

WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL BOARD

JULY 14, 2020

Google Meetings

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS/PLEDGE

The meeting was called to order at 5:34PM by Board Chair, Sean Whalen. Those present were: Sean Whalen, Kristen Brusco, Mark Yuengling, Robin Tindall, Annemarie Redmond, David Baker, JeanMarie Oakman, Katie Ahern, Angie Ledeau, Julian Villa, Kelly O'Brien, Jacqui Antonivich, Shawn Antonivich, Ryan Antonivich, Emily Antonivich (possibly former last name), Ben French, Amanda French, Jessica Wilmot, Jessica Brown, Jared Gunnell, Candy Fuller, Ed Connors, Steven Airoldi, SAPA and Becky Chrisinger. The flag was pledged. Sean Whalen said it has been two years since we lost Laura McNaughton and how she was such an important part of our community and Board. Sean mentioned that Laura's social media policy she worked so hard on may be used in the near future.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

04/12/20 - Moved to next meeting.

06/09/20

Sean Whalen asked for a motion concerning the minutes of 6/09/20. Robin Tindall made a motion to approve the minutes of 6/09/20 and Mark Yuengling second. All in favor. NFD. This motion was approved.

There was discussion around how the minutes are shared and the process. There have been issues with the Board being able to open the minutes sometimes. It was determined what the issue has been. It was decided to keep having Becky Chrisinger share minutes with Jenn or Diane Tessier and they will share with the Board.

III. CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - NONE

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - NONE

V. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Plans for COVID-19 for 2020 and Beyond

David Baker gave a report from the task force about the plans for reopening school in the fall. David went over the importance of social connections, in person learning, safety and well being, food security and physical and mental health and well being, and consistency in the day for the students as being important reasons to reopen. There will be a lot of outdoor activities. We will keep looking at the CDC guidelines for the buildings and busses. All students and staff will be required to wear masks. There will be an alternate calendar with a start date after Labor Day to provide more time to have everything in place for this plan. The day will be shortened and some learning will still take place at home.

Annemarie Redmond asked some questions about options for remote access for families who choose not to have students go to school, issues around wearing masks and ventilation. David Baker said they are hoping to have some remote access to the in school activities but since

some of these activities will be outside this may be hard to do at times. David said he doesn't believe we have enough personnel to offer both in school and remote learning options as separate entities. Wearing masks will be strictly enforced during the school day. The ventilation systems all have to meet certain standards in each building and there will also be a negative pressure room for people to go to if they have any symptoms during the school day rather than the nurses office. The ventilation systems are very sophisticated in order to meet the requirements. Annemarie wondered how it will work as far as being exempted as a teacher due to health concerns. David explained that the COVID exemptions are no longer in place as of July 1 and will be processed the way other long term leaves for health concerns are processed.

Robin Tindall said she is very interested in the outdoor aspect of teaching since the risks are so much lower for spreading the virus outside. JeanMarie explained the detailed process of what they will be doing and the plans for both inside and outdoor learning. The students and staff will be in pods and will stay with those pods throughout the day and will not mix with other pods. The six foot safety measures will also be enforced.

There was more discussion around safety and input from the parents and Board on how people feel about their students having in person learning. There was discussion on how to keep all of the students involved and not lose families that have been involved in the school. There will be a finalized plan shortly and more will be shared with the community and parents.

B. Principal Search Stakeholder Forum

There was a discussion on whether to start this process in person or virtually with the various groups that will give input. It was decided to start the process virtually as most people felt more comfortable with this method.

C. Memorial Day Celebration Committee

Sean said he would like to table this motion at this time. See Items for Action A.

D. Report About Professional Days Reopening

Angie Ladeau said they talked about Portrait of a Graduate and how the portrait will be used this year. There will be some unit studies and themes for the year involving some qualities of a graduate that have been put in the portrait. Weathersfield will have a year long theme of empathy. They talked about interdisciplinary unit studies, play space and project based learning, had some training in collaborative problem solving and talked about how the school closure has been for them as educators.

E. Athletics 20/21

There was a discussion about whether to offer a contract to our present Athletic Director and Assistant Director as it is unknown whether we will be having sports this year. JeanMarie Oakman mentioned that we need to hear from VPA on whether there will be 7-12 sports this year in Vermont. David Baker mentioned that the other towns have Recreation Departments and they will all be having sports and our students are welcome. There was discussion around the safety of our students being a part of sports both at our school and in other towns. There

was discussion on other ways to offer opportunities to students for outdoor activities that are safer. It was decided to tell Jessica Kischko and Alica Crane that the school can't offer them contracts at this time due to not knowing whether there will be sports at this time.

F. VAST Program

Ryan Antonivich is hoping to attend the VAST Program this year. Ryan explained why he would like to attend this program. Ryan and his family believe this is the best fit for Ryan for his senior year. The program is free but the family is hoping that Ryan's room and board and other fees can be paid up to the amount it would cost for Ryan to keep attending Springfield High School. The Board told Ryan and his family it was great to see him and wished him the best in the coming year. Shawn Antonivich thanked the Weathersfield School for all they have done for Ryan. See Items for Action B.

G. Grade 3 Teacher Update

JeanMarie Oakman explained that they had a teacher named David O'Grady and he attended the virtual inservice days. After the inservice days, David O'Grady gave his resignation for a variety of reasons. A few Board members expressed concern that the resignation was given after the inservice days and the reasons for the resignation were discussed. JeanMarie said David O'Grady participated fully in the day and no one had an idea that he would resign. David Baker said that this does happen sometimes. See Items for Action C.

