

Oyster River Cooperative School Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2022

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Michael Williams, Denise Day, Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Yusi Turell, Heather Smith, Matt Bacon **ABSENT:**

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Paige Burt

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: Dr. Morse, Suzanne Filippone, Catherine Plourde, Sue Caswell, Misty Lowe, David Goldsmith, Jay Richard, Rebecca Noe, Shannon Caron,

STAFF PRESENT: Kim Felch, Felicia Sperry, Rachael Blansett, Doris Demers, Lisa Huppe

GUEST PRESENT:

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

Michael let the listening audience know of technical difficulties with the live streaming and that the meeting would be recorded and posted.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Denise Day moved to approve the agenda as written, 2nd by Brian Cisneros.

Michael Williams asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

Yusi Turell moved to add Committee Assignments to the Discussion & Action Items to follow the Unanimous Consent Agenda, 2nd by Dan Klein.

Motion to amend the agenda passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None provided

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Denise Day moved to approve the August 17th, 2022 Regular & Non-Public Meeting Minutes, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

A. District

Misty Lowe of Mast Way shared that the opening of the school year was positive and full of energy. She said the building is currently focusing on social and emotional learning to establish routines and build school and classroom community. Picture day is Friday and Open Houses will be on October 12th for Grades K-2 and October 13th for Grades 3-4.

David Goldsmith of Moharimet shared that the school opening went very well, and they are also focusing on school-wide practices and procedures. They are glad to be back in the cafeteria and thanked Doris Demers and the nutrition staff for bringing back the salad bar and offering food choices. David shared they had an assembly on the 2nd day of school to revisit the new school motto and song. He acknowledged the staff for all their incredible work setting up the year and for coming together as a community. He also gave a big thank you to the PTO, which has already provided food for the first TW Day and is organizing volunteers for Picture Day. David reported that the old pick up and drop off routines are going smoothly, and bus ridership is up this year. He gave a big thank you to the town of Madbury for working with them over the past few years. Regarding community updates, David said the playground fence has been installed, this Friday is the Fun-Run which includes a ½ and 1

mile run, and Madbury Day will take place on Saturday. He encouraged students to meet at Cherry Lane at 11:30am to march in the 12:00pm parade to Town Hall.

Jay Richard of ORMS shared they also experienced a great start to the year, and he really appreciates the students arriving on time. He reported that the playground is a huge hit and now that students have had an opportunity to interact with it, they are working on additional safety norms. In case anyone was wondering why a basketball back drop shattered, he said a cement truck hit it while no students were present, and it will be replaced soon. Jay announced that sports and clubs are starting back up noting that Astronomy and XC have received many participants. Social Emotional Learning work has been a focus while students are in advisory, and open circle training has occurred with teachers to foster relationship building at the beginning of the year. Be on the lookout for Open House dates in the next coming weeks.

Rebecca Noe of ORHS shared that they have experienced an extremely positive and energy filled start to the year. Students are very happy to be back together. Senior privileges, including leaving campus, are up and running and students have until Sept. 16th to add a class or until Oct. 20th to drop a class. On Sept. 26th and 27th Freshmen will be attending the Browne Center for ½ the day to participate in team building activities. The whole school will take part in a Spirit Week the last week of September, which includes theme days and a pep rally. In other updates the tennis courts are currently being paved and students are really enjoying the new addition of tables and seats to the Senior Core.

Rachael Blansett, the District's DEIJ Coordinator, reported that she is working on scheduling regular meetings with principals and designating regular visits and meetings with the schools. She recently met with community members to go over what has previously been worked on and although it is not confirmed yet, she is working out logistics and details to host Tona Brown, a Black Trans violinist. Last year, Tona participated in a virtual event with students, which was very well received, and this year Rachael hopes to have her attend in-person. Rachael has also coordinated with the DEIJ committee, and the next meeting will take place on September 27th from 6-7:30pm. Details will go out soon.

