

WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD
AUGUST 7, 2020
WINCHESTER SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

Board Members Present: L. Picard, T. Perkins, J. Rokes, T. Kilanski
Administration Present: K. Dassau, M. Henry, V. Carey, I. Spencer

The meeting was called to order by L. Picard at 6:36pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Trevor Croteau and Ailliea Carle came to the Board on behalf of the Sports Boosters and spoke on the recent efforts to get Sports going, in some capacity. They had questions for the Board regarding uniforms, use of locker rooms/restrooms and the shed outback. They want to keep things as normal as possible and collaborate with the Board.

Signs would be put up around the school letting students know what is going on. They hope to have a couple of Fall sports. They will reach out to several schools to see if they want to participate and then hold a parent information night. The Boosters Club currently has some big fundraisers going on.

T. Croteau advised the big question for the Board is regarding the uniforms and sports equipment. They expect the cost to be around \$20,000.

The Board will discuss adding the Sports Boosters to the next agenda.

L. Picard advised, with agreement of the Board, additional Citizens Comments would be held at the end of the meeting.

MINUTES:

After discussion, L. Picard MOVED to approve the previously sealed non-public minutes of May 7, 2020, May 21, 2020, June 4, 2020 and June 18, 2020; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the non-public minutes of 7/16/20 as printed and the public minutes of 7/16/20 as amended, removing editing notes and under T. Kilanski said that the district needs to contact the Fire Chief for... add Life Safety upgrades; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – V. Carey:

Back to School Plan:

V. Carey wanted to make it very clear to everyone that this is not a complete plan; need some discussion and some authorization from the Board tonight. It is a moving target. Additional concerns have altered the hybrid model. Much depends on how many students plan to come back to the school. This is definitely a draft, but worth going through.

V. Carey distributed information and reviewed with the Board.

V. Carey explained in-person instruction is always what is preferred, what is best, but need to be concerned about health and safety at every turn. No plan will work for everyone. They need to leave opportunities for families to have a choice. Some students require individual differences. Limiting factors are transportation, capacity, physical space, air quality, etc. Bandwidth is also an issue.

V. Carey reviewed the three plan choices – In-person, hybrid and remote learning.

There are a lot of limitations for what students can do while here; classes need to stay to themselves for the entire day. Must get Special Ed Services to all that require them. If parents choose not to send their students, they would need to meet remotely.

Ian Spencer spoke on the fresh air exchange. Some issues were corrected, but not to today's standards. With COVID, the HVAC engineer advised the occupancy limit is 12 students. We would only have 27% of the air flow required.

Until we meet the standards, the engineer's recommendation is not to use those classrooms. Feels they should house students elsewhere. That is also the recommendation of the EPA and NEA New Hampshire, among others.

V. Carey advised we are fortunate we have such a large building and alternate spaces; 17 rooms on this side of the building are available. Many could be used for classroom use.

Hybrid Plan – Two days in and two days out with room capacity. The problem is we would need to split many grades into four instructional groups so they could only go in one day a week. That is not a preferred mode. Also, the bus capacity is an issue. Once we know the number of students selecting remote learning, we could increase the number of students coming into the building. Districts would need to be ready, if numbers change, to go back to a remote model.

V. Carey reiterated that this is a draft proposal. No decisions have been made until the Board makes their decision on a plan.

V. Carey reviewed what requirements need to be carried out by the WSD. She expects by the week of 8/27 they can set schedules as to when students will be here and the number of students working remotely. The proposal is teachers would meet with families in order to assist them. Most kids are not known to their teachers. Staff will begin meeting the week of 8/31 and then there will be Technology issues to deal with and the plan is to start instruction on 9/14. This matches MRHS and the Elementary School in Jaffrey and is very close to Keene's plan.

Administration is also asking for action on the start date, tonight.

V. Carey explained there is an electronic model option for logging symptoms, temperatures, etc. This is the preferred method for her. The State of NH did not require the school to take temperatures. It is the responsibility of the family to do it and submit the results to the school.

Face coverings – also need School Board authorization on this tonight.

V. Carey reviewed the survey results from families regarding face masks.

The recommendation is that students and staff wear face coverings on the bus and in the building unless medically unable to do so. Mask breaks will happen regularly outside of the building. Outside learning will be encouraged. With social distancing could remove masks.

Ian Spencer is receiving recommendations on hygiene and safety from the EPA, CDC, etc. and doing research.

