

Oyster River Cooperative School District

REVISED: January 21, 2021

Regular Meeting Minutes

January 6, 2021

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Dan Klein, Tom Newkirk, Denise Day, Michael Williams, Al Howland, Yusi Turell. Brian Cisneros. **Student Representative:** Megan Deane

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: James Morse, Todd Allen, Sue Caswell, Suzanne Filippone, David Goldsmith, Catherine Plourde, Jay Richard,

STAFF PRESENT: Erin Pasay-MS Nurse, Lucy Garfield-District Floating Nurse, Katherine Moore-MW Nurse, Sheila Koutelis-Moharimet Nurse, Kim Wolph-HS Nurse

GUEST PRESENT: There were 4 members in the audience.

CALLED TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Tom Newkirk

Tom Newkirk requested to add an organizational Nonpublic for the Superintendent evaluation at the end of the regular meeting and moved to the approval of the agenda as amended.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Denise Day moved to approve the agenda as amended, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

At this time Tom took a moment to state that a letter had come in from the Guild and they were disappointed that they were not on the agenda this evening. When he saw the letter, he felt that the letter indicates information the Board should learn from them. He went on to say that he felt bad if there was anything that he did that indicated disrespect for them or what they offer.

Tom introduced public comment and as there were only two, each would be allotted 3 minutes.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Brook Keeler has two daughters and lives in Durham. She stated that she is back again and expressed her appreciation and thanked the administrators and teachers who have reached out to her and her family. She understands that the nurses are presented tonight with criteria for returning to school. She asked for transparency. She also questioned the sources that are being utilized, have we spoken to other districts. She would like a statement from the superintendent and Board as to the process that has been followed to date. Additionally, she stated that after hearing at the Dover presentation, the heading "confirmation bias," she researched and read the definition of "confirmation bias" to the Board.

Gianna Gelsy from Madbury stated that she is going to read a letter that is signed by numerous people. She is representing all the parties by reading this letter pertaining to concerns regarding the proposed reopening models. She stated that she also sent this letter to the School Board.

There were no additional public comments and it finished at 7:10 PM.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Motion to approve the December 16, 2020 regular meeting minutes:
Revisions:**

Yusi Turell requested that the following be added to the end of page 8.

Yusi said it's important to make clear in our communications to families that, even though they will be asked to answer the survey in January, we are not talking about definitely returning in person on January 26th. Todd and Jay confirmed that we are preemptively reassigning students' sections at the start of Q3, to make it easier to switch to in-person instruction when the Board decides to. Michael and Al emphasized that parents should know what the criteria are for returning to school in-person before they complete the survey.

Denise Day moved to approve the December 16, 2020 regular meeting minutes as revised, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0. Student Representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS:

- A. District:** None
- B. Board:**

Denise Day commended the students and staff that are still putting out the Mouth of the River newsletters during this pandemic. They are great.

Yusi Turell reiterated the need for clear communication and spoke of an email from the middle school, and the confusion it caused. She suggested that we look from the perspective of a parent and the possibility of having a parent review an outgoing correspondence before sending.

VI. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion to approve the agenda items listed under the unanimous consent agenda:

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve the Unanimous Consent agenda, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative. Al Howland interrupted and read the motion: Motion to approve list of ORMS Clubs and Activity Stipends as presented for unanimous consent.

VII. DISTRICT REPORTS:

- A. Assistant Superintendent Reports:** Todd stated that he will wait for the nurse's presentation.
- B. Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Morse stated that he has several items that he would be reporting out on, but asked if a moment of silence could happen for the first Oyster River death that has happened to a family member of an existing employee, and another for a past employee family member.

Dr. Morse informed the Board that in collaboration with the Portsmouth and Exeter Superintendent's they have written an editorial on Civility from a superintendent's point of view. He stated that we are proud Americans and we can disagree without being disagreeable.

Dr. Morse stated that based on the decision made tonight, next week we will be sending out a comprehensive newsletter with all the updated and current information.

