

DRAFT

Somers Board of Education Regular Meeting

Somers Board of Education Chambers

Monday, March 24, 2025

7:00 PM

(The recorded livestream may be viewed on SPS' YouTube channel on the school website)

Present BOE Members: Anne Kirkpatrick, Mike Briggs, Dr. Ed DePeau, Jan Martin, Kim Radziewicz

Absent BOE Members: JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek

Others: Dr. Sam Galloway, Stephanie Levin, Dr. Jaime Rechenberg, Julie Hinkley, Lisa Horan, Kevin Nichols (Morgan Stanley), Emma Ciccirella, Ava DePeau

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular Board of Education meeting was called to order by Chair Kirkpatrick at 7:01 p.m. in the Board of Education Chambers.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. BOE APPRECIATION

Rationale: Dr. Galloway will present gifts to the Board members in recognition of Board of Education Appreciation Month.

Discussion: Superintendent Galloway expressed his appreciation of the Board's support and recognized the many long hours put in by each member to help solve problems and move the district forward. Board members were each presented with a frame engraved by Mr. Nick Kosloski, SHS Technology Education teacher.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1. Approval of the March 10, 2025 BOE Special Budget Meeting Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the March 10, 2025 special budget meeting.

Motion to approve minutes of March 10th Special Board of Education Meeting. This motion, made by Kim Radziewicz and seconded by Jan Martin, Carried. **Yea: 3, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek), Abstain 2 (Mike Briggs, Ed DePeau)**

4.2. Approval of the March 10, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Rationale: The Board to review and approve the minutes from the March 10, 2025 regular Board meeting.

Motion to approve minutes of March 10th Board of Education Meeting. This motion, made by Kim Radziewicz and seconded by Jan Martin, Carried.

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Yea: 4, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek), Abstain: 1 (Mike Briggs)

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

5.1. Superintendent Update

Superintendent Galloway provided an update regarding the SES HVAC project. Bids for completion of the job were submitted, opened, and reviewed in March. The cost of the project is \$1.2 million over the projected amount. The Building Committee met last week to discuss options to address the overage; however, no decisions have been made. The Building Committee meets again on 3/25/25. There is potential that the project will be paused to provide time to reevaluate and/or reduce the project scope. There will be ongoing communication with the Board and community.

5.2. Morgan Stanley Update

Rationale: Kevin Nichols from Morgan Stanley will update the Board on the 2024 Pension and OPEB performance reports.

Discussion: Mr. Kevin Nichols from Morgan Stanley provided an update to the Board regarding the 2024 Pension and OPEB performance. The pension is doing very well. Mr. Nichols provided recommended changes going into the new fiscal year. Mr. Nichols recommended more diversification in the portfolio by moving some funds that have underperformed during the last 9 months. Board Member Mike Briggs inquired whether Mr. Nichols had concerns of a regression and the potential for deregulation. Mr. Nichols stated there is uncertainty about President Trump's plan for the economy and the potential for a recession; however, he stated that he believes if there is a recession, it will be quick and soft. A discussion ensued regarding funds allocated to international funds in emerging markets. Overall, the portfolio is conservative. Mr. Nichols is mindful of protecting the downside of the portfolio. Chair Kirkpatrick invited Mr. Nichols back to the 7/14/25 Board meeting to provide an update. This meeting coincides with the end of the fiscal year.

5.3. SHS Student Representatives

Rationale: Emma Ciciarella and Carolyn Castonguay will update the Board on recent Somers High School events.

Discussion: SHS students, Emma Ciciarella and Ava DePeau, provided an update to the Board. The update began with an overview of recent events, including a field trip to the Pequot Museum, the musical production of Disney's *The Descendants*, and a field trip to the Annual Hartford Home Show. Ms. Ciciarella shared her experience of designing a home in her Architectural Design II class. Ms. DePeau shared her experience of watching the recent drama production, noting the excitement of seeing the production come together after weeks of preparation. Dr. Rechenberg

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applauded the dedication of the parents of Drama Club participants. Photos were shared from these recent events. Reiley Donald and Maddie Guyette received the Acts of Kindness Student of the Month awards.

