

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
ANDOVER, CT 06232  
Regular Board of Education Meeting  
Wednesday, December 13, 2023  
7:00 pm  
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

**Members Present:** Mike Beckwith, Gerard Cremé, Steven Fuss, Caitlin Greenhouse, Brianne Lanzieri (virtual), Shannon Loudon, Celeste Willard

**Members Absent:**

**Administration:** Valerie Bruneau, Superintendent  
Taylor Parker, Principal  
Terri Smith, Finance

**Others:** Anne Cremé, Lisa Hopkins (virtual), Kimberly Person (virtual), Jaime Tilden-Bailey (virtual)

**1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Superintendent Bruneau, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Comments from the Public – None.**

**3. Communications – None.**

**4. Election of Board of Education Officers for 2024**

Chairperson:

**S. Loudon nominated G. Cremé to be chairperson of the Board of Education, C. Greenhouse nominated C. Willard to be chairperson of the Board of Education.**

Discussion: G. Crème noted that he has been a strong leader, commitment of time and communication with Town officials, going to meetings for BOF and BOS. G. Crème asked for the support of the Board. C. Willard stated she takes the nomination seriously, has had communications and attended meetings with BOF and BOS, prepared to commit to the Board if elected. All BOE members spoke in support of the nominees.

**Roll call vote for Board Chair:**

**M. Beckwith - G. Cremé**

**G. Cremé - G. Cremé**

**S. Fuss - C. Willard**

**C. Greenhouse - C. Willard**

**B. Lanzieri - C. Willard**  
**S. Louden - G. Cremé**  
**C. Willard - C. Willard**

C. Willard becomes new Board of Education Chairperson with the majority vote. Bruneau turned the meeting over to Chairperson Willard.

Vice-Chairperson:

**C. Willard nominated S. Fuss to serve at Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Education. G. Cremé nominated S. Louden to serve as Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Education. No other nominations. No discussion.**

**Roll call vote for Vice-Chairperson:**  
**M. Beckwith - S. Louden**  
**G. Cremé - S. Louden**  
**S. Fuss - S. Fuss**  
**C. Greenhouse - S. Fuss**  
**B. Lanzieri - S. Fuss**  
**S. Louden - S. Louden**  
**C. Willard - S. Fuss**

S. Fuss becomes new Board of Education Vice-Chairperson with a majority vote.

Secretary:

**S. Louden and M. Beckwith declined nominations. C. Willard nominated C. Greenhouse to serve as Secretary of the Board of Education. No other nominations. No discussion.**

**Roll call vote was unanimous with no abstentions.**

C. Greenhouse becomes the new Secretary of the Board of Education.

## **5. Approval of Minutes**

**S. Fuss made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 8, 2023 Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion. B. Lanzieri abstained from the vote.**

**6-0-1 (PASSED)**

## **6. Opportunity to Add or Delete Agenda Items – None.**

**7. Celebrations**

M. Beckwith noted that he has heard a lot of positive feedback on the after-school activities taking place. S. Fuss noted that it is helping students with learning needs as well as enrichment. Board members agree this program is successful and well-received.

**8. Reports**

**A. Chairperson's Oral Report – None**

**B. Superintendent's Report –** Supt. Bruneau had a meeting with Titan & Green regarding the solar project to see why we were denied this time. Changed criteria for applicants, smaller and larger projects have same considerations at this time. It is lottery based. Our project is currently on stand-by and will possibly be considered for funding for the next two weeks if other approved projects fall through, but there is a low probability for it to be approved and completed this time around. Will put in again; the paperwork is valid for two application cycles, so we are all set to submit another request.

Preschool is going very well. Room was opened and students began in November. Currently have 11 regular slots (not all pay same amount), 16 students under School Readiness grant, 13 slots that are Smart Start grant. Several students after New Year, rest in the spring. Andover has a premier preschool program in Northeastern Corner of Connecticut. We have teacher support, continuing education, and foresee program remaining full. The majority of students are from Andover, with only four students from other towns. Anticipate bringing in \$35-40K regular tuition, plus \$69K in addition to the current grant funding of \$100K School Readiness and \$65K Smart Start. Teacher salaries for all preschool classrooms are \$187K; Para salaries \$80K. The worst-case scenario for funding would be a shortfall of up to \$30K. With the need for preschool programs, it is in the best interest of AES to keep these rooms open.

