

**Oyster River Cooperative School Board**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**July 21, 2021**

**DRAFT**

**SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT:** Michael Williams, Al Howland, Brian Cisneros, Tom Newkirk, Denise Day

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:** Begins in September

**ABSENT:** Yusi Turell, Dan Klein

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Jim Morse, Sue Caswell, Suzanne Filippone, Rebecca Noe

**STAFF PRESENT:** NONE

**GUEST PRESENT:** Amy Sterndale, Andrew Smith UNH  
Andre Kloetz, Anne Kettering, Steve Laput, Doug Shilo

**I. CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Michael Williams**

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Michael Williams proposed an adjustment to the agenda for the Communications report to be presented first under District Reports and to be followed by a presentation from the middle school architects.

**Brian Cisneros moved to approve the agenda with adjustments, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk. Motion passed 5-0.**

**Iia. Mask protocol for School Board meeting**

Al Howland stated that the Durham Town Council has decided to stop wearing masks for the time being, as all members are vaccinated.

Denise Day reminded those in attendance and at home that the recommendation is still that unvaccinated individuals continue to wear masks.

**Brian Cisneros move to adopt optional mask usage at School Board meetings, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Michael Williams. Motion passed 5-0.**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jill Piparo of Lee asked the School Board to make a motion for optional masks for all ORCSD students. Jill presented the Board with the percentage of the community that is vaccinated and stated that students should not have to wear masks if their parents opt for them not to. Jill stated that other districts are surveying parents or have already stated no masks will be required and would like the same to happen for ORCSD.

Bruce Mackenzie of Durham stated they would like for masks to be a parental choice instead of a government mandate and would like to start the school year without masks and reassess if needed. Bruce also discussed the curriculum being taught to students and would like to see both sides of history being taught to students, as well as the district sending out full disclosure of the curriculum in advance to see what the district will be teaching students.

Eric Graham of Durham stated they are unhappy with how the school district was being run last year, felt the schools should have stayed open like in other districts. Eric also expressed concern with the mask mandate for students in the district, and cited research of physical and mental health risks of wearing a mask.

Stephanie Graham of Durham supports parents' choice for masks for the school district, and feels parent suggestions and input should be considered, along with more surveys of parental opinions. Stephanie also questioned the authority the Superintendent and School Board have in forcing students to wear masks if there is no mandate and questioned what will happen to children that cannot wear masks. Stephanie stated that remote learning and VLACS are causing

mental health issues and isolation for students and would like the district to reach out to families to see who is at home with remote students throughout the day.

Kathleen Hopkins of Madbury thanked the Board for their work over the last year. Kathleen would like mask usage to be optional for students and at the parents' discretion. Kathleen addressed the DEI and is concerned that race, intersectionality, and identity is being taught to children at too young an age, and that 10-year olds being taught political activism and biases is not the right approach.

Michael Shipman is concerned with the equity of the DEI curriculum and asked the School Board to disclose to the parents more what they are teaching to the students.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Brian Cisneros moved to approve the 6/16/2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Al Howland. Motion passed, 4-0-1 with Michael Williams abstaining from the vote.**

#### **V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS**

##### **A. District: None**

##### **B. Board**

Michael Williams thanked Denise for officiating the School Board meeting on 6/16/2021 in his absence.

Denise Day urged families to get their children vaccinated.

#### **VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**

##### **Communications Report** (Moved via amended agenda)

Andy Smith, the Director of the UNH Survey Center stated that the survey they are designing is aimed to reach three audiences: parents and students, teachers, and the broader community, and the team is close to the final questionnaire for parents regarding communication, with hopes to be finished in the early fall.

Denise Day asked how they are going to reach out to the various groups to administer survey.

Andy stated that is the big problem, as there are emails for faculty and staff, but the general public is a different audience that may be reached with town updates in Durham and Lee, however Madbury has no list like this. Andy stated that to answer that question more accurately he will need more details on the budget and timeline for the project.

##### **Architect's Report/LEED** (Moved via amended agenda)

Andre Kloetz stated the middle school is more than 60% complete and discussed the timeline for completing the fourth and third floors, wiring the solar panels on the roof, and the construction of the solar bus canopy. Andre also stated the Durham Town Council approved the change of directions for the roads and in a few weeks, they will work with Durham Police Department to get the public used to the new traffic flow. Andre also stated the project is still on budget and within the timeline.

Tom Newkirk asked how far along is the middle school?

Andre responded close to 70% by the end of the month.

Anne discussed the large amount of communication required with a project of this size, and all the moving parts.

Steve shared photos that were taken yesterday of the school progress, showing progress in the gym, concert hall, learning commons, and team foyers.

Doug presented the Board with an LEED Update, giving a breakdown of LEED certification requirements and where the middle school is tracking upon completion.

Denise Day thanked the team for their presentation.

