

SHARON BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2019 - 5:30 PM
@
THE NEWTON SCHOOL
Approved Minutes

Present:

School Board: Chantelle Brackett, Sam Potter, Don Shaw

Others: Bruce Labs (Superintendent), Keenan Haley (Principal), Nicole Antal (Recording Secretary).

1. Call to Order
Don Shaw called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm
2. Adjustments to the Agenda
The executive session is canceled.
3. Assign times/time keeper
None
4. Consent Agenda
 - 4.1. Approve the Minutes of Monday, October 7, 2019 (Regular)
Potter moved to approve the minutes of Monday, October 7, 2019. Shaw seconded. Motion approved.
5. Board Communications
None
6. Public Comments
None
7. Action Items
None at this time.
8. Reports to the Board
 - 8.1. Superintendent's Report
Labs shared an email Dena Atwood sent him concerning David Whitaker's request about his status at the school. The email is Atwood reacting to that question (('why David Whitaker cannot be a salaried employee outside of the bargaining unit?')) Labs briefly summarized and shared the content of the email with the board and gave copies to the board members and public.

8.2. Business Manager's Report

8.1.1 Current Budget Status

None

8.1.2 Current Budget Info Status

Labs shared that the Business Manager has another meeting with the auditors tomorrow. It has been a 3 weeks process. Shaw and Haley participated recently in the executive board meeting, where the auditors did a read out to the executive board of where the districts stood.

8.3. Principal's Report

(The report shared with the public, staff, and board can be found in attachment on our website).

On October 31st, the school held our first Emergency Planning Committee meeting. We took a risk assessment (recommended by the state) in terms of what are the most likely emergencies to happen at Sharon Elementary. We will use this assessment to prioritize what we need to address in terms of emergency responses. Our next meeting is Thursday, November 14th at 7:00 am in the library.

Friday, November 9th, we held a school wide assembly in honor of Veteran's Day. Two Veterans joined us and discussed their role in the military. One Veteran wanted to impress on the children that most people who serve in our military do not engage in actual combat, but provide other services that add to a productive society. It was a good lesson for our students about the role that the military plays in all of our lives. Each class presented a reading or poem and at the end we all joined together for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Teachers conducted parent conferences on Monday, November 11th.

Our first Trimester will be closing on November 22nd. Teachers are putting together progress reports for parents.

Haley is currently in the evaluation process with teachers. There are 10 teachers in the formal evaluation cycle. This is the most intensive cycle that requires a pre and post-conference, plus multiples observations and feedback. The rest of the staff is on a self-directed cycle that is less intense but still requires observation and feedback.

Teachers met with Place-Based Education facilitators. We have developed grade by grade focus areas that are aligned with the NExT Generation Science Standards and Vermont Standards in literacy and math. Each class will have a document to share with parents and community members that will express what students are learning while taking part in Place-Based Education. We will also use this document to inspire other educators in the area to go beyond the traditional methods of teaching to inspire and motivate students to learn. ****

We have been hit with sickness in the school that has impacted staffing. Our night custodian was out for several days, while our day time custodian is on a doctor's order leave until November 20th due to weight lifting restrictions. Teachers have been taking time after school to do light cleaning in their classrooms, while students have pitched in as well, helping with lunch clean up. Our night custodian is back and that is helpful. I think we can manage the daytime custodial side of things until the 20th. But, if it is longer, we will need to find help.

We continue to look for a school counselor. We have posted the job on School Spring. I contacted our "second place" candidate from our first round of hiring and she has decided not to take the job based on family need. I'm also reaching out to local universities that have counseling programs to see if anyone is graduating and may need an internship. If nothing happens after Thanksgiving, it may be time to consider hiring someone from Clara Martin, or see about the possibility of sharing someone from another school within the SU.

Teachers will be taking a CPR course on Thursday, November 14th.

9. Discussion Items

9.1 Update on Projects

9.1.1 PK Roof

Ashley Johnson of Johnson Construction has started the preK roof project. This will be a big improvement to the building, allowing snow to slide off and not pool up on top of the roof, causing leakage into the building.

