

RSU # 12
BOARD OF DIRECTORS (REGULAR) MEETING
Thursday, September 9, 2021 @ 6:30 PM
Chelsea Elementary School

*The meeting will be recorded and made available on our website at
<https://www.svrsu.org/page/video-recorded-school-board-meetings>.*

Draft Minutes

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Flag Salute

Meeting was called to order at 6:39 pm

Sandra Devaney led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance: Rick Cote, Dustin Mellor, James Willigar, Deborah Myers, Will Sugg, Ryan Carver, Doug Morier, Lynette Conroy, Rick Danforth, Richard Devries, Sandra Devaney, Russell Gates

Zoom: Mary Coventry, Kristina Verney, Deborah Talacko, Kimberly Hutchinson

Absent: Suzanne Balbo (E)

Administrators in Attendance: DebTaylor, Michele Grant, Pat Block, Mike Flynn, Larry Dancer, Allison Myers, Stephanie Oliphant, Heather Wilson, Mark Deblois

2. Focus on Learning: None

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.*

Anthony Anderson - speaking on Item 6B of the agenda. He is a parent of Whitefield students who attend Lincoln Academy and Whitefield School and has been very involved with RSU 12. He wanted to thank the school board for last year as it was a difficult year for the RSU, but he was impressed and very appreciative of the commitment to keep the schools open last year. Conversely, his son was at Lincoln Academy last year and spent months at home, despite many attempts to convince LA to go to in-person learning and he did not feel like he had a voice in the decision. He urged the board to consider a high school for the RSU in the future. He encouraged the board to also keep the gyms open to keep students involved in the sports programs.

Will Sugg commended Mr. Anderson for his work with the Wellness Committee.

Angela Sullivan - speaking on Item 6B of the agenda. She wanted to reiterate her disappointment for the board deciding to require masks. She said activities outside of school do not require masks, family social activities do not require masks. She would like it to be reconsidered at each meeting. She does not feel people know about the meetings and there should be an email sent out to all

parents letting them know when it is or on the sign outside of school to get the word out. She also said that she was frustrated that the public could not comment after public comment, during the board discussion on a topic.

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 - removed
- c. Approve the Committee Minutes as distributed - Facilities removed
- d. Accept the Personnel Report - removed
- e. Accept the Policies as distributed: None

Motion to accept the consent agenda of items A, C (with exception of Facilities) and D

Russell Gates - 1st Richard DeVries - 2nd

Motion passes 15-0-0

Motion to approve the Finance and Facilities Minutes

Russell Gates - 1st Rick Cote - 2nd

Motion passes 15-0-0

Superintendent's Report: We do not have hard numbers yet for student count as we are still assessing the number of students that have returned as well as new enrollments. Official student count numbers will be available to the board in October.

Richard DeVries commented that student count is based on a two year average, which means we will still be feeling the impact in the next school year.

Personnel Report: Mr. Tuttle discussed the new hires for the teaching positions throughout the district.

Motion to approve the Personnel Report

Rick Cote - 1st Richard DeVries - 2nd

Motion passes 15-0-0

5. Old Business: None

6. New Business: (90min)

a. Report out about opening of school from the Administrative Team [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle explained to the board that administrators typically report out how the year began at the start of every year.

Mike Flynn, Nutrition discussed the summer food program as well as the breakfast and lunch programs, Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program, Prek, and afterschool program. We were awarded the USDA grant to partner with RSU 10 of \$100,000. The Fishermen Feeding Mainers Program will help us to receive fish weekly for the schools. He introduced Sarah Lavallee from Food Corps, who is working with the schools this year and hopes to build a garden as well as engage students in hands-on learning, get them interested in healthy foods. She will also be working with Mike and the kitchen staff at Chelsea School.

Richard DeVries commended Mike Flynn for all the work he has done since arriving in RSU 12 with grants and programs.

Stephanie Oliphant, Palermo Principal - She is beginning her 4th year as principal and said the beginning of the year was very hectic as three daycares in Palermo closed suddenly, prompting them to add the Boys and Girls Club program to the school. The student count is up this year and there are two new staff members. We are working on getting a contractor to finish the playground. Palermo has had two Covid cases in the school, which were community based. Because we are universally masked and keep students spread out during lunch time, we do not have to quarantine any students.

Ryan Carver asked about the Boys and Girls Club program at Palermo. The Boys and Girls Club in Chelsea is a daycare, paid for by the parents and the club can hire some staff members to work for them. Windsor School has a CCLC tutoring program offered through a grant by the Boys and Girls Club. The program is for 5 years and is run out of Windsor and Chelsea, with Palermo students bussed to Windsor and Whitefield students bussed to Chelsea to participate. The Boys and Girls Club in Palermo is like Chelsea, where parents have to pay the cost. The programs through the BGC do not cost taxpayers any money.

