

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
BEMIDJI AREA SCHOOLS
AUGUST 25, 2021**

The special meeting of the Board of Education, Bemidji Area Schools, Bemidji, Beltrami/Hubbard Counties, Minnesota, was held on Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 4:00 p.m., in the District Office Board Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Haack, Ann Long Voelkner, Gabriel Warren, Jeff Lind, Sarah Young, and Carol L. Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER: 4:00 p.m.

WELCOME & RULES – ANN LONG VOELKNER

PREVIEW OF AGENDA – SUPERINTENDENT TIM LUTZ

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The motion was offered by Sarah Young, seconded by Jeff Lind, and carried by all in attendance to approve the agenda.

AGENDA:

Public Participation

1. Josefina Li – Mask Mandate
2. Elijah Weeks - Masking
3. Mitch Kiehne – Pro Mask Mandate
4. Daniel Larson – Masking
5. Dwayne Weiher - Masks
6. Marie Richey - Masks
7. Julie Beevor - Masks
8. Mary Fairbanks – Mask Support in Schools

Health and Safety Measures for the 2021-2022 School year:

Superintendent Tim Lutz provided an update on current COVID information and an overview of the four resolution options for today's meeting.

Dr. David Wilcox, from Sanford Medical Center, provided a current COVID update and answered Board Member questions.

Jeff Lind introduced the following resolution and urged its adoption:

**RESOLUTION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES FOR THE 2021-2022
SCHOOL YEAR – OPTION #2**

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes Section 123B.09 vests the care, management, and control of independent districts in the school board; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Independent School District No. 31, Bemidji Area Schools, [hereinafter the "Superintendent"] is responsible for the management of the schools, the administration of all School District policies, and is directly accountable to the School Board; and

WHEREAS, when responsibilities are not specifically prescribed nor School District policy applicable, the Superintendent shall use personal and professional judgment, subject to review by the School Board, pursuant to School Board Policy 100-20-1; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") and the Minnesota Department of Health ("MDH") have determined that the COVID-19 pandemic is currently ongoing and may remain ongoing for an unknown time; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Education ("MDE") has issued and may continue to issue written guidance for Minnesota schools on educational issues related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the MDH has issued and may continue to issue written guidance for Minnesota schools on public health issues related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent and the administration of the School District have conferred with the School Board regarding COVID-19 health and safety measures, the current CDC, MDE, and MDH requirements for each, and other relevant information; and

WHEREAS, based upon the collective consideration of these factors, the Superintendent has recommended to the School Board that the following be implemented at the commencement of the 2021-2022 school year:

Prevention Strategies: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to follow the strategies of physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, contact tracing, screening testing, and staying home when sick as defined in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools"

Masking: All students in grades K-5 and all staff and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, as specified in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 31 as follows:

Section 1: The Superintendent is hereby directed to implement the following health and safety measures to open the 2021-2022 school year:

Prevention Strategies: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to follow the strategies of physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, contact tracing, screening testing, and staying home when sick as defined in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools"

Masking: All students in grades K-5 and all staff and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, as specified in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools"

Section 2: The Superintendent is hereby authorized, after consultation with the School Board Chair and notification to the School Board, to select and implement different health and safety measures for the School District or any specific school buildings without School Board action if the Superintendent reasonably believes that prompt implementation of different health and safety measures is necessary, and that constraints of time and public health considerations render it impractical to hold a School Board meeting to approve the implementation. The health and safety measures selected and implemented by the Superintendent shall continue in effect unless and until the School Board, in consultation with the Superintendent and appropriate school district staff and public health officials, deems it in the best interest of the School District and its students to implement different health and safety measures.

Section 3: The Superintendent will provide regular updates to the School Board regarding the School District's efforts to implement COVID-19 related educational and public health guidance issued by the MDE and the MDH, respectively.

The motion for the foregoing resolution failed due to lack of a second.

