

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ANDOVER, CT
Special Board of Education
Meeting Wednesday, August 21, 2024
7:00 pm
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

Members Present: Celeste Willard, Gerard Cremé, Caitlin Greenhouse (virtual), Shannon Louden, Mike Beckwith

Members Absent: Steven Fuss and Brianne Lanzieri

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

Others: Kimberly Person and Ryan Linares (Virtual)

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance

The special meeting (must be special due to date change) was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson Willard, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Comments from the Public

Brad Kelle reported that last year he received phone calls from the Principal and Superintendent regarding Andover residency; raised questions about procedure (*S. Louden inquired about BOE having legal presentation for this conversation*). A letter was sent stating that the inquiry was dropped but left room for revisit. Chairperson Willard suggested a meeting between Mr. Kelle, Principal Parker, and Supt. Bruneau.

3. Communications

C. Willard received an email addressed to herself and Supt. Bruneau along with the Town Clerk from Steve Fuss, which was read it into the record:

“August 21, 2024

Dear Members of the Andover Elementary School Board of Education,

I'm writing to formally announce my resignation from the board effective immediately August 21, 2024. This decision has not been easy but due to increasing demands from my professional career I find myself unable to dedicate the necessary time and attention that the Board, staff, and student body deserves and requires. It has been an honor to serve alongside each of you I'm proud of the work we have accomplished over the five plus years and the positive impact we have had on the children and staff at Andover Elementary School. I am confident that the Board will continue to thrive and uphold the high standards we have set for our students and teachers. I urge the Board to continue to work together with the community as a whole remove the needs of our school. Please accept this letter as my official

notice. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our community and for the support during my tenure.

*Sincerely,
Steve Fuss”*

C. Willard responded back and said:

*“Good afternoon, Steve,
Thank you for your e-mail and for your notification of your resignation, I will communicate it to the rest of the Board at our meeting this evening. On behalf of the Board, we thank you for your time and service and we wish you success in your new professional position.
Thank you,
Celeste BOE chair”*

The open position will be advertised and candidates will be at the meeting in September.

4. Celebrations – Opening of Community Center was great. One week until school starts.

5. Approval of Minutes

G. Cremé made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 17, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by S. Louden.

4-0-1 (M. Beckwith abstained) (PASSED)

6. Reports

A. Chairperson’s Oral Report

C. Willard – School begins next week; encouraged attendance at the CABA/CAPSS Convention November 15-16 at the Mystic Marriott, early registrations are less expensive please let Supt. Bruneau know if you’d like to attend by Friday, August 23, 2024, for the discount; Jeff McGuire possibility of opening a Short-Term Investment Account (STIF), does BOE want to do this? Can they even do this? C. Willard would like to research further and discuss it at September meeting.

B. Superintendent’s Report

Supt. Bruneau – Working on the IAQs over the summer; new state mandate for HVAC; Tools for Schools is a checklist with six areas and almost three are complete; the other ones will hinge on the asbestos and HVAC; a cross-sectional drinking water inspection needs to be done and filled out - our regular water people are locked in and they will make sure that all requirements are met; radon is done regularly, every three years the testing is done, and the reporting is in compliance; copper and lead needs to be filled out and updated to let them know that we have had no other changes to things that have been done to the property.

Other Updates – Environmental testing will have to be done next if we plan on demolition; Head Custodian, Scott, has been doing great work and taking the lead; finished up summer grants; two-year continuation has been filed and approved; summer mental health not fully spent/will be renewed next year; no new grant offerings currently.

C. Principal's Report

Principal Parker – First Professional Development day is Monday, August 25th; PD has been happening throughout the summer; 26 educators and teachers today in de-escalation training; there was also CPR training; the state is funding “321 Insight” which is a para educator professional development portal containing six ten-minute PD videos on different topics; the state has increased requirements in their mandated trainings which will require more time; Bookworms, the new curriculum for literacy, will be out in the spring, so there'll be some PD on that in the next couple of days and ongoing.

