

RSU # 12
BOARD OF DIRECTORS (REGULAR) MEETING
Thursday, February 11, 2021 @ 6:30 PM
Chelsea Elementary School

*Due to restrictions on crowd size, the public will not be able to attend in person.
Please see the information below on how to view the meeting remotely.*

All Board members in-person and other attendees must follow these safety protocols. These are the same safety precautions that staff and students follow during the school day.

- *Stay home if you are sick.*
- *Do the [RSU 12 self-check health screening](#) before coming to the Board meeting checking for signs of COVID19.*
- *Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer upon entering the building/room. We will have a table set up for this as you enter.*
- *Wear your mask at all times. **The mask must cover your nose and mouth at all times.** Brief mask breaks are allowed for eating and drinking.*
- *Remember to Social Distance and stay 6 feet apart from one another. We will arrange the tables so everyone is six feet apart.*
- *Do not share materials. Please bring your own pen to the meeting.*
- *The microphone will be sanitized in between uses.*

How to view the Board Meeting Remotely

See Directions Below

Draft Minutes

In accordance with An Act To Implement Provisions Necessary to the Health, Welfare and Safety of the Citizens of Maine in Response to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, as enacted to read: Sec. G-1 1 MRSA §403-A Public proceedings through remote access during declaration of state of emergency due to COVID-19, this meeting will be conducted remotely through online video conferencing. The meeting will be recorded and made available on our website at <http://www.svrsu.org/remote-school-board-meetings>. The meeting will also be streamed live on the [Sheepscot Valley RSU 12 Youtube Channel](#). If you wish to submit public comment, then you may do so by emailing Leslie Burgess at leburgess@svrsu.org.

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Flag Salute
Meeting called to order at 6:47 pm
Sandra Devaney led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance: Frank Hample, Russell Gates, Mary Coventry, Sandra Devaney, Monique Crummett

Zoom: Doug Morier, Doug Crochere, Richard DeVries, Will Sugg, Lynette Conroy, Ryan Carver, Rick Cote

Absent: Michael Lemelin, Suzanne Balbo (E), Kimberly Hutchinson (E), Kristina Verney (E), Stephen Smith

Administrators present; Deb Taylor, Michele Grant, Larry Dancer, Mike Flynn, Allison Myers, Heather Wilson, Stephanie Oliphant

2. Focus on Learning: Virtual Read to Me Challenge activity at Whitefield
Meagan Soule from Whitefield presented the reading challenge to the board. She talked about how the activity came to be and that it was starting this week. She said it was great to see kids reading to other kids. It has been difficult with Covid for students to be around their peers, so this was a great way to bring that about. She showed a video of a Whitefield student reading a book that was shared with other students. She said they did the same activity at Camp Chelsea where the kids were robots that were programmed to read to other kids. The videos will be uploaded on the Maine DOE website.
3. Public Comment: (10 min): *Public Comment at School Board meetings is to be restricted to items on the agenda. Comments regarding individuals or personnel matters are not appropriate for the public session. Please email public comment to Leslie Burgess at leburgess@svrsu.org*

No public comment

4. Adjustments and Consent Agenda (20 min)

Note: Items may be removed from the Consent Agenda on the request of any one member; items not removed may be adopted by general consent without debate. Removed items may be scheduled for consideration immediately after the Consent agenda or placed on the agenda at the discretion of the board. [Action]

Consent Agenda items:

- a. Approve the Minutes of the previous meeting as distributed
- b. Superintendent's Report
- c. Approve the Committee Minutes as distributed - remove the Finance Committee Minutes
- d. Accept the Personnel Report
- e. Accept the Policies as distributed
 - i. ACAB-R- Employee Discrimination - Harassment Complaint Procedure - Second Reading
 - ii. ACAA - Harassment And Sexual Harassment Of Students - First Reading

Motion to approve the consent agenda with the exception of the Finance Committee Minutes.

Russell Gates - 1st Monique Crummett - 2nd

Motion passes 11-0-0

Richard DeVries wanted to point out there is a significant cost to fix the Controls (\$300,000 of stimulus money) at Chelsea and the Finance Committee will be looking at this over the next few days and report back to the board.

5. Old Business: None

6. New Business (90min)

- a. National Board Certification [Informational] - Mr. Tuttle spoke of the initiative in this district to encourage as many teachers as possible to become nationally board certified. The process is rigorous and very educational for the teachers. Jen Brown and Rebekah Brockway were most recently certified, so we are up to five teachers in our district. Teachers that are certified earn an extra \$2500.00 per year from the district as well as \$2500.00 from the state if they are in a school that has 50% or more free and reduced lunch (less if the school is under 50%). He thanked the board for their support.
- b. Snow Days and/or Remote Learning Days Discussion [Informational] - Mr. Tuttle explained why the district has been having regular snow days rather than remote learning days during bad weather. He referenced the communication that was sent to the staff (pg. 26 of the board packet "The Great Snow Debate"). A remote learning day would be a day when teachers and students would learn by getting on Zoom as a school day. There were questions as to why we could not send packets home, but it is more of a day for kids to be doing work but not the staff. It is also challenging to put everyone to work, specifically support staff who all have contractual work days. Prior to covid, there was a process with the DOE to have remote learning days for snow days. Mr. Tuttle raised some questions for the staff to consider and to help understand the entire decision, including students and staff that do not have reliable internet at home, if the power went out, no food deliveries, special ed accommodations, etc. In person learning is the most effective form of instruction and the district is striving to stay on that course. Other districts are doing this, but Mr. Tuttle did not know if they had already solved all of the issues, but noted that most of them are remote part of the time already so it could be an easier shift. We do have snow days built into the calendar.

