

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

**September 22, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**6:00 P.M.**

**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 VICE PRESIDENT:**

Board President Brent Gorenflo called the regular meeting of the River Valley Board of Education to order at 6:12 pm with the following members present: Robert Stump, Nancy Richards, Staci Glenn-Short and Brent Gorenflo (Don Rengert absent.)

**APPROVAL OF BOARD AGENDA**

**Res. 113-20** Mr. Stump moved, seconded by Mrs. Richards to approve adoption of the agenda as presented.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Richards, Glenn-Short, Gorenflo

Nays:

President Gorenflo declared the motion carried.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS:**

**Superintendent Shares Oral / Written Correspondence / Communications:**

Mr. Wickham discussed the district's status since school is now back in session and we are operating on the hybrid schedule. He also discussed the hope that we will be back in full attendance at the end of the nine weeks, if not sooner if at all possible. We received word that the USDA has extended the Summer Lunch Program through December 31, 2020 or until funding is no longer available. Therefore, the district will be providing free breakfasts and lunches to all Students under this program.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Superintendent's Reports/Recommendation:**

**Res. 114-20** Mrs. Richards moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following resolution:

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**1. Agreements/Resolutions:**

**a. Resolution: Agreement between River Valley Local School District and the Broadband Technology Grant:** Board approval of the appropriation increase to the Broadband Technology Grant, Fund 510-9021.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Richards, Glenn-Short, Gorenflo

Nays:

President Gorenflo declared the motion carried.

**Res. 115-20** Mrs. Richards moved, seconded by Mrs. Glenn-Short to extend the amount of time for public participation.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Richards, Glenn-Short, Gorenflo

Nays:

President Gorenflo declared the motion carried.

**SUPERINTENDENT DISCUSSION**

Mr. Wickham presented on his recommendation regarding River Valley having students return to all-in, four days per week before the beginning of the second nine weeks. He shared information regarding parent and staff survey results, showed a map of districts that have returned all in versus hybrid or online and noted specifically how things are going for districts in surrounding counties that are in an all in model currently. Fridays will be used by teachers as a day to connect with all students online via Google Classroom, as well as use this day to record lessons for the next week for those students that continue to do online learning. Mr. Wickham also discussed the layers of protection that the District will continue using, such as masks, spacing, disinfecting of surfaces, hand-washing or sanitizing, reducing long periods of time that students spend in close proximity and partitions that we plan to purchase for each student in the District attending in person. Feels as though we have more information now to make a better informed decision regarding what model the District is using and how we can best make these decisions both now and in the future if we need to make any changes depending on what is going on in our District and the county.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:**

Amanda Tackett: Expressed concerns with students learning from home. Stated that students should be in school interacting and learning, not using a computer screen all day.

Jamie Wagner: Stated that it is difficult for her child to get work done on at home days and that it is difficult to rely on the sitter who cares for the children on at home days to take care of the children, as well as provide educational support.

Lisa Shumaker: Had to buy internet over the summer, because she was unaware that the district was providing resources to families in need. Even with purchasing internet the internet

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they were able to get for their home is insufficient- problems loading resulting in incomplete assignments not due to lack of trying and completing work when aware that it is available.

Cathy Mask: Student is having trouble focusing and being engaged on at home days, which is causing disagreements and frustrations at home. Students need to be back in person full-time.

Norma Friar: Has grandchildren in the district and has witnessed the difficulty of keeping up online and being able to communicate with teachers, which has been lacking, not at the fault of teachers. As an employee of the district she sees how difficult this has been on teachers as well. Students need to be back.

Chuck Osborne: Speaking on behalf of his church he has seen the drastic improvements in children's' spirits and overall well-being as things continue to reopen and they are able to participate in sports programs and extracurricular activities. As a parent, feels its best that the instruction and communication come from the teachers, not the parents, which means students should be back in school where parents are not having to try and take on a role that they don't feel they can assist their child in succeeding.

Coral Fitsko: Child has always had a tutor, but now that the child is having to do at-home learning days she sees her child falling even more behind than before and is truly struggling. She has been fighting with her child over schoolwork and doesn't understand why kids can play sports, but they can't be back in school full-time.

Christopher Dodds: Started off by saying that things were absolute chaos in March, but that he has seen drastic improvements in the technology, instruction and overall experience so far this fall when students are completing at-home learning. Doesn't understand why we are rushing back in when we just had our first positive case a week ago. We already have overcrowded buildings, yet we are rushing to send them back to school full-time where we can't assure the proper amount of distance necessary to try and limit the spread of COVID-19. Feels we need to find a way to slowly transition back to all in.

Shannon Osterlin: Stated that her child went from being excited to learn and go to school to having complete meltdowns. She is not a teacher, didn't go to school to be one and doesn't feel that she should have to play that role at home. The real world is not living in fear- we are all going to work and practicing proper protocols while still resuming normal activities and business as best as we can and students should be able to do the same by being in school. Feels that this all needs to stop somewhere and students need to be back in person with their teachers. Online schooling just isn't working, which is not at the fault of any teachers.

Angela Kloha: Online hybrid days have been a nightmare for her children. They are self-teaching instead of truly learning and grasping concepts. This is not at the fault of staff, but is really taking a mental, emotional toll causing statistics in areas such as suicide rates to increase and these things need to be taken into account when considering what return model we choose as a District. Students and learning are not optimized when they are learning at home.

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Jessica Meddings: Has two students that cannot attend due to medical concerns for her two youngest children. The oldest sibling is having trouble staying focused and struggling not having any interaction with teachers or other students. Feels like the online option just isn't working and there has to be ways to improve it for students who don't have a choice but to attend online, because of the risks involved if they were to bring this virus home to their family.

**Res. 116-20** Mrs. Glenn-Short moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to approve the following resolution:

**b. Resolution: Approval to move from a Hybrid Learning Model to an All-In Learning Model:** Board approval of River Valley Local School District transitioning from hybrid learning to all-in learning the week of October 5<sup>th</sup> with the first in-person day being Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> and students attending Monday-Thursday with Friday being an online learning day for all students.

Discussion: The Board discussed exactly what parameters were being set in regards to their resolution/recommendation. They wanted to make sure that they were taking all information into account, including, but not limited to what was presented by the speakers at tonight's meeting. Mrs. Richards addressed the audience and wanted them all to know that they, as a Board, are not taking this decision lightly and they are reading all information, survey results, etc. provided to them to make sure they are listening to everyone's concerns, at all levels, before they make a decision. Mr. Gorenflo mentioned that the Districts that have gone back in surrounding counties are much smaller than we are and that having 2000 students back in only four buildings is a concern. It was discussed whether parents could switch back and forth between online only and the all-in option and decided that parents will have to make a decision by September 30<sup>th</sup>, which will continue through the remainder of the first semester of the 2020-2021 school year.

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Richards, Glenn-Short

Nays: Gorenflo

President Gorenflo declared the motion carried.

**ADJOURN** - Thank you for coming.

**Res. 117-20** Mrs. Glenn-Short moved, seconded by Mr. Stump to adjourn the regular meeting of the River Valley Board of Education at 7:17 pm.

Discussion: None

Vote: Ayes: Stump, Richards, Glenn-Short, Gorenflo

Nays:

President Gorenflo declared the motion carried.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS**

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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.

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Board President

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Attest