Mark Deblois, Principal Whitefield - Mr. Deblois said Whitefield had a strong start with 166 students, which has rebounded from years past, due to students returning from homeschooling and other schools. Mr. Deblois did ask the students if they liked wearing a mask as he visited the classrooms on the first day of school. He said that while no one likes wearing masks (him included), he also asked the students why we are wearing masks and they were able to articulate the safety reasons why. We were able to gain a lot of things this year by wearing masks, like eating in the cafeteria, moving around to specials, recess with more than their cohorts, etc. The trade off of mask wearing helps to bring back the things we were not able to do last year. Whitefield has 4 new staff members this year. Whitefeild has had a very active gardening program and, through a grant, was able to purchase a used greenhouse that will be utilized this year as an outdoor classroom as well. He mentioned that the town of Whitefield allows the school to use a large piece of land behind the fire station to plant gardens, which has yielded a huge harvest.

James Willgar asked if there was any progress with the solar panels. They have not been able to get them going yet due to various issues.

Allison Myers, Principal Chelsea School: In her second year, she is more comfortable in the building and with the Covid protocols. The year started with 282 students, with the kindergarten classes doubling in size from last year. Many homeschooled students and remote learning have returned. Chelsea has added 12 new staff members. Chelsea has five cases of Covid, with 13 students in quarantine. Without wearing masks, Chelsea would have had to quarantine 75 students.

Heather Wilson, Principal Windsor - The new year has started with 310 students and Windsor has 6 new staff members. Over the summer, Windsor had a grant that helped to have a giant US map painted on the playground. All three fall sports teams have begun. Oren Robinson has written a few grants to be able to offer modern band instruments for students to learn as well as a grant to fund digital audio interface to record music for the seniors in the community. A family has donated supplies to build a gazebo in the garden to be used as an outdoor classroom. Windsor has a theme this year of making connections with students and staff every day and with the district initiatives.

Will Sugg asked if other students are able to participate in the Cross Country program. It is a district team, so all students are welcome to participate.

Pat Block, Assistant Special Ed Director - She spoke to the board about the homeless situation in our district. She discussed the McKinney Vento Act and how it is designed to help students stay in their school of origin to minimize disruptions in their lives, or help them to enroll quickly in a new school. They also help families connect with agencies to get them resources. She works with other liaisons around the state to share transportation costs, decide the best school for the students that will provide stability. She encouraged the board to go on the DOE website and read the act. She said that if they ever felt a family in the district was in need to feel free to reach out to principals or to her directly. Deborah Myers asked if there was a referral process. She explained that contacting the principal is the best initial way and they will get in touch with her to follow up.

James Willgar commended Pat Block for all she does for the district.

Larry Dancer, Director of Operations - He thanked Howie and the Facilities committee for everything that has helped keep our students and staff safe as we have had no spread of covid within the schools so far. He discussed the UV lighting that will be installed. We have hired 2 new custodians this year. The custodial staff did a great job working around the summer programs to get the buildings ready for school opening. There have been a few bumps in the road with bussing as we have a few drivers out and very few subs. The Palermo parking lot and back road have been paved. All the parking lots have been striped, sports fields have been done, and painting in all the buildings.

Ryan Carver asked if the RSU has looked at any programs to train bus drivers like other districts. Mr. Dancer explained that we do have such a program, but it

is initially difficult to find drivers willing to apply, despite how much we try to get the word out.

Deb Taylor, Curriculum and Technology - She commended the staff that has been working hard to make school normal and fun. We have hired a lot of new staff and did a new staff orientation to introduce them to the district and we do online professional development through Brightspace. The state has named the NWEA assessment as the state assessment. MLTI has enabled us to provide devices to 7th and 8th grade students and the latest version has launched, with less support to the schools than before but in combination with grants, we are able to be 1-1 for students with technology through the district, as well as expand our network and offer free wifi to the communities on our school grounds.

James Willigar asked how long we have the license for Brightspace. We are in year one of three.

Mr. Tuttle added that the beginning of the year began very successfully despite the mask debate. There were no bussing issues.

b. Maine Centers for Disease Control Standard Operating Procedures for Close Contacts and Quarantining [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle wanted the board to understand and ask any questions regarding the SOP's that are referred to and how we quarantine students. It gives the definition of close contact in a school environment: someone without a mask, in front of you, for 15 minutes over the course of 24 hours. The SOP's talk about close contacts with a mask, within three feet, on a bus - for example, sitting next to a Covid positive student on a bus would make someone a close contact. He directed the board to a table to the list of exceptions to quarantine, such as vaccination, a positive test within the last 90 days, participation in pool testing, universal masking mandate etc. Mr. Tuttle was glad to get clarification from the CDC about how to go about quarantining. Last year, we had to quarantine entire classrooms, now we only have to quarantine the positive student and any close contacts. These are the rules we are following and conveying to parents. He has heard the SOP's may be updated regarding someone participating in the daily testing program, but he is not sure. Mr. Tuttle said that as a superintendent and educator, the rules do baffle him but he follows them to keep students in school safely. As long as this SOP is in place, there is not much that can be changed with our plan.