Dr. Morse explained to the Board that the postcards with the dates for the upcoming voting session were mailed out today. The print house ran into COVID related problems. We will send reminders of the upcoming dates through SchoolMessenger Friday and again next week.

Dr. Morse stated that the letter from the Guild was amazingly detailed and that he totally supports their request to speak to the Board. The Guild will be sending representatives to do this presentation at the meeting on January 20th.

Dr Morse took a moment before the presentation by the nurses to recognize the incredible amount of work that has been done and continues to be done on a daily and weekly basis, and throughout the summer and fall. The hundreds of documents that have been reviewed, the amount of time above and beyond their regular schedules to do contract tracing, and anything else to keep the district running smoothly.

Before we introduce the individual nurses, Todd Allen and Catherine Plourde who have been working with them want to address the Board.

Todd Allen began by informing the Board that we are fortunate to have Megan Harvey, a past graduate of OR who has kindly agreed to work with us to personalize to OR the COVID Metric that has been included in your packet. He went on to say that the COVID page on the website will be updated every Monday with a dashboard separated by schools with caseloads as well as community caseloads to include Durham, Lee, Madbury, Barrington and Dover.

Catherine Plourde began by stating that they will bring the nurses up individually to present a section of the power point that has been included in your packets. She informed the Board that the nurses, her, and Todd meet weekly, and the nurses talk daily. She also stated to the Board that most of the sources referenced or referred to are DHHS, CDC and John Hopkins, and that all documents are available online. She went on to explain that there are six areas and each nurse will present one. She asked if the Board could hold their questions until the end of the presentation. Catherine introduced Erin Pasay from the middle school and Lucy Garfield the district floating nurse.

School Nurse COVID 19 Assessment Metric for ORCSD

Lucy Garfield began by explaining that contact tracing is the process of identifying persons who may have been in contact with an infected person, and that the goal of contact tracing is to quickly identify confirmed contacts so they may isolate and ultimately reduce the spread of the illness. She went on to state that the R value is the reproductive value and that R equals 2 to 3. Even small reproductive numbers create large outbreaks.

Erin Pasay relayed the timeline of infection. The incubation period can range from 2 to 14 days, but typically 5 days. You are most infectious at day 1 of symptoms. She explained that the state is overwhelmed and that the district is working with many variables; being timeline of the information and mix of information. We do the best with what we are given and hope for transparency.

Katherine Moore spoke about testing availability. She stated that right now the testing availability is not as great as it was in September. In September you got the test and results that same day. Now the higher the range the longer the wait, and the critical level is more difficult to get testing. She gave a plug to the teachers for the phenomenal job that they are doing with the kids. She provided a scenario to the Board as an example.

Sheila Koutelis stated that the turnaround time now is 48 hours. She stated that this timeframe is creating a general sense of unrest and anxiety and affecting the staff and student ability to return. She explained that it is now 5 – 7 days out of work or school.

Kim Wolph explained the three risk categories and the time frame surrounding the testing. High/Critical equals more than 48 hours turnaround time. Medium risk equals 24 – 48 hours turnaround time, and Lowest/Medium turnaround time equals less than 24 hours. She went on to explain that all information provided by the state websites are available online and updated daily. She explained that the nurses speak regularly with Dr. Chan and report back his conversations. She adamantly reminded everyone that it is imperative to complete the checklist every day at all buildings.

Todd Allen stated that we daily track and stay on top of the staffing needs. He recommends adopting the metric as it is now with staffing included.

Catherine reviewed what is working well and what the barriers are that we are experiencing. She asked the Board if they had any questions.

Denise Day thanked the nurses for the presentation and the amazing amount of work that they have done and asked if any of them have received the vaccine or are scheduled to take it.

Tom Newkirk ask what happens if some cases fall in the high risk, some in the medium risk, and some in the low risk, would this be a judgement call and how would you figure it out?

