

HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD – October 19, 2021

Unapproved

HOOKSETT SCHOOL BOARD

MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2021 –

Budget Workshop 6:00 pm.

Board Meeting- immediately following Budget Workshop

DAVID R. CAWLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

CALL TO ORDER

Greg Martakos, Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PROOF OF POSTING

William Rearick, Superintendent of Schools provided proof of posting.

LIAISON-Aiden Gravina

Former Cawley Middle School Student and now a Junior at Pinkerton. Fall sports are coming to a close. Senior Prom and Homecoming are upcoming. PSAT are underway for Sophomores.

MINUTES

Approval of September 21, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

W. Goertel motioned to approve the minutes of September 21, 2021. Seconded by J. Sullivan.

Amendment: Legos: My frustration with the Covid discussion is people in the community have a different self assessment which is way out of line with their actual COVID risk. For the purpose of a School policy regarding mask use is important to understand that the school community statistically is not the entire State's COVID data which doesn't include people in long term care facilities nor people over 70+ which are the strong majority of COVID associated fatalities in New Hampshire the resulting COVID associated fatalities arguably half of driving fatalities and none under 30 in the past year.

Vote unanimously in favor

Approval of September 21, 2021 Non-Public, Sealed Minutes

J. Godbout motioned to approve the non-public minutes of September 21, 2021. Seconded by W. Goertel

Vote unanimously in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No comments

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATES*- Bill Rearick

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Since the last Board meeting, the NH DHHS has held two COVID-19 webinars. The DHHS has not made any significant changes to their guidance regarding mitigation protocols. Since last month the transmission rate in NH, while still at a substantial level, has declined from 6.3% to 6%. In Merrimack County, the transmission rate has averaged 6.4% since our last meeting.

Since this report the transmission rate in NH has remained the same since I sent my report out. It had dipped to 6% and it is now 6.3. Merrimack County is average 6.5 and Hooksett's positivity rate has been 5.5%.

On October 14th, I attended a meeting with the sending superintendents to Pinkerton Academy. We discussed the following topics:

- Changes to the Perkins Funding which is a federal grant for CTE programming

- Received a budget/tuition update from Dr. Powers. He is projecting to have tuition rates for the 2022-2023 school year ready by early November. Information on the budget will sent out after the Board of Trustees meeting on November 18th

We also discussed how the shortage of bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers are impacting each of our districts.

Winter sports will have the same challenge that we faced with fall sports.

A letter of dissatisfaction with the bus company regarding the difficulties we are facing. There is no financial penalties for not meeting the contract and we as a district met our requirements. The bus company is not meeting the contract but we have little recourse because there is no one else that can help us.

The Superintendent with the approval of the Board will send a letter to the Commission of Education to explore the option of utilizing the National Guard.

J. Hyde asked if we have reached out to other transportation companies that have limousines and small buses.

A. Ransom: We cannot transport students in private vehicles. They just recently changed the law to allow us to use buses for example to shuttle students to Washington DC on coach buses. They have to approve the bus; it has to fall within the guidelines that they won't tip over and meet all safety regulations. Limousines are not vehicles to transport students in. Yellow school buses are the safest vehicle to transport students. We looked into the possibility of getting a vehicle for athletics but they still have a maximum number of kids plus a driver. You would need multiple small buses for a cross country team however it would be feasible for a golf or wrestling team. Also the District must own the bus. And it must be driven by a school district employee.

A. Tremblay motioned to have Superintendent Rearick reach out to Commissioner Edelblut to begin the discussion of utilizing the National Guard for driving buses. Seconded by J. Sullivan

J. Hyde: I am not in favor of this because it is not their job. We should not be pulling them away from their duties for this. They also have full time jobs which they will be pulled away for which could include bus or truck driving. We already have enough supply chain issues and driver shortages without pulling people out.

Roll Call Vote

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J. Sullivan *Yes*
W. Goertel *abstained*
J. Godbout *Yes*
L. Laliberte *Yes*
A. Tremblay *Yes*
J. Hyde *No*
G. Martakos *Yes*
Vote 5:1:1 motion carried

REPORTS

Reports of Administrators

Reports of Sub-Committees

W. Goertel stated he attended the New Hampshire School Board Association Delegation Assembly on Saturday. Of the 141 districts, 51 were there offering their opinion on the School Board Association lobbying the State on various topics. Discussions included not requiring public presence for public meetings. A resolution was submitted and approved to ask the School Association to lobby to essentially rule that we don't have to have a quorum in person to have a meeting. There were expenditures as well that I did not feel were prudent. It all just left a bad taste in my mouth.