Ryan Carver asked how the pool testing would work, if a percentage would allow students not to wear masks. Mr. Tuttle explained that the quarantine rules changed since July and that students who participate in pool testing do not have to quarantine. Rick Danforth said that there has been a shift in the pool testing, but to expect more changes. He asked what the air exchanges are in each building and how it compares to industry standards. Tuttle explained that all of our classrooms have air exchanges, which run constantly during the day. Mr. Dancer said they are always on, shutting down around 6-8 pm, depending on events in the building and that we have always had them, but now we have

added ionization, filters, etc. Last year, they ran 24/7, which caused the heating bill to go up.

Mr. Tuttle said we are collecting vaccination rates from our staff which will be provided every month. We are around 60-70%, but the numbers will be available next month. An unvaccinated staff member would have to quarantine, and this year there is no Covid leave, so staff members would need to use their own sick time if quarantined.

Dustin Mellor asked questions about the pool testing and Mr, Tuttle gave an explanation of what he knew of the program, but there is still more information needed.

James Willigar thinks pool testing is designed to identify outbreaks and asked if the SOP's on pool testing changed from the last meeting until now. Mr. Tuttle said they have not changed.

c. Committees [Informational]

Board members have received their committee assignments and Mr. Tuttle thanked those who signed up for Negotiations. He said the Committee for Bussing and Tuition needs more members, as we have to decide within the next two years on a designated high school. A 10-year window was granted for Wiscasset to remain our high school after they left our district. But, there was nothing said of what would happen after the 10 years is up. What will happen with our students that are enrolled in Wiscasset currently? We need a committee to make the arrangements for a high school for our students. The committee will eventually be presenting this to the board any choices they have found. It is an ad hoc committee.

d. Maine School Management Association's Fall Conference. October 28, 29. Elect a voting delegate to participate in the association's Annual Delegate Assembly [Action]

Suggested Motion: To nominate _____ as a delegate and _____ as an alternate delegate to the MSMA Annual Delegate Assembly

Sandra Devaney explained that the conference is over Zoom, and it helps board members learn how to be an effective board members, offers several learning sessions. Board members will be able to move sessions and eventually watch other sessions later.

Motion to nominate Lynette Conroy as a delegate and Sandra Devaney as an alternate

Richard DeVries - 1st Rick Danforth - 2nd

Motion passes 15-0-0

e. Recognition of Perfect Attendance [Informational]

Mr. Tuttle recognized staff members who have perfect attendance as it explains to do in the collective bargaining agreement with teachers. Thank you to the following teachers for having perfect attendance.

Melissa Guyon - Palermo

Nikki Mathews - Windsor

Kayla Coitrone - Windsor

- f. Approve the hiring of a temporary School Nurse position with ESSER ARP grant funds [Action]

Suggested Motion: To approve the hiring of a temporary School Nurse with ESSER ARP grant funds as recommended by the Finance Committee

Richard DeVries - 1st Rick Cote - 1st

Ryan Carver asked if all the schools had a school nurse. Mr. Tuttle said this is a temporary position who will help with pool testing as well as with students with medical needs through the district.

James Willigar asked if the nurse was being hired to coordinate pool testing. Sandra Devaney explained that the nurse would also be assisting with medical needs throughout the district.

James Willigar asked if the district was not meeting the medical needs of our students currently. Mr. Tuttle explained that students' needs are being met, but it would be helpful to have more staff.

Motion passes 11-2-1 (Ryan Carver abstained)

- g. Approve the hiring of a temporary Social Worker position with ESSER ARP grant funds [Action]

Suggested Motion: To approve the hiring of a temporary School Social Worker with ESSER ARP grant funds as recommended by the Finance Committee

Richard DeVries - 1st Rick Danforth 2nd

Ryan Carver asked about the position - Mr. Tuttle explained that the position would help to temporarily provide needed social work services. The new position would probably be shared between the two smaller schools.

This additional social worker position is temporary.

Richard DeVries asked if they were required by the grant. Mr. Tuttle explained we have to spend a percentage of the grant money on interventions. Social work counts as an intervention

Motion passes 15-0-0

- h. Substitute rates 2021-2022 [Action]

Suggested Motion: To approve the 2021-2022 substitute rates as presented

Richard DeVries - 1st Russell Gates - 2nd

Mr. Tuttle explained the purpose was to change the rates to be competitive with other districts to help hire subs in our district.

Rick Cote commented that one of the rates was discussed at negotiations and they are on the right track to be competitive with other districts.

15-0-0

Motion to have a recess before entering into Executive Session.

Russell Gates - 1st Ryan Carver - 2nd

Motion passes 15-0-0

8:30 pm recess

7. Executive Session: Enter Executive Session Pursuant to Title1 M.R.S.A.§405 (6) (D) for discussion of the RSU 12 Principals Association collective bargaining agreement negotiations.
8. Adjourn 8:55 pm