

RSU 56 Board of Directors Minutes
Board Meeting Amended Agenda- December 13, 2022- 6:30pm
(This meeting will be held at Dirigo High School. The board meeting
will also be available via zoom and live streamed on YouTube.)

School Board Members Present: Barbara Chow, Bruce Ross, Tim Kelly, Don Whittemore, Deanna Dolloff, Elizabeth Kelly, Carl Lueders, Marianne Young

School Board Members Absent: Angela Cushman, Natalie Sneller, Vacancy (Peru), Joe Conron (student Rep), Larry Whittington

Staff Attending: Michele Araujo, Heidi Broomhall, Jay Nicholson, Kurt Rowley, Brian Keene, Pam Doyen, Cathy Arsenault, Heidi Connelly, Gena Cloutier

Also Attending: Cyndi Dolloff, Pamela Rangel, Marianne Hutchinson, Students: Abby Theriault, Isaiah Campbell

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Barbara Chow, Board Chair, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30pm. Audience introductions were made. Everyone on zoom and YouTube were welcomed.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Motion to add the following:

VI New Business: #1 Request for an out of state field trip; VII Report out of transfers

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: T. Kelly

Motion Carried

CONSIDERATIONS OF THE MINUTES

1. Minutes of the November 22, 2022 Board Meeting

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: T. Kelly

Not Voting: B. Chow

Motion Carried

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMUNICATIONS

No new communications

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Request for an out of state field trip. (AP Gov./Politics, Mr. Rowley and students)**

Mr. Rowley and students asked permission to travel to Wang Opera House in Boston on March 11 to see Hamilton the play. It is related to their class of AP Gov.

B. Ross asked how many people are they asking to go and how are they getting there? Is it an overnight

trip or down and back?

Mr. Rowley responded,,it would be down and back. Himself, his wife and the two students present at the meeting.

B. Ross also asked if there was any cost incurred? Mr. Rowley responded that each person was paying for their own tickets.

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: T. Kelly

Motion Carried

2. Approval of Job Description for Learning Facilitator

Pam explained the Job description for Learning Facilitator and the reason for it.

It is a “stop gap” position. Currently it is difficult to hire certified staff for a lot of our positions, Ed Tech III’s included. As Pam talked to the DOE certification dept earlier in the year they suggested that we put them in as learning facilitators. Learning Facilitators would do the job they were hired to do, basically an Ed Tech III and they would have a year to get certified. Pam took that to the Personnel Committee as well as the DEA that this is a potential job description different than what we have. This would be a position if we were hiring an Ed Tech III and they weren’t certified we could put them in this Learning Facilitator role until they became certified. There is a program through the MDOE that they can do to get them certified at no cost to them. In the meantime they come on as an employee so they get the benefits as an employee. We get the benefit of a good employee coming in, who is working for us already, not just as a “Sub”. The first part of the job description is the MOE that we worked with DEA on and the second part is from the job description of an Ed Tech III.

It’s a way for us to get credit for people who are in as a long term sub that we wouldn’t get credit for on our ED 279. Actually if we hire someone as an Ed Tech III and they are not certified we get dinged on our ED 279 so this helps us as well as the person coming in.

B. Chow asked if an Ed Tech III needed a degree. Pam explained that they don’t necessarily have to have a BS....they can get credit for some courses they have taken but not completed a degree. They do not all have to be college classes to get Ed tech certification. This learning facilitator there is a program online that they would take in a year and take class after class to get certified for Ed Tech III. Pam stated that she appreciated the fact that MDOE is working with districts to help them get people certified and be able to take classes at no cost to them to help get people in positions.

M. Young asked if the Learning Facilitator does not complete the classes and get the certification what steps are taken and does the time get extended?

Pam responded that in the MOA if they do not complete it in one year the position gets reposted. The district would repost it, if they reapply and they are the best candidate they would have another year but there is no guarantee that they would be hired back if they don’t complete it in the year.

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

3. Second Reading of Policy JLCD- Administering Medication to Students

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

4. Second Reading of Policy JICJ- Student Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

B. Ross- questioned Brian on if the school devices do everything a phone would do and Brian said that

they do, so B. Ross would like to see the cell phones put away his only concern is that the devices are monitored by the school, the cell phones are not.

M. Young- Having a hard time separating, feels like this might be having a policy for the sake of having a policy. I don't see 100% of this working the way it's intended.