9.1.2 Snow Plowing and Paving

Haley attended a Sharon Selectboard meeting on Monday, November 4th. Jon Harrington from Horizon's Engineering presented paving plans for the parking lot and suggested that the school and town work together to bundle the town road paving that leads to the school and the parking lot paving, to get a better deal. The town is considering this, but does have a lot on their paving agenda already. **The town reiterated that they will NOT plow the lot this year.**

I am soliciting three bids for plowing this year. So far, Kolbi Walton-Strong has graciously plowed the lot once. I will select the bid to go with by day's end tomorrow.

9.1.3 Insulation

Haley met with Alex Riesterer a local contractor who specializes in insulation work about the kitchen and storage area. For the past several years the water pipes have been freezing. The company that cleans up the mess has just been putting a bandaid on the problem. The area is not properly insulated and needs to be. Riesterer is putting together a quote for the school. He has done similar work in Brookfield and knows these types of building well. This is an urgent problem as we cannot keep having pipes freezes and leaking.

9.1.4 Playground

The school received a building and safety report from Multi-Line, Vermont School Board Insurance Trust. The school has some needs on the school playground especially that need to be addressed. Mostly, the playground is solid, but there are replacement parts that need to be ordered that have a significant cost. Haley plans to add these costs to the overall budget.

9.1.5 Drainage

During the selectboard meeting it was brought up that the school's water build up on the playground is draining into the town library parking lot. The town wants to work together on a solution. Pathways Consulting, who conducted our 2019 stormwater inspection, suggested some simple regrading of the areas to limit ponding on the playground and redirect the runoff to areas along the tree line, away from play areas. They have presented two concepts on how this may work. The town also presented a concept. We agreed to meet about this at a later date as nothing can be solved at this point. Put on the agenda for Spring.

9.2 Literacy Work

The school continues to work with Aimee Toth on the Literacy Initiative. There is an upcoming meeting with her on November 15th and again, some time with her on the 18th if desired. There were two meetings scheduled at first, but it seemed overwhelming to have them so close to each other. Aimee offered to have the second one optional, but a lot of teachers signed up to have that extra time with her.

9.3 Placed Based/Farm to School Work

Teachers met with Place-Based Education facilitators. The school has developed grade by grade focus areas that are aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards and Vermont Standards in literacy and math. Each class will have a document to share with parents and community members that will express what students are learning while taking part in Place-Based Education. The school will also use this document to inspire other educators in the area to go beyond the traditional methods of teaching to inspire and motivate students to learn.

Sharon is seen as a model for their Place-Based and Farm-to-School work around the region and state. Haley attended the Wellborn Ecology Conference on November 1st. He was asked to be a part of the administrative symposium where we discussed many items including Sharon Elementary's evolution into a model school. This has taken many, many years to establish starting in 2002 when we began to work on ecological literacy units, and then again when we started working with Vermont FEED in 2005, that eventually led us to Farm-to-School work. Our small school has been mentioned in the Congressional Record in 2007, featured in a variety of online and national articles. WE find this work extremely valuable and will continue to look for ways to improve on what we are doing.

9.4 Building Safety Report

See 9.1.4 Playground.

9.5 Budget Update

As for the budget, the school has some significant need in terms of buildings and grounds that are high priority. Haley will work with the business manager to find ways to be cost effective but these needs are urgent and should be prioritized.

Other discussion:

Labs and Briglin discussed briefly the state of Act 173, and what it would mean for the SU. Labs talked about the fact that the SU has created robust programs for the lower grades to accommodate kids with a lot of needs, with the focus on taking those kids out of the classroom to address the needs they have, with the hope to reintegrate them into the classrooms once they are ready to reintegrate. Labs explained that we have done that for the lower grades and middle school, but not for high school. With Act 173, the SU has to start thinking about creating programs for the higher grades, as we are sending those kids out of our SU for their needs.

10. Executive Session - Personnel

Canceled.

11. Return to Public Session

Canceled.

12. Confirm Next Meeting Dates

12.1. Tuesday, December 10, 2019 - 5:30 PM @ Sharon Elementary School

Confirmed

13. Future Agenda Items

14. Adjourn

Brackett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 pm. Potter seconded. Motion approved.