A Junior College Planning Night will be held on 3/26/25 at 6 p.m. The SAT will take place on 3/27/25. The NHS Blood Drive will be held on 3/28/25. The organizers are hoping to get more participants signed up. Blood Drive participants must be 16 years of age and meet specific height and weight requirements. Quarter 3 ends on 3/31/25. Students in AP/ECE U.S. History will take a trip to Washington D.C. from 4/3/25-4/5/25. The *Choices Matter* assembly will take place on 4/7/25. The assembly will cover topics such as smart driving and prom night responsibility. Spirit Week will run from 4/7/25-4/11/25 and includes a pep rally. The week will kick off the Spring sports season and is open to all grades.

The Trade and Career Fair is scheduled for 4/1/25. Many vendors will be in attendance to teach students about various industries. Mrs. Stoltz has created a website to showcase all vendors who will attend the event. The careers have been organized into categories aligned with the National Organization of Advanced CTE Career Clusters.

6. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve Consent Agenda. This motion, made by Ed DePeau and seconded by Mike Briggs, Carried. **Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek),**

7.1. Warrant of March 24, 2025

Rationale: The Board to review and consent to the warrant of March 24, 2025.

7.2. Leave of Absences

Rationale:

- Kathryn Krauss, SES Special Education Teacher, will be taking a leave of absence approximately September 12, 2025 through the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.
- Courtney Suttle, MBA ELA Teacher, will be taking a leave of absence from the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year through approximately January 5, 2026.

7.3. Resignation

Rationale: Hannah Abernethy, Grade 5 Teacher, is resigning at the end of the 2024-2025 school year.

8. OLD BUSINESS

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Rationale: Mr. Kyle Kipfer, SHS Art Teacher, will present the May 2025 trip to New York City to the BOE.

Motion to approve the May 2025 New York City Art Trip with Kyle Kipfer, SHS Art Teacher. This motion, made by Jan Martin and seconded by Ed DePeau, Carried. **Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek),**

Discussion: Mr. Kyle Kipfer, SHS Art Teacher, presented the May 2025 trip to New York City for his Honors and AP Art students. Mr. Kipfer has taught this class for 3 years. It is the only full year art class offered at SHS. Students must be recommended to take this class. Between 6 and 8 students will attend with two chaperones. The group will leave on Friday morning and arrive home by 7 p.m. on Saturday. The group will travel by train from New Haven to Grand Central Station. Students will visit the Museum of Modern Art and Metropolitan Museum of Art. Students will stay overnight in bunk style rooms at Pod 51 Hotel. Mr. Kipfer shared further details about hotel arrangements, the use of public transportation and how students will spend their time in-between museums. The current cost for the trip is \$250 per student, not including food or a train ticket. An upcoming fundraiser could potentially take money off the final cost.

9.2. 2024-2025 Graduation Date

Rationale: The Board to approve the graduation date for Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Motion to approve Graduation for Thursday, June 12. This motion, made by Kim Radziewicz and seconded by Ed DePeau, Carried. **Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek),**

Discussion: Superintendent Galloway shared that he feels it is safe to establish a date for graduation to help families plan for the celebration. June 12th is also the last day of school for students.

9.3. BOE Photo Retake

Rationale: The Board to discuss a BOE picture retake to be scheduled before the April 28, 2025 Board meeting.

Discussion: The Board will retake a group photo at the next Board meeting on 4/28/25 if all members are in attendance.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**10.1. Curriculum (next meeting 4/28/25 6 p.m., 5/12/25 6 p.m., 6/9/25 5:30 p.m.)**

The next meeting will be held on 4/28/25 at 6 p.m.

10.2. Policy

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This committee will try to meet in May. The committee is up to date with all policies due for review.

10.3. Planning/Finance

This committee met on 3/24/25 to review the proposed budget.

10.4. Salary & Negotiations**10.5. Building (next meeting 3/25/25 2 p.m., 4/1/25 2 p.m., 4/15/25 2 p.m., 4/29/25 2 p.m.)**

The committee will meet on 3/25/25 at 2 p.m. to discuss next steps after reviewing the bid documents. There will likely be a recommendation regarding next steps after this meeting.

11. CABA/CREC/State Dept. of Ed./SEF**12. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS****13. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. This motion, made by Jan Martin and seconded by Mike Briggs, Carried. **Yea: 5, Nay: 0, Absent: 4 (JT Galloway, Shane Manning, Carl Stebbins, Derek Zelek),**

Jan Martin, BOE Secretary

Date

Jenna McDermott, BOE Recording Secretary