

Farouk Rajab, Board Chairman called the regular meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. Members present were Heidi Simmons, Secretary, Chris Donahue, Dan Kelley, Sara Baker, and Kevin Agnello. Member Absent: Craig Esposito. Also present were Mary Anne Butler, Superintendent of Schools, Student Government Representative Substitute Will Fyke, Recording Secretary, Ana de Oliveira, and members of the administration staff and citizens.

### **Communications & Recognitions**

Mary Anne Butler, Superintendent shared communications from Elke Bellet of United Way thanking the high school students for volunteering during the volunteer day. She also thanked Anne Marie Houle for organizing the student volunteer day event. Mrs. Butler received a thank you note from one of the high school families recognizing the administration for holding an award event at their home. She shared communications from a Board member from Stratford Public Schools recognizing our district on student engagement. Mrs. Butler recognized high school and middle school students for receiving this year's CABA award. She communicated that this week was Teacher Appreciation week and every staff member was recognized by receiving a bag of items from the HR Manager on Monday. She attended The Witness Stone event, which was a moving and beautiful ceremony. Mrs. Butler announced that West Vine Street School received the Connecticut Elementary School of The Year Award and thanked Kathy Irvine and AnneFay Sullivan, also added it is the work of everyone in that school and the amazing teachers who made the award possible.

Will Fyke reported on how great volunteer day was and is one of the most awarding experiences he has had. He thanked Mrs. Houle for her work on this event. He also shared a copy of the latest issue of the Brown and White newspaper with the Board and administration.

Chris Donahue congratulated the students who received the CABA award, West Vine Street School for their award, and the paraeducators for attending all the Board meetings. Dan Kelley communicated he attended the Witness Stone event and recognized a former teacher Mr. Flannigan for his past work on this and the students who worked on this event. He also noted he attended the FOI training, a lacrosse and baseball game at the high school. He shared that the paraeducators recently went to the capitol to lobby our state legislators for school paras. He gave kudos to all involved in the West Vine award, it is an honor. He recognized the CABA recipients, especially Miss Nowak. Heidi Simmons noted it is very exciting about West Vine Street School and added she even heard about Kathy Irvine receiving the award on the Westerly radio station WBLQ. Farouk Rajab, Chair thanked the paras for showing up at the meetings. He added it was a proud moment to be at West Vine Street School, your team is appreciated, and we are proud of every school we have.

### **Comments from Citizens Regarding Items on the Agenda**

There were no comments from citizens.

### **Board Presentation – Junior Project – Presented by SHS Junior Students**

Stonington High School junior students, Catherine Statchen, Maya Bengtson, Henry Sawin, Evelyn Conley, and Liam Haghpasand presented their Junior Project. They will be installing a high-top seating area costing \$480. They shared details of the project entails and how they will be fundraising for the project. A copy of the presentation is attached. Farouk Rajab, Chair had questions about the location of the seating area in the high school. The students answered all the Board's questions.

### **Report of the Superintendent of Schools**

New School Start and End Times – Mary Anne Butler, Superintendent shared information regarding the new start and end times for the students and teachers for the 2023-2024 school year and how this will impact the school day. She noted this information will be sent to staff and families soon.

Sharing Best Practices in Stonington – Mrs. Butler shared that the district has been contacted by Norwich Public Schools to share our DEI practices. Stratford Public Schools also requested information on our Witness Stone Project. The CAS members visiting West Vine took away our meet-and-greet practices and will be using them. We are having discussions with Mystic Seaport and NESS about creating a curriculum plan for non-profits to use. She shared she has presented the Future Focus work at the NCAA where now some other districts are using our practices and work.

### **Consent Agenda**

The following motion was made by Dan Kelley and seconded by Chris Donahue:

**Motion 1:** To approve the consent agenda.  
All: Aye

### **Sub Committee Reports**

Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee - Second Read - Physical Oceanography and Advanced Health & Wellness

Kevin Agnello reported the committee had only one curriculum for review and received updates on the District's 3-year New Teacher Mentor Program. There was also an update on the Future Focus professional development. He noted there are two curricula up for a vote on the agenda, Physical Oceanography and Advanced Health and Wellness.

The following motion was made by Kevin Agnello and seconded by Sara Baker:

**Motion 2:** To approve the curriculum as presented.  
All: Aye

Finance and Facilities Sub-Committee - Chris Donahue asked Alisha Stripling for an update on the ESSER funds and the end-of-the-year funds. Mrs. Stripling noted things are looking good, she anticipates preserving some of the ESSER funding and this will help us next year. Mr. Donahue asked Peter Anderson to report on the boiler issue. Mr. Anderson shared information on the middle school and high school boilers.

Policy Sub-Committee – Dan Kelley noted the committee has met twice since the last Board meeting, and has policies on the agenda for first read. She noted most are enhancements, amendments, and updates on current policies that were brought down from Hartford. He noted getting sample policies from CABA and counsel has been helpful and will help protect our district and students. These policies will be on for a second read at the next meeting. Farouk Rajab, Chair reviewed how sub-committees are formed and shared that Heidi Simmons will be taking his spot on the Policy Sub-Committee going forward.