Al Howland asked what exactly are the models that we are approving? Also, looking at the timeframe and using the medium risk scenario, would we be able to open the middle school, high school and even the elementary school. He also stated that it is a great idea to put the metric on the website, this would allow parents to anticipate.

Michael Williams questioned the contract tracing practicality.

Megan Deane thanked the nurses on behalf of the students for doing such a wonderful job, not only during this pandemic but always for being a wonderful resource. She questioned that when contact tracing and asking students to quarantine, what is the method for getting that testing outside of the school environment.

Yusi Turell commented that UNH returns in February and asked how we should be thinking about weighing the UNH data against other transmission data. She also suggested that researching a UNH marketing campaign that show UNH student behavior affects the K-12 population.

Michael Williams asked for the definition we are using for close contact.

Dan Klein asked if we move to a model greater than ½ day and necessitated some protocol for mask removal, what impact would that have on the definition of close contact, therefore contract tracing.

Yusi Turell asked if there were any rows, we can affect by bringing in extra contact tracing resources or testing resources. Additionally, how we act on the columns that are separated by fully remote/targeted learners & hybrid/less than six feet. There are a number of stages in decision making. Also, the thoughts of using these columns for making decisions for reopening and returning to schools at the different levels. Questioned if a motion or a policy needed to be done to acknowledge that elementary and target learners are a different group.

Denise Day stated that contact tracing speaks to the difference between elementary and targeted learners. Also, do we see a difference in the high category where you can't open for the MS/HS but possible can for the elementary. She sees the value for different criteria for elementary.

Tom Newkirk clarified if it's a decision needed or approval of the plan presented, or if we are going to create other questions or create different criteria for different schools.

Megan Deane relayed that the metric is a guideline not rules. This is transparency and allows the public to have a document to refer to for a better understanding of the situation.

Al Howland stated that this puts everyone on the same page and provides context of conversation. Weekly message defines what decision was made and why we are doing what we are doing.

Al Howland made a motion to approve the ORCSD Assessment of COVID-19 Metrics, 2nd by Denise Day.

Yusi Turell made a motion to amend the ORCSD Assessment of Covid-19 Metrics to include: that this metric will serve as a guide to administration, that existing programs will be given preference over starting new programs, that we would define what contact tracing means from a local perspective, and that the implications for the categories of full remote, targeted /hybrid, and full in person will be added to the document, 2nd by Dan Klein.

Motion passed with a vote of 6-1 with Michael Williams voting in the negative and the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Amended motion passed with a vote of 6-1 with Michael Williams voting in the negative and the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Catherine Plourde stated that two additional nursing staff Michael Hope who is in the audience, and Kim Langlois who is not present this evening but wanted to recognize them as well.

Tom Newkirk requested that we give kudos to the nursing staff with a standing ovation.

Tom called a 5-minute recess at 8:50 PM.

The meeting resumed at 8:55 PM with the high school presentation by Suzanne Filippone

Tom Newkirk stated that before we begin the high school presentation Dr. Morse wanted to relay to the Board that he wished to extend the remote learning by one week until January 15th. His rationale was that looking at the whole traveling issue for the Christmas and New Year's holiday this extension would provide the 14 days needed for a quarantine period and provide for an additional safety window.

Denise Day clarified that the return date would be January 19 due to the Martin Luther King holiday.

Dr. Morse also relayed a message from the School Nutrition Director that parents should anticipate an email from food service requesting parents to put in your child's meal order for the extended week as soon as possible.

Tom resumed the meeting by asking Suzanne to begin her presentation at 8:57 PM.

ORHS Model Presentation

Suzanne introduced her 50% AM/PM Hybrid Model. She stated the targeted learners will still come into the building every day. She stated that the goal was to create a hybrid model that offers both in person and remote students' instructional options. The criteria and considerations are: ensure all students have instruction with their teacher, ensure all students are accounted for each day of the week M-F, ensure all Faculty & Staff have needed coverage, Adhere to School District COVID-19 Guidelines, Teacher Contract, and MOA, In person and remote opportunities, Equity with time, Equity with supports, Continue to support targeted learners, Support UNH CTE and CAT's students, Ensure Transportation, Child Nutrition, Space Needs are met.

