

Board of Education Office
50 Sheffield Street
Old Saybrook, CT 06475
(860) 395-3157

The Old Saybrook Board of Education met in Special Session on Tuesday, April 24, 2018, at the Board of Education Office, Old Saybrook, CT 06475.

Board Members

Kelley Kennedy
Jan Furman
Tara Barros
Eileen Baker
George Chang
Phil Broadhurst
Alan Hyla
Jim Henderson

Others

Jan Perruccio, Superintendent of Schools
Julie Pendleton, Dir. Operations, Facilities & Finance
Amity Goss, Dir. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Sheila Riffle, Old Saybrook High School Principal
Matt Walton, Old Saybrook Middle School Assoc. Principal

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

Chairman Kennedy called for a moment of silence in honor of former Board of Education Member Holly King.

Chairman Kennedy read the 2018 School Nurse Appreciation Proclamation into the minutes and thanked the district's school nurses on behalf of the Board of Education and the administration.

II. COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

Audience of Citizens

Chairman Kennedy reminded the audience members of the rules for addressing the Board of Education and asked Vice Chairman Hyla to keep time during the comment.

A member of the audience offered her condolences for Holly King, a recently deceased Board of Education Member. She went on to discuss an alleged incident between her son and a teacher at Old Saybrook Middle School. She stated that her primary goal was that her son feel safe in school and that her child be treated fairly.

A member of the audience stated that he planned to continue attending Board Meetings as a voice for his son, the child in the aforementioned incident. He insisted on his son's voice being heard by the Board.

Board of Education Student Representatives

The Student Representatives submitted the following report to the Board of Education:

Arts

- 4/19-4/21 – CMEA All State Music Festival: 2 students attended a very selective music festival. The students first had to be selected for Regionals and then re-audition for All State.

Sports

- OSHS Crew had their first regatta
 - 2 boats finished first
 - 3 boats finished third

Other

- Senior project open house on Wednesday night (4/25) from 6:00-7:00PM in the Library Media Center. The event is open to the public
- Freshman retreat recap is happening on SAT day

Correspondence

The following correspondence was sent to the Board of Education:

- Letter of Support from a community member for the Old Saybrook Middle School music program

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION I

Baker/Furman

“Move to enter into executive session at 7:43 PM for the purpose of discussing confidential attorney/client written communication pertaining to community concerns about personnel investigations and student supports”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

The Board invited Attorney Anne Littlefield and Superintendent Perruccio into Executive Session.

IV. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 8:26PM

Chairman Kennedy issued the following statement on behalf of the Board of Education:

On behalf of the Old Saybrook Board of Education, I have been asked by the Board to address public concerns regarding student safety and support at Old Saybrook Middle School. Since January 2018, some members of the public have approached the Board to speak publicly about a personnel matter and its effect on students at OSMS. As the Board's audience of citizens protocol typically prohibits the Board from responding directly to these concerns during audience of citizens, the Board has authorized me to provide further information to the public regarding student supports at OSMS, as well as general information pertaining to personnel investigations when child abuse and/or neglect is alleged.

Supports Available to All Students:

OSMS has significant counseling and support personnel available for all students. These individuals include: guidance counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses.

Each of these individuals is available to speak with students about any stressful situation, and can provide continuing guidance and support for students.

It is also important to note that, with respect to the specific situation at OSMS discussed recently in audience of citizens, district administrators have assigned another adult to the classroom to assist all students in feeling safe and comfortable.

Student Specific Plans:

The support plan for any specific student depends upon the student. District administrators regularly offer to meet with parents to develop such plans.

Supports offered to students experiencing stress and anxiety at OSMS (whether related to a personnel situation or unrelated) include:

- *Designation of a specific adult that a student can go to, at any time, if the student feels uncomfortable at any time in school.*
- *Frequent check-ins with specific students by school counselors.*
- *Counseling sessions with school mental health personnel.*
- *Counseling sessions with community mental health professionals.*
- *Communications between a student's school support team and community and/or privately retained mental health professionals, as appropriate.*
- *Facilitated meetings between students and adults in the school setting when specific stressful situations need to be processed.*
- *Parent/school team, district, and administration meetings to plan for students' needs.*

There are also legal processes in place to develop support plans for disabled students. Such students are provided supports through plans developed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”). Each of these laws requires that a multidisciplinary team come together with parents to design and implement supports individually tailored to a disabled student’s needs.

The Board encourages all parents whose children are experiencing stress in school for any reason to access the personnel listed above to discuss available supports.

