

Lyme School District
Emergency School Board Special Meeting
Thursday, July 23, 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 Voegele, Barbara Wilson. Administrators: District Administrator Jeff Valence, Director of Academic Elise Foxall, Special Education Director Miki McGee, Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell. Public: 34 other attendees including staff and public. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. Call to Order and Minutes Approval

Chair Jonathan Voegele called the meeting to order at 6:06 PM and cited the state right-to-know laws associated with emergency electronic meetings.

2. Public Comment

There were two public comments with the first being in relation to the comment made at the last Board meeting about the quality of remote learning in the Lyme School District. Superintendent Valence commented that there has also been plenty of positive feedback about the remote learning used by the school district in the spring. The other public comment by one of the staff expressed support for the 4-10 whole class scenario.

3. Minutes Approval

A motion was made and seconded (Greenway, Berk) to approve the Lyme School Board meeting minutes for July 15, 2020 as submitted.

Discussion: In the name of saving time it was suggested that changes to the minutes be suggested at a future board meeting and the motion was tabled.

4. Chair Report

The town of Lyme select board is considering a mask ordinance and there was a Board consensus to submit a formal statement on the matter at the next select board meeting scheduled for 9:00 AM on July 30. A report was given that there were currently 8 cases of CV19 in Grafton County.

5. Business Requiring Discussion and/or Action

5A. Families First Corona Virus Act

Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell outlined the details associated with the Families First Act which involves family leave for employees. The Board will address a proposed policy related to the Act at a future board meeting.

5B. School Reopening Discussion

Hybrid Scenario Preference

The Board discussed the process of culling the choices for reopening scenarios. It was decided to select a favored hybrid scenario program and then a favored overall scenario. There was a discussion regarding full classes versus split classes and the ramifications on physical distancing among students and the class' teacher and adult assistants. A significant concern is supporting the student social and emotional development. Teachers commented about the compromised form of education when

applying the mitigation protocols in the school and classes. There was a consensus that the whole class scenario would be better for student learning and development.

A motion to approve the 4-10 whole class scenario as the leading hybrid model for the Lyme School in the 2020-21 school year was made and seconded (Barta, Hayden). The motion was passed 5-2 with Phil Barta, Yolanda Bujarski, Matthew Hayden, Jonathan Voegelé, and Barbara Wilson voting in favor, and Vince Berk and Hayes Greenway were opposed.

Scenario Priority

The Board reviewed the situational distancing differences in classes between three feet and six feet. The state recommendations put forward an opinion on this matter and so have other school districts. Administrators reviewed the factors related to space and furniture for the two distance options. Additionally the class configuration such as rows of desks and the teacher in the front of the class are factors with distancing. The concerns on the selection of the distancing protocol in the classes include safety, budgetary, and educational. There were also comments about unknown latent infection from the virus for young people and the overall issue of concerns by working parents to go to work versus desires for remaining in quarantine. An issue also involves the reality of how children act in a school setting. There was a suggestion that a virtual orientation for remote learning might suffice to prepare the school community for that possibility.

A motion to adopt as its leading reopening scenario in the fall of 2020, the full open scenario that employs mitigation efforts such as distancing and masking at the Lyme School and seconded (Berk, Greenway). The motion was passed 4-3 with Vince Berk, Hayes Greenway, Jonathan Voegelé, and Barbara Wilson voting in favor and Phil Barta, Yolanda Bujarski, and Matthew Hayden opposed.

5C. Parent Survey

The Board discussed how to pose the question of school reopening in the upcoming parent survey. There have been some negative perspectives about remote learning in the community and there also has been support for the effort that was coordinated last March. Superintendent Valence will draft the survey questions and circulate the document among the Board.

A motion to solidify the Board position on the social distancing minimum of three feet and more if possible, and face coverings to be worn at all times in the building except during eating or drinking at the Lyme School, and seconded (Hayden, Greenway).

Discussion: The Board discussed recommendations by the state on masks and distancing. Concern was expressed about the need for the youngest students (K-4) to wear masks. It was stated that a multi-layered approach to mitigation is the best option to support safety.

The motion was passed with Vince Berk, Hayes Greenway, Jonathan Voegelé, and Barbara Wilson, Phil Barta, Yolanda Bujarski, and Matthew Hayden voting in favor.

5D. Other

Survey results from the faculty survey have been circulated to the Board and it will also be sent to the faculty. The Board also has discussed that setting threshold metrics for school shutdown was appropriate and criteria to address this issue will be considered.

Faculty member Steven Dayno made a statement regarding the opportunity to make bold decisions and that the learning framework amidst the CV19 situation is a non-normal situation.

Superintendent Valence reviewed information he had gathered regarding outdoor tents. There are issues related to weather, electricity, and restrooms with the tents and the options that were considered were somewhat cost prohibitive. Board members asked whether a lesser option would be less costly, but there is a reluctance to commit substantial funding toward the outdoor tents compared to other school mitigation efforts.

It was stated that the administration and the Board have spent considerable time on the school reopening matters. It was suggested that after embarking in the selected scenario, the school district may pivot to another scenario for a number of different reasons.

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway). 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 9:04 PM.