### **Update on RFP for Board Counsel**

Farouk Rajab, Chair explained how the process by which the Board establishes a Board Counsel. He noted it is time now to go through the process for the RFP for Board Counsel and asked for a motion to move forward. He has informed the current Board Counsel that this item is on the agenda. He would like to ask the Superintendent and her team to go out for RFP and hopefully, in the next 30 days, the Board can determine who will be the next counsel to represent the Board.

The following motion was made by Dan Kelley and seconded by Kevin Agnello:

**Motion 3:** To empower the Superintendent to put out a Request for Proposal for a Board Counsel.  
All: Aye

Chris Donahue asked how often we have done this and what the process is for the RFP. Farouk Rajab noted he was not aware of any other time and could not find where we had done that in the past. Farouk Rajab explained all the factors that go into choosing a Board Counsel and went over the process and timeline of the process with the Board. Dan Kelley asked how we achieve a contract expiration date. Mrs. Butler shared her informational draft and noted there is usually a 3-year contract. However, the Board can decide how long the contract will be. Farouk Rajab, Chair noted that would like the agreement signed by July 1<sup>st</sup> and feels 3 years is a good time frame to put out an RFP. Chris Donahue asked what the cost is tied to putting out an RFP. Alisha Stripling noted only cost would be the advertisement in the paper. Chair Rajab hopes to have more information at the next Board meeting.

### **Discussion of AEDs for Town Fields**

Dan Kelley stated this is something we should move forward with especially at the high school. He shared his experiences with individuals who were in an emergency situation and were able to use the equipment. He shared information on what the Town of Westerly currently has for AEDs. He would like to work with the Town and perhaps share finances to acquire more machines. He shared the initial costs and cost per unit. Farouk Rajab, Chair asked the Superintendent get more information and reach out to the Selectwoman. The Board was in consensus to have the Superintendent look into this issue.

### Monthly Reports

Farouk Rajab explained the Global Report is what the Finance Sub-committee reviews monthly. Mrs. Stripling gave a summary of the global report, including savings on transportation, and heating expenses. She will be meeting with principals regarding bid supplies, and Cabinet on ESSER funds. Dan Kelley had questions on the sub-teacher budget line being higher and was this due to the sub increase in the sub rate. Mrs. Stripling explained a small spike was still due to some COVID issues. Dan Kelley also had questions regarding para openings during the year. Heidi Simmons had questions for Student Government Representative, Will Fyke on wellness week. Will Fyke explained there is a theme for each day during wellness week.

### Board Comments and Items for Future Agendas

Board had no comments or items for future agendas at this time.

### Adjournment

The following motion was made by Sara Baker and seconded by Chris Donahue:

**Motion 4:** To adjourn at 7:39 p.m.  
All: Aye

Complete Board Meeting can be heard on the Stonington Public Schools YouTube Channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFXjoLyIU1KT9YnO3SQSryQ/>

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Heidi Simmons, Secretary

# Junior Project

Class of 2024

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# What is our project?



- Barstool seating area in hallway across from our guidance suite
- Inspired by beloved Junk n Java seating
- Beautiful part of our school
- Encourage work and great place to hang out
- Good place for students to eat lunch and work; hard to accomplish on benches

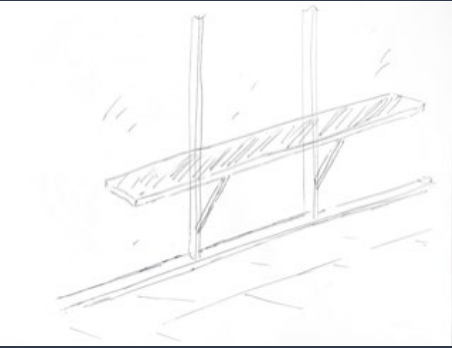
# Location



# Advisors

- Mrs. Dentch
  - *Student Government Advisor*
  - *Helped to brainstorm potential fundraising ideas*
- Mrs. Dawe
  - *Stonington High School Principal*
  - *Helped formulate idea for project*
- Mr. Anderson
  - *SPS Facilities Director*
  - *Advised on measurements and installation*

# Future Plans



- Mr Anderson has given approval to fund the 10-12 foot wide top granite table
  - Incorporating it into the schools budget
- Plans for installation approved by Ms. Dawe, with room for 8 stools
- Presented to Student Government on May 11
- Presenting to Board of Education on May 11
- Installation crew will put table in over the summer



# Fundraising



- Must raise \$450 dollars for stools
- Launching a website of new Stonington High

## School merchandise

- Includes sweatshirts, sweatpants, T-shirts, crewnecks
- <https://tinyurl.com/mu6m5hdm>



# 4 C's



- **CONVINCE**

- *Why would SHS benefit from this installation?*
- Having the availability of more inclusive seating in one of the under-used parts of the school can allow for students to utilize the space more beneficially.

- **COMMUNICATE**

- *What does this project involve?*
- Our group met after school and brainstormed dozens of ideas to benefit our school and community. After deciding upon the high top seating, we worked to choose seating, length, and fundraising options in order to complete the project successfully.

- **CONSIDER**

- *Why is this project important?*
- Our group wanted to help our school use all of the resources available to us, and this seating can benefit students who are looking for a new place to work, eat, and collaborate with their peers.

- **CONNECT**

- *How important is a sense of community?*
- Having more available seating in an underused part of the school can allow students to work more efficiently in a collaborative way.

# Questions?

Thank you for your time!

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