When the Board receives information pertaining to specific student concerns as part of information shared by a parent or other community member during the portion of the Board meeting set aside for audience of citizens, federal law prohibits the Board from responding in public.

When concerns are raised about a specific student situation during audience of citizens, the Board Chair will meet with the Superintendent to review the concerns raised and develop a response to be sent by the Board Chair on behalf of the Board. Since January 2018, the Board Chair has followed this procedure and issued multiple responsive communications to community members who appeared and requested information from the Board about specific student situations during the audience of citizens.

Board Role in Personnel Matters:

Section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes expressly charges the Board with the responsibility for evaluating the performance of the Superintendent. Aside from the Superintendent, the Board has no authority to evaluate other employees. Rather, all other employees in the district, including the district’s teachers and administrators, are evaluated and supervised by either the Superintendent or other individuals within the district’s administrative structure. Ultimately, the responsibility for appropriate evaluation and supervision of all teachers rests with the Superintendent.

The Board occasionally receives information about the performance of employees through community members speaking out in the context of the times set aside for the audience of citizens’ portion of Board meetings. When systemic concerns about the training and/or conduct of staff members are raised, the systemic concerns may be added to a Board agenda for discussion and action. In setting the Board agenda, the Board Chair and the Superintendent will confer on whether such agenda items are needed.

District Role in Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations:

Members of the public have raised questions about the procedures for the investigation of physical assault and/or child abuse by a school district employee. To aid the public’s understanding in this matter, the Board encourages community

members to review the Board's policy concerning this topic, located at www.oldsaybrookschools.org.

As noted in Board policy, some basic principles concerning these investigations apply:

- While school district administrators are required to investigate reports of child abuse and neglect concerning school employees, investigations by DCF and/or the police take priority.
- The Commissioner of DCF must notify the superintendent of the investigation results within five working days after DCF completes the investigation of a report against a school employee.
- DCF reports and the information contained in such reports, wherever located, are confidential documents not subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Board hopes that this information will aid in the community's understanding of these issues.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Baker/Broadhurst

“Move to approve the consent agenda, as amended”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

Board Member Baker requested Series 9000 Meeting Conduct be pulled out of the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

VI. EDUCATION ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Professional Development Wrap Up

At their meeting on April 24, Amity Goss, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, provided an overview of professional learning for the year.

From July 1, 2017 to July 1, 2018, one hundred thirty-nine (+2 from 2016-17) educators from every academic department and school were provided professional learning opportunities, beyond the contractual professional development days. Workshops and conferences outside of the district cost approximately \$19,000. This total is less than half of last year's total (down from ~ \$40,000 in 16-17) due to job-embedded coaching opportunities and teachers taking excellent advantage of free professional learning offerings.

Current research indicates that job-embedded coaching has significant, positive impact on student learning. This year every department had access to job-embedded coaching through the Instructional Leadership Team. Additionally, twenty grades 3-8 teachers were provided ten days of instructional coaching about writing workshop and twenty-five K-3 teachers were provided five days of coaching focused on guided reading.

The majority of the job-embedded coaching in the district, however, was provided to PK-12 math teachers. Old Saybrook's Math Coach/Coordinator provided 56 days of formal coaching workshops for groups of teachers in addition to her work with individuals.

Field Trip Request – Quebec, Canada

Since 2004, Old Saybrook High School has sent students of French, levels 2 through French AP to spend 3 days, 2 overnights, in Québec, Canada. In 2011, 2013 and 2016, Ms. Zumbaum organized and took students to Québec, with the help of the administration and chaperone teachers.

Ms. Zumbaum would like to bring French students again to Québec in March of 2019. Students and chaperones will leave Old Saybrook High School on a Friday morning, 7:30am, and come back to the High School Sunday night, at around 9:30pm.

The itinerary and activities include, but are not limited to:

- Take the ferry across the St. Lawrence stream
- Enjoy dinners and breakfasts in Parisian style restaurants and cafés
- Visit the cathedral “Notre Dame”
- Visit historic grounds (Plains of Abraham, the old city, city gates and towers, et cetera) and museums
- Visit the Montmorency Falls
- Visit the world known “Hôtel de Glace”
- Spend time in the “village vacances” (tubing and ice skating)
- Visit a traditional sugar shack (food, music, and dance)
- Visit the Musée du Fort

Henderson/Furman

“Move to approve the field trip to Quebec, Canada, as presented”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

Textbook Request – AP Psychology

On Tuesday, April 24th, Megan Roarick, High School Social Studies Teacher, and John Glover, Social Studies Instructional Leader, presented their choice of updated textbook for AP Psychology.

