

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peterborough, New Hampshire**

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

School Board Meeting

7:00 p.m.

Physical Location: None

Virtual Location:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81728460880?pwd=VkZGdmISN25tUmQwdkF4S2NJU1BDdz09>

Meeting ID: 817 2846 0880

Password: 6XgePc

Phone: +1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 817 2846 0880

Password: 526043

Minutes

BOARD

Rich Cahoon, Richard Dunning,
Alan Edelkind, Jim Fredrickson,
Katherine Heck, Janine Lesser,
Niki McGettigan, Kevin Pobst,
Linda Quintanilha, Robert Short, Jr.,
Tim Theberge, Stephen Ullman,
Jerome Wilson

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.	Anne O'Bryant, SMS
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.	Colleen Roy, GES
Tim Markley, H.R.	John Reitnauer, CVHS
Lori Schmidt, B.A.	Michelle Voto, CVHS
Mark Schaub, Tech.	Steve Bartsch, CVHS
Tim Grossi, Facilities	Kathie Morrocco, Pierce
Carrie James, H.R.	Nicole Pease, DCS
Ben Moenter, Spec. Ed.	Stephanie Syre-Hager, AES
Cari Christian-Coates	Larry Pimental, PES
Kat Foecking, FES	Jen Kiley, ATC
Jim Elder, GBS	Kim Chandler, CVHS

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Rich Cahoon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Acceptance of School Board Meeting Minutes (Board Vote Required)

a. April 7, 2020

Stephen Ullman moved to accept the minutes of April 7, 2020. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

3. Points of Pride

Dr. Kimberly Saunders reported that ConVal is serving 1,600 meals every day! In addition, several elementary schools have gone on parades to see their students and give them a wave. Videos were also created by several schools. A "Spirit Week" video was created by high school and sent to students.

4. Public Comment

None.

Dick Dunning moved to enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II for negotiations at 7:13 p.m.

Tim Theberge second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

The school board meeting reconvened at 7:48 p.m.

5. Governance Document

Rich Cahoon said that we have not had the ability to conduct our new School Board Orientation. The first is to mention that hopefully all new board member received an invitation to webinars.

Rich Cahoon spoke about the role of the board. It is a governance role and not a management role. If a decision is about the future it is likely governance. If it is now, it is likely management. Small, day to day things, are not the boards role. When boards and their administration come into conflict, it is for these reasons of conflict. In NH, budget, by statute, lies the responsibility of the School Board. Teacher hiring is the responsibility of the board; that is why we vote on hiring and resignations. Negotiations is similar; it is between the School Board and the Union; not between the Administration and the

Union. We manage and evaluate our single employee, the Superintendent. Rich closed by saying that the School Board has one employee and not 450. The Superintendent has 450 employees. To wrap up, it is the board, as a whole, that has one employee, not individually.

The School Board shall elect teachers; but the reality is that it is determined that “elect” means hire and unhire. “Teacher” means any certified staff. The board approves contracts. The Superintendent brings forward contracts.

6. Consent Agenda

a. Personnel

1) Resignation Notification – June 2020

Resignations –

Sarah Daley is resigning her position as School Psychologist at the end of the school year.

Kathie Morrocco is stepping down from the Principal position at Pierce School

Dick Dunning moved to accept the resignations and step down as read. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous.

2) Nominations – July 2020

Jessica Strassburg – SMS Grade 8 ELA - \$41,086 is change in salary.

Greg O'Brien – CVHS Social Studies - \$75,640

Dick Dunning moved to approve the nominations as read. Kevin Pobst second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

b. School Board Requests

Rich Cahoon thanked all of the school board members for using “School Board Requests” as a tool for requests. He said that there have been more school board requests in the past six weeks than in six years. Many of the school board requests are asking for quite a bit of detail. They will be answered, but not immediately. With that, he asked that when requests are being formulated, that the request is narrowed to include what is in the governance of the board rather than what might be interesting. He asked that the scope be kept narrow.

Kimberly said that board requests come to her and other SAU Leadership Team members. From there, the request is directed to the appropriate member for a response.

7. Superintendent's Report and Presentation of Business

a. Monthly Events Calendar

Organizational meetings are in the process of being scheduled and noticed.

b. American Association of Woodturner's Grant (Board Vote Required)

Dick Dunning moved to accept the grant. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

c. Update on Remote Learning

Kimberly Saunders said that ConVal continues to build on remote learning. We have rolled out Google Classroom for elementary school and the mailing of school work packets. We are in the middle of conducting a second survey to reach out to parents about moving forward. We are beginning to shift thoughts from what we are doing right now to what the summer might look like and also the reopening next year. Feedback on Google Classroom has been received.

Stephen Ullman said that it is important to have standardized testing in the fall for benchmarking. He asked if it is possible for fourth grade teachers to share what was effective and what did not work.

