

NEWINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Administrative Unit 50
48 Post Road, Greenland, New Hampshire 03840
Phone (603) 422-9572 Fax (603) 422-9575

The regular monthly meeting of the Newington School Board took place on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. via remote access through Google Meets.

PRESENT:

School Board Members: Dr. Mark Joyce
Ms. Samara Robertson
Mr. Chris Russo

Administrators: Salvatore Petralia, Superintendent
Kelli Killen, Assistant Superintendent
Mindy Ryan, Business Administrator
Brian Grattan, Director of Technology
Peter Latchaw, Principal

Other Staff Present: Samantha Fuller, Secretary to the Superintendent

Visitors: None

CALL TO ORDER – Dr. Joyce called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Dr. Joyce read aloud a brief statement required by law. The statement ensures all school board meetings are compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are in accordance with the Governors Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-4, the public body is authorized to meet electronically.

REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL BOARD

Dr. Joyce opened nominations for the reorganization of the school board; election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary positions.

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board nominated Dr. Joyce as Chair of the Newington School Board. Vote: 3-0

On a motion by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Joyce, the Board nominated Mr. Russo as Vice-Chair of the Newington School Board. Vote 3-0

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Dr. Joyce, the Board nominated Ms. Robertson as Secretary of the Newington School Board. Vote 3-0

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Dr. Joyce, the public minutes of March 10th, 2020 were approved. Vote: 2-0-1(abstain).

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Dr. Joyce, the public minutes of March 14, 2020 were approved. Vote: 3-0

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Petralia shared a letter from Governor Sununu dated March 30, 2020, that had been sent to all educators across the state of New Hampshire.

The second communication consisted of a document provided by NHSBA, NHSAA, NEA-NH, NHASP, NHCTA and NHASEA members. The purpose of the joint communication was to provide unified and consistent recommendations to school boards, superintendents/central office administrators, teachers, school principals, school special education staff, support staff, other district staff and most importantly, to public school students and their parents. Mr. Petralia added that the document provided a back drop for the SAU 50 long term Remote Learning Plan.

Ms. Killen added that Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents consistently meet virtually with counterparts across the state to ensure there is some congruity across districts. She noted that most SAU's were using similar timelines and consistent with a four-day remote learning schedule.

FINANCIAL REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the manifest for March 7, 2020 through April 10, 2020 was approved in the amount of \$92,220.77. Vote: 3-0

Ms. Ryan noted approximately \$6,000 in the fund balance has not yet been encumbered. Over the next month building administrators will close out any final purchase orders.

RECOGNITION OF GROUPS OR INDIVIDUAL VISITORS - None

REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Mr. Petralia acknowledged the fine work of Assistant Superintendent Killen the past week as the SAU 50 began to formulate the key components of the SAU 50 Remote Learning Plan. The plan took several hours to develop and included virtual meetings with teachers in each grade level, including Unified Arts. The Remote Learning Plan ensures continuity of the curriculum that is still in place to reflect competencies and essential standards.

Mr. Petralia shared that his message to the parent community sent on March 31st highlighted the SAU 50 Remote Learning Plan set to launch the week of April 6th. Included in that communication was information regarding the current academic calendar. Some school districts across the state are removing the April school break scheduled for April 27th through May 1st and continuing with remote learning in order to complete the academic year sooner. Previously the Administrative Council felt staff, students, and parents could use the April break. In light of the new possibility that schools will be working remotely until the end of the academic year the idea of working

through April break may be a more prudent option. A continuation of learning through April break would make the new last day for students of Newington Public School June 4th.

Mr. Petralia noted that he had received seven responses in regard to the April vacation email from parents. Five of those were in favor of working through April break. He asked Board members for feedback on that decision.

Mr. Petralia asked the Board to entertain a motion to amend the current calendar to five working days April 27-May 1 with a potential closing date of June 4th.

Mr. Petralia noted that during New Business he would like the Board to entertain a motion to continue paying support staff at the current rate of pay and hours worked through the next anticipated phase of remote instruction.

Mr. Petralia thanked Jane Lannon and members of the Clipper Foundation Executive Board for offering additional resources to our school districts during the current COVID-19 crisis. Peter Latchaw submitted a proposal for technology equipment. Mr. Petralia will submit Mr. Latchaw's and others to the foundation for approval.

Mr. Petralia shared that upon reaching out to First Student he was able to negotiate a savings in transportation costs across SAU 50 districts. A reduction of approximately 20% as the pandemic closure continues. For the time period of March 16th through April 14th the savings for Newington was approximately \$1,219.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Ms. Killen will provide an update with Mr. Latchaw on remote learning under New Business.

Principal's Report

Mr. Latchaw provided highlights of how each grade level is navigating through remote learning. He provided examples from each classroom and included an update on the Unified Arts schedule. Each week Mr. Latchaw conducts all school morning meetings. During spirit week an all school meeting is held each day so students can highlight their spirit each day. The school community is hosting weekly family trivia game nights in an effort to stay engaged as a community.

