

NEW SALEM/WENDELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, January 6, 2022, 7:00 P.M.

Via Google Meets

Attending: [Carla Halpern](#), Melinda Hazen, [Elizabeth Devlin](#), [Barbara Doyle](#), Miriam Warner, Johanna Bartlett, Beth Erviti, Anna Wetherby (minutes), [Kelley Sullivan](#), principal; Jen Culkeen, superintendent; Caitlin Sheridan, Director of Finance and Operations

Teachers: Tammy Richards, Robyn Vitello, Rachel Vitello, Lisa Aubin, Gosia Spooner, Anne Martin

Public: Chelsia Torchia, Anna Seeger, Sara Jenney

Meeting to Order - 7:01 PM

Public Hearings - none

January Item

- COVID Protocol Excluding Vaccine Mandates - Discussion
 - DESE has a change in protocol
 - Students are being vaccinated - once vaccinated, students are exempt from all testing protocols - can take a rapid test if showing any kind of symptoms
 - Quarantine for positive cases is 5 days, then return fully masked for additional 5 days
 - Still masking - KN95 for all staff, medical masks for students
 - Trying to maintain a 3-foot distance
 - There are 9 positive cases in the school
 - Encouraging sanitizing in large groups
 - 96 students are in pool test, 45 staff
 - Question about lunch
 - Students are in the classroom but spaced out with all windows and doors open
 - Cannot pool test student who has tested positive
 - Vaccinated individuals are no longer considered close contacts
 - Thanks to Anne Martin for her direction and guidance
 - Acknowledgment of the hard work the community is doing to keep everyone safe
 - Request that students bring in a copy of the vaccination card
 - Question about notification for families when there is a positive case?

- The new guidance is that the school is not required to share the information
 - Only people who would be considered close contacts will be notified, on a need to know basis- if it is in the classroom, the class will be notified
 - Comment on how a family feels safe and comfortable but unhappy with the no talking during lunch policy
 - Students have 30-minute recess before lunch unmasked

Warrants

- 40241-\$28,871.25; \$12,071.10; 4022- \$906.86; 4021-1\$21,095.40; 2810- \$2,655.30; 2811-\$256.99; 8100- \$89,586.31; 8110- \$90,057.67; 8111- \$33,725.38; 8112- \$48,624.63; 4101- \$81,416.44; 411- \$80,880.15; 810- \$25,742.37; 811- \$26,015.83; 412 - \$79,837.35; 812- \$26,164.27; 8210- \$89,290.15; 8132- \$42,744.71; 8131- \$33,578.22; 813- \$26,054.87; 414- \$87,027.68

Superintendent's Report

- Welcomes Caitlin Sheridan, the new director of finance and operations
- Getting budgets together for the five towns
- Received a shipment of KN95 masks and rapid tests
- An impending storm is coming - school is canceled for January 7th, 2022

Director of Finance and Operations Report

- Previously a math teacher from Franklin County Tech school
- Certified school finance officer
- Budget discussed later in the meeting

Principal's Report

- Thanks to the staff for dealing with the emails over break
- All staff tested Monday morning
- 131 students enrolled
- Have been able to reopen the afterschool program
- New substitutes working great in the school

Committee Reports

- Report from Mahar Representatives
 - Reviewed new COVID protocol with the teacher's union
 - Requiring staff to participate in regular testing if not willing to be vaccinated
 - Need to reassess and redo the dress codes as they seem outmoded and sexist
 - Redo locker room design
 - Regarding a staff member who had worked in Duxbury with concerns of antisemitism and racism in their past. The allegations were addressed but Mahar will need to look into taking action against racism and injustice
 - Underlying attitudes need to be considered in hiring practice

- Next meeting Feb 10, 2022
- Collaborative for Education Services
 - Introduced to the new director, Todd Gazda
 - Presentation regarding schooling after DYS
 - Working on contracts and keeping people in their roles at CES
- Budget and Personnel
 - No report
- Joint Supervisory – Next Meeting – January 10, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.
 - How we assess the member towns in U28
 - Increasing substitute salary