JeanMarie said they had already offered the job to another candidate first before David and that candidate was under contract with another school district and wasn't released. They now would like to offer the job to another candidate and her name is Jennifer Durham and she has 13 years of experience. There was some discussion about if this position needs to be filled at this time due to the learning situation due to COVID. JeanMarie said it does need to be filled as she doesn't have another space in the building for a large classroom to fit due to the COVID space restrictions. It was agreed that this position should be filled at this time. See Items for Action D

H. Hawks Mountain Grange Scholarship

Ben French is going to VPI in Blacksburg, Virginia. He has received the Hawks Mountain Grange Scholarship in the amount of \$500. JeanMaire read off the award and let Ben know that the school and community are proud of Ben. Ben was congratulated by all.

I. Hicks Nichols Committee Volunteers

It was decided to appoint the members to the Committee and let the members decide which term they would like. The Committee is as follows: Diana Stillson, Jessica Brown, Janine Firagus, Will Hunter, AmyBeth Main and Kristen Bruso. See Items for action E.

J. Part Time Secretarial Opening

JeanMarie Oakman and BJ Esty talked about how important this position is to fill and how much it is needed. This person does the accounting for the school lunch program as well as other duties. There was discussion that in the present circumstances with all the extra duties

related to COVID that it would be good to have this position be more multifaceted in order to use this person in places that are needed. The Board agreed that this position should be posted so it will be posted both in house and for outside applicants.

K. Tax Anticipation Note

Ed Connors talked about the reason a Tax Anticipation Note was needed at this time. The Board has signed the note. Ed needs the Board approval in order to apply for this note and it is a lengthy process. See Items for Action F.

L. Home School Support

There was discussion around how the school can support students who are homeschooled out of choice and those who may be staying home to learn because of COVID and desire more assistance from the school. Home schooled students can come in for some classes but to be qualified as homeschooled they have to have three of four academics taught at home. Katie Ahern talked some about special education students and various ways they can receive support at home. As a school we receive funds through a per pupil block grant and if home school students come in for a certain amount of support they qualify as .3

Sean Whalen talked about meeting people in the middle during these times so we don't lose their enrollment. There was more discussion around how to supply support to those who wish to have their learning at home and access learning through the school. There was discussion and information shared on how to access online learning, There was discussion around how many students may not be returning in the fall to in person school because of COVID and how to supply learning for these students as well. David Baker said they don't have enough staff to provide both in person learning and virtual learning. If enough students are staying home, then some teachers may be able to offer virtual learning and others the online learning. It was decided that the numbers of students in each category needs to be determined as well as having a plan to share with the parents. JeanMarie said there is a Plan A and Plan B. Plan A is for in school learning and Plan B is for virtual learning when this is needed but there isn't a plan in plan for both types of learning at the same time. The Board said they would like a part of the plan to consider incorporation of students whose parents feel they should keep them home for safety reasons. David Baker said they will strive to do this.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

David Baker said that everything in his report has been covered. Sean Whalen mentioned the firing of the Windsor principal and how upsetting this is for the Weathersfield community as well. David said he is hoping more can be shared about this subject during Executive Session at the next SU Board meeting.

VII. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT - None needed as already covered.

VIII. ITEMS FOR ACTION

A. Motion to Table Memorial Day Celebration Committee

Sean asked for a motion to table this Committee. Robin Tindall made a motion to table the Memorial Day Celebration Committee. Annemarie Redmond second this motion. NFD All in favor. This motion was approved.

B. VAST PROGRAM Ryan Antonivich

Sean asked for a motion concerning this request. Mark Yuengling made a motion to authorize the Superintendent to pay all costs of the VAST program for Ryan Antonivich to attend during the 20/21 school year that don't exceed the cost of the tuition at Springfield High School where Ryan has been attending. Kristen Brusco second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

C. Third Grade Teacher Resignation

Annemarie Redmond made a motion to accept with regrets the resignation of David O'Grady. Sean Whalen second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

D. Third Grade Teacher Hire

Sean Whalen asked for a motion concerning the hiring of Jennifer Durham. Robin Tindall made a motion to hire Jennifer Durham for the third grade teacher. Mary Yuengling second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

E. Hicks Nichols Committee

Sean Whalen asked for a motion concerning the Hicks Nichols Committee. Annemarie Redmond made a motion to recharge the Hicks Nichols Committee with the members listed above in Item I. Robin Tindall second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

F. Tax Anticipation Note

Sean Whalen made a motion for the Weathersfield Board to authorize a Tax Anticipation Note in the amount of 653,233.33 and authorize Ed Connors and Gail McCoy to access these funds. Robin Tindall second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved.

IX. SETTING THE NEXT AGENDA

Board Retreat/Open Meeting

- A. Principal Search
- B. Reopening

X. TENTATIVE EXECUTIVE SESSION VSA T.11 Section 313 - None needed

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Sean Whalen once again expressed appreciation for Laura McNaughton and for her service and mentioned how much we all miss her and how she is a part of us. Sean also thanked the present Board members for all their hard work.

Sean Whalen asked for a motion to adjourn. Robin Tindall made a motion to adjourn. Kristen Brusco second this motion. NFD. All in favor. This motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Chrisinger