

**RIVER VALLEY LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL SESSION BOARD MEETING
RIVER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
AUDITORIUM**

**September 2, 2021
5:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

In order to be successful with our mission, we focus on the following goals:

- Safe Learning Environment
- High Student Achievement
- Effective and Efficient Operation
- High Performing Workforce

OPENING OF MEETING BY THE PRESIDENT:

Board President Don Rengert called the special meeting of the River Valley Board of Education to order at 6:00 with the following members present: Cheryl Beineke, Bob Stump, Ken Osborne and Don Rengert.

APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA

Res. 114-21 Mr. Stump moved, seconded by Colonel Beineke to approve the adoption of the agenda as presented.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Beineke, Osborne, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:

President Rengert welcomes all visitors.

Mrs. Meredith Gates, the parent of two students at Heritage Elementary requested to speak to the Board. She shared her concern with the lack of notice the community received regarding the special meeting. It was explained to Mrs. Gates that the notice was sent to the news with more than 24 hours' notice, however unfortunately the news did not post the notice until later in the day on the day of the meeting. Mrs. Gates requested that the Board reconvene at a later date, but because the Board took all necessary actions to notify the community it was decided that they would not reconvene.

Mrs. Gates expressed her concerns with the Board mandating masks after eighty-five percent of parents stated that they wanted to be able to make the choice themselves whether their children wore masks. She stated that she feels as if the District has blindsided parents and taken away

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their rights overnight. She requested that the Board seriously reconsider and allow parents the right to choose and not force her children to wear masks.

BOARD DISCUSSION:

Board Discussion and Review of Ohio Department of Health Quarantine and Mask Guidelines for K-12 schools:

The Board openly discussed their views on mask mandates and what they feel is best for the District given our current state and number of quarantines and positive cases.

Mr. Rengert addressed Mrs. Gates and thanked her for coming to speak. He expressed that the District's main goal and the highest request from parents was that students stay in school. He shared that he feels that mandating masks is the best way for the District to try and make this happen. There have been several students that have come to school sick regardless of our requests to keep sick children home and that is where we are running into issues. These students coming to school ill force us to quarantine children based on the new guidelines that have been released from the Ohio Department of Health. Having children wear masks will allow us to quarantine fewer children and protect them and their families from having to be out of school for ten days or more. Colonel Beineke agreed with Mr. Rengert.

Mr. Osborne expressed his concerns with the governor's office and that he believes it should be a parent's choice, not something that he feels was pressured by the governor's office given the most recent Ohio Department of Health guidelines that were released. Another concern that Mr. Osborne has is when all of this will end? He feels that the District needs to discuss the policies, procedures and benchmarks for coming out of the mask mandate.

Mr. Stump reminded everyone that we do have an online option if there are parents that would prefer to not send their kids to school due to not wanting to wear a mask or not wanting to risk being in school during the pandemic.

NEW BUSINESS:

Superintendent Reports/Recommendations:

Mr. Wickham presented an update on the Ohio Department of Health guidelines that were released on August 31st. These guidelines changed in that they now will require quarantining students rather than just recommending quarantine. This changes things for Districts that were trying to keep students in school and not forcing families/students to quarantine if they were considered a close contact. Students who are now not wearing a mask, within three feet with a mask or within six feet without a mask or are not vaccinated and considered a close contact of someone who tests positive for COVID will now be required to quarantine per ODH guidelines. This change in guidelines also clearly stated that the local health department should be the entity issuing quarantine orders, not the District.

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Mr. Wickham agreed with the Board that we need to consider what benchmarks we will use to come out of the current mask mandate in the future. He recommended that the Board have a work session to work through some of these procedural details moving forward.

1. Agreements/Resolutions:

Res. 115-21 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following information:

- a. **Resolution: River Valley Local Schools and the Ohio Department of Health Quarantine and Mask Guidelines:** Board approval of the River Valley Local Schools upholding the Ohio Department of Health quarantine requirements for K-12 schools in response to the quarantine changes issued by the Ohio Department of Health in its most recent update on August 31, 2021. The District also chooses to mandate masks for its students and staff K-12 in response to these changes in guidelines.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Stump, Rengert
Nays: Osborne

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

Res. 116-21 Colonel Beineke moved, seconded by Mr. Osborne to approve the following information:

- b. **Resolution: Resolution: Approval of the Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic/Epidemic Events Policy:** Board approval of the Protective Facial Coverings During Pandemic/Epidemic Events policy as outlined in your background materials.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Beineke, Osborne, Stump, Rengert
Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

ADJOURN - Thank you for coming.

Res. 116-21 Mr. Rengert moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to adjourn the regular meeting of the River Valley Board of Education at 5:52pm.

Discussion: None

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Vote: Ayes: Rengert, Stump, Beineke, Osborne

Nays:

President Rengert declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

In order for the Board to fulfill its obligation to complete the planned agenda in an effective and efficient fashion, a maximum of 30 minutes of public participation may be permitted at each meeting.

Each person addressing the Board shall give his/her name and address. If several people wish to speak, each person is allotted three minutes until the total time of 30 minutes is used.

During that period, no person may speak twice until all who desire to speak have had the opportunity to do so. Persons desiring more time should follow the procedure of the Board to be placed on the regular agenda. The period of public participation may be extended by a vote of the majority of the board.

Board Policy BDDH - Adopted October 12, 1999.

Board President

Attest