

**GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 31, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.
REMOTE MEETING**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Shepardson Watson-Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman-Vice Chairperson, Jane Giuliani, Gretchen Newsome, Liz Porter, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rosemary Robertson

ALSO PRESENT: Mike Graner, Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight, Dennis Colclough, Denise Doolittle, Laurie LePine, Addie Clark, Xavion Quito

I. CALL TO ORDER – Vice Chairperson Andrea Ackerman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Update re: Groton Public Schools Coronavirus Response

- Online Instructional Program - Susan Austin explained the online Instructional Program that is being utilized. Denise Doolittle noted that her department did a lot with the special education piece. Laurie LePine noted that the motto is to go slow and grow. The first was supplemental learning; a lot of kids are participating. Susan Austin stated that a Robo call will be going out from Dr. Graner that will include a parent letter regarding a video conferencing. Phase 2 will include PD for teachers, student teachers, and paraprofessional. PD through the Teachers College will occur at the end of the month. Denise Doolittle noted that they are working on Distance Learning Guidelines for staff, parents and students.

Mrs. Newsome stated that she had a question from a teacher who spent a large amount of time trying to reach a parent to no avail. She asked if there is any way to prevent a teacher from spending an inordinate amount of time trying to make contact with parents. Mr. Colclough explained the process to be used.

Mrs. LePine addressed what we will do when someone becomes ill.

Sam Kilpatrick explained that the Food Service Department is distributing meals at the 3 sites Monday through Friday; 3 meals are packed and distributed on Fridays to cover Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The Police had to be called on Friday at MM due to the line extending to Toll Gate Road. Distribution is averaging 2,200 meals a day.

Sam Kilpatrick reported that cleaning and disinfection of the buildings are in excellent shape.

Addie Clark asked if video chats between teachers and students are allowed. Dr. Graner stated that he is in the process of setting that up.

Addie Clark asked if there will be final exams. Dr. Graner noted he is trying to get statewide grading on a pass or fail basis.

- Statewide Testing - Dr. Graner noted that the State has indicated that SBAC, SAT, and NGSS testing has been cancelled.
- Computer Distribution & Hot Spots Update – Dennis Colclough noted that 2,400 Chromebooks has been distributed over the last few days; he has ordered 120 hot spots for families who do not have the Internet.

III. Update re: Groton Middle School Construction

Dr. Graner indicated that the Middle School construction is continuing as planned and is on time for a September 1st opening.

Sam Kilpatrick noted that he made a site visit yesterday and had to answer questions to be allowed on site. He noted that workers' absences has been due to child care and that the work is moving forward and is on schedule.

Dr. Graner and Sam Kilpatrick will be meeting with a moving consult to coordinate the move of portables from CMS and WSM schools.

IV. FY21 Budget Review

- Budget Revision Recommendation – Ken Knight reviewed the possible budget adjustments which would allow the FY21 budget to be reduced to 0.
- CIP Review – Kim Watson, Sam Kilpatrick, and Mike Graner attended the Saturday Town Council meeting where the 4 CIP projects proposed by the Town Manager were approved:
 - Moving the portable classrooms; the district hoped the CMS and WSMS portables would stay on site, however, that is not possible. The Town Council approved the building of the foundation for the portables; the cost for moving the portables will be included in the construction cost for the 2 new elementary schools.
 - NEA - \$104,000 for the engineer was approved.
 - Dishwashers – The purchase of dishwashers was approved for FHS, CB, CK, and NEA.
 - Video Surveillance was approved for FHS and 3 elementary schools.

Dr. Graner noted that the RTM Education Committee will meet with the Board on April 4, 2020; the RTM will also meet on April 11, 2020 and on April 18, 2020 at which time they will hold a vote on the district's budget.

V. Proposed Demographic Study by Malone and MacBroom

Dr. Graner noted that with CC, SB, and MM closing there is a need to establish neighborhood catchment areas. He asked Mr. Zuba for a proposal and Mr. Zuba stated he will be able to redraw catchment areas to achieve racial balance. This will be at an approximate cost of \$15,000 for this study.

Jay Weitlauf noted that the Finance Committee was in agreement to have Mr. Zuba provide this data because he has all the historical data for the study.

Dr. Graner noted that there will be a COW meeting on Monday, April 6, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Ackerman, Volkman: To adjourn at 7:48 p.m.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY