

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