Suzanne presented a sample daily schedule which will be split into two pieces. AM – Remote (45-minute classes), PM - In Person (40-minute classes). She went on to say that they will lose Office Hours on White Days for Remote Learners. Also, Wednesday's Office Hours will be vital for continued work to meet the individual needs of all learners. Suzanne then provided a weekly rotation sample that is alphabetical along with a weekly schedule breakdown for students.

Next Suzanne provided an example of a faculty schedule. Monday and Thursday will consist of the same courses, but different students will be in person and remote.

Two modes to plan for – remote in the morning and in person in the afternoon. Pacing will be a challenge & loss of instructional time (160 to 140 to 85/90 min. per class per week).

A fully remote student example schedule was presented and explained as well as an in-person example schedule. Suzanne went on to explain the schedule that will be implemented if the 50% model shifts to fully remote.

Suzanne highlighted the strength and challenges for this proposed model:

Strengths are Consistent schedule daily, Remote and In-person Option – Equity, all students connect with teachers every day, Morning Advisory contact every day, UNH CAT's and CTE classes Lunch (high risk), Targeted learners can continue to work from the building every day.

Challenges are Faculty working from home and need for coverage, Four additional staff members – paraprofessionals for the remainder of the school year, Loss of instructional time (160, 140, 85/90) No Office Hours on White Days for Remote Learners. Wednesday's Office Hours will be vital for continued work to meet the individual needs of all learners, Pacing and preparation for both in-person and remote students, Classes that utilize demonstrations and are performance based (art, music, culinary, etc.), COVID cases could pause the model and shift back to original remote model.

Suzanne informed the Board that the earliest implementation date would be February 1, 2021 and asked the Board if they had any questions.

The Board asked for clarification for the different scenarios for COVID exposure. It was asked if for fully remote students, would the instruction be repetitive? If the survey had less than 50% of students that want to be in person, does that change things. Also, wondering about asynchronous time and if teachers are concerned about losing this time. Questioned what supported professional development and transparency and accountability we have with teachers so that time is being spent wisely.

Dr. Morse advised the Board that at this time he suggested that permission be given to Suzanne to investigate the implementation of this proposed model.

Al Howland made a motion to direct Suzanne Filippone to investigate the implementation of this proposed 50% AM/PM hybrid model and return in two weeks with an update to the Board, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

C. Finance Committee Update:

Al Howland stated that when they formed the original committee, our charge was for the 2021-22 budget, and the work that was left was the language on the warrant articles and the public hearing presentations. When we did this budget there was no COVID and now things have changed radically, and we have allowed Suzanne to investigate a new high school model and Jay a new middle school model each which involved staffing. For the short term we would ask what the cost of the model and any other changes would be coming to the second semester models, and where is the funding source and the budget it is coming from. For the long term we are planning on returning \$400K to the communities and as we move forward if we are over or under that what do we do with the targeted fund balance. We have two warrants; one is to increase the amount we put into the emergency fund and the second is for \$125K to pay for the solar system. As the committee we wrestle with the best option for the money, where we plan to put it. Possibly the CIP or reserve fund. We would come back for the first meeting in May with the recommended number to present to the Board.

Denise Day asked that the following additional language be added at the end of the 2020-21 budget goal.

"In order to support transparency in the process, the committee will keep detailed minutes and provide those minutes to the full Board."

Brian Cisneros made a motion to move the charge as amended with a report to the full Board on May 5th, 2nd by Michael Williams. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

D. Business Administrator: None

E. Student Representative Report:

Megan stated that she had spoken to the students and that the general consensus was not to return at this time. The senate is still pushing forward with ways to encourage camera usage during instructional times. She stated that the end of the semester is January 22 and that mid-terms and finals are coming up. There is a push for academic assistance and more teacher student contact time. She mentioned that she was approached by a student who felt that mental health initiatives have slipped to the side as there is less opportunity to go outside and see friends. The social emotional piece is critical at this time.

