

SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

(Pre-Deliberative Session Board Meeting)

MINUTES

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A meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 in the Gymnasium at Sanborn Regional High School.

SRSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Jim Baker, Chair
Peter Broderick (Excused)
Dawn Dutton
Jamie Fitzpatrick
Larry Heath (via remote connection)
Tammy Mahoney, Vice Chair

STUDENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:

Jake Tedford (Excused)

ADMINISTRATORS:

Thomas Ambrose, Superintendent
Matthew Angell, Bus/Administrator

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Jim Baker followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. COMMUNICATION

- 2.1 Distribution of Manifests Documents- Chair Baker noted that the Manifests are being circulated for signatures.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- 3.1 Discussion of remote or in-person attendance for the week of March 1-5

Chair Baker asked Superintendent Ambrose to begin the discussion.

Mr. Ambrose said, two weeks ago we had a discussion at the school board meeting about the week of March 1 to March 5; the week that follows February vacation. We were trying to figure out what would be the best course of action to ensure that school stays open as smoothly as it has been lately.

We looked over the history of school closures for school moving to a remote model over the last few months and we noticed that when we didn't have a plan in November (after Thanksgiving) we had to go to remote very quickly on short notice and that when we were remote for the week after Christmas, we've been open for the longest stretch that we have been since the since the start of this school year. So, right now we have very low cases; we only have quarantines ranging between 25 and 30 people right now. There was one time when it was over 150 so things are going very well. Our health and safety protocols are going very well.

The Administration has asked me to recommend to the School Board that we have school as a normal school week the week after February break but they did ask me to have the Board consider having a remote day on the Monday after February break so that they can have the nurses and staff check on all the different staff members and everyone to make sure that no one is quarantining on short notice so basically what they're saying is, could we have a remote school day on March 1st and then return right back to in person learning on March 2nd and keep on going. So, that's the question for the Board that needs a motion and vote; would you like to have school be just a normal school week that week, would you like it to be remote or would the Board like it to be remote or in person but with remote on the first day back from February break to give everyone a chance to kind of assess where the quarantine situation is.

Chair Baker asked if someone would like to make a Motion. Mr. Heath moved that the school district be in remote learning the first day after February vacation (March 1, 2021) and go back to in person learning thereafter, seconded by Ms. Dutton.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said, my preference would be to do a full week. What is it specifically we think we're going to achieve on that Monday? Let me ask it

another way; what happens if we don't have the Monday remote? How then does the come in period look from an administrative perspective?

Mr. Ambrose responded, by having the day after break remote, it gives the nurses who have been off for 10 days an opportunity to review any emails or medical documents that have come in over the course of February break regarding current quarantines. It gives them an opportunity to review everything and make sure that we have the staffing that we need to open school.

By not being remote on that Monday, it just means that the possibility that we could have to go remote Monday morning would exist on short notice because there's no staff in the building. The only people in the building for the week of February break are some Administrators; some are out some are in so there's no one there to monitor whether or not staff are quarantining over the break. So that Monday would just give them a chance to get the lay of the land, figure out what's going on and make sure that we're all covered and ready to go for the for the reopening the next day.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said, so it's really a comparative point. The expectation is we're not going to have an issue. By taking Monday off, we can make sure if there's an issue it can be planned as opposed to rolling the dice and saying we're just going to assume there's not going to be an issue. By assuming there's not going to be an issue then you take your chance that if there is an issue it's a little bit chaotic to your comment.

Mr. Ambrose said, yes, keeping things smooth and consistent has been a goal for the team, for all of us this year and we've done a really good job of that I think that's you said it perfectly.

Mr. Baker asked for clarification that the data the nurses would be reviewing would be coming in as it comes in but presumably, a lot of it comes in on a Monday.

Mr. Ambrose responded, yes, I think it's important to remember that our nurses are on a teachers' contract and other administrators will be away, not necessarily traveling, but maybe on vacation. So officially, we won't have a full capacity staff back until Monday, March 1. The nursing staff and the office staff take vacation time like Administrators, so there could be a mixed group of people in and out but really Jamie said it best that when we get in on Monday, if we have school normal on Monday, then we just are taking a little bit of a risk that it might be rough and it there might be a last minute switch that needs to occur. I know as a parent of two students that are remote with the in-person and remote going back and forth, that the more I can know what's going on, the better off it is for me because I can plan. I'd rather know that Monday's off than plan on having school Monday and then find out that it's off on Monday morning at six o'clock or Sunday night which is not really fair to the nurse or the Administrators to have to figure that out on Sunday night so I want to avoid that.

Mr. Baker asked for any further discussion. Seeing none, he called for a vote.

Roll Call Vote: All in Favor

4. Public Comment - none

Superintendent Ambrose said that Mr. Dawson usually meets to discuss athletics but he wanted me to let everyone know that everything is going fine, he is holding steady. There have been some quarantines, but we made the right decision letting students choose in-person or remote. That seems to be working really well. He will give a more detailed update at the next Board meeting.

5. Other Business

5.1 Next Meeting Agenda

5.2 Announcements

5.2.2 The next Sanborn Regional School Board meeting will be held on **Wednesday, February 10th at 6:00 PM** in the Library at Sanborn Regional High School

The Second (Voting) Session of the Annual School District Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 9, 2021** from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Swasey Gymnasium (Seminary Campus) for Kingston voters and at 8D Merrimac Road (Fire Rescue Station) for Newton voters.

6. Mr. Baker said this concludes our business for now (6:40 PM) and at 7:00 PM the Deliberative Session starts.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Phyllis Kennedy
School Board Secretary