V. Carey advised they will be depending on families not to put kids on the bus with symptoms. There will be a health/safety expectation; students need to wear masks while on the bus. If not followed, students will be removed from the bus.

L. Picard confirmed with V. Carey that Administration is looking for action tonight on the face covering policy and what we will be offering for a hybrid program.

V. Carey explained to start with, the school will do temperatures before students enter the building in addition to parents doing them.

J. Rokes asked if all students will be broken down into four groups or will it be just groups with the highest student count?

V. Carey – Only the highest student count. They might be able to split the smaller counts into two groups that come in to the building two days a week.

T. Perkins asked if they expect to be hiring more teachers.

V. Carey advised she does not anticipate hiring more teachers, but explained they will need to look at what staffing looks like; in person vs. remote learning. There could be some staff not available for in-person learning.

T. Perkins asked if they expect the length of the day to change.

V. Carey does not see that as a possibility; looking at a shorter day. Won't be switching classrooms, going to the cafeteria, etc. We can't expect to go back to business as usual. There will be less on academic instruction absolutely; not the solution at this point.

L. Picard asked about the delay in the start date.

V. Carey advised they have inflated hours at our school every year. There would also be a reduction/elimination of snow days for 2020/2021.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to approve a student start date of Monday, September 14th; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.**

After considerable discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to adopt the recommendations from Administration. As part of the return to school plan students and staff will be required to wear masks; SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.** T. Kilanski advised for the sake of the vote he voted in favor of the mask policy, but doesn't necessarily agree with it.

Hybrid offering – V. Carey explained would start with a one-day minimum in-school instruction per week and adding to that wherever, whenever and as quickly as possible. Always seeking to get to as much in person instruction as possible, when it is safe.

After much discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to adopt the recommendations from Administration with regard to the hybrid plan as part of the return to school plan; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.**

L. Picard thanked Administration, the Reopening Committee and the Board. A lot of effort and thought has gone into this.

V. Carey – Will deploy the survey to parents tomorrow morning, with options. Hoping Tuesday to have surveys back; have volunteers who will call the parents they haven't heard from. Hope to have it done by Friday. At the August 20th Board meeting, will work on a final plan.

V. Carey discussed CARES ACT funding. They know there will be some compensatory services; will need to deal with it. Hoping to be able to use CARES ACT funds to reinstate a position. The Integration Specialist is an hourly position. Will provide continuity for students; very important. Fully funded pending approval of the activity requested and funded through the CARES Act. She fully expects it will be approved, but you never know. Advised they wouldn't enter into an agreement with the staff member until approved.

T. Kilanski asked about funding for next year.

V. Carey advised without CARES funding, wouldn't be funded unless put into the budget.

K. Dassau reiterated the funding for the position would be for this year.

T. Perkins MOVED to use CARES Fund emergency money to hire the Integration Specialist at an hourly rate for the 2020/2021 school year; SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Rokes asked if this is a top priority. Asked about the cost.

V. Carey explained yes, would say it is a priority and guidelines indicate additional staff as a top priority for use of CARES funding.

Ian Spencer feels if we fall behind, would cost so much more.

L. Picard advised the following Manifests were approved per e-mail protocol:

The Accounts Payable Manifest of 7/28/20 in the amount of \$177,092.91, the Accounts Payable Manifest of 7/31/20 in the amount of \$184,309.50 and the Payroll Manifest of 7/24/20 in the amount of \$122,266.91

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest of 8/7/20 in the amount of \$85,957.37; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest of 8/7/20 in the amount of \$108,723.86; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest of 8/7/20 in the amount of \$74,943.90; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the Payroll Manifest of 8/7/20 in the amount of \$122,532.75; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

M. Henry advised there are also FEMA monies; wouldn't have to use just from CARES Act monies. That will cover equipment, cleaning, supplies, etc. She and I. Spencer have a meeting on Monday.

M. Henry advised they receive face coverings, shields gowns, gloves from the State every two weeks.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – K. Dassau:

*K. Dassau advised there was no need for a non-public session tonight, but there will be a brief non-meeting.

FACILITIES UPDATE – I. Spencer:

*Approval of opening day plan; no further Board action is required tonight.

*Meeting with FEMA regarding the Grant. The biggest project is the HVAC at a cost of approximately \$500,000, but that cost could change. Hopefully things will be funded in the 75-80% range. Explained need to chase any state and federal monies we can to correct these problems so taxpayers don't have to help with the cost.