A short discussion ensued pertaining to strategies for camera use and possible ideas for using student athletes to advocate for suicide prevention.

F. —Other:

VIII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2021 Warrant Article

Tom clarified that this did not need approval at this time, which was confirmed by Sue Caswell.

Assign Presentation of Warrant Article

Tom assigned the five articles in the following manner:

Warrant Article #3 – Al Howland
Warrant Article #4 – Denise Day
Warrant Article #5 – Dan Klein
Warrant Article #6 – Brian Cisneros
Warrant Article #7 – Michael Williams
Distinguished Service Award – Yusi Turell

Brian Cisneros moved the assignment of warrant articles as presented, 2nd by Denise Day. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Public Hearing Discussion

Dr. Morse briefly relayed to the Board the remote option for Deliberative Session which would be incredibly difficult, he believes that staying with the traditional way of meeting is best, with usage of the Gym as an overflow area, and the music room dedicated to non-mask wearing individuals. There will also be audio and visual set up in each area.

Superintendent Self Evaluation

Will be discussed during non-public.

IX. ACTIONS

Superintendent Actions:

A. Board Action Items:

Discussion:

Approval of List of Coaches and Volunteers

Brian Cisneros made a motion to approve the list of winter coaches and volunteers, 2nd by Al Howland. Motion passed with a vote of 5-0-2 with Michael Williams and Dan Klein abstaining and the student representative voting in the affirmative.

X. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES:

A. Manifests Reviewed and Approved by Manifest Committee:

Denise Day and Dan Klein reviewed the manifests.
Payroll Manifest #8 \$954,310.63, #8 \$1,550,591.07, #10 \$1,003,743.36, #11 \$1,350,161.89
#12 \$949,673.93, #13 \$49,678.31 & #14 \$1,362,450.46
Vendor Manifest #14 \$304,176.99 & #15 \$119,309.69

Al Howland updated the Board on a request that was made by Maggie Morrison, Sustainability Coordinator, who approached and spoke to the Town of Durham regarding waste reduction and asked the Board if she could speak with them and UNH regarding this topic.

Al Howland made a motion to allow Maggie Morrison to speak to the Board with an invite to UNH, 2nd by Yusi Turell. Motion passed with a vote of 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Denise Day informed the Board that a member has stepped forward to assist in leading the Long Range Planning Committee and that she will keep the Board updated on the status of this committee.

Dr. Morse updated the Board on the status of the concurrent committee, the Improving Instructional committee, and the equity committee. He stated that at the last meeting they started a review of the district's racism policy. He went on to say that the student representatives on this committee are fantastic.

Brian Cisneros reminded everyone that we are still building the middle school and attends weekly meeting on site. He also wants the GO VOTE committee to come to a future meeting and be recognized.

Dr. Morse stated that there was additional material from the middle site that was not needed and was given to the school art departments as sculpturing material.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

XII. CLOSING ACTIONS:

- A. Future Meeting Date:
- 1/13/21 – Budget Public Hearing – HS Auditorium
 - 1/18/21 – Madbury Select Board Superintendent Meeting
 - 1/20/21 – Regular Meeting – ORHS Auditorium
 - 1/25/21 – Lee Select Board Superintendent Meeting

Tom Newkirk moved to enter into nonpublic session at 10:08 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c) – 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 an open meeting, 2nd by Dan Klein. Upon roll call vote, the motion passed 7-0.

XIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3 II C

- Superintendent Evaluation

~~NON MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A:2 {if needed}~~

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Al Howland moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 PM, 2nd by Dan Klein. The motion passed with a roll call vote of 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy L. DiFruscio
Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Schools