Kimberly Saunders said that discussion about assessment should come up at Education Committee. We are most concerned about getting students back in and readjusting them. Assessing students is really important. Short assessments will be looked at. NWEA will allow a long history of aggregate data.

Appreciation was shared from Niki McGettigan for all of the work that goes into what is happening.

Dick Dunning shared how impressed he is with what he is seeing with all that is happening.

Kimberly shared that we are thankful for the incredible staff that we have. It is an ever-evolving process. We have taken public education and turned it on its head in the past six weeks.

Katherine Heck asked if we have noticed any trends in participation or attendance moving forward. Kimberly said that we have asked a lot about engagement. We are finding that students are engaged. It will be important to continue to ask the question as remote learning is less novel. If a student has not been participating, that information is reported to administration.

Linda Quintanilha shared her appreciation with the way that ConVal is working for kids with significant disabilities. She knows that ConVal will do the right thing for students when this crisis is over.

Tim Theberge spoke about the parts of our district that still struggle with internet connectivity. He reported that Hancock recently had a meeting with regard to upgrades in sight that will allow faster speeds to be pushed out.

d. CARES Act

Dr. Kimberly Saunders reported that there has been no guidance from the State but is expected soon. The CARES Act provides \$30+ billion in stabilization funds for education. From that amount, 2% is set aside by the Secretary for outlying areas. The remaining funds will be allocated into three areas for emergency relief. ConVal will get about \$326,000 from the CARES Act. It has to be allocated to the district. The money can be used to mitigate challenges identified during the COVID-19 crisis. There are other funds available such as the Governor's Emergency Education Relief and funding from Project SERV to clean and disinfect affected schools.

Kimberly said that she believes that the documentation for these funds will be strict.

Rich Cahoon said that he is looking at the over \$1M anticipated expenditures; this \$326K is not a windfall.

e. New School Board Member Orientation

Kimberly said that the administration has begun to talk about new member orientation. Usually, she meets with new members individually to discuss many topics. Zoom meetings will be set up with new members. In addition, on May 5th at 6:30 there is a new board member orientation. Another is scheduled for May 11th. She encouraged board members to attend any of those. In addition, Attorney Dean Eggert presents to the board on School Board Roles and Responsibilities each year. SAU Administration will review the roles and responsibilities each of them have with the board.

f. Meeting with Town Administrators

Kimberly Saunders reported having met with the Town Administrators. The meals program was reviewed and shared with them. A financial status was given at that point in time. It was a quiet meeting. She didn't receive a lot of feedback. Remote learning information was shared with them.

Kevin Pobst asked how receiving expanded names for the food program is working out. Kimberly reported adding about 25 people per day; totaling approximately 800 per day receiving two meals daily.

g. Hiring Process

The hiring process was shared as previously distributed.

h. Research Project Approval (Board Vote Required)

Kimberly referenced a request for a Research Project. It requires collecting data from staff. It meets all of the requirements of policy LC.

Dick Dunning moved to accept the research project. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

8. Reports

a. Student Representative – Lorien Tyne/Abby Kamieniecki

None.

b. Teacher Representative

Greg Leonard said that there are a number of opportunities to build a community such as the Lip Sync contest. Mr. Leonard reported that the first several flex days have been beneficial to staff. Especially to elementary staff using Google Classroom.

9. Old Business

a. Architectural Services/Bond Discussion

Kimberly Saunders reported that we had placed our name in line for funds. She does not feel that we are in any kind of position to put any kind of a bond on next year's warrant.

Tim Grossi said that the chances for qualifying or receiving any of the funding available are slim this time around. By extending it into the next year will allow us better time to frame our work.

The consensus of the board agreed not to pursue a bond next year.

b. Spring Stipends (athletic and co-curricular)

Rich Cahoon referenced stipend information included in tonight's packet.

Janine Lesser moved that the District meet its contractual obligations for the stipends but with the work approved by the Superintendent and documented. Jerry Wilson second.

Linda Quintanilha said that she will vote "no" on this because the motion because it lacks "what if's" and lacks accountability. Katherine Heck asked for confirmation that we would be meeting our contractual obligations and that the Superintendent would assure there would be an accountability piece. Rich confirmed that was true, and then some.

Kimberly Saunders said that the dollars around the CAREs Act are specific to meeting contractual obligations and remuneration. It is an important piece of the contractual piece. She does not want to risk the over \$300,000 potential.

Stephen Ullman said that he is going to support this but urged the Communication Committee to take this on. He said the folks receiving this should document the work done.

Tim Theberge said that this is the public sector version of protection.

In favor: Dick Dunning, Stephen Ullman, Tim Theberge, Jerry Wilson, Katherine Heck, Alan Edelkind, Kevin Pobst, Robert Short, Jr., Janine Lesser, Niki McGettigan, Jim Fredrickson.