V. Carey explained we are in a really good position; have an engineered plan and a quote. Some districts are much further behind in getting this fixed. It will be in the first round of FEMA money.

T. Kilanski asked how many classrooms there will be.

V. Carey advised 10 of the 26 rooms on the ELM side were classrooms and the room that utilizes art.

M. Henry – The HVAC system is one item covered under these monies. It is huge; we are ahead of the game.

L. Picard – Thank you to I. Spencer, Administration and the Facilities Committee for their hard work.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT – L. Picard:

L. Picard advised the Board has received seven Letters of Interest for the open Board position. The Board agreed the end date for letters to be submitted is 8/10/20. After discussion, the Board agreed to start the meeting on 8/20/20 at 5:00pm. to do interviews for the open Board position. L. Picard advised individual Board members could come up with some questions if they wanted to. She will follow up with interested candidates.

J. Rokes asked about time clocks.

M. Henry explained they are not using them; have cut back on staff so it is not viable. Returning time clock; will get money back.

J. Rokes asked about the budget breakdown.

M. Henry advised she should have it for the Board by the September meeting. It will be for the current budget.

L. Picard has started a draft of the budget calendar beginning with September 17th. She would like to invite the Budget Committee to the meeting.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Dennis Murphy, Town Moderator advised the Board that the Selectman voted 5-0 to make wearing masks mandatory at Town voting. He would like it to be the same at the School. Feels it needs to be the same at the Town and School properties.

L. Picard advised under our current plan, it requires all visitors to wear a mask and that includes at elections.

Amanda doesn't feel her daughter's 504 was included in remote learning.

L. Picard advised that these comments are not for public session.

V. Carey asked that she and Amanda talk privately at another time.

V. Carey will take her input to add the 504.

Amanda advised remote learning didn't help her daughter at all.

Emily Henderson advised she had four questions/comments:

*If they move the classrooms, what about the bathrooms, hand washing stations, etc?

*Teachers are sharing spaces. Will they be set up with requirements?

*Social/emotional curriculum needs; how to implement them?

*Do we have a School Nurse? Are we able to open, if not?

V. Carey advised there are bathrooms and sinks on the Elementary side; not all areas will be shut down, but bathrooms and sinks still accessible. There is potential for additional areas. The number of children in the building each day will be greatly reduced; many bathrooms and wash areas available.

It is ideal that each teacher have space in their classroom as sharing is not recommended. Student furniture would not be moved in and out. Areas would be shared by same grade levels.

The intent is to up-kick the curriculum. A canvas platform is not in the plan; it depends how many kids are here at a time.

No nurse now; second interview on Monday.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Theresa Sepe advised her son is in Seventh Grade; did remote learning in Sixth grade. Kudos to teachers. If she contacted them, they got right back to her. V. Carey needs kudos; picked her son up and V. Carey's car was still here at 5:30 to 6:30pm. She made her feel much more relaxed after talking to her. Parents need to take time to talk to teachers.

L. Picard thanked T. Sepe's son for being here. She is very proud of the Board. She agrees with T. Sepe.

Whitney Linnenbringer, former nurse at the Winchester School, advised a tool kit will be going out next week and the Nurse's Association will be providing guidelines and a flow sheet. Feels we will need to make some changes regarding guidelines coming out next week. The recommendation is to follow the guidelines of the DHHS; reviewed some with the Board. Explained contact tracing is done by DHHS. It is not the school nurse contacting the family.

Whitney Linnenbringer is concerned about the privacy of the child's information if being screened at school. If a child has an elevated temp and staff is pulling them out of line, then what happens?

Maddy asked when the last day of school is.

L. Picard advised they don't have that information yet.

The Board discussed Booster Club Sports.

Ian Spencer explained there are a lot of issues pertaining to the gym and the field.

Ian Spencer – His son plays football; there are a lot of conditions with playing sports such as high school football. There are minimal skill drills, no exertion to make them breathe heavy, no equipment. There is also the visitor aspect. The other concern is the ability to keep up the fields with a reduced maintenance staff. It is a low priority with other issues going on.

After discussion, the Board agreed to have the Boosters Club on the agenda for 8/20/20. Hopefully they will have more information for the Board then.

Crystal Fletcher asked if the staff is coming back in August.

V. Carey advised it is according to the regular schedule. The delay in the start of school allows teachers more training time.

L. Picard MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:30pm; SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary