

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT  
Regular Meeting – February 9, 2021  
**Via Audio/Video Conferencing**

The Trumbull Board of Education met via video/audio conferencing for a Regular Meeting.

Members present:

L. Timpanelli, Board Chairman  
T. Gallo, Vice Chairman  
J. Norcel, Board Secretary  
S. Kerr  
M. Petitti  
A. Squicciarro  
M. Ward

Agenda Item I—Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item II—Preliminary Business

- A. Salute to the Flag - The Public Session began with a salute to the Flag.
- B. Correspondence – Mrs. Norcel read the following correspondence:  
Mike Stafaroni requested to move to 5 day in person learning and Ella Grosso is grateful to our educators and support staff and considers a diverse educational system to be a priority.
- C. Public Comment - The following people spoke:  
Marc Mascola commented on the status of the current budget proposal and Mike Miller addressed the Board and offered any assistance.
- D. Superintendent Report - Dr. Semmel reported:
- Dr. Semmel attended a *We the People* dress rehearsal and was so impressed with this year's team and their level of expertise.
  - As of today, we will move to remote learning for future snow days making the tentative last day of school June 18, 2021.
  - Ms. Hefele gave an update on technology workshops that are available to parents, students and staff. These workshops are available online and include several topics to help engage the community to enhance better understanding of technology.
  - On her first week on the job, Dr. Iwanicki has been visiting our schools and is so impressed with our educators and their determination to keep all students engaged in providing the highest level of education possible.
- E. Board Chairman Report - Board Chair Lucinda Timpanelli reported:
- At tonight's meeting, the budget will be presented for approval. I want to thank the Superintendent and his staff for all their efforts and hard work in developing the 2021-2022 budget. Thank you to the Board for their questions and concerns given to the Superintendent and Business Administrator.
  - Elementary teachers will present a virtual lesson that is being used with great success.

- Mr. Hendrickson will provide the status of the operational review and update on recommendations as they are being implemented.
- F. Student Board Representatives Report - Gabriella Biondi and Jack Allen reported on:
- At Tashua, plans are underway to celebrate Black History Month and will include a virtual visit with the author Charles R. Smith Jr.
  - At Hillcrest, the basketball season will begin soon with tryouts geared to ensure everyone's safety.
  - At Madison, a grade 6 student has been selected as a congressional category winner for an essay written about Dr. Martin Luther King.
  - At THS, the Gratitude Challenge was a huge success that promoted kindness and understanding; the *We the People* team was the runner up at the Connecticut State Finals and will be competing in in the spring nationals as a wild card. Congratulations to senior Dylan Cranston who was chosen to participate in the All-National Honor Ensemble.

### Agenda Item III—Reports/Action Items

A. Minutes: Regular Meeting – January 26, 2021

It was moved (Norcel) and seconded (Gallo) to approve the minutes as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

B. Personnel – Dr. Semmel

Dr. Semmel reported the following certified resignation:

Sansone, Michele; math interventionist (.5) at Frenchtown Elementary School (currently on a personal leave of absence) since August 2005, resigning effective 1/29/21.

It was moved (Gallo) and seconded by (Norcel) to accept the resignation as presented. Vote: all in favor.

C. Teacher Presentation – Using SeeSaw in Primary Grades to Support Blended Learning

Elementary teachers Amy Congdon and Rachel Orr presented a virtual lesson using SeeSaw. Seesaw enables learners to be creative and allows teachers flexibility by assigning individualized activities. Students can learn by listening at their own pace. A messaging platform for parents to communicate with teachers is available. Teachers have noticed an improvement in cognitive learning skills while students are using SeeSaw.

D. Reopening Update - Dr. Semmel reported on the following:

- At our elementary schools, we are continuing with 4-day in person learning. At our middle schools, teachers are identifying disengaged students to bring them back to the classroom. At THS, 277 students opted to return to school four days a week. Administration evaluated that safety guidelines could be met to accommodate all 277 students who returned to their classrooms last week.
- Each time a Covid case is reported in our school system, the Covid dashboard on our webpage is updated so that the Trumbull community stays informed.
- Dr. Semmel is in contact with the Connecticut State Health Department to stress that our school staff be a priority to receive the vaccine.
- Dr. Semmel's Town Hall conversations with educators will continue in March, 2021.

- The Reopening Committee is planning for the possibility of returning to classroom learning to include Wednesdays in late March. This date remains tentative as we continue to monitor the virus and the directives from the Health Department and the Governor's office.

E. Budget Discussion and Approval - Dr. Semmel

Dr. Semmel presented the revised 2021-2022 budget in the amount of \$113,751,421 that reflects a 4.33% increase over last year's budget. Revisions to the first proposed budget were necessary to incorporate recommendations from the operational review. Please note that this budget increase is derived by a few major drivers: Staff Benefits (\$1.919 million); Transportation (\$973,000); Additional Staff (\$477,000); Special Revenue Accounts (\$430,000); Magnet School (\$245,000); Salaries (\$190,000); and Utilities (\$44,000). The budget hopes to rebuild TPS by avoiding deficit spending and by adding back high priority positions. The Board will present the budget to the First Selectman for approval on February 11, 2021.

It was moved (Gallo) and seconded (Petitti) to approve the Superintendent's 2021-2022 proposed budget request as presented. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

F. Operational Review Update - Mr. Hendrickson

Mr. Hendrickson updated the Board on the implementation of recommendations of the Operational Review that was conducted by PKF O'Connor Davies. Fifty-six of 68 recommendations have already been implemented with the remainder in progress and being addressed. The detailed list is available on our website under budget, then click on operational review update - February 9, 2021.

Adjournment

Board Members gave unanimous consent to adjourn the Public Session at 8:55 p.m.