

## NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE – FINAL MINUTES

THURSDAY, October 1, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

REMOTE MEETING – GOOGLE HANGOUT MEET

(Public can join by calling: 1 650-980-7159 PIN: 837 944 223#)

### THIS MEETING WILL BE RECORDED

Attending: April Thompson, Johanna Bartlett, Carl Seppala, Jack Radner, Melissa Burke, Barbara Doyle, Carla Halpern, Elizabeth Devlin, Anna Wetherby (minutes) members; Jennifer Culkeen, superintendent; Kelley Sullivan, principal; Bruce Turner, treasurer

Teachers: Lisa Aubin, Tina Newman, Jill, Gosia Spooner, Christine Morin, Jennylou Powers, Patty Savage, Ciji Cody, Tammy Richards

Public: (as identified in the call): Heather Wiley, Jen Levangie, Carla Jilton, Cailin Reed, Robin Sitello, William Spooner

#### A. Call Meeting to Order -7:08

#### B. Public Hearings –

- Remote learning is not going well for one parent – the teachers are doing their best but not going well, truly heart-breaking. Student not responding and a wall has been built between the students and teachers.
- Children's voices need to be heard. Children are not given a choice currently to be a part of remote learning
- Can see child struggling, sees the teachers are trying, does not see this as effective solution
- Concern for adding the extra two hours next week, having a fairly ok experience for one family
- Parameter for returning to school will be discussed in tonight's meeting
- A lot of teamwork and patience with parents for the youngest learners. Much of preschool is about socialization and play. It is taking time to learn how to do this through a screen. Take a leap of faith, breathe, know that every day is getting better, and this is not a long term situation
- Another family is having disconnection, interruptions, missing the feeling of the classroom and flow of the daily routine. The increased screen time is a lot for the younger students
- From another teacher's perspective, it has been challenging – meeting the needs of the students who may not have good Internet, devices, family support, etc. Some of the panic is arising for the full days starting next week. Hoping to incorporate small breakout rooms for socializing for at the end of the day

#### C. Warrants – Record in minutes with numbers

- Vouchers: #2805 \$3467.62; #2806 \$391.31; #4007 \$360.00; #4008 \$34,741.19; #4009 \$12,914.51; #4010 \$300.00; #4011 \$55,335.79; #4012 \$125,926.52
- Warrants: #405 \$70,943.01; #406 \$69,555.39; #407 \$72,254.29; #805 \$26,354.11; #806 \$26,354.11; #807 \$26354.11; #8050 \$81,050.00; #8060 \$79,227.50; #8070 \$82,014.27; #8063 \$33,690.00; #8064 \$45,250.56

#### D. Superintendent's Report

- Chromebooks should be arriving in the next week or two – a special thanks to Jackie, AnnMarie, and David at DESE for helping and supporting Swift River
- Leadership team – attending webinar on educator evaluations
- Commissioner will be keeping the MCAS – if you feel this is not the most important part of this year, please write to legislative reps (Jo Comerford, Susannah Whipps, Charlie Baker)
- Nurses are working with leadership team around metrics for returning to in-person learning- hoping to have the metrics within the next couple of weeks
  - FRCOG working with nurses on metrics from Mass Department of Health, data indicators for 14 day or shorter closure, daily case numbers, which towns are in green, red, or grey zones
- Uptick in Amherst COVID-19 numbers in the past week, their schools are needing to stay remote

#### E. Director of Finance and Operations Report

- Building project nearing completion – final doors and window
- Interior doors 105k – the towns would need to fund directly
- New copiers were delivered on Tuesday
- Looking to find alternative to MERV-13 for new filtering systems, [looking at I-WAVE] using COVID funds
- FY20 End of Year Report complete and ready to be signed by chair

#### F. Principal's Report

- All exterior doors and windows replaced- thank you to the town tax payers, looks wonderful and functions very well
- All interior door are most likely 37 years old, and 33 are no longer fire safe due to wear, tear, and repairs – some need metal frames replaced as well
- Asked for a price quote to replace interior doors from Kurtz
- Teachers and students are doing remarkable job with remote learning
- Held daily meetings to review what worked and what didn't
- There are no seamlessly perfect days, but the teachers have been amazing
- Community sing is still favourite part of week. Mr. Cortina has a green screen for his room
- Starting synchronous art and music classes – hoping this will break up the day and help keep students more engaged
- Able to have lunch with two students