September 19th – Open House/Back to School event; pizza truck, bounce house, Book Fair and will continue monthly family events.

Next week – August 27, 2024, Meet and Greet, parents to meet teachers. The new calendar on website is great.

D. Financial Report

T. Smith – Reviewed the financial reports as presented. Final expenditure report and final numbers for last fiscal year will not be available until after the audit. T. Smith answered questions and confirmed that Professional Services in the 23/24 budget were mostly legal fees. For 24/25 budget, the Other Professional Services line items (line 330), which is expended at 92%, is for staff training.

E. Liaison Reports

Principal Parker, School Readiness – All spots are filled.

C. Willard, PTA – Gave Principal Parker meeting dates; playground coming to finish line.

S. Louden – Successfully concluded teacher contract negotiations; more on tri-board to come.

7. Items for Discussion and Possible Action

A. BOE Goals

S. Louden made a motion to approve the BOE Goals as developed at the July 17, 2024 retreat, seconded by C. Greenhouse. G. Cremé abstained, would like to see the goals be more child centered.

4-0-1 (G. Cremé abstained) (PASSED)

B. Solar Update

Ryan Linares, Greenskies Clean Energy – after due diligence and inspection of the building and electrical system, school is a one phase system, and most are three phase systems. Array had to be redesigned which reduces the size by 16%, new equipment is needed. This will impact the price per kilowatt hour originally proposed; 8 cents per kilowatt hour needs to be adjusted to 11.24 cents per kilowatt hour; flat rate for 20 years (recent Eversource increase impacts this too) annual savings - \$22,000 per year average. 30-year warranty on equipment.

After 20 years a new contract can be negotiated, if there is not a new contract they have to remove the array. If the school was to upgrade to a three-phase system, nothing would change. Fully ballasted system on the roof, but no penetration of the roof. A structural assessment will need to be done by a third-party engineer on a weekend or holiday when the school is closed.

G. Cremé made a motion to notify the Town of intent that they are moving forward with solar, seconded by M. Beckwith.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

Supt. Bruneau will draft a letter, C. Willard to sign and will be sent.

C. July Town Meeting Summary Update

S. Louden – suggested looking at the meeting agendas ahead to see if there are items pertaining to the BOE.

Selectmen Meeting – STIF account question about accounts pertaining to BOE; support from the Board of Finance for BOE to have a capital fund, sending to Town Attorney for discussion and will be brought to the Board of Selectmen.

D. Building Inspections

HVAC – every five years; doesn't have to be started until the end of next school year; would like to do sooner to receive grant funding, especially if corrective action is needed.

Asbestos – every three years; 2012-2018 Fuss and O'Neil plan.

G. Cremé made a motion to allow Supt. Bruneau to hire Fuss and O'Neil for Asbestos inspection, seconded by S. Louden.

Discussion: How is this being funded? Can come from Capital or 2% or be viable to run line over and transfer if there are funds left at the end of the year.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

M. Beckwith made a motion to allow Supt. Bruneau to hire Fuss & O'Neil for HVAC inspection, seconded by G. Cremé.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

E. Plumbing Project

Concerns about Aztec plan led to looking into other companies. Will have someone from Fuss and O'Neil come to the October meeting to discuss the proposal.

8. Comments from the Public on Agenda Items – None.

9. Executive Session – For the Purpose of BOE Self-Evaluation & Superintendent Evaluation

S. Louden suggested tabling until the September meeting due to time and low attendance.

S. Louden moved to go into Executive Session For the Purpose of BOE Self-Evaluation & Superintendent Evaluation at 8:46 p.m., seconded by M. Beckwith.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

BOE came out of Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

S. Louden made a motion to add Executive Session next month For the Purpose of BOE Self-Evaluation & Superintendent Evaluation, seconded by G. Creme.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

10. Upcoming Meetings

- Regular Board Meeting – September 11, 2024

11. Adjournment

S. Louden made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m., seconded by G. Creme. No discussion.

5-0-0 (PASSED)

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Longley, Clerk