

**GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
KINGSWOOD ARTS CENTER
AUGUST 6, 2020**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Governor Wentworth Regional School Board meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Members Present: Krista Abear, Julianne Cardinal, Timothy Eldridge, Wendi Fenderson, Dr. James Manning, James Pittman, Charlene Seibel, Dana Streeter, John Widmer

Middleton Representative: Kelly Tivnan

Also present: Superintendent Kathleen Cuddy-Egbert, Assistant Superintendent Heather Cummings, Business Administrator Kathy O'Blenes, Curriculum Coordinator Kaitlyn Hills, administrators, staff, community members and WCTV.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

III. AGENDA REVIEW

No changes

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

Community members shared their thoughts on school reopening. Roger Decato, Wolfeboro, asked if milestones have been established. His kids have asked how long restrictions will take place at the schools. He is concerned this will set precedent and become standard for future events and will become protocol. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said this is an understandable concern and in order to have the correct milestones going forward the District is going to contract with an infectious disease specialist to help with information and to establish a metric. Mia Bassett, New Durham, had questions about the three sided plexiglass stations at desks. She does not feel this is conducive for student learning and wonders if this will happen for certain? She asked if face shields have been considered. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said the idea for the plexiglass barrier is to have layers of mitigation. She said the environment in schools will be different, but she is confident teachers will establish a positive climate in the classroom. Before school begins professional development activities will be instituted for teachers. She said face shields do not protect from virus. Transparent face shields with drapes will be available for students who need speech therapy. Roger Decato, Wolfeboro, asked if these measures really have the students' best interest in mind (all the layers and restrictive measures for recess, plexiglass barriers, masks, the level seems high and over kill). Mr. Widmer said the first priority is the safety of the students and the staff and whatever it will take to keep them as safe as possible while they are in the buildings.

V. SCHOOL REOPENING

Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said this has been a tough week for the Board reviewing and considering all the information from parents and staff. They are taking all comments very seriously and have the best interest of students, staff and the community at heart. This is a monumental decision; we have never been in a pandemic before. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said she is impressed and grateful to be working with this Board and she appreciates all the thoughtful comments from the community. She thanked everyone for their input and then gave a presentation on the remote learning guidelines. The guidelines were established for consistency for student expectations for behavior, attendance, assignment completion, time spent online for each grade level and teacher responsibilities.

At 7:33 pm Mr. Widmer opened discussion for the Board. He said there are two primary

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proposals coming forward: 1. Hybrid/blended model; 2. Full remote learning model. He said they have spent a lot of time looking at the blended model which is a work in process. They will need to know many students want remote learning and how many want blended. With the blended model parents still have the option to choose the remote learning. We also have some educators who, for health reasons, may prefer online teaching versus being in the classroom. He said this is not an easy process and it is a very difficult decision that the Board knows will impact families with whatever decision is made. School Board members shared their views and asked questions. Mr. Widmer received text messages from community members: Q: The New Hampshire Department of Education signed a deal for iLearnNH with Canvas will this be used? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said we will want to implement but we don't want to rush and try to use before teachers are ready. It is a pilot program at the high school right now but we are not ready to implement K-12. Q: Is there enough staffing for both models? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said she has thought about this but we won't know our numbers until a survey is done and we have family choices for blended or remote learning. We will know more after a decision on which model is chosen is made and a survey is conducted. Mr. Widmer said concerns have also been expressed about the influx of visitors to our area over the summer as well as Motor Cycle week which is scheduled for the last week in August. The Board has discussed this and possibly moving the opening day for students from September 9th to September 14th which will give us a full two weeks (quarantine period). Q: If teachers do not want to return to school what happens? Are they not shopping, eating out or going out in public? A: Mr. Widmer said some teachers may not want to return to school for safety/health reasons but the survey will help us match up teachers who indicate remote teaching and those who want to return to the classroom. Q: When do you anticipate knowing what full remote will look like? A: Mr. Widmer said some of the guideline process was explained this evening by the Superintendent. The full plan will be put together as we go forward. Q: Will teachers be required to be tested before starting school? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said no. Currently there is an order for a required 14 day quarantine for those employees that travel outside of the New England States (Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, Vermont and Rhode Island). Q: Will students bring their chromebooks to and from school every day? Also comments that adults need to make decisions for children and teenagers. They would like the Board to choose remote learning only for the first marking period. A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said each student will be assigned a chromebook so they will be available to bring them home every day. Q: New Durham has two day care facilities and one has been closed since March and the other one will be closing. What do families and employees with children do if the hybrid model is selected? A: Mr. Widmer said this is a very difficult decision and there is no answer at this time. Scott Geissler, Mirror Lake, commented that the State music guidelines for music education increased distance for singing and wind instruments from 8 feet to 10 feet. Q: Kids are hard on chromebooks. Can the District provide covers? A: Mr. Widmer said yes this is a possibility. Q: What are the repercussions for students who do not wear masks in school? A: Mr. Widmer said the District will be working on a mask protocol. Q: If a teacher has a child in school in the District will the teacher be able to be home on their children's off days. A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said schedules are to be determined but teachers will have students in school for two sessions A & B, which will be four days per week, so this will not work. Q: Can remote students, or teachers teaching remotely, live stream the activities from the classroom. A: Mr. Widmer said this will be determined. Q: NH DHHS Task Force recommends 3-6 feet social distancing, World Health Organization 3 feet, CDC guidelines 6 feet when feasible so could full in person learning occur with 3 foot social distancing? A: Mr. Widmer said the Board has chosen 6 feet social distancing and feels this is the proper guideline. Q: Will the preschool program run if we go with hybrid model? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said the special education portion will be available but the regular education will not be available due to social distancing and the need to keep the spaces open for

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special education students.

Motion: To implement the hybrid model of learning as presented with the option of remote learning for families who do not want their children to attend in-person learning.

Moved: Ms. Cardinal – **Seconded:** Ms. Fenderson

Discussion: Board members shared their views and discussed amendments to the motion. One topic brought forward was to continue with remote learning until a later date.

Vote: Motion passed on a roll call vote (7-2). Ms. Abear and Ms. Seibel voted against the motion and all other Board members voted in favor of the motion.

Ms. Seibel said she would like to make a motion because she does not want to start the year with a hybrid model. She asked for input and guidance on what would be a reasonable length of time of when to discontinue remote exclusively and begin with hybrid model. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said motorcycle weekend was not considered when implementing the plan so delaying the start of school to September 14 or a little longer makes sense under the conditions. Ms. Fenderson asked if it would also push the end date of school. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said she will need to look at hours. Ms. Seibel said she is not proposing to delay the start of school, and although we approved hybrid model in theory, she would like to see remote learning to start the school year.

Motion: To delay the start of the school year from September 9 to September 21.

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

Discussion: There was discussion about how the additional time would allow administration to get plan details in place. They also discussed how delaying the start of school to September 21 may impact the last day of school.

Vote: Motion failed on a roll call vote (2-7). Mr. Pittman and Ms. Seibel voted in favor of the motion and all other Board members voted against the motion.

Motion: To delay the start of the school year from September 9 to September 14.

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Seconded:** Ms. Fenderson

Vote: Motion passed on a roll call vote (8-1). Mr. Streeter voted against the motion and all other Board members voted in the affirmative.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

Q: Is this hybrid plan presented by Kathy Cuddy-Egbert with the rotating schedule? A: Mr.

Widmer said yes, but the rotating days on the original presentation may change. Q: When do parents have to decide whether hybrid or remote? Also, original plan did not layout each school's plan; they were grouped. A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said this has been the idea from the start but

administration needed to know what model would be decided on before making it more school specific. She said the plans may not be available before the decision has to be made but a

parent can change their decision after all information is available. Q: Will high school students help create the plans for safety because some students may want to break the plan? A: Ms.

Cuddy-Egbert said she would not assume students will want to break plans but it is a great idea having students involved in some of the planning. It may not happen this summer but whenever

we have student investment on what is happening in schools it always makes things work better. Q: Clarification that parents may choose remote learning even though the hybrid model was

chosen. A: Mr. Widmer said yes, we voted on hybrid model with the option for remote learning for

those parents who are not ready for their children to return to in-person learning. Q: May a student change options after they have chosen one? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said yes and the best

time to change instruction method would be at the end of a marking period. Q: If parents choose

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the hybrid model will students get direct instruction from teachers only two days per week? A: Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said it will depend what schedule is decided on.

-Mr. Widmer said the School Board is going to set another date to discuss the fall sports programs.

-Mr. Streeter asked if we could revisit vocational center schedule. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said she will be working on a schedule with Principal Farr because there are certain students whose certification requires practical hours. There may be some alterations to the program but it will be in line with guidelines in the plan.

-Mr. Eldridge said the Board has a meeting scheduled for September 14 and asked if we should change it to September 10. All Board members agreed.

-Ms. Seibel asked what criteria would be used to determine if we need to change from hybrid to remote learning. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said she would work with the infectious disease specialist and would want to watch the trajectory. She feels community transmission is too late.

Ms. Fenderson said she would also like to work with the specialist for guidelines on what we can ease up on restrictions. Ms. Cuddy-Egbert said having direction in either direction is a good idea and she will want to develop metrics with the consultant.

VII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

Motion: At 9:31 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.

A staff nomination was shared with the Board.

Motion: To accept the Superintendent's nomination of Chris Nelson to work in Technology at the LRTC under the mentorship of Glenn Wilson.

Moved: Ms. Seibel – Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Motion: 9:53 pm a motion was made to end non-public session.

Moved: Dr. Manning – **Seconded:** Mr. Eldridge

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: 9:54 pm a motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mr. Eldridge **Seconded:** Dr. Manning

Vote: It was a unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



School Board Secretary

Approved by GWRSD School Board 08/24/2020