Opposed: Linda Quintanilha

Motion carried.

c. Communication regarding long-term costs and savings

Kimberly Saunders referenced estimated areas where a savings may result and estimated additional costs.

Lori Schmidt referenced compensatory services listed as Payment of services not rendered. All of this information is a moving target. Buildings are scrambling to get their accounts cleared up.

Rich Cahoon said that the clear take away here is that the notion that there would be a significant savings is not true at all. Most of our costs are fixed.

Lori Schmidt said that labor and benefits represent teachers covering teachers should staff get sick, overtime of facilities and administrative assistants. These are above and beyond, additional costs. The COVID Sick Bank is covered in this.

Payment of services not rendered represents paying for services that we are not able to provide. It is money normally expended in this budget. It reflects services that we are required to by law but cannot; OT would be an example.

Food Service is the cost for distribution of meals right now. There will be compensation back to the district. The food service contract reduced their administration fees. They did not have any involuntary layoffs. Other costs were noted.

The hardware line reflects technology.

Future Budget & Property Committee meetings will continue conversations.

Niki McGettigan said that as a full board, we have not had time to have discussions. Alan Edelkind and Katherine Heck started a communication document which will be solidified moving forward. Niki said that she feels like it is a moving target for sure.

Katherine Heck added that this will go to Communications for a strategy.

Rich Cahoon said that he thought that the overall tone was good. He cautioned not to use specific numbers until more is known. He asked if anyone objected to the Communication Committee to continue with this document and finalize.

d. ConVal High School P.A. System

Kimberly Saunders said that this is informational. There was \$100,000 set aside to replace the Public Address (P.A.) system. One of the bidders recognized that the system did not need total replacement. With some different pieces, we can update the system and have it run smoothly.

Mark Schaub said that aside from looking at the system, staff were surveyed. Information about issues were addressed individually. The bell generator was replaced. Several safety issues were resolved. Being able to communicate with the campus as a whole is important. Adding horns around the building and out in the fields were priced. The added benefit of doing this project would allow us to use the conduit to stream events in the future.

Stephen Ullman asked if this is the time to spend \$35,000 that might be dedicated to other services. He asked the bidding laws on this type of work.

Rich Cahoon said that ConVal School Board Policy on bidding would need to be waived because the work exceeds \$15K.

Kimberly said that the main concern was safety of students and staff first and foremost. We are walking a fine line asking staff to use personal devices for a school function for school safety vs. having a sufficient P.A. system.

Mark Schaub said that in a lockdown situation would be difficult to access phone numbers of staff, costing a significant amount of time. It is a safety consideration.

Dick Dunning said that now is the most appropriate time to do this work. This is truly a safety issue.

Discussion ensued.

Kimberly said that this was a \$100,000 budgeted item and we are set to save \$50,000.

Jerry Wilson said that he is in favor of the project but said that it should go out to bid.

Kimberly said that this was put forward to let the board know about the evolution of the work. A vote to waive the policy would be needed if that is the intent. If the board wants to bid out, please let this be known now.

Linda Quintanilha, Stephen Ullman, Katherine Heck, and Jerry Wilson shared concerns with not bidding.

Janine Lesser said that we were set to spend \$100k but a vendor familiar with the system identified that was not the need. She asked why not go with the vendor who is familiar.

Mark Schaub said that there is a lot of detail involved with a bid in terms of mapping the building and equipment inventory. The familiarity of the vendor and timeline of the project drove the recommendation. The bid would go out for the work already scoped and not for a replacement system.

Mark Schaub said that the urgency question comes down to this work already being work planned. In terms of urgency, we are just over two months remaining in the current school year to deal with these funds.

Board members weighed in on their objections to waiving board policy.

This will go on the next agenda of the board.

10. New Business

a. Staff Nominations (Board Vote Required)

Tim Markley referenced nominations for teachers and SSP's (Special Service Professionals). The recommendation is to approve the contracts for these individuals based on the category that they are in.

Janine Lesser moved to approved the nominations as presented. Linda Quintanilha second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

b. Grading Proposal

Kimberly Saunders referenced the recommendation for grading for the remainder of the school year (see attached). Pieces around Running Start courses need consideration.

Alan Edelkind asked about the specific areas selected to assess and the others that are not of priority. Dr. Ann Forrest said that there is the full expectation that the district will have to go into the summer and next year addressing some items. Prioritizing specific areas to assess does not mean that other areas will not be covered.

Rich Cahoon shared concerns of some students that they have worked really hard to pull up their GPA and feel they are now deprived.

Kimberly Saunders said that there is concern around the equity issue. Different students have the capacity to do work in different ways. Can we go back to the drawing board? Absolutely. However, this is consistent with what is happening across the State and country. We can reconsider if that is the decision.