Sarah Young introduced the following resolution and urged its adoption:

RESOLUTION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES FOR THE 2021-2022
SCHOOL YEAR – OPTION #1

WHEREAS, Minnesota Statutes Section 123B.09 vests the care, management, and control of independent districts in the school board; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Independent School District No. 31, Bemidji Area Schools, [hereinafter the “Superintendent”] is responsible for the management of the schools, the administration of all School District policies, and is directly accountable to the School Board; and

WHEREAS, when responsibilities are not specifically prescribed nor School District policy applicable, the Superintendent shall use personal and professional judgment, subject to review by the School Board, pursuant to School Board Policy 100-20-1; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the Minnesota Department of Health (“MDH”) have determined that the COVID-19 pandemic is currently ongoing and may remain ongoing for an unknown time; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Department of Education (“MDE”) has issued and may continue to issue written guidance for Minnesota schools on educational issues related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the MDH has issued and may continue to issue written guidance for Minnesota schools on public health issues related to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent and the administration of the School District have conferred with the School Board regarding COVID-19 health and safety measures, the current CDC, MDE, and MDH requirements for each, and other relevant information; and

WHEREAS, based upon the collective consideration of these factors, the Superintendent has recommended to the School Board that the following be implemented at the commencement of the 2021-2022 school year:

Prevention Strategies: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to follow the strategies of physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, contact tracing, screening testing, and staying home when sick as defined in the “CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools”

Masking: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, as specified in the “CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 31 as follows:

Section 1: The Superintendent is hereby directed to implement the following health and safety measures to open the 2021-2022 school year:

Prevention Strategies: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to follow the strategies of physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, contact tracing, screening testing, and staying home when sick as defined in the “CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools”

Masking: All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings must wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status, as specified in the “CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools.”

Section 2: The Superintendent is hereby authorized, after consultation with the School Board Chair and notification to the School Board, to select and implement different health and safety measures for the School District or any specific school buildings without School Board action if the Superintendent reasonably believes that prompt implementation of different health and safety measures is necessary, and that constraints of time and public health considerations render it impractical to hold a School Board meeting to approve the implementation. The health and safety measures selected and implemented by the Superintendent shall continue in effect unless and until

the School Board, in consultation with the Superintendent and appropriate school district staff and public health officials, deems it in the best interest of the School District and its students to implement different health and safety measures.

Section 3: The Superintendent will provide regular updates to the School Board regarding the School District's efforts to implement COVID-19 related educational and public health guidance issued by the MDE and the MDH, respectively.

The motion for the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Carol L. Johnson.

A motion was made by Jeff Haack and seconded by Gabriel Warren to amend the motion to include, *with a maximum quarantine period of ten days.*

A motion was made by Jeff Haack and seconded by Gabriel Warren to amend the motion to include, *shortened quarantine period as outlined by MDH quarantine guidance.*

A motion was made by Gabriel Warren and seconded by Jeff Haack to amend the motion to include, *students will be allowed to remove masks outdoors.*

Masking: *All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings must wear a mask indoors, regardless of vaccination status, as specified in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools."*

Prevention Strategies: *All staff, students, and visitors within Independent School District No. 31 buildings, regardless of vaccination status, are recommended to follow the strategies of physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfection, contact tracing, screening testing, and staying home when sick as defined in the "CDC Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools" and implementation of the shortened quarantine period as outlined by MDH Quarantine Guidance.*

A tabulation of votes is as follows:

AYES: Jeff Haack, Sarah Young, Gabriel Warren, Carol L. Johnson, and Ann Long Voelkner
NOES: Jeff Lind
ABSENT: None

WHEREUPON, the foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted.

Adjournment

The motion was offered by Sarah Young, seconded by Jeff Haack, and carried by all in attendance to adjourn the meeting. Time: 6:05 p.m.

Sarah Young, Clerk

Date Approved

Ann Long Voelkner, Chair

Date Approved