B. Chow- K-8 don't have their devices. In the high school which is the major change, if the teacher does not want them they are not there, so that means some have them some don't. There have been issues where the kids have been distracted, not focused on doing what they're supposed to do.

M. Young- commented that is a student is distracted it may not be because of the phone,,,it may be that they are easily distracted. Is it really the device or is it the child?

B. Chow- most of the committee felt that during classroom times they did not need their phones. They are not being taken away, they have them in their space, they need to just put them away during class time. A teacher at any level can see if the phone is the distraction or is there something going on with the student.

Pam stated that issues with the phones come from all places: in the classroom, in the hallways, home in the evening. They come from all places. This policy is an attempt to take this out of the equation in the classroom. Pam mentioned it at an assembly and the students were pretty clear on what the expectations was going to be.

L. Kelly- I've subbed at the middle school and at the high school. At the middle school it's not enforced. Saying they're enforced up there might not be absolutely correct. At the high school she knew of many teachers that don't allow phones to be on or used in the classroom. She feels the teachers are really good at the HS and they can run their own room with their own rules to the best of their ability and she gave them credit. Doesn't understand the need for another policy or one like this, not giving teachers enough credit. Feel it will be hard to enforce. Feels the teachers can teach students when to use a phone, when it's not respectful to use it and that is when a teacher is teaching. Feels it's part of the learning process.

H. Broomhall- as a teacher, would like to see the part of the policy that says that phones be stored and put away, that the student can keep the phones next to their person. I feel it would be easier for me as a teacher to police if there were a policy that states the phones need to be stored. It is totally the board's decision. Would also like some teacher discretion for class work if there is something that is easier to do on the phone as opposed to the laptop because of the cameras.

D. Dolloff- In the current policy is states for educational purposes as determined by administration It was commented that the last meeting that Pam stated the administration could give a blanket authorization to teachers.

Motion: D. Whittemore

Seconded: B. Ross

Opposed: L. Kelly

Motion Carried

5. Second Reading of Policy BEDH- Public Participation at Board Meeting

Pam stated at the last meeting there was asked to be clarification around the times that someone could speak as well as the 60 minutes total for public comments. So we may want to look at those again tonight to be sure that is captured in the way the board wanted them to be captured.

B. Ross agreed that he was concerned that it be clear that the 60 minutes was for the entire public comment time and also the 5-8 minutes per speaker or up to the discretion of the board chair that the speaker wasn't repeating themselves and still saying something that was pertinent to the topic.

B. Chow- across the state districts are all doing it different. As a board we are listeners and we do a good job to listen to people.

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Opposed: L. Kelly

Motion Carried

OLD BUSINESS

1. Region 9 Updates (Bruce Ross/Angela Cushman)

B. Ross- Region 9 had their monthly meeting on Dec 7th. The board voted to approve & ratify the acceptance of the Grant they were approved for. It will now move to the next step which is an organizational step. They will get someone to oversee the whole process. There are steps that need to be followed. It's slowly starting to move forward. They have been approached by a solar company to see if Region 9 would want to join that. Asked how the Superintendent's advisory committee is doing and it seems to be working better. They are meeting more regularly with some good communication going. Region 9 did have some issues with water. They have had all the tests done. They had some things that were above the limits in some sinks but not anywhere that anyone would drink from. Going through the second round of tests and when those come back they will know what they need to do to correct that. Region 9 is lit up... They are having a Holiday light show on 12/13 & 14 from 5-8pm. They have done a very nice job with it.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent's Report: Pam Doyen

This is the annual spirit week for the 3 schools compete against each other for different events throughout the week. Monday was PJ day. Tuesday was Tacky Tourist day. Wednesday is Winter Wednesday. Thursday is Ugly Sweater day and Friday is Fancy Friday. Remind everyone that we have an early release next Wednesday Dec 21. Student dismissal begins at 11:30. We will not have a late arrival Wed that day. Pam let the board know that she participated in two outstanding webinars: one was sponsored by the Maine Superintendent's Association where they were able to hear from the 3 Superintendent's where they had the hoax shooter calls. It was very informative. They gave some insights on some things because the first two schools thought it was a real situation. Their reaction to it, their response to it. They gave some insight on how we may want to think about emergency response. One easy thing was they had a laptop at the command center and could see cameras and such but the police needed it so having multiple laptops would be helpful. So some of those things that you don't really know the flow of until you're in it. It was really very helpful and informative. Pam said her heart went out to them because it was really a traumatic event for those schools. Also participated in a webinar from Drummond Woodsum on transgender and gender expansive training around the laws and in schools. It was insightful and important information. She did take notes on both of those webinars and was able to send them out to her administrators.

Administrator's Report: Heidi Connelly

Special Education Department updates include the following:

- The DOE did an on site visit to finish our special education audit this fall. I'm happy to share that we have met all components of the corrective action plan and it is closed until the next audit. As part of this plan staff received additional training and documentation practices have been updated.

- At this time we have 132 students identified with disabilities qualifying them for special education services which puts us at 17.5% of our student population. The national average is about 15% and the state of Maine average was 19.41% for the 20-21 school year.
- At this time last year we had 3 student referrals to special education and thus far this year have had 14 referrals which is more than the total we had all of last year.
- We had 15 students with IEP services transfer out of our district from July to today and 25 students who have transferred in adding 10 total to our count.
- Goals I am working on include more student involvement in their individualized Education plans including an eventual goal to have student led IEP meetings. Also to develop a more extensive professional development menu/options for ed techs across our district.
- From last year we were able to generate billing and reimbursement for some of our services through Maine Care. This included billing for psychological services, occupational therapy services, and physical therapy services. The total reimbursed was \$22,355.68.
- The special education department is fully staffed with teachers and we have one open Ed tech role with the second one with a designated candidate so we are moving toward official hire.
- Excited to share that we have a student that is currently in the process of successfully transitioning back to our middle school from the Western Maine Foothills Program! Also as of today we have one high school student who has met her goals and been dismissed from special education.

Transfers:

Shawn Murphy from special education ed tech III to DES Technology ESSER position

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Student Representative Report- J. Conron Absent
2. Policy Committee- Not met
3. Finance Committee- Will have a short discussion at the end of the board meeting.
4. Curriculum Committee- Met prior to board meeting. Jason Long presented multiple things. One is the program that is used for World Language, the books will be gone. The company is not doing them. No longer in use. They have worked out a plan on how we can get materials now. B. Chow had asked about Native American, by law it is that schools have it in social studies, and Jason had a presentation about it. Where it is taught in our curriculum. He also had a presentation, the new law is coming up, about African American studies as part of history. We used to stop at

WWII, now they are getting into the 80's and other things. A couple of Maine Learning results standards. PE was a little wordsmithing, the visual and performing arts is a little more detailed and specific so they will be working on that.

5. Buildings & Grounds Committee- Meeting with Kenny Robbins 12/16 - 1pm
6. Negotiations Committee- Nothing this year
7. Personnel Committee- N. Sneller Absent- Hired a couple people
8. Ad-hoc Committee- A. Cushman Absent

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

L. Kelly- Asked/told by a community member about students being out/about during open campus at the end of the street smoking pot. I don't know if anyone has heard anything about this but it was brought up to me. If that's the case has it been addressed or not?

Pam stated when it comes to her attention she does a little field trip.

L. Kelly- are there repercussions?

Pam stated yes there are.. We have policies around abuse

L. Kelly- My other question: I know that open campus was done during the pandemic for good reason. Is there a good reason why it should be all grades? It used to be a senior thing. Could it go back to being a Senior privilege?

Pam- We do consider it each year. We consider it each year since the pandemic. There are a couple of reasons why we continue with an open campus. First and foremost there is a lot of research around students needing a true mental break. Secondly at the high school level we are trying to build a level of independence and responsibility and open campus, for those that can handle open campus, helps support that. There are consequences if you don't come back on time, there are consequences if you come back and are obviously high or whatever. It allows for our high school students to build that responsibility and trust that most families are building with them outside of school as well. If they were home on a none school day their parents would not keep them inside the house for the entire day. We're trying to continue that level of responsibility and trust at the high school level.

B. Chow- if they don't do what they're supposed to do that privilege is revoked, correct?

Pam- There have been multiple times this year that students have lost open campus privileges for various reasons. You don't have open campus privileges if you are failing classes, so there's an incentive to be passing your classes. Open campus is lost for other infractions, so there's incentive to do what they are supposed to be doing during school hours.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:28pm

If the board meeting ends in a timely manner, there will be a brief Personnel/Finance Committee meeting following the board meeting. The meeting will be held in the DHS SCC.

Agenda- Superintendent/High School Principal Salary