

**GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
KINGSWOOD ARTS CENTER
FEBRUARY 8, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Governor Wentworth Regional School Board meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

Members Present: Krista Abear, Julianne Cardinal (remote attendee), Timothy Eldridge, Wendi Fenderson, James Pittman, Charlene Seibel, Dana Streeter, John Widmer

Excused: Dr. James Manning

Middleton Representative: Kelly Tivnan

Also present: Superintendent Kathleen Cuddy-Egbert, Assistant Superintendent Heather Cummings, Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes, WCTV and community members

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. AGENDA REVIEW

House Bill 20 was added to the agenda.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion: To accept the minutes of the January 11, 2021 School Board meeting as presented.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Mr. Pittman

Vote: Motion carried on a roll call vote 8-0-0

Motion: To accept the minutes of the January 30, 2021, School Board meeting as presented.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Mr. Pittman

Vote: Motion carried 6-0-2 on a roll call vote (Ms. Fenderson and Ms. Seibel abstained)

Motion: To accept the minutes of the January 20, 2021 Deliberative Session as presented.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Mr. Pittman

Vote: Motion carried 6-0-2 on a roll call vote (Ms. Fenderson and Ms. Seibel abstained)

Motion: To approve the accounts payable (\$1,920,631.24) and payroll (\$1,974,159.98) manifests totaling \$3,894,791.22

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Ms. Fenderson

Vote: Motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote 8-0-0

V. PUBLIC INPUT

- Jessica Williams said by law the members of the audience must be able to hear everyone when they speak and she said she could not hear Julianne Cardinal.
- Nate Williams has a child at Effingham Elementary School and he thanked everyone for all the hard work. He said it is a struggle to keep children focused when they are learning at home and on-site works best. The numbers seem low and he is strongly in favor of getting students back to school more than two days a week. He urged that data be used to make the decision.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Deliberative Session Review

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said more people participated livestream than in person. She thanked everyone for all their hard work.

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Voting Times

The Town of Effingham will not be holding their town meeting on March 9 like the other cooperative towns and have scheduled for May 11. The District was advised by the State that the ballots of the towns voting on March 9 must be counted and announced immediately, which, unfortunately will happen before the Town of Effingham votes. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert advised against the District holding its own election, due to the lack of experience in running elections, even though it has the authority to do so.

COVID-19 Update/School Schedule

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said nationwide and in the state COVID cases are trending down. The District's positive cases have averaged between six and eight per week over the past four weeks with limited close contacts. The biggest challenge has been staffing because they may have to quarantine from outside close contacts. School administrators are working on different configurations for students to return in person full time. With cases trending down, increased vaccinations, and with spring coming and more ability to be outside and open windows is a positive in getting students back. CDC is planning on releasing new guidelines; getting children physically back to school. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said work has begun for a rigorous summer program, this year and next, with more access for students to have tutoring using federal ESER 2 funds. Mr. Widmer went on record to say even when students return to full in-person learning the remote option will be available until the end of the school year. The Board discussed a target date for full in-person instruction.

Motion: To make March 22, 2021 the target date to have full in-person instruction for students and to keep the fully remote option in place through the end of the school year for those families who opt for this method of learning.

Moved: Ms. Fenderson – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said it is that time of year when the District needs to decide if they want to participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. She shared the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior survey results and there was some discussion. The survey shows improvement with drug and alcohol use but there is always work to be done. Other areas covered in the survey include physical inactivity, to dietary behavior, to questions related to suicide and risky sexual behavior.

Ms. Seibel asked if the survey can be taken online. She added that she feels the section on sexual and dating violence is not going in the right direction. She wants to make sure programs are in place to make sure kids are empowered to say no. **The Board decided unanimously to delay the Youth Risk Behavior Survey for one year.**

Girls Ice Hockey as a Funded Sport

A request was provided by KRHS athletic department for Girls Ice Hockey to be funded at 60%, in line with District Policy JJIBB Interscholastic Athletics, for the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. House answered several questions from the Board.

