

Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union #52
Special School Board Meeting
Monday, March 14, 2022
Approved Minutes

Present at the Meeting:

Board: Nancy Pedrick (V), Colleen Spence (V), Nicole Buck (V), Davis McGraw (V), Beth Roy (V), Annemarie Redmond (V); Rebecca Roisman (V), Mark Yuengling (V), Bill Yates (V), Amy McMullen (V)

Admin: (All virtual) David Baker, Brittany Preston, Larry Dougher, Katie Ahern, Jenifer Aldrich, Christine Bourne, Brian Martes, Colleen DeSchamp, Kate Ryan, Lyndsie Perkins, Brittany Preston

Public: (All virtual) See attached list of attendees at end of minutes.

[Meeting video from 3/14/2022](#)

- I. Call to Order at 6:35 p.m. by David Baker
 - Reorganization of the Board
 1. **Election of Chairperson** (Superintendent David Baker)
 - a. Amy McMullen nominated by Bill Yates, seconded by Rebecca Roisman
10-0: Amy McMullen elected as Chairperson
 2. **Election of Vice Chair**
 - a. Elizabeth Burrows nominated by Nancy Pedrick, seconded by Davis McGraw
Nine in favor, zero opposed, one abstention by Bill Yates; Elizabeth Burrows elected as Vice Chair (in absentia)
 3. **Election of Clerk of the Board**
 - a. Colleen Spence nominated by Annemarie Redmond, seconded by Nancy Pedrick.
10-0: Colleen Spence elected as Clerk of the Board
 4. **Election of Treasurer**
 - a. Nicole Buck nominated by Annemarie Redmond, seconded by Rebecca Roisman
10-0: Nicole Buck elected as Treasurer
 5. **Election of Assistant Treasurer**
 - a. Nancy Pedrick nominated by Bill Yates; seconded by Colleen Spence
10-0: Nancy Pedrick elected as Assistant Treasurer
 6. **Election of Signers of the Manifest (2)**
 - a. Bill Yates and Colleen Spence (as backup) nominated by Nancy Pedrick, seconded by Annemarie Redmond
10-0: Bill Yates and Colleen Spence elected as Signers of the Manifest
 7. **Election of Budget Committee Members (2)**
 - a. Jamie Turner and Rebecca Roisman nominated by Annemarie Redmond; seconded by Davis McGraw
10-0: Jamie Turner and Rebecca Roisman elected as Budget Committee Members
 8. **Designation of Official Newspaper(s)**
 - a. Valley News, Eagle Times, Vermont Standard, VT Digger
10-0 in favor of all and no others
 9. **Establishment of Meeting Day, Time and Place**

- a. Current: 4th Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m., hybrid; then visiting schools as they reopen, and once at SU

- Introductions of School Board: Nancy Pedrick with Mt Ascutney School Board; Colleen Spence with Hartland School Board; Nicole (Nicki) Buck with Hartland School Board; Davis McGraw with Mt Ascutney School Board /Windsor seat; Beth Roy with Hartland School Board; Annemarie (Anne) Redmond with Weathersfield School Board; Rebecca Roisman with Mt Ascutney School District/Windsor seat; Mark Yuengling with Weathersfield School Board; Bill Yates with Mt Ascutney School Board, West Windsor seat; Amy McMullen with Mt Ascutney School Board/Windsor seat

II. **Changes/Additions to the Agenda**

- David Baker made no changes
- Rachel Navaro took minutes from recording

III. **Public Participation/Announcements**

- Ryan G (no last name given) requested future agenda item regarding equity, specifically House Bill 659, voiced complaint that Elizabeth Burrows is a cosigner of the bill and requested her resignation due to overreach.
- There were no other public participation comments not related to the agenda and no additional announcements from the board

IV. **Items for Discussion**

• Masking Protocol

1. David Baker discussed data points for whether the board could make masks optional; for slide presentation thanked Brittany Preston, the data and recovery and data coordinator for the SU; also Larry Dougher. For a link to the presentation, please click [HERE](#).
 - Percent Vaccinated for Students, Staff, and Total per building: in each building, most staff between 96 and 97%; students between 50 and 60%
 - WSESU Masking Survey, with overall question being, "Should the SU Board require students to be masked in school?"
 - Total for SU Staff (193 responses): 54.4% said Yes, 45.6% said no
 - By Grade: Pretty consistent across the board, with slightly more saying it should be required versus not.
 - Parent Survey (504 responses): 31.2% said Yes, 68.8% said no
 - By School District: generally aligned across every school
 - By Grade Level: stayed fairly consistent
 - Student Survey Grades 5-12 (359 responses): 29% said Yes, 71% said No
 - Student Survey Grades K-4 (223 responses): 22% said Yes, 78% said No
 - CDC Tracker for Windsor County, as of 3/10/22: Medium Risk
 - Also spoke with nurses for positive COVID case counts by school, weeks of 2/20 and 2/27
 - Superintendent recommendation to follow the AOE guidelines regarding masking beginning 3/15/22:
 - Can reinstate the requirement of masking if the AOE guidelines change;