B. Board

Heather Smith thanked Sarah Kuhn and the music department for organizing the band that played at the ORMS Grand Reopening Ceremony. She remarked that they are amazing educators full of knowledge and enthusiasm.

Brian Cisneros thanked everyone who attended the ORMS Grand Reopening and gave special credit to Dr. Morse for spearheading it.

Michael Williams read the recent praise that was given to Marek Filip, ORHS Bobcat of the Week, and thanked the rest of the custodial staff at the high school and in the entire district.

Michael noted that the opening of school can be a time of change, challenge, and uncertainty for students and that going back can be hard. Amongst all the reports of positivity, there are students struggling and he let them know they are not alone. He asked staff to not take any student's well-being for granted and to make sure students are connected to an adult. Michael thanked students for enduring both the good and hard stuff.

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS

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

Suzanne gave a huge thank you to all the principals for the work that was done during the summer. She said it was unseen and hugely essential to the district.

Strategic Plan Board Review

School Nutrition: Doris Demers reported that the first few days back have gone really well, and students are glad to see the return of the salad bar. She reported that breakfast and lunch numbers are down, which are typical of September and increase as the year progresses. She gave a reminder to parents to put payments in their child's Titan accounts since they have already witnessed some charging. Notices have been sent out to alert families, which she understands is a change since students were receiving free food last year. Doris reiterated that no child is ever turned away from a meal, however, staff do witness students walking away without food

when they want a snack over the meal. Doris and Dr. Morse let parents know that a meal is always offered regardless of students having funds. She also emphasized that no matter the student's meal plan, they are all served the same lunch with the same options, which includes a multitude of choices. Although the middle school and high school cafeterias are currently short staffed, Doris shared how impressed and appreciative she is with the students being polite and patient.

Doris presented the school nutrition strategic plan and details regarding staff training, kitchen equipment and kitchen design. She provided updates to the board, as well as the on-going progress that is occurring in order to reach the 5-year outcome goals.

Transportation: Lisa Huppe reported that the afternoon runs are getting better each day, however, they are short-handed by two bus drivers plus two drivers that are out for medical reasons.

Dr. Morse credited Lisa for doing an amazing job predicting the times and showing careful planning, which has resulted in the most accurate times they have seen in the last ten years. Dr. Morse thanked the drivers, stating they are doing a phenomenal job. Lisa also echoed Dr. Morse's sentiments to the drivers and let the listening audience know that the driver shortage is the reason for not providing after-school transportation.

Lisa presented transportation strategic plan and details regarding bus fleet, student school bus safety program, and recruitment and pay. She provided updates to the board, as well as the on-going progress that is occurring in order to reach the 5-year outcome goals.

Rebecca Noe updated Dr. Morse with the numbers of student drivers at the high school, which currently includes 124 seniors and 125 juniors. Approximately 32 juniors and seniors are on the waiting list and if any students do not pick up their parking permit by the end of the day Friday, the school will begin providing parking passes in order of the waiting list. Individual parking passes cost \$100 while carpooling passes cost \$60.

B. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Morse commended the staff for opening the school year positively and taking the time to build relationships with every student. He felt the staff was doing an incredible job working around the theme of MTSS/SEL building routines and relationships, and the theme of Security becoming experienced with the emergency plans. While working with the town's police chiefs, Dr. Morse was able to determine that School Resource Officer Mike Nicolosi will run active shooter training (ALICE protocol) for all schools and will use the same language for consistency. With Facilities Director, Jasmine Daniels, they have identified weak points in facilities to keep them secure and will continuously work to have maximum safety. Dr. Morse credited all the parties involved in the towns for coming together to establish safety in the school buildings. He also thanked the Durham Police Department for their work around public safety announcements.

Opening Day Enrollment

Dr. Morse felt the numbers for opening day enrollment were as expected. He acknowledged that it was the 10th year in which they have been a part of the Barrington Tuition Agreement and remarked that it has opened more offerings for students and has helped the high school to flourish.

