



# Wakefield School Board Minutes

December 7, 2021

Held in the Paul School Library

Approved

BOARD MEMBERS		ADMINISTRATORS	
Bob Ouellette, Chair	✓	Pam Stiles, Superintendent	✓
Relf Fogg, Vice Chair	✓	Michael O'Neill, Financial Manager	✓
Mary Collins	✓	Anne Kebler, Special Ed/Coordinator	✓
Sheena Robbins	✓	Kristen White, Principal	✓
Caitlin Gelinis by Video	✓	Tracy Bemis, Assistant Principal	

Audience: Robert Grillo, Andrea Milroy, Roland Grillo, Nick Fox, Dawn Alie, Sandra Taliaferro, Norma Joy, Emma and Kylee Joy, Zack Delisle, Jason Monahan, Brendon Monahan, Jill Garnet, Nickie Dolaher and Mary Soares with Clearview TV.

Chairman Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6:00. Those present joined in the flag salute.

## **Public Comment**

Mrs. Dawn Alie said kids need to leave their classrooms and go to the cafeteria for lunch, wash their hands with soap and water not just sanitize them. She asked if there would be basketball and will spectators be allowed. Mr. Stiles said the kids will have basketball and the players will not have to wear a mask while playing. They are limiting spectators to two per family and those people will be asked to wear masks. Mr. Nick Fox asked what the difference was sitting in the room now without masks and sitting on the bleachers, it makes no sense. Mr. Jason Monahan said he believes mask wearing should be a personal choice. Mrs. Jill Garnet said doesn't want her children to have to wear masks. Her son has taken four negative Covid tests.

Mrs. Norma Joy said she doesn't like kids being told they will have lunch detentions for pulling their masks down and they will lose their mask break if they can't behave. Mr. Robert Grillo said from tonight on his son will not be wearing a mask at school anymore. He feels mental health issues with kids wearing a mask outweighs any potential Covid case. He said of the 98 deaths in Carroll County 90% were over 65. Mrs. Nichole Dolaher said she doesn't feel that the Superintendent, Principal or an Assistant Principal have the right to make decisions without parents. She said the school makes rules without letting parents know. She said there are no mask breaks at all in this school.

Mr. Fox said parents had no faith in the last administration. Communication was a major issue the last two years and we're looking for the administration to give us more. Mr. Fogg said the

Board made a decision to let the administration do what they believe is best because they have shown us that they are doing the very best they can considering all the factors. Mrs. Stiles said she did send out an email because we were considered at outbreak status from DHHS. We have sent out surveys to the community and have tried very hard to keep you informed. We're doing our very best and she apologized to anyone who did not receive the emails.

Mr. Grillo asked who the School Board is accountable to. Mr. Fogg said the taxpayers and students. Mr. Grillo said there should have been an emergency meeting with parents about the mask mandate. He moved to New Hampshire because he was living in a communist state. He said masks are a personal choice. The Board is accountable to us and I'm accountable for my child. Mrs. Alie said DHHS recommends masks. Mrs. Stiles said the handwashing etc. have not been followed lately with fidelity. She said the morning announcements are going to remind teachers and students to wash their hands regularly.

Mrs. Garnet asked what the outcome would be if her children come to school tomorrow without masks. Mr. Stiles said a parent can write a letter to the school asking for an exemption. The letter is filed and the child does not need to wear the mask. Mrs. Joy said there are things going on in school that don't get the punishment that a mask infraction gets. Teachers are yelling at students and it's not okay. Mrs. Stiles said if a staff member is doing that, please let the principal know immediately. Mrs. Garnet gave a positive shout out to Mrs. White for all her hard work. There was a discussion among parents about not teaching politics in school.

Mrs. Taliaferro said she has been to school board meetings and she knows that Covid has been a topic at every meeting and she has received the emails and calls that have gone out and she appreciates all the information and everything the administration tries to do. She said the new teachers aren't used to Wakefield ways yet. She's thankful for the new administration and how approachable they are. Mr. Fox said he believes everyone is much happier with the new administration. Mr. Ouellette thanked the parents for their honesty and said there is a group out there that feels just the opposite. It's tough on the Board and the Administration because we can't please everyone.

There was a discussion among parents about homework. The parents had a discussion about the bathrooms. Mrs. Dolaher shared an incident that happened to her daughter and feels there should be one bathroom for transgender students and all the other bathrooms should go back to the way they've always been. She said that Mrs. Stiles told her this is a law and she said she called the governor and DOE among others and found it was not a law, Mrs. Stiles said it is Title 9 and we also have a policy written in 2017 and the Board approved that language. She gave Mrs. Dolaher the policy to read. Mrs. Joy said the students are treating this as a joke and they need to be told this is serious stuff.