- SU has always followed the AOE and VDH guidance and this should remain our benchmark;
- Will also monitor the CDC county data;
- Will periodically and voluntarily antigen test (the first testing window will be during the April vacation)
- Rationale based on recommendation from Secretary of Education's guidance to superintendents after 2/15 news conference (there was no mention of vaccination rates)
- Nicole Buck said the Secretary of Ed put out new recommendations that rescinded all previous recommendations
- Bill Yates requested something clearer than following non-recommendations
- Katie Burke, the COVID coordinator for the Windsor Central Supervisory Union, said the recommendation is that schools now follow the general health guidance by the VT Dept. of Health
- Beth Roy said it was on the Field Memo for March 9th
- David Baker said he thought using the word "Guidelines" for AOE was cause of confusion and should be changed to "Recommendations"
- Annemarie Redmond said it's probably time to make masks optional but high-quality masks are available for those who are—or who have household member who is—immune-compromised
- Davis McGraw echoed sentiment from David and Annemarie
- Colleen Spence echoed all; read short list of recommendations from the VT Dept. of Health and feels comfortable standing behind them
- Bill Yates created set of recommendations with a step transition, e.g. requiring masks in hallways for the first couple weeks; now with clarification about guidance, he'd be more comfortable moving forward—with documentation with what's recommended regarding vaccinations and testing
- Amy McMullen said Bill's "masks in hallways" recommendation could lead to confusion and discontent
- Bill Yates: Claremont School District has been mask-optional for three weeks without any school closures or outbreaks; found that piece of data to be telling and trusts admin and nurses to lead us down same path
- Rebecca Roisman suggested bringing mental-health staff together with COVID task force for input, plus getting feedback from parents during transition period; echoed what others said about moving forward and changing wording from AOE "Guidelines" to Recommendations"
- Beth Roy said her (work) school district had been mask-optional for a week and shared experience (first day: weird but joyful); said lots of staff were wearing masks, most students not
- Questions masks on school busses; Annemarie said the federal mandate for masks on school busses has been rescinded; Beth said it would be something to consider
- Mark Yuengling spoke in favor of making masks optional; liked Beth's suggestion about masking on school busses; said Jamie Turner is in favor of moving to optional masks as well

- Nancy Pedrick said the general consensus from board members speaks for her; that masks would come back if things change but at this time they could be optional
- Bill Yates said Annemarie Redmond (email from Josh Compton) noted the state is still recommending masks be required post-infection up to ten days
- Colleen Spence requested more information about the post-infection recommendation
- David Baker confirmed to keep protocol in line with the state regarding post-infection masking for ten days, or to have the parents keep the student home for ten days
- Elizabeth Burrows asked Nicole to give her proxy: wants VDH data to trigger to return to masking
- Nicole Buck suggested that the board's decision follow the AOE recommendation regarding masking, beginning on March 15, 2022; that it's possible to reinstate the masking requirement based on recommendation changes made by AOE (or just VDH), that the SU will continue to follow AOE and VDH guidelines, and that this should remain the benchmark
- Board members heard from the community
 - Regarding public participation, Bill concurred with Nicole and encouraged parents who can't attend meetings to read meeting minutes as well as watch and listen to the recorded meetings.
 - Davis McGraw echoed what Nicole and Bill said about transparency and encourages out-of-box thinking for getting the word out (perception is important too); said there's always more the board can do
 - Amy McMullen clarified that school board meetings are meetings of the board doing business in a public setting, that a meeting of the public would be called a public forum
 - Larry Dougher said the board added the banner to the website about this special board meeting; also, at front of website, above the news section, the board added board meetings for that coming month for each school board, and will keep that going and updated

V. **Items for Action**

- *Motion to vote on mask mandate*

Nicole Buck moved to follow AOE recommendations regarding masking, beginning on March 15, 2022, with any reinstatement requirement only changing if the AOE and VDH guidance should change

Nancy Pedrick seconded

Motion passed 10-0 to make masking optional beginning March 15th, and to follow AOE and VDH guidance as well as monitoring CDC data

- Annemarie Redmond made point to not discourage students or staff who want to wear a mask; would encourage KN95 or N95 masks
- Rebecca Roisman requested that David Baker send a statement to staff to ensure a consistent presentation around this change
- David said he'll try to get something out, will probably point them to VDH's outline on how to protect yourself and others
- David requested board clarity on mask-wearing on busses

- Nicole Buck said the bussing guidance should be consistent with the mask-optional guidance going forward
- Bill Yates said that if AOE and VDH don't have bussing exceptions to the mask-optional recommendation, that it would apply everywhere

VI. **Setting the Next Agenda**

Amy McMullen confirmed that the first item on the agenda for the next meeting will be "equity work"

VII. **Executive Session** (VSA.T11 Section 313) if needed: None

VIII. **Adjournment**

Amy took a motion to adjourn

Davis McGraw moved to adjourn; Rebecca Roisman seconded

10-0, motion passed

Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Navaro