Tom Newkirk remarked that it looks as though the school is going to be an instructional case in itself on how it works.

Brian Cisneros stated that at the beginning of the project we wanted the basics, but he now anticipates that when the school opens, people are going to be writing about it and coming from far away to see it, and learn how we did it and why we did it.

Michael Williams stated that the middle school is a long-term investment.

Brian Cisneros stated that previously it had been determined the fossil fuels used by the school would be dropping 85% and questioned how that works if we now have a net positive building.

Doug stated he will revisit the source data used to determine that information and provide an update.

## **A. Assistant Superintendent/Curriculum & Instruction Report(s)**

### **Testing Scores Update** (was reported on first)

Suzanne directed the Board to the information surrounding the test scores that was provided in their back up. She went on to review and explain the student results for the SAT and Star Data that was presented.

### **Reach Update**

Suzanne began by stating that we are very fortunate to have faculty and staff willing to be part of the Reach Program. She went on to state that over the past three weeks they have had 340 campers taking part in the program and that 177 of these campers stayed on to take part in the Friday version of Reach through Durham Parks and Recreation. Suzanne gave a big thank you to Regan Spinney, Dan Hammond, and Rachel Gasowski of Durham Parks & Rec for their help with the Reach program. Suzanne went on to explain that both Misty Lowe and Brian Ryan have been a tremendous support to the Reach Program in the event of inclement weather by providing areas of their building for use by the program.

The high school has also played a part in the summer programming for both the middle school and high school students by housing the SEL, ESY and summer recovery programs. These programs are personalized and student specific. She again thanked everyone involved in making this program such a success.

## **B. Superintendent's Report**

### **Chinese Program**

Dr. Morse stated the district has hired a high school and a middle school Chinese Language teacher, and they are naturalized citizens, so visas are not a problem. The last issue we face is the elementary level after school program. Dr. Morse stated he is asking the Board to make a decision for the next meeting regarding the after school program, as there is a \$20,000 cost projected for a program through One World Language, which is worth the Board's consideration, and would bring the total cost of the program to somewhere around \$183,000.

Denise Day asked how much it would cost per student if parents chose to pay for the afterschool program themselves.

Dr. Morse stated the estimated amount was based on a spreadsheet of the number of children that participated in the program in the last few years, and he will have the cost per student for the Board for the next meeting.

Grant General Assurances

Dr. Morse stated that he and Michael Williams require a motion from the Board authorizing both to sign the Grant General Assurances.

**Brian Cisneros moved to authorize Michael Williams and Dr. Morse to sign the Grant General Assurances, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Denise Day. Motion passed 5-0.**

**C. Business Administrator**

Sue Caswell provided an update on the second bond sale, and suggested we stay with the traditional bond.

**D. Student Representative Report:** None

**E. Finance Committee Report:** None

**F. Other:** None

**VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA – None**

**VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**

**Denise Day moved to affirm the hiring of the MS World Language Chinese Teacher, MS School Nurse, HS .6 FTE English/Theater Teacher, and HS Special Education Teacher (covering 1-year LOA), 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brian Cisneros.**

Brian Cisneros asked if there is a .4 position picking up for the .6 FTE teacher.

Dr. Morse clarified there is just a .6 FTE position.

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**Denise Day moved to approve two ORHS Placement Requests from Dover and Newmarket for the 2021-22 school year, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brian Cisneros.**

Dr. Morse stated both students are seniors and their parents have asked if they can continue to stay in the district.

**Motion passed 5-0.**

**IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES**

The Manifest Committee met and completed the following manifests.

Payroll Manifest #26 Total is \$1,158,703.20

Payroll Manifest #27 Total is \$5,191,832.21

Payroll Manifest #1 Total \$192,589.15

Manifest #27 Total is \$2,649,736.25

Manifest #28 Total is \$299,291.57

Manifest # 29 Total is \$2,886,034.34

Manifest #1 Total is \$586,756.60

Brian Cisneros stated that a tour of the middle school will be planned to take place in the next few weeks at 2:00 PM on a Friday.

**X. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

## **XI. CLOSING ACTIONS**

- A. Future Meeting Dates:** August 4, 2021 Regular Meeting – ORHS Auditorium  
August 18, 2021 Regular Meeting – ORHS Auditorium  
September 1, 2021 Regular Meeting – ORHS Library

## **XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II (e)**

- Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation.

**Chair Michael Williams moved to enter into a non-public session at 8:44 p.m. in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (e), Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed against the body or agency of any sub-division thereof, or against any member thereof because of his membership in such body or agency, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brian Cisneros. Upon a roll call vote the motion passed 5-0.**

**NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2**

The Board returned to public session in the ORHS Auditorium at 9:00 PM.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Brian Cisneros moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 PM, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tom Newkirk; Motion passed 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Alexa Fusilier  
Recording Secretary