Mrs. Alie said at her school they are not having this issue. The students go to the bathroom where they feel comfortable. She is mortified how these transgender students are being treated by the kids at Paul School. Mr. Ouellette said the administration will look at the bathroom issue.

### **Consent Agenda**

**Mrs. Gelinis made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the consent Agenda.  
(Vote 4-1)**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the non public minutes of 11-2-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the public minutes of 11-2-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the Budget Workshop minutes of 11-8-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the public minutes of 11-16-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the non public minutes of 11-16-21 with any amendments offered. (Vote 5-0)**

## **Reports**

### **Superintendents Report**

Mrs. Stiles said with the rise in covid cases and the Thanksgiving holiday at our doorstep, school was closed on November 22 and 23. Because not all Blizzard Bag materials had been sent home and students did not have Chromebook, the decision was made to close and add the days to the end of the calendar. Students and staff are wearing masks until December 22. The results of the Covid Staff Survey will be discussed later in the meeting. Staffing continues to be a challenge. With a minimal substitute pool and illness among the adults, finding coverage during the day impacts the level of instruction that is taking place. I'd like to commend the staff for their willingness to jump in wherever needed, to do whatever is asked and to do it all with a smile. We were expecting to have a new driver join us last week, however, covid impacted their family and she will not be able to start until after Christmas break. Our families have been remarkable when asked to transport their own children - we are down to 4 drivers which means that three of them are covering two routes each.

The SAU is busy preparing documents for the annual School District Meeting. Using last year's booklet as a guide, it will be ready for distribution before the March vote. I will be working with teachers in grades K-2 on updating their report card. Category designations are outdated and the language needs revision. Our goal is to create a document that will be user friendly for parents and become a permanent school document. The school received a donation from the Parish Helpers from First Congregational Church of Wakefield in the amount of \$500; "On behalf of the Parish Helpers we wish to donate to your wonderful school."

### **School Administration Report**

Mrs. White said that Ms. Cook led our Red Ribbon week, educating students about the importance of being drug free and bully free. One way we promoted being drug and bulky free was through a classroom door decorating contest. Congratulations to Mrs. Bonnevie's fifth grade class for being our winners. They enjoyed a pizza lunch and we all enjoyed reading their essays

on the importance of being drug and bully free. On Saturday, November 6th, the New England Center for Children (NECC) facilitated a CALM training at the school; with a focus on how to utilize interventions that can de-escalate challenging behaviors. Staff in attendance learned effective procedures that will benefit students and adults.

Throughout the week of November 8th, staff and students participated in a variety of learning activities to celebrate our Veterans. As a member of a military family myself, I was honored to be invited into classrooms to read "Twenty Two Steps" to several classrooms. I was impressed with our students' hearts and appreciation for our Veterans. On Friday November 12th our incredible PTA hosted an ice cream social for our September and October Outstanding Student recipients. Students enjoyed a yummy treat while I enjoyed seeing their eyes light up in appreciation for this thoughtful gesture by our PTA. I was incredibly proud of our students who used their manners and showed their appreciation to our PTA.

On Monday November 15th we welcomed Caroline Dexter as our new Art teacher. In her short time here at the Paul School, she has already made a positive impact by fostering relationships with students, jumping in to support classrooms and has been working hard to find creative ways to display student work. In an effort to ensure the health and well-being of our school community we shifted from in person Parent/Teacher Conferences to virtual. We would like to thank our staff and families for their support and ability to shift to virtual so quickly. I sat in on several conferences and I was impressed with the team effort our educators and families have in approaching ways to meet the diverse needs of our learners. We appreciate the support and efforts of all members of our Paul School community.

On November 16th we celebrated our 50th Day of school, students and staff dressed in their favorite 50's style. The Student Success Center is going very well! On average Mrs. DeColfmacker has twenty students visiting the center each day, most of whom ask to come. Their reasons for coming vary but mostly stem from frustration due to a home/school issue, or their classmates. Students who take a moment to step away from what's causing them to feel frustrated have said that they feel so much better and are ready to go back to class. Students have said that they like knowing there's a space for them to go when they start to get mad or overwhelmed. When connecting with the teachers after their student has visited, the feedback has been positive and that the demeanor of the students improves which alleviates the stress of the class as a whole.

The Title I Literacy program began servicing children October 14, 2021. Diana Pettis and Kate Kelley are servicing 48 students between grades K to 6. K: 7 students 1: 11 students 2: 14 students 3: 7 students 4: 2 students (1 student recently moved to monitor status: 5: 5 students 6: 2 students interventions used include: Reading Mastery (K and 1), Literacy Footprints Intervention kit for Guided Reading), phonemic awareness work, and Orton Gillingham. Orton Gillingham is provided as a 1-1 intervention and happens before school for two students and during the school day for one student. Diana Pettis is certified level 2 Dyslexia Practitioner and can deliver this intervention to students.

