

INTER-LAKES SCHOOL DISTRICT
Inter-Lakes School Board Special Meeting Minutes
Inter-Lakes Middle/High School – Community Auditorium
Livestream Access
September 14, 2021

DRAFT

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Merrill called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. RECORD ROLL

Members Present:

Ms. Lisa Merrill, Chair
Mr. Mark Billings, Vice-Chair
Mr. Craig Baker
Mr. Howard Cunningham
Mr. Charles Hanson
Mr. Duncan Porter-Zuckerman
Ms. Nancy Starmer

Members Absent:

N/A

Administrators Present:

Ms. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent
Ms. Trish Temperino, Asst. Superintendent
Mr. Michael Bryant, ILES Principal
Dr. Amanda Downing, ILM/HS Principal
Mr. Jeremy Hillger, SCS Principal
Ms. Stephanie Howard, ILES Assist. Principal
Mr. Mark Parsons, Technology Director
Mr. Brian Swanker, Facilities Director
Ms. Holly Vieten, Guidance Director

Others Present:

Atty. Barbara Loughman
Mr. Chris Mega, Video Recorder
Mr. Jason Cornelissen, Auditorium Manager
Public & Guests

Prior to opening Public Input, Ms. Merrill shared a statement regarding ground rules for the meeting. The Chair called for the Board's consensus regarding the ground rules as presented. The consensus of the Board was unanimous, by a show of hands.

Ms. Merrill reminded anyone wishing to address the Board should state their name and town of residence; comments should be 2 to 3 minutes per person, please be civil and respectful.

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

Dr. Barbara Syac (sp?), Meredith. Supports requirement for masks to be worn; there is no research that shows that wearing masks causes health or psychological issues. Dr. Syac shared her thoughts and opinions regarding people thinking they have unlimited rights.

Email: Tara Staples, ILM/HS Parent. Disappointed by how parents were treated at the last meeting; limiting public input by changing the rules. Parents should have a say and choice for their own children. Let us vote and be heard.

Keith Champagne, Meredith. Request that the drop-off and pick-up at school be changed to allow families an opportunity to mingle, talk, get to know one another; as was the practice in the past. The community of school being family has been lost with the new rules and process.

The long-term solution is going to require spending money to ensure safety and allow community building for families.

Email: Emily Coulter, Sandwich. Supports the School Board's common-sense, science-based policy regarding the Covid pandemic. Urges the Board not to give in to those that are resisting the measures that are keeping us safe.

Catherine Field, Center Sandwich. Gives 100% support of the mask mandate as outlined in the School Opening Plan.

Email: Melanie Hodge, Sandwich. She and her two High School students continue to support the mask policy in the school district. It is very important to do to keep everyone safe and slow the spread of the virus.

Karen Sticht, Meredith. Submitted a request last week to the Board Secretary for minutes of Non-Public Session; has not received a response. Is there a chance of getting those minutes?

Superintendent Moriarty responded that the minutes would be provided tomorrow.

Email: Christina Touhey, Meredith. Thanked the Board for continued support and efforts to keep schools open and in-person. Please continue keeping everyone safe by supporting the current mitigation plan.

Peggy Polo(sp?). Speaking on behalf of her two grandchildren in 10th and 12th grade; her 12th grader wants to have a real senior year in school; they do not want to go remote. Masking policy will help to do that; we have to do everything possible to keep kids safe.

Email: Melissa Torres. If we go into the red category with Covid numbers and kids have to be separated by their classes, will you consider arranging them according to their academic level and maybe require masks outside so they can plan with all their friends, not just their class?

Cayla Peaslee, Sandwich. Understands that the objective is to keep school in-person; moving forward isn't it going to be confusing for kids changing back and forth from wearing masks to not wearing masks. The mitigation level of 13 cases in three towns requiring masks seems extreme. Making masking optional would appease both sides. There have been no death of children by the virus in NH.

Email: Laura Hopkinson, Meredith. Advocates for masks as a choice, not a mandate. Supports teachers who want to teach outdoors, please consider their requests.

Dr. Barbara Syac (sp?), Meredith. Speaking on behalf of her husband who could not attend. The strongest reason to wear a mask is for children in elementary school or where vaccination is not an option. We need to take steps to help other people, not just to satisfy personal rights.

Melanie Hodge, Sandwich. Agrees with previous speaker; masks work if everyone wears them in close spaces. It's not about living in fear, but protecting the most vulnerable population – our children. Parents do have a choice when cases fall below 12 masks are option. No record of children's deaths in NH, let's keep it that way.

Lisa Meeken, Meredith. Public input is important, people need to feel that they can speak and want to be heard. People are at this meeting today because they need a voice in this particular choice regarding the issue of masking. Parents have to weigh in and have not had a chance to. The School Board is the only ones who have made decision. Explain New Business after public input and tell us what the next steps are.