Mr. Latchaw shared that the school had purchased two new cleaning machines (an electro-static device and back pack sprayer device). He also extended the offer to town police and fire departments to use the devices.

Mr. Latchaw noted that school lunches were still being made available for those who need them. Currently the meals can be picked up Monday's and Thursday's and will provide three days' worth of lunches.

Dr. Joyce reiterated that he is please the school can continue to provide lunches to students.

Ms. Robertson asked about specifics regarding committee assignments. Mr. Petralia and the other Board members provided specifics on each of the committees.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Audit Report Update

Ms. Ryan previously provide the draft audit report from Plodzick & Sanderson. She and Mr. Petralia will collaborate on management responses which will then be reviewed by the Board and made into a final bound copy.

Ms. Ryan noted that the audit provides the major findings, however a management letter highlights additional findings that need attention.

Dr. Joyce provided for Ms. Robertson a brief review of the audit process over the course of the last year. He reiterated that no wrong doing was found however practices of the SAU 50 Business Office had to be in line with modern compliance standards. No misappropriation occurred, just data was input in an old fashioned way.

Ms. Ryan noted that the MS-22 was in the drive and needed to be signed by Board members so that she may send the DRA.

Committee Assignments – deferred to the May board meeting.

Remote Instruction Update

Ms. Killen briefly summarized the work done in preparation and distribution of the revised Long-Term Remote Instruction Learning Plan. She highlighted that when the pandemic situation began the focus was on an emergency response. The plan has now evolved into a purposeful and thoughtful procedure for moving forward. The learning plan incorporates feedback from principals, staff and families.

Ms. Killen worked with Principals on reframing the long-term plan. The document was sent out to staff and parents with a video and revised curriculum. Ms. Killen sent revision plan documents and link to an informational website to parents last week.

Ms. Killen added that she and SAU 50 Administrators continue to hold a weekly meeting with Principals to monitor the situation in each district and share information. If remote learning should continue for the remainder of the year, the SAU 50 will adhere to the reduced curriculum plan.

Ms. Killen highlighted that he Board has access to the revised curriculum in the shared drive. She discussed the four planning phases for then end of the school year and beyond.

Dr. Joyce extended his appreciation to teachers for all their work and flexibility to be able to shift gears.

Mr. Russo reiterated that he has witnessed with his own children the quality educational experience during the remote learning; teachers and administrators have gone above and beyond.

Ms. Robertson thanked the teachers and administrators for their ability to create normalcy for students while simultaneously managing their own life stresses during this pandemic. She noted the probable need for incorporating remote learning in the future; building on what teachers are learning now. She added her own concern for the amount that kids are digesting during this time and worries for their mental health while balancing math, reading, and safety.

Dr. Joyce suggested that the message previously sent out by guidance counselors be sent to families again. Mr. Latchaw noted that Ms. Scuderi is issuing multiple lessons each week and collaborating with classroom teachers for students who may need additional support and/or counseling.

Ms. Killen noted they are starting to gather data from parents so they can have a better understanding of the effect the situation is having on students. She reiterated that the social emotional piece for children and families is at the forefront. Less time on daily time limits, etc.

Transition to Portsmouth Middle School

Mr. Latchaw gave an update on collaboration ideas with Principal Davis at Portsmouth Middle School for Newington students that will be attending grade 7 in the fall.

Academic Calendar

The Board discussed a change to continue classes through the week of April 27th and the cancelling of April break.

On a motion by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Joyce to amend the calendar as to cancel April school vacation. Discussion

Mr. Russo suggested a longer weekend with Monday or Friday as vacation days or reading days.

Mr. Latchaw suggested having an all school Earth day or outside day one of the days rather than regular instruction.

On a motion by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Dr. Joyce the Board voted to change the academic calendar eliminating April break, with the understanding that administration and teachers will be creative about assignments of families and students the week of April 27 – May 1, 2020.

Vote: 3 -0

On a motion by Ms. Robertson, seconded by Mr. Russo the Board authorized continued payment of support staff during the COVID-19 closure. Vote: 3-0

POLICY

Dr. Joyce reminded the Board that the current policies for review are on second reading for approval.

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board voted to approve and adopt the following recommended policies: BEDG-Minutes, EBCA-Crisis Prevention and Emergency Response Plan; EH Public Access to School District Records; EH-R Administrative Procedures for Public Access to District Records “Right to Know Requests;” GBD-Employment of Non-Certified Personnel; JLCFA-Feminine Hygiene Products. Vote: 3-0

PERSONNEL

Mr. Petralia asked the Board entertain a motion to go into non-public session under RSA 91 A:III

NON PUBLIC SESSION

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board entered into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:III (a) (c)

RE-ENTRY INTO PUBLIC SESSION

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board voted to come out of non-public session and seal the non-public minutes at 4:10 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board voted to authorize and issue a three year employment contract to Peter Latchaw as Principal of Newington Public School effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Vote: 3-0

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Robertson, the Board adjourned their meeting at 4:13 p.m. Vote: 3-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Samantha Fuller
Secretary to the Superintendent

Approved by the School Board - Virtual Meeting - Approval Date 5/12/20