On November 4, 2021, parents of Title I students were offered times to attend remotely the beginning of the year parent meeting. The 8:30am session had 4 parents and the 2:30pm session had 6 parents. Diana and Kate also participated in parent teacher conferences for 40 students. On

November 17, 2021, a survey was sent to all parents to get feedback on things that the Title I program could do to help support them. 6 returned surveys as of November 29, 2021. Parents indicated that they would be willing to participate in a bi-monthly meeting (remotely) for parent training around topics such as book selection and homework support. On Wednesday December 1st we held our first annual Turkey Trot for grades K-8 as well as an extra recess for students for their participation in our PBIS Recess Rollout. On Friday December 3rd our PreK students participated in the Turkey Trot and extra recess.

We would like to celebrate Robin Fifield as our Outstanding Staff member for the month of November. Robin went above and beyond this month jumping in to cover classrooms when needed, taking on extra duties and ensuring that her colleagues and students are cared for, she is always putting others first. We are grateful for her dedication to the Paul School.

Mr. Collins asked if there were times when there are more than one student in the Student Success Center. Mrs. White said there are. The room holds about 5 kids and Mrs. DeColfmacker knows when a guidance counselor or Mrs. White needs to be called into the room. Mrs. Collins asked if it was teachers sending students or students deciding they need to leave the classroom? Mrs. White said a little of both. Kids usually spend about ten minutes in the center.

### **Old Business**

#### **Covid Response Update**

Mrs. Stiles told the Board there were staff surveys in their packets dealing with Covid. 80% of staff were in favor of wearing mask until Christmas. It was good information she shared with the Advisory Team and they continue to look to improve and try to keep people happy. Mrs. Collins said she'd like to address some of the parents concerns dealing with Covid. She would like the kids to go back to eating lunch in the cafeteria. She said we are going on to two years with Covid and kids are sitting in the classroom and not leaving. She does not feel this is healthy. Mrs. White said the special ed small groups have been moved to the art room and the gym is being used for physical education.

Mrs. Robbins agreed with Mrs. Collins and she said one of the teachers and parents feel kids are not social distancing at lunch in their rooms and would probably happen better in the cafeteria. Mr. Ouellette agreed this might be better. Mrs. Collins said she doesn't expect it to happen tomorrow because Café Services need time to adjust. Mrs. White said teachers would have to do seating charts. Mrs. Collins would like masks to be optional. If we are asking parents to write letters for their child to be exempt from mask-wearing making them optional is the same thing. She said we've worn masks most of the time. Covid is still spreading and we need to learn to live with Covid. She was concerned about basketball and doesn't want to see activities cancelled. Parents need to decide if they want to attend these activities or not. Mrs. Robbins said two years to adults is a lot different than two years in a child's life.

Mrs. Gelinas said we are working on getting the cafeteria back open. She wants to let the parents know that they hear them and are trying but if the teachers are getting sick, they can't be here and if they can't be here the school cannot be open. Mrs. Collins said she didn't want to see teachers or anyone get sick so it would be their choice to wear a mask to prevent them from getting sick. **Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, that wearing a mask**

**should be optional (Vote 4-1)**

Mr. Ouellette said he is for Mrs. Collins motion but on the flip side most of the teachers are not and if we get a bunch of teachers that are out, we'll be back to remote. There is another side that you will probably hear. This is not easy for the administration. N95 masks are provided at the school for teachers. Mrs. Robbins believes that normalcy matters when it comes to mental health. Right now, there are four with Covid in the school. She recommended if the number climbs we relook at this, The Board discussed masking individual rooms if there is a case in that classroom.

Judy Nason Bridge

Mrs. Stiles said there are pictures in the packet of a bridge in Dover that the engineer designed. She explained what the engineer suggested. Mr. Fogg said he thought the information the Board was seeking was if his drawing was structurally sound. Mrs. Stiles said before he gave an answer, he had some concerns about the drainage area and the direction they were going then the drawing would have to be amended. Other than that, the drawing was fine except it would have to be angled and moved to the left.

Mr. Fogg said the culvert that was proposed addressed the amount of water that goes into that and is oversized He said if the project is moved school side of the light post it would create a smaller span. He said the bridge was not closer than fourteen feet from the catch basin it's not over it. There is seldom standing water in the basin. He said having someone design a bridge at an expense not necessary if the bridge he presented is structurally sound. Amending the location is easy to do.

Mr. Fogg asked how the Board felt about creating a warrant article for \$8,000 to \$10,000 for this bridge, There's \$10,000 in the Trust right now.