Oliver Anderson, Sandwich. Fully in support of Board's mask indoor policy; it is in the best interest of staff, students, and the broader community to limit the spread of the virus. Mask are important to protect the people around you, not necessarily the wearer. Hopeful cases with drop and get rid of masks sooner than later.

Mark Anderson, Meredith. Father of three fully supports the optional usage of masks during school hours. Mr. Anderson shared how hard it is to hear from his children how difficult their day was in school with masks on. Covid is not going away, it will be around like the flu. The option of remote learning can be considered for families in fear of the virus; it can work both ways.

Leslie Johnson, Sandwich. In favor of having a public meeting, so that people can vote on this important issue; providing an opportunity where community members can have input. It is sad that children are afraid to go to school without a mask. Ask to have a Special meeting and allow the people to vote on this decision.

Email: Larry Hopkinson, Meredith. Father of three, strongly oppose mask mandate. We all understand the risks and should be free to chose how to mitigate them ourselves. The Board should not mandate wearing mask and should stay out of the decision making.

Cayla Peaslee, Sandwich. If the decision is to keep wearing masks, could the levels be looked at again. Thirteen cases over three towns is a low number; possibly discuss a higher number that may be a little more realistic. Mask indoors or outdoors for kids, why is it different?

Neal Dwyer, Sandwich. Thanked the Board for taking on this problem. It is a very complicated issue; has faith the Board will make the right decision.

Jarrold Stoia, Meredith. Sympathizes and appreciates how difficult decisions are, and doing what is in the best interest for everyone. This is a situation that all voices should be heard; the entire community. There needs to be a vote on something this important; a decision made by the community for the community.

Email: Rachel Kusch, Sandwich. Express gratitude for diligence and care for the District's Re-Opening Plan. Family is in full support of the document as approved; please continue to consider the health and safety of our most vulnerable community members as you make decisions about Covid mitigation measures.

Andrea Martin, Sandwich. Cannot wear a mask; asked the Board to think about what is being done to the children and how is it going to affect them. When she wears a mask it is difficult to function, don't do that to the kids.

Sandwich resident. Kids have been resilient; the decision has been made to wear masks indoors; they talked about what they could do as a family was to wear masks. The kids felt empowered that they were helping to make decisions and make a difference.

With no further comments Public Input was closed at 6:41 p.m.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Citizens' Petition for a Special School District Meeting Regarding "In School" Learning and Student Masking Based Solely on Parental Guidance

Ms. Merrill introduced School District Attorney Barbara Loughman, she will be speaking to the petition received.

Atty. Loughman stated that there are a couple legal problems with petition received by the School Board calling for a Special School District Meeting to vote on the mask mandate. Inter-Lakes is a Cooperative School District, in order to petition the signatures of 5% of the voters on the checklist are required. The checklist has over 6,000 voters in the communities together; the petition received has 111 signatures that have been verified. The School Board is not going to set a date for a Special School District Meeting this evening.

The other matter being addressed, is whether the School Board is legally required to call a special meeting, the answer is no. RSA 189:15 gives the School Board the authority to adopt regulations for the attendance of students and staff at the school. This is not a power that the School District Meeting has the authority to do. Under NH Law certain authority is exercised by the School District Meeting and certain authority is exercised by the School Board; in general, they do not overlap. The School Board is responsible for establishing the regulations for operating the school; there are limits on their power, they cannot adopt regulations that violate State or Federal laws. The advice will be given to the School Board if they receive a petition with the required number of signatures, that they do not have to call a Special School District Meeting to deal with that topic. If a meeting was to be called, the vote would not be binding. State law vests the responsibility for establishing regulations for the school on the School Board not on the voters at the School District Meeting.

VI. MINUTES

A. Special Board Meeting – August 24, 2021

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Porter-Zuckerman, to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2021 Special Board Meeting, as amended. The motion passed 7-0.

Amend minutes to reflect Ms. Starmer abstained from vote to approve 8/10/21 Minutes.

VII. CURRENT BILLS PAYABLE

A. General Operating Expenses

Mr. Baker moved, seconded by Mr. Hanson, to approve the payment of bills, manifest #3005 and #3006. The motion passed 7-0.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT/ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

A. Enrollment

Additional time is needed to build enrollment report, there are a lot of ins and outs; enrollment will be emailed to School Board members.

B. School Opening Update

Superintendent Moriarty reported that we are challenged by staffing shortages, 16 paraeducator positions are not filled; the candidate for the Middle School Science position

has not yet been released from her current contract. It is very unusual to be so short staff, it is a tough hiring market that is not unique to our District.

It was a wonderful start of the school year to have community return to school, school opening was very positive in that regard.

