

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ANDOVER, CT 06232
Regular Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, March 13, 2024
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

Members Present: Celeste Willard, Mike Beckwith, Gerard Cremé, Steven Fuss, Caitlin Greenhouse, Brianne Lanzieri, Shannon Louden

Members Absent:

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

Others: Jennie Morrell/Teacher (Virtual), Lisa Hopkins/Teacher (Virtual), Melissa Loteczka/Teacher, Kirstina Frazier/Teacher

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Willard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Comments From the Public – Invention Convention Ceremony was wonderful.

3. Communications – None.

4. Approval of Minutes

G. Cremé made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by M. Beckwith. No discussion. B. Lanzieri abstained.

6-0-1 (PASSED)

S. Fuss made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February 7, 2024 special meeting budget seminar, seconded by S. Louden. No discussion. G. Cremé abstained.

6-0-1 (PASSED)

5. Opportunity to Add or Delete Agenda Items – None.

6. Celebrations

Principal Parker noted that Spelling Bee has finished up; Hilary Boris went to State level representing AES. Invention Convention showcased tonight with judging this afternoon. All fourth grade participated in class as part of the curriculum. Program was also offered afterschool for all students K-6. Total of 34 inventors created an invention from scratch. Four semi-finalists will go to the State level: Weston Loteczka, Olivia Delaware, Lilli Godwin, and Wynston Greenhouse. Semi-finalists presented their projects to the Board.

Supt. Bruneau noted that it is Board Appreciation month; Board members received two books as a thank you. Supt. Bruneau thanked the Board members for their service to the children and the district.

Presidents of Teacher's Union (Charlene & Melissa), on behalf of teachers and students, presented the BOE members with cards made by the children. Thanked BOE members for support.

7. Reports

A. Chairperson's Oral Report

Chairperson Willard thanked BOE members for putting together liaison descriptions; will provide update on BOS & BOF March meeting next month. S. Fuss is scheduled for April. CABE Convention coming up; an excellent opportunity for learning. Convention is held on a Friday and Saturday and is beneficial whether one attends one or two days. Encourages BOE members to attend programs coming up in the school. May 23rd is Evening of the Arts. Step Up Ceremony coming up June 11th during the day. Has been in discussions with staff about having students attend meetings to give presentations on projects they are working on. This would help to encourage more students and families to participate. April will see a presentation by kindergarten. Fire Department running an Easter Plant and Bake Sale March 27-31.

B. Superintendent's Report

Supt. Bruneau reviewed several grants that are coming to an end, working directly with T. Smith to finalize reporting and use of funds. Library will be able to get new items including seating for younger children as well as tables and seating for older children and community use, etc. Working with afterschool grant funds as well to ensure appropriate use.

C. Principal's Report

Principal Parker went over important dates. Professional Development this week on Friday to get familiar with Book Worms for Reading/Writing curriculum. CEA program on incorporating more play into the upper grade classrooms will be held in April. Officially submitted NAEYC re-accreditation on February 1, 2024. They will come for the visit between May and November; hoping to have the visit before the end of this school year. Pre-K enrollment has 51 students enrolled/in process.

Several families reached out this week; about three or four more students. Currently four of those are from out of town. Possibility of opening a fourth classroom, will keep BOE informed at April BOE meeting. Supt. Bruneau presented a historical view of enrollment as well as how the data informs enrollment moving forward. On April 4th, five students will attend a State program for Chorus and Band.

D. Financial Report

T. Smith reviewed the financial reports as presented. Numbers show we are right on track. Discussion.

E. Liaison Reports

B. Lanzieri, School Readiness – Quarterly meetings, last meeting was in February. Next meeting is April 18th.

C. Willard, PTA – Working to raise funds for a new playground. Friday night is Trivia Night at Andover Pizza at 7:00 p.m. Pasta dinner on April 25th with raffle items. Next meeting April 1st.

S. Loudon, CIP – CIP met, went over future Public Works requests.

S. Loudon, Policy – Met with Supt. Bruneau to go over State reporting requirements. We may need to replace or change some personnel policies to align with legislation for this reporting, will review this in April. Will be working on this process as well as several other policies and presenting at the next few meetings. Changes must be made by July 1.

G. Cremé, Curriculum and Instruction – Met with Supt. Bruneau to go over diversity plan that needs to be submitted to the State. Policy about exit interviews will need to be worked on. New resources in library for staff and BOE members for professional learning to go along with diversity work.

M. Beckwith, Curriculum and Instruction – Working with Supt. Bruneau on program to engage and promote Science of Reading.

8. Executive Session for the Purpose of: Personnel Matter

G. Cremé made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:48 p.m. and to invite Supt. Bruneau and T. Smith into the session, seconded by S. Loudon. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Exited Executive Session at 9:03 p.m.

9. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

A. Audit Update

Supt. Bruneau reported that Town side issues that were identified have been corrected. BOE had a few glitches and citations due to new accounting software system and new finance manager. Corrective Action Plan is in place to address the three areas of concern. T. Smith reported on the procedures that will be implemented going forward to ensure compliance with auditor's findings. Discussion. Moving forward, an agenda item will be added to financial reports to state, "Update on Corrective Action Plan".

B. Superintendent's IED Report

Supt. Bruneau presented the Increasing Educator Diversity Plan. State initiative to increase the diversity of teachers within each school district. Plan must be submitted to the State. Small districts have an additional challenge of getting applicants. Three areas to be addressed in plan: recruitment, hiring and selection, and retention. State requires an annual update on this process. Currently have many of the systems in place to meet these needs. The plan includes:

- Additional training for all who sit on hiring committees in diversity awareness and how to identify and work through their implicit bias. Added books to library as resources for hiring committees.
- Hiring committee members are required to watch an 80-minute video created by the State for diversity training including focus on implicit bias.
- Expanding areas of advertisements of employment opportunities to include Offices of Diversity and Inclusion in local colleges and universities.
- Use job/recruitment fairs that have a more diverse audience of candidates.
- Working with about other 25 small districts to share ideas and plan.
- Survey of candidates that apply to determine comfort of hiring process for diverse candidates.
- Community discussions during recruitment process.
- Commitment to diverse employment and offer mentoring through other organizations to ensure they feel supported.
- Access CREC resources as needed to support hired and existing staff.

S. Fuss made a motion to approve the IED Plan as presented, seconded by C. Greenhouse. No further discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

C. IED Policy

Working on policy, will be on April agenda.

D. Capital Project(s) Update

Chairperson Willard reported on status. Have presented to the Town the three top concerns which are plumbing, elevator, and parking lot. Working with Supt. Bruneau. Would like BOE permission to meet with J. McGuire and M. Brinker to clear up confusion and to discuss how this will be addressed moving forward in collaboration with the Town. Discussion regarding Board members' overall concerns and priorities that should be addressed in this meeting. Moving forward, BOE will work on and create a long-term Capital Project Plan. C. Willard will attend the CIP meeting next Thursday with S. Louden to determine next plan of action.

E. Liaison Roles

Chairperson Willard reviewed the outline of liaison roles created with the input from BOE members. At April meeting, each liaison will present their proposed functions of their role so that language can be worked through and a document can be created to inform future Board members of the role of the liaison in each area.

10. Other Action Items – None.

11. Public Comment – None.

12. Upcoming Meetings

A. Regular Board Meeting – April 17, 2024

B. Items for Next Meeting – Discuss 4th Pre-K Classroom, Present Liaison Language, First Read of Policies, CIP Results for Discussion, Internal CIP Plan Process

13. Adjournment

S. Fuss made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 p.m., seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.

7-0-0 (PASSED)

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Longley, Clerk