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to set up a warrant article asking the Wakefield School District to raise and appropriate and place into the Judith Nason Memorial Capital Reserve Fund an additional \$10,000 to complete the project. (Vote 4-1)**

Mrs. Robbins said she feels it's a little irresponsible to put a warrant article out there with a number we're just guessing. Mr. Fogg said he believes it's an \$18,000 project.

**New Business**

Physical Security Assessment -Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Mrs. Stiles said there are only some minor suggestions because the security at the school has been very well done.

2022-2023 Budget Update

After the last Board meeting there were some adjustments made to the operating budget which amounted to \$7,100 taken out to meet needs which brings the bottom line to below where it was last year. The proposed budget for 2022-2023 is \$10,720,981. The current budget is \$10,765,580 which is about \$45,000 less than the current budget.

Mrs. Stiles presented the Default Budget which is \$11,017,512.55 or \$296,539 greater than the proposed operating budget.

### 2022-2023 Warrant Articles

Next Mrs. Stiles presented the warrant articles taken directly from the CIP. They have all been sent to DRA and the language has been approved. They will all be voted on at the next Board meeting. They just finished collective bargaining with the teachers and that will be brought forward at the next meeting also. The Para CBA has already been ratified. There are warrant articles for Special Ed, Transportation, Multipurpose room floor, Bathroom renovation, parking lot and sidewalk replacement, boilers, well replacement and maintenance building replacement

### Policies

#### EBB Safety Precautions/Safe Schools Committee (first reading)

Mrs. Collins said some items in this policy are in other policies so they condensed it. A committee will be formed. The Superintendent and Principal will see about putting the committee together. Parents will not be part of this committee because it's about safety inside the building.

#### IKB Homework (second reading)

Mrs. Collins said this was a bit of a struggle. Some schools have a lot and others none. Mrs. White put this together. Even if they don't have homework they are encouraged to read. Mrs. Robbins said she disagreed with the Policy Committee because data indicates homework doesn't aid in student achievement. Mrs. Gelinis thanked the committee for addressing some of her concerns.

**Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve Policy IKB. (Vote 3-2)**

### Sub Committee Updates

#### Facilities

The Board has no interest in pursuing the disinfectant that was presented to the Facilities Committee.

**Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve the Facilities Committee minutes. (2-0)**

#### Policy Committee

The minutes of that committee meeting were in the packets.

#### Wellness Committee

Wellness Committee minutes are a requirement of the Food Service Application. Mrs. Kebler said they have a monthly meeting and focus on student and staff wellness. They reviewed the food suggestion parties written by Elayne Ellis for years. This is a list that teachers are to use for a guideline for their parties. The Wellness Policy was brought to the Board in April and it was tabled and is still tabled. Mrs. Robbins said they are working on getting input from the staff and then bringing it to the Board. They are trying to get answers about an assessment that's mentioned in the policy.

Mrs. Kebler said they are trying to organize a yoga class. There are eighteen that would like to do this. One of the staff is a yoga instructor. They have a space problem. The Town Hall Opera House was suggested. Mrs. White suggested a happy call home from teachers. Mrs. Robbins shared what her school was doing monthly for self-care. She said that we're supposed to submit a Wellness Policy to the state as well. She and the school nurse will work on a student wellness week for the spring. They will also have a wellness day for staff. The Committee now has ten members.

**Mrs. Gelinas made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins to approve the Wellness Committee minutes of October 25<sup>th</sup>. (2-0)**

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Garnet questioned some of the comments from teachers on the survey. Mrs. Joy said the boxed lunches don't look as appetizing as the lunches they eat in the cafeteria. Mrs. Dolaher asked if there was a problem with heat in the classroom. Her daughter says they have a space heater because there is no heat in her classroom 3P. Mr. Grillo said that the teachers wearing masks should be protected against kids without masks if they feel masks work. Mrs. Alie asked if they could restructure classes and not have multi layered classes but put the higher achievers in a class. The parents discussed homework and curriculum.

### **Nominations /Hires/Resignations**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to approve the new hires for R Stevens, M. Soares, and resignations for L Toohey, J Palmatier. (Vote 5-0)**

Mr. Fogg asked if exit interviews were being conducted. Mrs. Stiles said she spoke with Jenn but not Lisa

### **Correspondence**

None

### **Non Public Session**

**Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gelinas, to enter nonpublic under 91-A 3:11(c) at 8:40. Roll call Gelinas aye, Robbins aye, Fogg aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 5-0)**

The Board reentered public session at 9:12

**Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Robbins, to seal the non public minutes (Vote 5-0)**

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Gelinas, to adjourn the meeting at 9:15. (Vote 5-0)**

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath  
School Board Secretary