FINANCE

Manifest Approvals

A. Tremblay motioned to approve the manifest for September 20, 2021 to October 1, 2021 in the amount of \$606,218.41. Seconded by L. Laliberte

Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

Manifest Approvals

A. Tremblay motioned to approve the manifest for October 4, 2021 to October 15, 2021 in the amount of \$5,483,360.60. Seconded by L. Laliberte

Roll Call Vote unanimously in favor

Expenditure Report

NEW BUSINESS

Public Input Format-Greg Martakos

G. Martakos asked if the Board would like to entertain a limited time (15 min.) and if the Board would be interested in limiting public input to one time during the meeting..

J. Sullivan stated it is a policy that is up for review and there are guidelines and should be considered. I would not be against having 2 public inputs. I thought it was important to allow comments at the beginning and the end of a meeting. When public input gets to an hour it doesn't always make sense. There is no requirement for two public inputs and I would agree to a limit.

W. Goertel: I thought everyone who came to the meeting should have a chance to speak. I would not be inclined to reduce the window.

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A. Tremblay: As long as we are adhering to the law, I think it makes sense to have only one input. Since I've been on the Board, very few members are communicating via email but rather are coming in person. I'm concerned that it is turning into somewhat of a show. We are not here to entertain the public; we are here to conduct the business of the Board. The other issue to consider is I've noticed when the public is speaking there are instances when Board members are on their phone and it skirts confidentiality. It is just rude and not necessary and we should give the public speaking our full attention.

J. Hyde: I agree with Wayne that it is important to allow the public to come and speak. Email is fine but it doesn't go on the record or out to the public and to the world. It is important to allow the public to come and say their piece and a 3 minute limit is good. I think one in the beginning and the end are both needed. I am comfortable where it is.

L. Laliberte: I think we can clean up the policy if we are not following it but 3 minutes is sufficient.

J. Godbout: I like the two input sessions. Yes, we are here to do business but we are elected officials and we need to hear from the people who elected us and we need to be sure we are doing what they want us to do. That is how this works. I am with those that don't have an issue. We had a few meetings with COVID that went longer than 15 minutes but besides that it hasn't been an issue.

HEA

The Superintendent has been meeting with the HEA on MOU's as a result of COVID.

▲ Health and Safety MOU

▲ Technology MOU with students quarantined as a result of COVID and how we will instruct.

The change in the Technology agreement would be making the parent teacher conferences remote.

A. Tremblay disagreed with the stipulation that teacher conferences be remote with parents since students are attending in-person full time. No in-person meetings seems hypocritical.

Mr. Rearick stated that this was a negotiation. The Board may make a change and it will be resubmitted for approval.

Technology MOU

A. Tremblay motioned to strike from the Technology MOU item #1 page 3 stating in school work day that parent teacher conferences will be held remotely. Seconded by J. Hyde.

W. Rearick: If this is not approved tonight the current practice of in-person conferences would stand since we can't meet before the November 4th conference date.

The teachers were concerned with having a large number of the public in the building at the same time.

Vote 4:3 motion carried

Health and Safety MOU

A. Tremblay: It is standard but item #7 on page 2 states nurses or other professionals will conduct screening of potentially sick students but will not include COVID tests. This doesn't belong in the

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MOU. The MOU is about protecting employees from potentially being exposed and what to do if that happens. So it isn't relevant. The Board has already voted and approved that testing twice. This seems to violate the voting of the Board. When a Board votes on something it is not up for debate. The nurses had stated they would not agree to the testing unless we hired an LNA

Mr. Rearick met with the nurses and they explained what they currently do and they felt this would be an undo stress and take more time and interfere with the job they are doing. I said I would present to the Board, that we hire a nurse using our Federal dollars to do the testing so the nurses don't have to. A policy is a policy but I thought it was important to hear their position and I felt it was warranted. If we can bring in outside support we can run the program and they can do their job. It was a reasonable ask.

A. Tremblay: I agree with the expanded duties everyone has taken on including myself; my push back is there are other districts including mine that have not hired other staff to cover that.

Mr. Rearick: We have in Auburn and Candia. Pembroke and Goffstown have similar testing programs.