C. Business Administrator

DOE25/MS25 Signature Authorization

Sue Caswell presented both the New Hampshire State Department of Education Annual Financial Report (DOE-25) and the Oyster River Cooperative School Finance Report (MS-25) for the year ending June 30, 2022, to the Board for signing.

Brian Cisneros made a motion to authorize the Board to sign the DOE25 and MS25 documents, 2nd by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

D. Student Representative Report

Paige Burt reported that for the first-time underclassmen will be included in purchasing class t-shirts to wear during Spirit Week. Freshmen and sophomores can purchase their t-shirts online, while junior and senior class t-shirts will be available both online and in person. Junior class shirts have arrived and are being sold at school, while senior class shirts will be available at school soon. On September 20th students can attend an evening Hypnotist event sponsored by the junior class. The proceeds will help pay for the costs associated with prom. During a senior class meeting Paige said her and her classmates recognized that they entered high school prior to COVID and play an important role shaping the culture of the school. Paige reported that fall sports have had a strong start with soccer and volleyball wins. She let the audience know that Flex period begins tomorrow and regarding the new schedule, she said it is not confusing and it feels easier.

E. Finance Committee Report

Brian Cisneros reported they are looking deeper into electric buses to weigh the positives and negatives and may consider starting with vans. The Fund balance was discussed, as well as off-site sports. It was previously brought to the board what the cost would be for the district to cover sports and transportation fees. Brian confirmed it would cost approximately \$100,000, however, since it is not feasible due to the driver shortage, so it is not a discussion point for the board at this time.

F. Other – None provided

VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Michael Williams asked if any items needed to be discussed separately and there were no objections from the board.

- Motion to affirm the hiring of the high school Art Teacher.

Michael Williams made a motion to affirm the hiring of the high school Art Teacher, 2nd by Heather Smith. Motion passed 7-0 the student representative voting in the affirmative.

VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

Due to technical difficulties the Committee Assignments were moved ahead of the presentation on Monitoring Student Growth.

Yusi Turell asked to remove herself from the World Language Committee, leaving Matt Bacon as the representative.

Denise Day made a motion to remove Yusi Turell from the World Language Committee, 2nd by Brian Cisneros. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

It was requested by Athletic Director Andy Lathrop to have Dan Klein serve on the Athletic Review Committee for athletic staff and coaches.

Denise Day made a motion for Dan Klein to be a part of the Athletic Review Coaching Committee, 2nd by Matt Bacon.

Dan Klein explained that one of the objectives of being part of the committee is to connect coaches and athletic staff to policies and best practices.

Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

Monitoring Student Growth

Suzanne Filippone gave her support and appreciation for the slow school roll out taking place at each building in order to promote culture, norms, and relationships. Her presentation focused on a continued conversation about

monitoring student growth and assessment. Although a variety of assessments are used, at the elementary and middle levels they focus on the STAR Assessment and at the high school they use SAT results.

STAR Assessment

Suzanne explained that the STAR Assessment is given at grades 2-4 in reading and math. Mast Way scores rose over the year, and she is pleased with the level of proficiency in math and reading. Moharimet reading scores improved several points throughout the year, however, math experienced a slight dip at the end of the year. Since numbers were consistently high throughout the year (80 or higher), there was no cause for concern. Suzanne examined the second-grade screening data for Mast Way and Moharimet since it was the grade most impacted by remote learning. The results in spring showed a shift down in the number of students below benchmark with lowest percentile numbers. She contributes this progress to the MTSS work being done to address individual students and their learning gaps. This year's focus will be on Tier 1 supports, which are done through the classroom to reach all students, and this will hopefully result in a similar shift for the below benchmark numbers with middle percentiles. Students at or above proficiency either stayed the same or went up.

