

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, August 26, 2021

SAU Office Board Room

7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Present: John Robertson, Jeff Brown, Carole Monroe, Bob Marshall, George Willard, Kate Fuller, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Lori Schmidt, Tim Theberge, Stephen Ullman, Janine Lesser

1. Call to Order

John Robertson called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Approve Minutes of June 24, 2021

Bob Marshall moved to accept the minutes of June 24, 2021. Jeff Brown second. Unanimous.

3. School Reopening Update

Dr. Kimberly Saunders shared a video on the ConVal Reopening Plan. The overarching goal is safety and in-person instruction.

There are four instructional phases: blue, green, yellow, and red. Each were outlined.

ConVal is opening in the Green Phase, which is in-person instruction with increasing levels of mitigation strategies as needed; including CDC recommendations.

The criteria for transitioning from one phase to another were outlined.

Masks will be required in certain phases; optional in blue, required indoors in green, required indoors for in yellow phase.

Once communities or schools reach an 80% vaccination rate, mask requirements will be reconsidered.

There is not a remote option for instruction this year.

Sports and Extracurricular activities will take place for the foreseeable future.

Outdoor spaces will be utilized for outdoor learning, lunch, classroom instruction, small group instruction as needed or desired.

Students and staff have a focus on hand-washing, self-screening, maintaining a distance of 3 feet, regular cleaning routines, and air quality standards.

The District developed the plan through surveying of parents and recommendations from both NHDHSS and CDC.

Greater Monadnock Public Health Region is the southwest portion of the State of NH. Kimberly Saunders said that we are looking forward to a fantastic school opening.

John Robertson asked if the video could be used for sharing. Kimberly Saunders confirmed. The written plan is available online as well as the video.

Opening in the Green Phase was determined by the percentage of transmission, currently there are 238 and fewer in the ConVal towns based from NH COVID Dashboard. Location of the positivity rates are considered as well e.g. nursing homes or other consolidated areas.

District wide for 15 and older; 62% are fully vaccinated. In towns vaccination rates range from 49% to 77%. It is up in the last week.

Pod use will be different this year and used in schools with 100 or more students.

Some bus routes will be longer than in the past as a result of the need for bus drivers. This is a national issue.

Tim Theberge reported that there is no cost for school meals this year. However, we really do want families to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) application. Eligibility for other programs are driven from these rates. It impacts other areas as well. The District will be reimbursed for meals. Adequacy is based on FRL status. This impacts the towns as well. Stress the importance of filling out the form. 501-3C's are impacted as well as grants. It is in everyone's interest to have these applications completed.

Select boards can get the word out by including it in town publications, websites, and stating it at public meetings.

Qualifying for FRL results in the gateway to a reduced rate for broadband.

Has ConVal lost many students in terms of enrollment? Kimberly Saunders said that 24 students last year were lost. In addition, kindergarten enrollments are growing daily.

The most important date that the State uses is the October 1st enrollment. Enrollment is reported at the first meeting of each month at Board meetings.

Stephen Ullman spoke about enrollment remaining a challenge. Several elementary schools have fewer than 50 students. Enrollment is down across the southwest part of the state. Enticements such as broadband are needed to attract people.

4. Committee Reports

Budget & Property – the goal is to come up with a draft budget recommendation that will be presented to the board and then the district. They are working on finalizing the list of Capital Improvement Projects working toward an eventual bond. There will be a public hearing to replace a boiler with trust fund monies soon.

Communications – People get frustrated at Board meetings because Public Comment is not a question and answer period. It is a business meeting of the board. We know that there is a desire for two-way communication. A public forum will be held at the LHT at the high school in September to address questions on topics of interest that are identified through survey. The Board is interested in engaging with the communities.

The ConVal News Feed is intended to push out as much information as we can to the communities.

Policy Committee – never a shortage of policy work to be done due to Federal or Legislative changes to assure our policies are in compliance.

Education Committee – has examined several course proposals. The high school counseling staff is looking to gain national qualification. Standardized test scores have been reviewed.

Food Service – summer programming was discussed at tonight's meeting. FY'2021 report was reviewed. pricing of staff meals was discussed.

5. Surplus Update

Kimberly Saunders reported that the audit is next week. More information will be available after the audit. She said that she is looking at \$3.2M. We applied \$1.8M to the July through December town payment schedule. The payment schedule will be adjusted for beyond December.

6. Superintendent Meeting

John Robertson reported that he met with Superintendent, Dr. Kimberly Saunders to discuss topics for future SAC meetings.

August – School Reopening and Recovery Plans

September – Lawsuit

October – shifting demographics in ConVal

January - Final budget update

A follow-up meeting will take place again in January to discuss other items such as mandated state costs, real costs versus what is in adequacy, and what school would look like with only adequacy.

Unfunded mandates were discussed. There is so much that comes down from Concord that is required without funding to support it.

Kimberly Saunders said that a civics assessment was adopted three years ago. Those assessments were put in place. Near 100% of our students pass that assessment. It has been said that the schools must be doing it wrong if near 100% pass.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok

Amended at the September 23, 2021 Selectmen's Advisory Committee Meeting.