C. COVID-19 Update

Superintendent Moriarty reviewed the meeting matrix (*attachment #3*). Weekly the Advisory Team gets together and looks at the various metrics and tries to make a decision based on all of that information to determine the level of mitigation. We are at a total of twelve cases; there is no evidence of school-based transmission or spread. We work with families to keep them informed, and continue to work on mitigation. The weekly meetings help to make adjustments as needed for our schools.

Mrs. Moriarty confirmed that of the twelve total cases, two are fully recovered. Discussion ensued regarding measures to keep staff safe, in addition to the efforts put forth for our students. If we have a lot of illness with the need to quarantine, it would be a great challenge for us with staff.

D. DOE-25 Financial Report for the 2020-2021 School Year

Assistant Superintendent Temperino reported that the annual Department of Education Financial Form (DOE-25) has been completed and uploaded; it is in the review process. In October, a summary annual report will be prepared and presented to the Board providing an in-depth review of the DOE-25.

Mrs. Temperino provided a financial overview: per the Board vote \$506,793 has been retained to reduce the tax assessment for 2022- 2023 fiscal year; voted from unreserved at the District Meeting was \$175,000 (Facilities \$160,000 and Special Education \$15,000); the unassigned fund balance that will be used to reduce the District Assessment is \$540,361.

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Moriarty received a petition containing 153 signatures, that has been shared with the Board that supports the use of masks. The petition has not gone to the checklist as the petition is not asking for anything. Email correspondence relative to masks have been forwarded to the Board.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Moultonborough Memorandum of Understanding

Mrs. Moriarty reviewed the long-term relationship with Moultonborough in regards to sharing of resources and classes that has evolved over time. Discussion ensued regarding the need to update the Memorandum of Understanding and present it to the Boards for approval.

Mr. Cunningham moved, seconded by Mr. Porter-Zuckerman, to permit the Superintendent and School Board Chair to meet with the Moultonborough Superintendent and School Board Chair for the purpose of updating the Memorandum of Understanding. The motion passed 7-0.

Mr. Billings asked for information regarding the number of students that have taken advantage of classes and sports between the two Districts. Superintendent Moriarty will collect that information and share with the Board.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. New Hire Nominations of Professional Teaching Staff

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Hanson, to approve accept the Superintendent's nominations of Mary Beth Sledzik, Reading Teacher; Lora Colten, School Nurse; and Kimberly Massaro, Art Teacher. The motion passed 7-0.

B. Donation

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Porter-Zuckerman, to accept the donation as presented; with gratitude. The motion passed 7-0.

XII. POLICY

A. Second Reading and Adoption

Mr. Hanson request that Policy #8344 – Public Participation at School Board Meetings be removed from the list of policies for approval and returned to the Policy Review Committee for further review.

Mr. Hanson moved, seconded by Mr. Baker, to approve second reading and adoption of the following policies, as amended:

- Policy #1335 (also #4335, #5335) – Use and Possession of Tobacco Products Banned in/on School Facilities and Grounds
- Policy #3260 – Disposition of Books, Supplies and Equipment
- Policy #3326 – Payments, Checks and Manifest
- Policy #3327 – Authorized Signatures
- Policy #3340 – Payroll Procedures
- Policy #3434 - Audits
- Policy #3546 – Data/Records Retention
- Policy #3725 – Emergency Care and First Aid
- Policy #4153 – Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace
- Policy #4158 – Data Governance and Security Policy
- Policy #5131 – Student Conduct
- Policy #5131.6, Student Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Policy #5149 – Student Discipline and Due Process
- Policy #5149.3 – Behavior Management and Intervention
- Policy #8130.1 – Policy Development and Review
- Policy #9250 – Request for Legal Opinion
- Policy #9410 School Board Use of Email and Other Electronic Communication

The motion passed 7-0.

XIII. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

A. Members of the Board None

B. Members of the Administration None

XIV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Tuesday, September 28, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium, Meredith NH

- Policy Review Committee – **5:00 p.m.**
- Regular School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

B. Tuesday, October 12, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium, Meredith NH

- Policy Review Committee – **5:00 p.m.**
- Regular School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

C. Tuesday, October 26, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium, Meredith NH

- Policy Review Committee – **5:00 p.m.**
- Regular School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

D. Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium, Meredith NH

- Policy Review Committee – **5:00 p.m.**
- Regular School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

XV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION – RSA 91-A:3 II (b)(c)

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Ms. Starmer, to enter Non-Public Session at 7:02 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (b)(c) – To discuss the hiring of any person as a public employee; and matters which, if discussed in public would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests and open meeting. The Secretary polled Board members, the motion passed 7-0.

Public Session

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Hanson, to re-enter Public Session at 7:18 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Billings moved, seconded by Mr. Porter-Zuckerman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m. The motion passed 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn G. Martell
Recording Secretary