As part of a College Board approved curriculum in AP Psychology, the use of a textbook is suggested. While the College Board itself does not specifically recommend texts for use in AP classes, Myers' Psychology for the AP Course is listed on the AP website as a potential text. This book is more widely used to prepare students for the AP exam than the current text by Weiten: Themes and Variations. The current textbook used in the AP Psychology course at Old Saybrook High School is copyrighted 2007 and does not have the same (updated) resource offered by the Myers text.

Myers' Psychology for AP 2nd edition is updated on a semi-annual basis and includes the most current research in psychology. This research is constantly reviewed for overall relevance and relevance to the current version of the AP Exam. This text also has an e-text and "psych lab" for online access. This online lab benefits students in a number of ways. First, it helps to keep information and assignments updated for students, it has specific, targeted activities which assist students in preparation for the AP examination in May and allows instructors to assign and assess assignments in a virtual manner-access is possible from anywhere that can link to the Internet.

This textbook purchase was budgeted for this school year. This is the Board's first opportunity to review the potential adoption of this text.

Hyla/Broadhurst

“Move to approve the proposed textbook, as presented”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

VII. REPORTS BY ADMINISTRATION

Kathleen E. Goodwin – There was no additional report.

Old Saybrook Middle School – Mr. Walton elaborated on the proposed scheduling changes at Old Saybrook Middle School. One of the biggest changes is moving X Block from the end of the day to the middle of the day. Instructional time has been reduced per block so that five periods can be seen every day. Daily class meetings was also an important goal.

Old Saybrook High School – The Board discussed the Wellness Days at the High School.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment – The final Strategic Plan series event will be held on April 25 at the Board of Education Office.

Operations, Facilities and Finance – There was no additional report

Pupil and Professional Services – There was no additional report.

Superintendent of Schools – There was no additional report.

VIII. REPORTS BY BOARD COMMITTEES/LIAISONS

Budget and Fiscal Committee – The town meeting on the budget is on May 7, 2018, and the town referendum is on May 15, 2018

CABE – The Board emails have been updated in the CABE Database.

Facilities – There was no report

LEARN – The synopsis from April was posted to the notebook.

Strategic Planning Committee – There was no report

Demographics – The Committee is working on research and drafting ideas.

Personnel – There was no report

Policy – The Series 9000 Meeting Conduct policy will be brought up at the next Board Meeting.

Chairman's Report – There was no report

IX. COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

Audience of Citizens

No citizens addressed the Board of Education

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Barros/Hyla

“Move to enter into executive session at 9:14 PM for the purpose of discussing Non-Certified/Non-Union Contracts and Letters of Employment”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

The Board invited Superintendent Perruccio and Director Pendleton into Executive Session.

XI. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

The Board returned to open session at 9:20PM.

XII. REMINDERS

- Goodwin – Special Friend Day Grade Kindergarten – April 25 – 11:30AM
- Goodwin – Special Friend Day Grade 3 – April 25 – 2:15PM
- OSHS – Senior Gallery – April 25 – 6:0PM
- District – Strategic Plan Series: Profile of a Graduate – 7:30PM
- OSHS – Mr. Old Saybrook – April 26 – 7:00PM
- OSMS – Parent Coffee Hour – May 2 – 6:00PM
- Goodwin – Kindergarten Parent Orientation – May 2 – 6:30PM
- Goodwin – Grade 2 and 3 Ballroom Dance Performance – May 3 – 9:15AM
- Goodwin – Grade ECP, K, and 1 Ballroom Dance Performance – May 3 – 10:15AM
- OSMS – Grade 6 Spring Concert Band and Chorus – May 3 – 7:00PM
- OSMS – PTO Teacher Appreciation Luncheon – May 4 – 12:00PM
- OSHS – 19th Annual Community Variety Show – May 4 – 6:30PM
- OSHS – RAM Boosters Meeting – May 7 – 7:00PM
- Goodwin – PTA Meeting – May 8 – 7:00PM
- Regular Board of Education Meeting – May 8 – 7:00PM

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Baker/Furman

“Move to adjourn at 9:21PM”

MOTION: CARRIED (8-0-0)

Karen Brodeur, Secretary
Old Saybrook Board of Education

Minutes recorded and typed by:
Trent Gerbers, Executive Assistant
*DRAFT - Subject to approval at the next BOE meeting