Principal Parker and Supt. Bruneau discussed the status of the waiver for Science of Reading and Read to Write grant. AES received conditional approval for the waiver. Received \$19K grant funds to meet the requirements, and purchases must be made from the manufacturer. Need to supplement vocabulary and reading comprehension. Education team will pick a program to pilot.

After school programs that are grant funded going well. More family activities will be coming out of these grant programs as there were three months with no programming, giving us surplus. Planning a Pre-K/K sensory program for younger students on a Friday.

Reviewed Mental Health grant; will be meeting after the first of the year to discuss programming. Applied for a small grant.

**C. Principal's Report** – Pre-K going well. Pre-K registration for next year is not officially opened, but with K age change families are more eager to secure a spot for their children who will not be moving up to kindergarten. Hosted an Intergenerational Day near Thanksgiving, 250 people participated. Picture books were given to each family to promote intergenerational reading. After-school programs are going well, several staff members spending a lot of time planning for upcoming family activities. Had some professional development days. A half-day Writing program for teachers in upper grades, as well as discussion of the Reading program and how we will move forward. Paras taking professional development as well, learning to work more in sensory room. OT has been providing a lot of support and training. Participated in the Hour of Code for the first time this year – super successful. Code.org was used for most of the programming. Teachers joined in the program alongside the students, which was a wonderful thing to see. Older students did it one day and helped younger grades the next day. Spelling Bee, Invention Convention coming up after the New Year. C. Greenhouse asked that reminders for professional development days state what training is happening. Overall enrollment is at a seven-year high. NAEYC accreditation will begin in February and anticipate the observations and visit will be end of May/beginning of June.

**D. Financial Report**

T. Smith unable to attend, questions can be sent to her via email. BOE members did not have questions at this time.

**E. Liaison Reports**

- S. Loudon reported that BOF did not pass the policy at their last meeting. This will be an ongoing process to come together to agree on and approve the policy. Next BOF meeting is on December 27, 2023, and S. Loudon will attend to try to work through the process and have a policy in place.
- CIP meeting next week if there is anything needing to be addressed.
- C. Greenhouse reported on Tri-Board meeting, interested parties would like to hold off until after budget season.
- Paving updates on basketball court, coned it for a while. E. Anderson is not concerned about the issue; Principal Parker asked the Board that it not remain this way for a significant amount of time.

**9. Items for Discussion and Possible Action**

**A. Item: 2024-2025 AES School Calendar**

Principal Parker put together a calendar with a few changes to meet the needs of the school. Changed some locations and made changes to align with RHAM schedules as best as possible.

**S. Fuss made a motion to accept the 2024-2025 AES School Calendar as presented, seconded by C. Greenhouse. No discussion.**

**7-0-0 (PASSED)**

**B. Item: Preliminary Discussion of 2024-2025 Budget Calendar**

S. Fuss passed around a proposed schedule of budget meetings/workshops, which will be held via Zoom. Discussed the format and how to ensure that community members can send in questions via e-mail. Will work with Supt. Bruneau on which line items are discussed at each meeting. The goal is that by the Wednesday, January 31, 2024, meeting there will be an outline of the budget ask. Public forum proposed to be held February 7, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. via zoom to get public input and answer questions regarding potential proposed budget. February 14, 2024, at the regular BOE meeting, there will need to be a vote on proposed budget. Breakdown of topics for each meeting should be completed before the holiday break, then they will be posted in the RiverEast and through the Town and AES websites as well.

**G. Crème made a motion to approve the meeting dates as proposed, seconded by M. Beckwith. Further discussions regarding timelines and task breakdowns.**

**7-0-0 (PASSED)**

**10. Other Action Items – None.**

**11. Upcoming Meetings**

- A. Regular Board Meeting – January 10, 2024
- B. Budget Meetings will be January 3, 2024, January 17, 2024, January 24, 2024, and January 31, 2024.
- C. Items for Next Meeting – BOF Policy Update

**12. Adjournment**

**S. Fuss made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m., seconded by S. Loudon. No discussion.**

**7-0-0 (PASSED)**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Longley, Clerk