

The Laconia School Board held a regular meeting at the Laconia High School Auditorium.

PRESENT: Aaron Hayward, Dawn Johnson, Joe Cormier, Laura Dunn, Heather Lounsbury, Malcolm Murray, Nick Grenon, Superintendent Steve Tucker, and Assistant Superintendent Hinds.

ABSENT: Business Administrator Christine Blouin.

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairperson, Heather Lounsbury, called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. The agenda was posted on Monday, August 30th at the SAU office and on the District's website, along with being sent to each of our schools, the Laconia Daily Sun, Laconia Library, and City Hall, in accordance with RSA 91-A.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Board Nick Grenon made a motion to amend the agenda to include a second General Public Comment after item #9, Action. Each General Public Comment to last 20 minutes each unless otherwise stated by the Board Chairperson to add additional time, seconded by Board Member Murray. Board Member Johnson opposed. The vote was 6-1.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Board Member Hayward to amend the minutes to correct noted grammatical/spelling errors by Board Chairperson Lounsbury and to correct in the Superintendent's Report that Superintendent Tucker said there is one class at Woodland Heights School that will eat in the classroom and *not* some classes, and to include that Board Member Dunn stated in Action, "to be clear, we are taking action on everything we just talked about in discussion". The motion was seconded by Board Member Dunn. The vote was unanimous.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Personnel: Board Member Cormier said this committee met and discussed negotiations but that there was no financial discussion that took place.

Facilities: Board Member Murray said this committee met with Rist Frost Shumway and discussed ESSER Funds.

Policy: Board Member Hayward said this committee met on August 30th and discussed handbooks, policies BEDH and BEDH-P and the committee is looking to rescind policy BEDH-P.

Board Member Input

Board Member Dunn said she attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Colonial Theater and it was nice to see ten Laconia students take part of the event. Board Member Johnson said the Laconia High School Girls Varsity Soccer won their first game of the season 2-1.

BOARD CHAIR REPORT /CALENDAR

Board Chairperson Lounsbury reported that students return to school on September 7th and talked about future School Board meetings and where they should be held and if we should continue with the ZOOM option. After a brief discussion, Board Chairperson Lounsbury said she hopes drama returns to the LHS auditorium and the Board meetings can return to the SAU Board Room at some time in the future.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Tucker reported on the staff Opening Day on Monday, August 30th and the professional development and building meeting happening on Tuesday, August 31st. He continued to update the Board on the Stay in School Plan. He talked about the safety protocols and that cases per 1,000 are up for positive COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. He reported on the DHHS toolkit for mask wearing, screenings, vaccinations, handwashing and being outdoors. He talked about the guidelines for mask breaks outside or

when 6 feet apart, and the recent decision making matrix. Board Member Hayward inquired about how many children 12 years old and up in the County are vaccinated and Superintendent Tucker replied about 3%. He continued to report on clusters and outbreaks, and communicating COVID-19 data to the school community by creating a dashboard on the District's website. He reported that cases in the county and city have gone up since August 17th from 100 in the county to 181 as of August 30th and 22 in Laconia on August 17th to 69 as of August 30th. He talked about mask wearing and that in the in the Lakes Region, 10 schools are mask optional for the opening of the new school year and 7 schools are requiring mask wearing. He continued to report that 40% of new COVID cases are the Delta variant and reported on District communication and emphasized the importance of getting students back into school.

DISCUSSION

- **Stay in School Update:** The Board discussed the Huot Technical Center's sending schools' requiring masks, implementing a response mitigation method in the event of an outbreak. The Superintendent talked about the recommendations from DHHS and how Belknap County is in the substantial zone and should be masking according to the matrix. The Board talked about State/County COVID-19 data versus local and school COVID-19 data.
- **Student/Parent Handbooks:** Board Member Dunn said she made sure to take adequate time to read all the handbooks per policy CHCA.

General Public Comment on Discussion and Action Items

- Marcia Hayward of Ward 1 talked about children 11 years old and younger not being vaccinated and the CDC's recommendation to wear masks indoors.
- Dana Hacket of Sanborn Street talked about her immune compromised child and that she is a proponent of mask wearing in schools.
- Jennifer Freo, Ward 3 of Lynward Street talked about her support of optional mask wearing in schools.
- Charles Bradley Lafayette Street, Ward 5, expressed his opposition to students wearing masks.
- Liana Crowell of Sara Circle talked about her opposition of students wearing masks.
- Doug Teegarden of Gilford Ave talked about his opposition to the metric and mask wearing.
- Oscar Toce of Stafford Street talked about his opposition to mask wearing.
- Karin Salome Ward 3 of Orchard Street talked about her support for mask wearing.
- Carol McCarthy, Ward 3 of Bell Hill Road talked about her support for masks in schools.
- Abby Dae, Ward 4 talked about requiring masks.
- Mo Baxley talked about his support for mask wearing.
- Catherine Tokarz, Ward 6 talked her support for a mask mandate.
- Charlene Stockton of Valley Street talked about her opposition to mask wearing.
- Jay Tomlinson, Ward 4 of Adam Street talked about the emotional impact of mask wearing.
- Wanda Lesler of Wistwood Lane talked about wearing masks while COVID-19 numbers are up and the option of taking them off when numbers go down.

ACTION

- **Stay in School Update:** Motion made by Board Member Dunn to approve that masks are strongly recommended and to empower the Superintendent to make decisions using local and school data, seconded by Board Member Cormier. Board Members Hayward and Murray opposed. The vote was 5-2.
- **Parent/Student Handbook:** Motion made by Board Member Dunn to approve the Student/Parent Handbooks as presented, seconded by Board Member Cormier. The vote was unanimous.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no general public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Board Member Cormier to adjourn, seconded by Board Member Murray. The vote was unanimous. The Board meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Hinds
Clerk