The middle school STAR results for math increased while reading went down 1%, but Suzanne felt there could have been a variety of different reasons affecting this small percentage decline and if it were to become a pattern over years then there would be reason for concern.

SAT

Suzanne explained that at the high school they use SAT scores for reading and writing and math to look at a relationship of our school in comparison to schools in the state and the nation. Although scores have overall decreased at the ORHS level, compared to the rest of NH and the nation, ORHS consistently outperforms. Suzanne explained that the ORHS scores are from an in-school test day and does not account for retakes nor does it include all students since they are allowed to opt out. The recent college trend is making SATs optional. For this reason, there has been most likely a less stringent focus on SAT prep since performance is less critical today than years past. No matter, on average ORHS students score better than the rest of the state and nation.

Suzanne explained that SATs can be used to dive into data for curriculum and teachers can pull out areas of weakness. The plan is to continue work for Tier2/3 but focus more on universal Tier 1 supports.

Some members of the board wondered how the 41% proficiency level was established for the STAR testing, and Dr. Morse explained that it was set by the district because our students are well-prepared for school. He said other schools may have a 25% proficiency level or whatever value they choose, but ours is relatively high since most of our district demonstrates a greater level of school readiness.

Michael let the audience know that the data and graphs would be available on the website since the projector was not working for tonight's presentation.

ORMS Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Kim Felch, middle school Coordinator of SEL and Mental Health, presented the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which covered such topics as safety, school performance, substance abuse and mental health. The results showed that students' mental health has increased post-pandemic, specifically in areas of self-harm, depression, and having thoughts or plans for suicide. Kim discussed the importance of our community being able to talk openly about their struggles without stigma, and she said the district can help promote this through dialogue, resources, and presentations. Some board members wondered if there is a correlation between the number of students feeling bullied and the number of students showing concern for their mental health. How bullying is handled at the classroom, counseling, and administrative level was discussed, and concerns for cyberbullying were raised.

Kim explained that schools are using a variety of tools, such as open circle, teaching kids the laws and rules around bullying, and focusing on prevention. She said students are taught how to report bullying and any concerns they have for themselves or other students, which can be done anonymously or to adults.

As a follow up, Dr. Morse requested that the building administrators report on how they handle bullying at each school. He also asked Kim to come back and present on the specifics of the Caring School Community program. Denise Day reminded the listening audience of the 988 mental health line. After providing your concerns, you will be dispatched to a clinician, or one will be provided at the house or school. Michael Williams asked Kim

what she was surprised by in the survey results. She said the high bullying numbers and it concerns her that we are not hearing from all the kids who are not feeling safe. She reemphasized the need to teach kids how to be respectful to one another. Yusi Turell thanked parents for allowing students to fill out the surveys to gain this valuable insight.

Suicide Prevention Activities

Kim Felch provided the school's evidence-based Suicide Prevention Plan experts recommend. This multifaceted approach includes protocols for helping students at risk of suicide, protocols for responding to suicide death, staff education training, parent education and student education. She explained what happens when they have a concern for a student at risk stating they utilize a screener to decide if a student's safety may involve an emergency room.

IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES

Manifest Committee reviewed the following Manifests.

Payroll Manifest #4 \$318,172.99
Payroll Manifest #5 \$831,793.73
Vendor Manifest #5 \$514,098.39
Vendor Manifest #6 \$128,278.42

Policy Committee meets tomorrow, Sept. 8th.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None provided

XI. CLOSING ACTIONS

A. Future Meeting Dates: September 21, 2022 – Regular Meeting – MS Recital Hall 7:00 PM
{Thursday} October 6, 2022 – Regular Meeting – MS Recital Hall 7:00 PM
October 19, 2022 – Regular Meeting – Mast Way Cafeteria

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 II {If Needed}
NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A2I {If Needed}

XIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Brian Cisneros made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 PM, 2nd by Heather Smith. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.

The School Board reserves the right to take action on any item on the agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karyn Laird, Records Keeper