

SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held September 14, 2017 at 700 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA

Notice of this meeting was sent to appropriate governmental agencies and press, and was published in the "South Shore Charter Public School Update".

Trustees:

In attendance: Jeffrey Seglin (Chair), William Smyth (Vice Chair), Edwin Rivera (Treasurer), Nancy Seglin (Clerk), Leslie Alden, Katie Cianelli, Peter Farrell, Dan Falkner, Bethanie Glass, Scott McCallum, David Whitemyer, Tanner Demaggio Pending Approval

In absentia: Charles Storey, Prue Goodale

Also in attendance:

Staff: Alicia Savage (Executive Director), Kristine Bingham (Director of Finance)

Audience: Linda Cook, Denise Demaggio, Kerry Griffin, Colleen Leonard, Linda. Reith

J. Seglin (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

MOTION: B. Smyth moved to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2017 meeting. N. Seglin seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

School & Academic Report

State of the School Report: Alicia Savage, Executive Director reported

- SSCPS is hosting parent back-to-school nights this week with record number in attendance. Next Tuesday is the Level I night.
- The faculty and staff will be implementing a new ELA curriculum as well as expanding implementation of Eureka math. Professional Development work will focus on K-12 curriculum alignment.
- Enrollment is stable. Reviewed the number of students attending and the number of students who withdrew over the summer. Transportation is the major reason for many of the students leaving with athletics second

Student Report: T. Demaggio reported

- Fall sports have begun with boys and girls soccer, girls volleyball, and cross country.
- Student Board elections and class officers were held

Finance: E. Rivera reported

- Early in the school year so not much to report
- SSCPS has been awarded DESE grant of \$400,000 over two year. The grant is restricted to books, technology, teaching materials and supplies. Items will be purchased through grant money to offset budgeted items with the cost of the budgeted items to be put into reserve.
- Per pupil tuition better than expected
- Auditors will be in next week and they will report next month

Faculty Report: K. Cianelli

- The new faculty is fitting in well. Less wandering at the high school and students are on task.
- Off to a smooth start

- Senior overnight retreat at the end of September
- 9th grade retreat to ropes course in Canton also at the end of September
- English department is working on a newsletter
- The faculty/staff will be voting on a new BoT representative. The process will begin at the end of the week

Parents Association: S. McCallum reported

- Annual Back-to School picnic was held last week and was well attended
- First PA meeting was held. Eric Greene attended and gave a brief overview of the foundation. Also discussed enrollment and the school's expansion
- At the PA meeting parents expressed their feelings regarding the change in the community. The PA Chair read for the record a statement from the PA. Statement attached

Development Committee: L. Alden reported

- Harvest Run October 14. Sponsorships have raised \$5,000. Family registration forms were distributed
- The PA has a new Fundraising Chair who is working on community building, a vendor fair, acorn hole tournament, apparel sales
- May 4th is the Annual SSCEF Auction to be held at Atlantica in Cohasset
- Laurie Dannison would like leads for donations
- In FY17 Development raised over \$100,000 last year. Hoping to raise more this year

Governance: B. Smyth reported

- Nothing new to report
- Board members were asked to pass along names of any potential new Board members to J. Selgin or B. Smyth

Personnel: N. Selgin

- Nothing new the reported

MOTION: D. Whitemyer moved to adjourn the regular meeting. B. Smyth seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:23pm

Respectfully submitted:
Pam Algera

Approved by: Nancy Seglin, Clerk

My family joined the school three years ago. When [REDACTED] won the lottery we felt like we'd won the lottery. We were starved for information and read everything we could find, but largely suffered through until the August mailing. We loved the idea of the school, the size of the school, and the distinct feeling of quirkiness and community that we hoped was as cool as it seemed. We loved the idea that these were the kids of parents who, regardless of their relative place in life, found sscps and took the step of applying... going through that effort to try to put their kids in a better place. Parents who care, likely meaning kids who care too.

My first event at the school aside from the lottery was Kindergarten screening day. It was exciting to really see what we'd built up in our heads as an almost magical place. The kids played, they were taken off for testing, and Ted "read" them a story... "sang" would really be a better term. My thoughts immediately went from "Wait, this is the principal?" to "is this guy for real?" to "that was kinda weird... what's going on here...?" Then there were teachers, called by their first names, with visible tattoos, with *wonderfully* inviting classrooms. I loved it immediately.

School started and we discovered the joy of first day drop-off and the further joys of the pick-up line, but we also discovered the wonders of the tight community. More than once we were out at a store or the mall and some teenager enthusiastically said hi to [REDACTED] because they're friends from school... Tell me another school where that happens.

The very next year I heard that there would be an expansion. I was immediately anxious and concerned for what this could do to the school I just began to love. I wanted to go back to where I missed that happening and somehow be in on the decisions surrounding it and surrounding the search for additional space. I definitely understand why 700 kids' worth of parents can't possibly be consulted on every decision though, so I accepted it as fact and hoped for the best.

Given my visceral response to the news as such a new parent, I can only imagine how this has affected those parents with high schoolers who have been here since kindergarten. It's not hard to imagine, as I have heard it come up in many if not most PA meetings that I have attended over the past couple of years. Now that I find myself in the position where I apparently speak for the parents, I can't not bring it up. They are concerned by the increase in speed of the expansion from five years to three, about the cramped space which administration says is still not at capacity but students say is already tight, about the ratio of new kids to current kids affecting the culture of the school, about the building split affecting the closeness between the older kids and younger kids, about the consideration of going to single-grade classrooms.

More than any specific thing, what I am getting from parents, particularly those who have been here for awhile, is they feel like the school was a certain kind of place they fell in love with, and is now changing, gradually, into something more like a standard public school district. It's great that more kids get to become part of our community, and I think the parents mostly agree on that, but they... we, are worried. It will probably be fine; people will adjust, we'll get some more space, kids will still have a great school experience; but for the moment, there is a significant disconnect. We *need* to do a better job with communication, and I think that's something we're already working on, but we also need to do a better job at making people feel like our community is still as strong as it ever was, because some of the most dedicated long term parents are thinking it isn't.