

BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Communications/Community Outreach Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: Communications/Community Outreach Subcommittee

Meeting type: Regular

Date of Meeting: 9/3/20

Minutes submitted by: Kimberly LaTourette

Members present: Kathy Baker, Kimberly LaTourette, Ed Sbordone

Members absent:

Other attendees: Pat Cosentino, Rich Sanzo, Dominic Cipollone, Rick Regan

Place of Meeting: Meeting House Hill School Cafetorium, 24 Gillotti Road, New Fairfield, CT.

Due to in-person meeting restrictions of 25 persons, Board Members and Administrators will be physically present while the public may join us for participation via the provided Zoom link:

Meeting Access: Communications/Community Outreach (9/3 at 6 p.m.)

Web: <https://zoom.us/j/92926000800> Dial In: (929) 205-6099 Meeting ID: 929 2600 0800

Meeting called to order: at 6:11 p.m. by Kathy Baker.

II. Election of Chair

Kimberly LaTourette nominated Kathy Baker for chair, seconded by Ed Sbordone. All in favor.

Approval of Minutes

A. September 5, 2019 – Regular

Motion: To approve the minutes of September 5, 2019

Made by: Kathy Baker

Seconded by: Kim LaTourette

Recording of Vote: All in favor

III. Action Items - none

IV. Information Items

A. Reopening of Schools

Dr. Cosentino shared that it has been a very busy couple of days. Our staff and administrators are working very hard, and she would like to thank everyone for their patience.

There are two major issues:

Technology - We purchased 900 Chromebooks at the end of May/June, and they have not arrived yet. That has been challenging for teachers, but they are making do. Tuesday night, the help desk was flooded because student Chromebooks were not working. We have tech staff working this weekend to fix them. This is above and beyond, but they are committed.

Transportation - When we started, the guidance from the state was telling kids to be on the bus, socially distanced. We asked parents to drive their kids. We had 50% of parents say they would drive. We probably have about 15-20% on buses and everyone else is driving. Arrivals are much better. CONS and MHHS dismissals are having issues. It takes an hour and a half for pickups. All of the administrators and staff are helping, and it is very difficult. We also have a new dismissal program that has had some kinks that we are trying to work out. Parents have been awesome! Our buses are empty, so we are asking parents to put their kids on the bus if they feel comfortable.

We are going to dismiss every school one hour earlier next week. Right now, on the half days we have staff and with full days we will not have staff. We need the days to see if with more kids on the bus, streamlining of the program, and changing a couple of other things, we will see how quickly we can get this done. Staff will stay, and students will early dismiss. We are encouraging CONS and MHHS to put signs in their windows with students' information - that will be helpful.

We are having some problems filling some positions that are hard to fill. We do not have candidates. We are looking for paras. Bus company is still looking for monitors, and we need cafeteria aides also. We may have to offer some full year positions to keep them.

Dr. Cosentino would like to remind everyone that we are still low risk, but COVID is starting to increase. We have to keep an eye out for everyone's health and safety this weekend or we may have to go on hybrid or remote learning.

Our Athletic Director will be at the regular meeting to discuss sports. CIAC and the state make decisions. We are following their very specific guidelines.

We decided at the end of the year to not have some of the after-school programs until we get our school days under control. Then we will work on adding in programs. Major/Minors will be starting at MHHS. What about the music program at the MS?

This has been very challenging for everyone. This is not easy, it is unprecedented.

V. Other - A HS parent spoke about the music programs. What other programs may have been cut? Culinary? Marching band is outside and is a small group of kids. The Superintendent made the decision to have smaller classes, and she had to shift some teachers around. Concerning dismissal at Consolidated and MHHS, Dr. Sanzo spoke about procedural and software issues that have to be worked out. More time is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the program being used. We really need to focus on dismissal more than arrival.

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Kathy Baker Seconded by: Kimberly LaTourette
Recording of vote: Aye – Unanimous Meeting adjourned at: 6:50 p.m.