January Items

- School Committee Member Resignation – Policy BBBC – Discussion and possible vote
 - Brian Bauch has written a letter of resignation to the parents of New Salem but has not resigned from the position as he has not notified the town clerk. He is still collecting the salary and not attending meetings
 - Request to check in with legal counsel
 - Action to be taken by the next school committee meeting
 - Is there a policy regarding missing two consecutive meetings?
 - Jen will check the bylaws, Anna will check town clerk and selectboard roles for resignations
- Home School Applications – Discussion and Vote
 - Follow up for requesting more information
- First Draft of FY23 NSW Budget
 - Treasurer salary for U28 increased
 - Keeping the Director of Finance separate from the Swift River treasurer
 - Increase from 4 hours to 8 hours a month for the treasurer
 - Allocation of Swift River for Finance and Operation is down 2%
 - 4% increase for principal based on the survey of surrounding schools
 - U28 principals work academic calendar + extra days in the summer
 - Readdressing the summer hours
 - Significant workload happens during the summer months
 - Increase the principal salary to reflect a 12-month work calendar
 - Library media specialist is a new position
 - Increased fuel and school power to meet increasing costs and needs
 - Decrease in custodial salary due to retirement
 - Increase in fixed cost
 - Questions regarding the increase in health care, phone cost, decrease in Title 1 funding

Principal – Change to Year-Round Employee – Discussion and Vote

- Johanna moves the principal's position to a year-round position, Elizabeth 2nds;
 - Question regarding the timeline of contract or what the specifics of the contract are
 - Superintendent is the manager of the principal contracts
 - Principals will get the same holidays as the superintendent
 - Principals will get 20 days of vacation time
 - A concern of tax cap for Wendell
 - The overall budget is very carefully crafted and great regard is given to the balance of the needs of the school and the funding of the towns
 - Per pupil expenditure is increasing, almost escalating
 - The 4% increase for the principal is not a huge increase (FY2021 salary \$98,000 FY2022 proposed salary \$101,920). The increase will be shared by the town towns
 - Currently, no E&D and school choice money is budgeted
 - Need to look at personnel for next year- this year has required additional staffing
 - Year-round salary for the principal and the FY22 budget are deeply connected
- Motion passes with one abstention

Policy Update and Review:

- First Reading on:
 - GBEC –Drug Free Workplace
 - GBGF – Family and Medical Leave Act
 - HA – Goals for Negotiations
 - HB – Negotiation Legal Status
- Second Reading, First Vote on:
 - DJ - Purchasing
 - EB – Safety Program
 - EBCD – Emergency Plans
 - ECA – Buildings and Grounds Security
 - EFC – Free & Reduced-Price Food Services
 - FA – Facilities Development Goals
- Anna moves to vote on all policies in one vote, Beth 2nds
 - Passes unanimously
- Johanna moves to pass the policies first vote, Beth 2nds
 - Passes unanimously
- First Vote on Deletion of Policy:
 - GBA-1 – Harassment Policy
 - GBAA – Policy on Sexual Harassment
 - H – Negotiations
- Anna moves to vote policies in one vote, Beth 2nds
 - Passes unanimously
- Beth moves to delete the above policies, Barbara 2nds
 - Passes unanimously

Future Business

- Subcommittees and appointments
 - Adding positions to each committee for Union bargaining rep, a point person for MASAC to read mailings and knowledge of trainings and issues, regionalization subcommittee
- Schedule for bargaining discussions with the teachers union
- Critical race theory
- Next Meeting Date – February 3, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
- New Salem/Wendell Policy Committee – February 3, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

- November 4, 2021
 - Johanna moves to approve the minutes, Beth 2nds
- Passes unanimously

Adjournment

- Johanna moves to adjourn, Beth 2nds - passed unanimously
- Meeting adjourned 8:34