

**Lyme School District
Emergency School Board Special Meeting
Wednesday, July 15, 2020
Electronic Meeting Via Zoom**

approved as is, 8/7/20

Board Members Present: Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegelé, Barbara Wilson. Administrators: District Administrator Jeff Valence, Director of Academic Elise Foxall, Special Education Director Miki McGee. Public: Jen Boylston, Brett Rusch, Sarah Glass, Tara McGovern. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. Call to Order and Minutes Approval

Chair Jonathan Voegelé called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM and cited the state right-to-know laws associated with emergency electronic meetings.

2. Public Comment

Jen Boylston commented that she has a low tolerance for CV19 risk and was concerned about the consequences on her child with regard to reading. Additionally, she stated that it is unlikely that one of her children would go to school if she had to wear a mask in school. Sarah Glass stated that her family could be a source of infection spread in the school because like others in Lyme, her husband works in the medical community. She has one child that did well with remote learning and one that struggled using it.

3. Minutes Approval

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Barta) to approve the Lyme School Board meeting minutes for July 8, 2020 as submitted.

The motion was approved with a roll call of those in favor including Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegelé, Barbara Wilson.

4. Business Requiring Discussion and/or Action

4A. School Reopening Discussion on Guidance

The Board discussed implementation of guidance protocols for the school grounds including face covering, distancing, screening, sanitizing, and social cohorts.

Each Board member provided their views about distancing and masking and there was a consensus on opening the school, but no consensus on whether it should be a full reopen or whether there would be a hybrid system that would include some remote learning, too. Some felt that if the virus spreads in the region, that the school would return to remote learning and it would be good for students, parents and school staff to already be familiar with remote learning. It was stated that remote learning will be more rigorous because it has been normalized and would be planned compared to last year when it was in an emergency format.

The six foot distancing would require that some classes would be held in the conference room, music room and so on with a possibility of para-educators in charge of supervising practice work. Teachers would be with students about 50% of the time and para-educators would be supervising students about 50% of the time. Some issues discussed were that distancing would deter learning techniques

that would normally incorporate more collaboration among students. There also could be social grouping issues as some students may not fit well with their respective groups.

There was some discussion by the school nurse regarding the screening of students and staff. The nurse suggested a procedure that when screened at the school entrance, students with symptoms such as runny noses or sore throats would be sent home. The Board asked about the possible requirements for isolation, quarantine, and testing for students and staff if found to be positive or showing symptoms. There were comments about families that might opt out of sending students to school because of a low risk tolerance.

4B. Sense of the Board

To get a sense of the Board, the Board members were asked for their favored scenarios for school reopening.

Greenway, Wilson – School reopening with six foot distancing and full masking.

Berk – School reopening with three foot distancing.

Barta, Bujarski – 4-10 hybrid with whole classes.

Hayden – 4-10 hybrid with split classes.

Voegelé – School reopening with whole classes with 3'-6' distancing depending on feasibility.

There was some discussion about split school sessions being a problem or an advantage for families with multiple kids. The middle school teachers could be reassigned but there might need to be more staff added to the lower school in the kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th. This extra staffing could cost as much as \$500,000 and could be difficult to find at this time just before school starts. Additionally, there may be families that will opt to homeschool their kids or expect that there would be respective remote learning available. The Board would consider acting in accordance with a threshold for the community pulse on reopening, remote learning and homeschooling.

It was suggested that it may be easier to start with a tighter program (all masking, longest distancing, etc.) and adjust it to be more liberal when possible. The Board was informed about outdoor tents for two classes with costs which are estimated at \$38,000 per month, plus heating, electricity and restrooms.

4C. Communication with Town

The Board decided that information in an “interim statement” format would be drafted to inform the community about the work the administrators and Board have been doing on school reopening considerations. The concern for safety would be conveyed regarding a modified reopening of school. Barta and Berk would work with the Superintendent to draft the statement that would be distributed to the Board for review.

4D. Plan for the Board and Administrators

The administrators were asked to prepare the ideal full open school with six foot distancing, and the hybrid scenario versions in a week with broad details. There will be some faculty members contacted for additional input regarding the child educational experience and faculty time spent on planning. The plans submitted would avoid major expenditures such as adding multiple staff, but it could include the educational compromises with the scenarios.

The next Board meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 6:00 PM.

5. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded (Hayden, Berk). The motion was passed with Phil Barta, Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden, Jonathan Voegele, Barbara Wilson voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 PM.