- Spent time in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades digital classes– sees students being curious about each other, need to learn to take breaks from screens
- Providing lunch on Tuesday and Thursday for families with the buses
- Will start to bring in students with specific IEPs for in-person instruction next week
- Gym is open for families to use internet
- Has started parent check-in – good to connect with parents and learn what is working and what isn't. Brings feedback to teachers

#### G. Committee Reports

##### ☐ Report from Mahar Representatives

- No meeting since last Swift River meeting
- Next meeting rescheduled to the October 15<sup>th</sup>

##### ☐ Collaborative for Education Services

- Meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Two presentation
    - Title 3
    - Professional Learning Collaborative
  - Review of strategic plan, preparing for Bill's retirement
- Barbara would like to stay as the rep for CES
- Melissa is willing to be the alternative
  - Will be added to next month's agenda to vote Barbara rep with Melissa as alternative

##### ☐ Budget and Personnel

- Next Meeting – October 19, 2020

##### ☐ Joint Supervisory

- Finished Jen's evaluation –
- Limited number of submissions from the school committee for the review
- Next Meeting – November 16, 2020 6:30 p.m.

#### H. October Items

##### ☐ Home School Applications –

- Would like to vote on all applications at once
- Is the number of applications a reflection of the remote learning?
  - Yes- combination of wanting to keep students out of the school 'bubble' or not a part of remote learning
- Jen has asked to not have Chapter 70 funding reflect the COVID -19 home schooling numbers
- Students can return to school from home schooling
- Question regarding the criteria for home schooling

- If there is seems to be a portion of the proposed curriculum, what is the process? – The central office does contact the families to request more information.
- Carla is putting to the side her wish for more in-depth information this year due to parents doing their best under the trying circumstances
- Jen has followed up with families that were sparse in their information
- Would like to not see ISBN numbers as the curriculum
- The committee has very little room to object to home schooling applications
- Anna moves that we accept all home schooling applications submitted by the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in one vote (students 7-16), Jack 2nds – passes with 2 abstentions
  - Kelley mentions that in the past she has reached out to families to encourage participation in extra curricula activities as well as music and art classes, providing recourses to supplement materials
  - Jen has written to families as well
  - Many families will be re-joining Swift River once school is back in session

#### □ 2020 Reopening – Discussion

- State metrics:
  - Quality of air in the building – currently only MERV-8 filters, state requires MERV-13, the I-WAVE would work in place of MERV-13 (waiting on price from local company)
  - Availability of testing – needs to be fast and free
- Small groups are going into the building currently – this is not a big issues, not whole or ½ classes
- Things are currently OK here – desire to get students back as soon as possible
- Are other school districts doing CO-VID 19 testing?
- The state is not providing the schools with testing
- Each school is negotiating with school committees, it is not at the state level to determine reopening
- Meeting on November 5 will be the time to decide to open on November 16<sup>th</sup>
  - School committee members will know as many factors of reopening are in place to start hybrid learning on November 16<sup>th</sup>
- The building will be ready by November 16
- There may be staff who are not able to return to in-person instruction- this will be handled by the HR department

#### □ MOA with Swift River Education Association – Discussion and Possible Vote

- Teachers have a list of concerns
- MOA discussed in executive session
- Questions on small items, will be reviewed with teacher's union and lawyer,
- School committee approved the proposal for hazard pay

#### □ FY21 Academic Calendar – Amended – Discussion and Vote

- No October professional development
- New last day of school June 16<sup>th</sup>
- Missing from calendar 5 snow days
- Carla moves to approve the amended calendar, Carl 2nds - passes unanimously

☐ Policy Update and Review:

- No policies

I. Future Business

- ☐ Next Meeting Date – November 5, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.
- ☐ New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – November 5, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.

J. Approval of Minutes:

- ☐ September 3, 2020
  - Carla moves to approves, Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup> passes with one abstention

K. Executive Session

- Carla moves to move to executive session discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (MOA) with the intention to return to main session at conclusion, Melissa 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kelley, Bruce, and Jen invited to the executive session
- Role taken

Carla moves to adjourn Melissa 2<sup>nd</sup>, meeting adjourned 9:36