Ryan Carver said that we have been full time all year and that we probably have more actual days in attendance than other school districts.

Richard DeVries said we still have the rest of February and March to go through and that there could be more snow days, but he supported in-person learning.

Lynette Conroy also supported snow days due to the possibility of power issues, no travel, and that by the time we go through negotiations it would be too late to change anything this year, but that we should have a plan in place for emergencies for the future if something happened again and school was out for extended period.

Mr. Tuttle said that we have been following the calendar that was approved by the board that has 10 storm days built in, but it is natural for parents and staff to ask these questions considering the current circumstances.

The calendar for the 2021-2022 school year will be presented in March and there will be opportunity to discuss this further.

c. Substitute rates

Suggested Motion - To accept the amended 2021 substitute rates as presented.

Motion to accept the amended 2021 substitute rates as presented.

Monique Crummett - 1st Frank Hample - 2nd

Motion passes 11-0-0

d. Fiscal Year 2022 Draft Budget Presentation and Discussion [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle presented the Draft Budget Presentation to the board. This is one of the most difficult budget years we have ever faced as there are many decisions that will affect next year and several years after. We have lost approximately \$370,000 in state subsidy, which is really more double that amount as we generally would receive \$300,000 additional.

He went over some information regarding the types of schools in Maine, how many schools our students attend, etc. He explained our priorities in our schools that will continue in our budget (nurses in schools, social workers, PBIS, maintaining class sizes, professional development, technology, curriculum, PreK program, school choice and a return to in person learning only). Capitol Improvements has been removed at this time. He explained that it is difficult to cut something out of the budget and then try to get it back in the future.

Lynette Conroy asked if we should develop some sort of policy around covid vaccinations for teachers for the next school year. Mr. Tuttle is not clear if we are allowed to require that, but he will research that.

Richard DeVries asked if the superintendents are asking for teachers to be vaccinated.

Sandra Devaney asked if we would be doing a poll to find out how many students would not be returning to school in the fall due to the new vaccine law and if those students would have the remote option. We have not done that, but Mr. Tuttle said it was a good idea. There has been some early discussion about a remote school offered by RSU 12, but he does not know if students would be allowed to enroll if they were not vaccinated. A remote option provided by RSU 12 could bring in students from towns such as Alna or Westport Island that cannot physically get to our schools.

Frank Hample asked if there has been a profile developed that would show the individual towns how the subsidy has affected each town based on their student counts.

We rely on MLTI for devices for grades 7-8 and network support and have been told this will continue, so we will not need to budget for them. The network support may go away in the future which would incur an additional cost.

Mr. Tuttle will present to the towns the Covid 19 response of the district.

Richard DeVries congratulated the district and the staff for what they have accomplished during the pandemic.

Mr. Tuttle presented the Total Proposed Budget to the board. The budget is a 4.1% increase. Tuition rates have gone down because they are based on the

expenses of the previous year, which changed dramatically with the schools closing in March. The district pays the state average tuition rate, and the rates for high school dropped, including the state tuition rate. There is concern because students will return to school and how it will affect budgeting for tuition rates. The student count is an average of two falls in a row, showing a loss of 49 students. Our district lost more students to homeschooling - the state average was 5% while we lost 7%. Our budget has not decreased with our student count. Our budget is at an 11.2% increase due to the reduction in state subsidy.

Per student, we are very low in our area and under the state average for per pupil administrative costs.

In discussing town valuation in regards to local cost sharing, if valuation increases then the town will lose subsidy, which increases the cost despite losing students.

Mr. Tuttle encouraged board members to contact him with questions about the budget. There is some stimulus money coming, with rules attached that could help pass the budget. But next year, there will be no stimulus money.

There is concern about how to explain the increases to the towns. This problem has affected many districts around the state as well.

The first presentation is to Chelsea on March 10th, after the finance committee meeting and before the next board meeting.

Frank Hample asked how the presentations would be done. Mr. Tuttle explained that each of the towns were doing it differently - over zoom, in person. He asked if the meetings could be viewed publicly or if they would be recorded. Leslie Burgess will look into whether or not the towns will record the meetings and report to the board.

The district budget meeting is due to be held May 26th at 6:30 pm at Chelsea School. The Board will need to decide if holding this meeting is allowable.

Motion to enter into executive session at 8:38 pm

Monique Crummett - 1st Frank Hample - 2nd

Five minute recess before entering into executive session.

7. Executive Session: Enter Executive Session Pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (D) Negotiations
8. Adjourn 9:25pm