Motion: To approve the funding of Girls Ice Hockey at 60% for the 2020-2021 school year in line with District Policy JJIBB Interscholastic Athletics.

Moved: Ms. Seibel – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

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Future Board Meetings

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert read the sites of the Board meetings for the remainder of the year.

Motion: To hold the March 2021 School Board meeting at the Kingswood Arts Center. The remaining meeting locations will be determined at the March meeting.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Ms. Fenderson

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

NH School Boards Association

Mr. Widmer said the NHSBA annual meeting was remote and it went very well. NHSBA hired a company for the online voting. The next meeting is March 24, remotely, with delegates from the congressional office with updates on representatives and senators in Washington. It was asked if the school boards association wrote to the Governor on behalf of vaccinating teachers sooner like the teachers association has done. The school board directed the superintendent to write a letter to the Governor asking to vaccinate school personnel now, in Phase 1b.

House Bill 20

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said HB 20 is a voucher bill for families as it will establish an education freedom account program with little oversight. Ms. Abear said she is concerned the bill will pull resources from public schools if passed.

VII. CHAIRMANS REPORT

No report

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic Affairs

Ms. Fenderson brought the following policies to the Board for a first read: Policy BEA, Board Meetings; Policy GCG, Part time and Substitute Staff; Policy JLDB, Suicide Prevention and Response; Policy EBBCF, Temporary Emergency Policy: Travel Guidance for Employees/Essential and Non-Essential At-Risk Personal Travel and Policy EBCF, Pandemic/Epidemic Emergencies. She told the Board that Susan Merrell and Katey Hills presented to Academic Affairs on where we are this year with curriculum, instruction assessment and progress/achievement.

Finance Committee

Mr. Widmer addressed the public and said if anyone has questions about the material presented at Deliberative Session to contact the SAU Office or himself.

IX. CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Advanced Planning Mr. Widmer read upcoming events from the bottom of the agenda.

Public Input

- Jessica Williams asked the Board to rescind the approval of the January 30th meeting minutes because she said they are falsified documents. She also said the Board's pandemic policy was written in 2007 and amended in 2009. She said if the Board needs to follow the policy why are we using other guidelines. Mr. Widmer explained that the meetings are not falsified and that the policy is currently being reviewed.
- Sarah, who has a couple of high school students, asked if the March 22nd target date to return to full time learning is for the high school as well as elementary. She said the high schools still uses quarters and the elementary schools are using trimesters. The answer was a March 22nd target date for all students K-12.

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- Bobbi Boudman said there is a hearing on HB 20 on February 11th at 9am which can be attended via Zoom. She said under this bill homeschoolers would not be able to use our athletic programs anymore so people may want to reach out to Jeb Bradley who is one of the sponsors. Ms. Boudman also said she would like to see her child back in school full time. She said she feels it is important to talk to teachers about returning and to other schools to see what they are doing. She said some vaccination sites have extra vaccines and encouraged the district to reach out to the State.

X. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

Motion: At 8:35 pm a motion was made to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II to discuss personnel.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge – **Seconded:** Ms. Fenderson

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert presented a teacher nomination and shared retirement letters.

Motion: To accept the Superintendent's nomination of Michael Jacobs as 100% math teacher at Kingswood Regional High School for the 2020-2021 school year. Track 3 Step 13 which is \$33,688 (prorated for 86 days).

Moved: Ms. Seibel – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

The Board accepted retirement letters from Patricia Ford and Susan Randall with sincere appreciation for their service.

Motion: 8:54 pm a motion was made to end non-public session.

Moved: Ms. Seibel – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert told the board that she talked to SAU 9 to see how there full in schedule works. The Board had a brief discussion on students returning for full in-person learning.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: 9:09 pm a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Ms. Seibel – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



School Board Secretary

Approved by School Board 02/17/21