Rich Cahoon said that the board meeting is a working meeting for the board. Public input is in two sections on the agenda. Parents with questions should direct them to the Superintendent.

Kevin Pobst asked if college admission folks have been talked with about the value of a “P” for a course that is important for college admission. Kimberly said that for most colleges, they are in the same boat as high schools. This is not something that they will hold against students.

Kevin asked about the equity concern. Kimberly said that not everyone has the same access to the learning opportunities. We are creating a large amount of stress on families; varying levels of parents’ ability to support their students exists. While we are doing our best to put forward this remote learning program, people in place to provide needed support cannot provide that support.

Dr. Ann Forrest shared some of the input that the district is hearing about the various stressors that resulted in this grade recommendation. Ann shared that she had serious concerns with running two systems of grading.

Linda Quintanilha said that this is a really difficult environment; there will not be a one size fits all solution.

Katherine Heck said that she has heard from 14 parents with only one in favor of no type of grade. She said that she hears parents in favor of the opt in option, following Concord. Does a pass/fail option change the motivation of a student?

Kimberly said that the research on grading and its impact on motivation is plentiful and would be difficult to summarize. In addition, at the high school level, if lack of participation and no grade, it would mean that the student had work to do to move forward. At the middle school, modules are being looked at to determine prerequisite skills. This would be done across the board.

Discussion ensued about the Pass/Fail and/or the opt in.

Rich shared concern with the external competitiveness as well.

Ann said that these recommendations were made before we had a solid answer on Running Start courses. We have to give grades for Running Start courses. Given that, it might be fair for the high school as a whole.

Kevin Pobst moved that administration look at the proposal again and return with more options. Tim Theberge second.

In favor: Unanimous on a roll call vote.

c. Last Day of School

Kimberly said that traditionally, the last day of school would be June 12th. This year is obviously different. Based on that and what is happening around the State, she made calculations on dates based on mandatory requirements for instruction. The earliest day that we could be out of school is May 29th.

Katherine Heck moved that the last day of school is May 29th. Dick Dunning second.

Linda Quintanilha asked why we would end on May 29th.

Kimberly said that this gives teachers the opportunity to come together and really plan the programming moving forward. It provides 10 solid days to accomplish that. Structure and what it will look like next year would be intentional rather than designed in two days. Kimberly said that she thinks that there is a lot of stress on parents and students right now. This would significantly help with planning.

Linda shared her opinion in opposition of this.

Katherine Heck said that she is a proponent of ending earlier to allow planning for summer programming together in addition to what will happen in the fall.

Linda said that not all of the teachers will participate in this; the same teachers that will show up are those that always do. She said that this is a bad idea.

Rich Cahoon shared his concern over students that will experience significant regression.

Kimberly shared the number of times she has a conversation with a parent who is stressed with the current situation for a number of reasons. All of our students are going to be behind with this current model. The proposed model provides ten days to get this work done. At the end of the day, she can contractually hold staff to 188 days. When summer comes, there is no contractual obligation for staff to attend for planning purposes.

Can we begin compensatory services earlier than July? It depends on when we will be able to come back to our buildings. Many of those that are not provided are a result of the inability for staff to be in direct contact with students.

Linda Quintanilha said that this proposal assumes that students would be able to come back at the end of May otherwise it would be a huge Zoom meeting.

In favor: Alan Edelkind, Kevin Pobst, Katherine Heck, Tim Theberge, Janine Lesser, Jerry Wilson, Dick Dunning, Robert Short, Jr., Jim Fredrickson, Niki McGettigan

Opposed: Stephen Ullman, Linda Quintanilha

Motion carried 10 to 2 on a roll call vote.

11. Expenditure and Encumbrance Report – Lori Schmidt

Lori Schmidt reviewed the expenditure report and highlighted the benefits line that appears to have significant funds in it but will be spent.

Dick Dunning moved to accept the expenditure report and adopt any encumbrances therein. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

12. Public Comment

Mr. Dreher spoke in favor of the opt in option to a pass/fail.

13. Approval of Manifests (Board Vote Required)

Lori Schmidt certified that manifests listed totaling \$256,748.57 and Payroll totaling \$1,804,382.31 have been reviewed by her and found to be proper charges against the Contoocook Valley School District for goods and/or services received and have been properly processed prior to their submittal to the School Board.

Dick Dunning moved to approve the manifests as read. Jerry Wilson second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

14. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A:3,II (If Required)

- a. Negotiations**
- b. Legal**
- c. Personnel**

Janine Lesser moved to enter into non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3,II at 10:43 p.m. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Dick Dunning moved to exit non-public session at 11:33 p.m. Katherine Heck second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Tim Theberge moved to seal the non-public minutes for all discussions for a period of five years. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Linda Quintanilha motioned to adjourn at 11:37 p.m. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous on a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok