

WAKEFIELD SCHOOL BOARD
1-19-21 Public Minutes
Held in the Multi-Purpose Room and via Zoom
Approved

In attendance:

Board: Relf Fogg, Mary Collins, Bob Ouellette and Sheena Robbins

Administration: Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino, Student Services Director, Anne Kebler, all via zoom

In person: Principal James Lampron, Assistant Principal Jenn Spector and Facilities Director Joe Williams.

Public: Sandra Taliaferro, Norma Joy, Wendie Nicholson, Eric Demers, John Veno, Joe Coddington, Tiffany Thorne, Amy Blackwood, Alison Turbitt, Nicole Hershal, Michelle and John Farina, Brennan Peaselee, Christina Nicaastro, Gina Golden, Stacey Dubreuil, and Jill Garnet, and Parents and community members via Zoom

Call to Order

Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6:00 and led those present in person and on zoom in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ouellette introduced Sheena Robbins as the new member of the Board filling Sandy Johnson's seat until March. She will be sworn in tonight by Dino Scala.

Public Comment

Eric Demers found Mr. Lampoon's email offensive and teacher's not being understanding of the difficulties he has endured since Covid and remote learning.

Joseph Coddington expressed his struggles to keep up with remote learning.

John Veno asked about why there were so few bus drivers and what was the problem paying them.

Jill Garnet had several comments about short notices and the difficulties children are having with remote learning. She was disturbed that breakfasts and lunches weren't delivered today.

Tiffany Thorne talked about the difficulties her children are having with remote learning.

Norma Joy asked what the hybrid will look like, when will they know and will it affect the remote students?

Mrs. Collins said they will be looking at several options tonight.

Sandra Taliaferro talked about the options Rochester was offering and that many schools haven't closed at all.

Brennan Peaselee had an issue with K-4 coming back face to face and not the rest of the school. Her children are failing for the first time.

Amy Blackwood agrees the kids need to go back to school. Her concern is the meals not being delivered today. She wants a promise this won't happen again. She praised the teacher for doing

a wonderful job but it's still not meeting their needs. She has seven remote learners at her daycare.

Cassandra ? She said there is a problem with a teacher teaching two grades.

Tom O'Neal wants his child back in school. He thanked everyone for the hard work and tough decisions they will have to make tonight.

Mr. Fogg said this is the first time he has heard of a teacher teaching two grades. He didn't know until 10:30 today that meals weren't delivered. He said it's difficult to answer the community's questions when the Board hasn't been kept abreast of what is happening. Mr. Gregoire said the teacher teaching split grades was discussed prior to being implemented.

Randie Fox said she's concerned about the families who are struggling.

(parents speaking from the audience instead of using the mic. Inaudible)

Dawn Alie's problem is with the finger pointing and blaming. Blaming one another is not helping. We need to work for the kids.

Old Business

Remote Learning

Mr. Avellani suggested this topic be moved up on the agenda due to the comments heard tonight.

Mr. Gregoire said he has been working on a plan that would be as comprehensive as possible.

We were hoping to come back to school on January 30th but the transportation issue has been the most pressing matter. One of the things he will be proposing is masks for everyone K-8. Mr. Gregoire and Mr. Lampron proceeded to present the following slide show presentation :

HYBRID OPTIONS FOR BRINGING STUDENTS BACK TO SCHOOL

FACTS

- 138 students require school transportation
 - PK: 5 (10am - 1pm)
 - K: 13
 - Grade 1: 16
 - Grade 2: 15
 - Grade 3: 12
 - Grade 4: 18
 - Grade 5: 10
 - Grade 6: 17
 - Grade 7: 17
 - Grade 8: 17
- We currently have three bus drivers.
- Each bus can transport 24 students for a total of 72 available seats while maintaining minimum social distance of 3 feet.
- Most students in K-2 cannot work independently and require adult support.
- Quarter 2 ends January 29th.

SURVEY SAYS

- We had 325 responses from our parent survey!
 - 223 families would prefer to reopen in a hybrid model if we are unable to come back full in person.
 - If we went to the typical hybrid model:
 - 7 families would shift from remote to in person
 - 12 families would shift from in person to remote.
- We had 55 responses from our staff survey.
 - 29 would prefer to come back in the typical hybrid
 - 10 prefer to prioritize high needs students
 - 19 prefer to bring all of K-4 back with a progression that will get everyone else back in the building

HYBRID OPTIONS

Typical Hybrid	Prioritize High Needs Students	K-4 Full Return with Progression Plan to Bring in Additional Grade Levels
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TYPICAL HYBRID

- Bring half the students in on Monday and Tuesday (Group A) for in person learning while the other half, Group B, are independently working remotely.
- On Wednesday, all students meet with their teacher remotely on an early release schedule to provide teachers time for planning and professional development, and students time to complete missing assignments and integrated arts assignments.
- On Thursday and Friday, Group B students are in the building while Group A students are independently working remotely.

PRIORTIZE HIGH NEED KIDS

- Students who require services, are struggling remotely or have excessive absenteeism would be brought into the building to work alongside their teachers as they're teaching remotely.

FULL RETURN OF GRADES K-4 WITH PROGRESSION PLAN FOR 5-8

- Bring in all students in grades K-4 for in person learning; grades 5-8 remain remote.
- When a fourth driver is added, bring grades 5 and 6 back for in person learning.
- When a fifth driver is added, bring in our highest needs students in grades 7 + 8.
- When a sixth driver is added, we will be able to bring all students back to the building for in person learning.

TYPICAL HYBRID PROS

- We would be able to socially distance students closer to six feet since only half of the students would be in the building.
- There would be more separation between cohorts with cleaning in between.
- All students would receive two full days of in person learning.
- Some special education students could receive in person services on their two in person days.

TYPICAL HYBRID CONS

- Our students with the most significant needs will get the in person support they require.
- Students would be socially distanced of six feet.
- Transportation is attainable
- Aligns with orange status protocol described in re-entry plan

PRIORITIZED HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS PROS

- A significant increase of additional planning and preparation on the teachers' end in order to provide in class instruction and activities and independent work for remote students.
- Students of all grade levels will be expected to work remotely independently for two and a half days each week.
- Remote students will have limited access to their teacher since their teacher will be teaching the students in the building and cannot do both simultaneously.
- There is not enough technology to accommodate in person learners and remote learners who will need devices at the same time.
- Scheduling of paraprofessionals will be challenging as remote and in person students might need support at the same time.
- Organizing the two student groups involves many factors: location and keeping families together, in person class size, students requiring services, etc.

PRIORITIZED HIGH NEEDS STUDENTS CONS

- Classroom schedules as well as special education schedules would need to be readjusted to accommodate student support times while preventing students from missing instruction.
- Requires teachers to teach remotely and supervise in person students simultaneously, taking away from remote learners especially in the younger grades.
 - Teaching time will decrease for remote students in order to provide support to in person students.
- Many students remain remote
- Potential decreased motivation in an effort to get into the building
- Requires additional adult supervision during the 'down time' when teachers have their planning time, lunch, etc.
 - To avoid this, students could attend in smaller chunks of time, causing additional scheduling challenges.

K-4 IN FULL WITH PROGRESSION -PROS

- All of our most dependent students in grades K-4 would be back in the building receiving in person instruction.
- Students in grades 5-8 stay remote with a consistent pre-established schedule and routine.
- There is a clear progression to bring additional students into the building as soon as more drivers become available.
- With K-4 students returning borrowed technology, there will be enough devices to accommodate in person use.

K-4 IN FULL WITH PROGRESSION - CONS

- Some Integrated Arts times would need to be adjusted for remote learners in grades 5-8.
- We would be unable to accommodate six feet of social distancing in classrooms.
- Potential for extended time on the bus
- If a bus driver is unable to drive, with no backup driver, it causes additional scheduling challenges on short notice.

Mrs. Collins said the issue she has with the hybrid is that now they receive instruction every day. With the hybrid they are left on their own for Thursday and Friday with no direct instruction. Mr. Fogg asked if any other district has used this approach and has it worked for them. Mr. Gregoire said each school chooses what works for them but we have to consider our bussing problem too. Most districts want their students back in school. Rochester has voted to have K-8 back in school with the high school starting February 1st. Mrs. Collins asked if the Board approved this tonight is it ready to be implemented tomorrow or how soon? Mr. Gregoire said it is not ready to go because of the driver situation. If we had the drivers, we wouldn't even be having this

conversation about hybrid, we'd be bringing the students back to school with a remote option. Mr. Fogg said if we hadn't closed the school there wouldn't have been a problem with the drivers.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to bring the kids back into school face to face with a remote option with their required face protections.

Mr. Lampron said when we closed school the entire main office was quarantined or Covid positive and that was the catalyst for closure. Mrs. Collins asked if the quarter, which ends January 29th would be the date for them coming back. Mr. Gregoire said February 1st would be a good date and enough time to implement a plan as long as there are drivers. No one can drive a school bus without a CDL and all certifications.

Mr. Fogg withdrew his motion and Mrs. Collins withdrew her second in order for the Board to make a motion to appoint the new Board member.

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to appoint Sheena Robbins to fill the empty Board seat until the March elections. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Avellani aye, Fogg aye, Collins aye. (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg took public comment while Mr. Ouellette and Mrs. Robbins were out of the room getting Mrs. Robbins sworn in. Mrs. Collins read a message from a parent asking if the Board would discuss option 3, families who can drive their kids also coming back to school. Mr. Fogg responded that the Board had asked for a count of the number of walkers, students being dropped off and the number riding the bus. Mr. Lampron said 139 students need transportation. Last year there was one bus with 65 students on it. He said parents have stepped up and are willing to drive their students if able to. Mr. Gregoire said this wouldn't work if just a few from a grade level were able to get driven to school.

Amy Blackwood said we wouldn't be in this position if we had just paid the bus drivers. She asked if the Board had looked into contracted services. Mr. Gregoire said no other bus companies are able to accommodate us. She asked why we are picking dates when we don't have bus drivers. Mrs. Collins said she thought we were coming here tonight to see if the kids would be able to return to face to face tomorrow.

Nickie Dolaher asked for the administration's recommendation. Mr. Gregoire said his recommendation would be the K-4 progression with the bus situation the way it is. Mr. Lampron said they will also relentlessly pursue bus drivers. Mrs. Dolaher asked if we had buses available to transport high school students. Mr. Gregoire said we do not. Mrs. Kebler also feels bringing K-4 back is the most consistent way to provide special ed services.

Sandrea Taliaferro asked how many people have applied for one of the open bus driver positions. Mr. Gregoire said one but he hasn't had any response from his references. Mrs. Taliaferro had some suggestions on the bus cleaning between trips.

Mr. Avellani said he had a conflict and had to leave the meeting at 7:45.

Terry? From zoom said she feels more parents would transport their kids if they knew they could go back to school fulltime.

Norma Joy said she hoped Mr. Gregoire had contacted more than two bus companies as there are several out there. She suggested a mediator come in to meet with the bus drivers.

Elizabeth ? asked if there would be an option to accommodate parent choice for each of their kids. They will do that.

Stacey Dubreuil said she had already talked to Mr. Ouellette and she thinks they should go into non public because there is already an idea in place but the Board has to vote on it. Mrs. Collins asked, the Board has to vote on what? She said Mr. Ouellette had reached out to her and she had contacted all he former bus drivers and there is an idea put in place but until the Board votes we can't talk about it. Mr. Ouellette said we will take this up in non-public. Mrs. Collins asked, him if he was the only one that knows about this? Mr. Ouellette said we will discuss this in non-public.

Jill Garnet asked Mr. Ouellette when he contacted the bus drivers? He said the past two weeks. She was upset that the rest of the Board has not been informed and that no decisions have been made. You need a game plan.

Mrs. Robbins questioned why the relentless search for bus drivers hadn't already taken place. We just learned now that there is a possible solution for children to return to school. We need to stop wasting time. We need to move forward. Mr. Gregoire said we will be hiring bus drivers away from other companies because they're just not out there. We will probably have to offer bonuses, increased salaries as an incentive.

Mrs. Robbins is not happy with adopting the K-4 model having no idea when the rest of the students will return. Mr. Fogg said we want to come out of non-public with a decision and asked Mr. Ouellette if he had a contact number for the bus drivers and can he contact them while the Board is in non-public? He said they are all present but he does not have a contact number with him. Mrs. Collins said she would like to go into noon-public now because she would like to know what's going on.

John Veno was baffled. He said after two hours of conversation we find out there is a potential solution. Mrs. Collins said she knew nothing about it.

Nicole Hershal said she has a fourth and fifth grader one could go back and one couldn't. And she wondered how it would work with her fifth grader who has the IEP. She questions the K-4 model to start.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to go into non public at 8:02 under RSA 91-A-3-II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Ouellette said during non-public session the Board decided to come back on the 25th, K-4.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, for grades K-4 to come back to face-to-face learning on Monday January 25th. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Ouellette will contact each and every bus driver tomorrow morning and discuss the options. If we can add on bus drivers, we will open 5-6 and then 7-8.

Consent Agenda

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to approve the consent agenda.

Mr. Fogg asked about a check. The Board made a motion up to \$98,000 for a new bus and the bus cost \$92,000. The bus leasing made up the other \$6,000 difference. Mrs. Robbins asked why under payroll, some people are listed twice. Mr. Gregoire said it could be the \$1,000 bonus or health benefits.

Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins abstain (Vote 3-0-1)

Minutes

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to approve the minutes of 12-29-20 with any amendments offered.

Mr. Fogg had two typographical errors. **Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins abstain (Vote 3-0-1)**

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to approve the minutes of 1-5-21 public and non-public with any amendments offered. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins abstain (Vote 3-0-1)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to approve the sealed minutes of 1-5-21. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins abstain (Vote 3-0-1)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to approve the minutes of 1-11-21 with any amendments offered. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins abstain (Vote 3-0-1)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to seal the minutes of 1-19-21 for six months. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to recess the meeting until Thursday January 21st at 6:00. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to enter non-public under RSA 91-A-3-II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee and (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

xxxxxxx made a motion seconded by xxxxxxxx to adjourn the meeting at ? Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Fogg aye, Robbins aye (Vote 4-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting.

Priscilla Colbath
School Board Secretary