A. Tremblay: Among the three schools, since the beginning of the school year, there have been 90 students dismissed for COVID symptoms of which 17 tested positive. That leaves 73 students who tested negative. That's 73 students who are missing school time and parents that have to leave their jobs while waiting for the tests.; so is administering a test an extra duty or does it save them time. I'm concerned we are not doing what is best for the students.

L. Laliberte: I would like the last line of COVID test is because this is for the 2022 school year and remove it would take it out of play.

***L. Laliberte motioned to strike the testing page 2 #7 “This will not include the administration of COVID tests”. Seconded by A. Tremblay.
Vote 6:1 motion carried***

OLD BUSINESS

COVID Testing Update-Discussion

W. Rearick: On October 1st, all the nurses in the SAU attended a meeting with Philip Alexakos who is the Director of the Manchester Health Department. Mr. Alexakos explained the testing process and demonstrated how to administer the rapid Anti-Gen test to students. He also answered questions from the nurses. Hooksett received its CLIA certification from the state on October 6th. This certification is required in order for a school to test students who exhibit COVID symptoms. We have also received approval to be part of the SASS Testing Program for students who are asymptomatic. We will be partnering with Convenient MD.

On October 15th I met with the three nurses to discuss how we can effectively implement the Anti-Gen (Rapid) testing protocols in our three schools. We agreed that as a result of the number of students who exhibit COVID-like symptoms on a daily basis, hiring an LPN or CNA would help to expedite the testing process and would also allow the nurse time to perform her daily duties. We also agreed that the program would only be offered if there was an LPN or CNA available to do the

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testing because the nurses would not have the time to administer the Anti-Gen tests and fulfill their normal job responsibilities.

If the Board approves moving forward with the testing program, we would send parents a description of the Anti-Gen Testing Program that will be offered on a voluntary basis. The principals and nurses would work collaboratively on developing testing protocols.

J. Sullivan motioned to approve the Superintendent to hire a medical professional up to an RN to meet the Districts COVID 19 Testing and related issues to the end of the School Year. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

Vote 6:1 (J. Godbout) motion carried

Washington, DC

M. Benson: We had our meeting September 22 and we had follow up to answer questions related to COVID. Mr. Bennett shared the cancellation fees. We had 115 students sign up which requires 3 buses. There are individual cancellation fees and district cancellation.

Dec. 1st to Dec. 31st - \$75/pp fee

Jan. 1 to Jan. 31st - \$300/pp fee

Feb. 1st to Feb. 28th - \$350/pp fee

March 1st to April 19th – Full amount penalty

M. Benson will get clarification on who is to pay the penalty, parents or the school district in the case where the district cancels the trip.

J. Hyde asked the administration to look in to possibly purchasing an insurance for cancellation that is cheaper than paying the penalty.

PERSONNEL

Retirements

Donna Tremblay, Alps Teacher

Cindy Libby, School Nurse

L. Laliberte motioned to accept the retirements of Donna Tremblay Alps Teacher and Cindy Libby, School Nurse with thanks. Seconded by J. Godbout.

Vote unanimously in favor

Resignation

Lisa Pollard, Special Education Teacher

J. Godbout accepted with regret the resignation of Lisa Pollard. Seconded by L. Laliberte.

Vote unanimously in favor

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No comments

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 Section II a

A. Tremblay motioned to enter into non-public per RSA91-A:3 Section II a. Seconded by L. Laliberte.

Vote unanimously in favor

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The Board re-entered public session at 7:50 pm

L. Laliberte motioned to seal the minutes in perpetuity. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

Vote unanimously in favor

L. Laliberte motioned to accept the retirement of Karen Landsman and to also approve her bonus benefit as requested. Seconded by J. Godbout.

Vote unanimously in favor

J. Godbout motioned to increase the current network administrator's salary to \$67,500 beginning the next pay period. Seconded by L. Laliberte

6:1 (J. Sullivan) motion carried

J. Godbout motioned to increase the network administrator position beginning at \$67,000. Seconded by W. Goertel.

Vote 6:1 (J. Sullivan)

ADJOURNMENT

L. Laliberte motioned to adjourn at 8:00 pm. Seconded by A. Tremblay.

Vote unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan

The Hooksett School Board will meet for a Budget Workshop on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at 5:00 pm. at the David R. Cawley Middle School Media Center.

The next regular meeting of the Hooksett School Board will be held on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm. at the David R. Cawley Middle School Media Center.

The SAU #15 Board will meet on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 6:30 pm. in Candia.