

Revised April 27, 2022

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

**April 6, 2022**

**DRAFT**

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

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE:** Olivia Gass

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Jim Morse, Suzanne Filippone, David Goldsmith, Jay Richard, Rebecca Noe, Catherine Plourde, Sue Caswell, Andy Lathrop

**STAFF PRESENT:**

**GUEST PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:**

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

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Brian Cisneros moved to approve the agenda as written, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Yusi Turell. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Denise Day moved to approve the March 16, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon.**

Denise Day submitted the following revisions:

On page 1 in the last sentence of William Hall's public comment it should say Bill instead of Tom.

On page 3 in Rebecca Noe's update the name of the guest performer should say Tona not Tonya.

Heather submitted the following revision:

On page 2 the heading should say "Razing the old middle school" not "Raising the old middle school".

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

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS**

**A. District**

Principals Misty Lowe of Mast Way and David Goldsmith of Moharimet provided a collaborative update focusing on planning for the now, the end of the year with 4<sup>th</sup> grade recognition and transition, and the next year. So far, the 4<sup>th</sup> graders have had mini tours and lunch at the new middle school, and they will be planning more transition opportunities with Jay Richard. Brian Cisneros commented that the recent shelter in place at Mast Way was fluid and handled very well. He wondered how the kids felt during it. Misty said she greeted students off the busses the next day and that they had a lot of questions. She received positive responses from the parents on how everything was handled and thanked the PD and SAU for their fast involvement and support during it. Both schools are planning music concerts, although they will look different since the schools have different shapes and capacities for distancing and singing. More details on location and time will be provided.

Jay Richard of ORMS provided an update on demolition stating that 91% of the materials are being recycled. He reminded the audience that if they'd like a memento brick to call the front office. Jay thanked the staff for their

tremendous job organizing Kindness Week which features guest speakers Rob Surette and Sam Brazen. The first strings orchestra concert in the new Music Hall will take place next Tuesday night and the first field trip in two years recently took place at UNH's environmental presentation of *SPLASH*.

Rebecca Noe of ORHS shared about two recent events, including Tona Brown who gave an excellent and inclusive presentation with students who were engaged and asked great questions, and Katie Greer who provided insightful information to students and parents about social media in her Digital Citizenship presentation. Rebecca asked parents to let the school know of any future topics they'd be interested in. She announced that a spring pep rally is in the making, prom tickets are going on sale tomorrow, and staff are involved in transition planning for step-up day, college 101 and bootcamp for freshmen.

## **B. Board**

Brian Cisneros congratulated Olivia Gass for becoming a scholar athlete. He said the deconstruction of the middle school is going well and it is fascinating to watch.

Denise Day felt the presentation by Tona Brown was fabulous and commended the high school JETI group for putting it together and for asking thoughtful and professional questions. She also enjoyed Katie Greer's Digital Citizenship presentation and encouraged parents to provide topics for future events.

Heather Smith recognized Sarah Curtin and Susan Leifer for a doing a good job running the live portion of Katie Greer's presentation and commented on how well the new middle school was built since kids can't hear the demolition from inside their classrooms.

## **VI. DISTRICT REPORTS**

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

#### COVID METRIC/SASS

Catherine Plourde stated that the metrics have stopped being reported but the district will still update the website on local data. She said there has been a little uptick in positive cases citing 8 at the middle school and 5-6 at the high school.

Catherine said a lot of other illnesses are occurring right now and as a result the quarantine numbers look high since students need to provide a negative COVID test before returning to school. The SASS testing is still going on; however, more inconclusiveness is being reported due to a lab change of running tests through one cycle instead of two. Catherine said inconclusive tests are redone on our end and there are approximately 0-1 positive cases reported every few weeks. The district still has a good supply of home, rapid, and PCR tests.

#### Competency Based Learning

Suzanne Filippone presented Part 1 of Competency Based Learning. She explained that historically the focus for student receiving HS credit was on attendance and their number of seat hours in a chair. Over time, the focus shifted from completion hours to how kids do to showing mastery. A 2008-2009 law requiring HS competencies for each course was enacted and credit earnings became based on students mastering the competencies.

Suzanne explained that competencies are broad over-arching concepts that are skill based and encompass multiple learning standards. She said they describe what students need to know and be able to do to support mastery, which makes individualized and specialized instruction more available for extended learning opportunities and personalized education plans. Overall, they make learning more transparent and meaningful to students. She said students want to know what they are learning, why they are learning it, and how it is relevant to them.

Suzanne shared a diagram of the CBE learning cycle alongside a comparison model of the traditional instruction that often left struggling students behind. In the cycle-based instruction, as seen in our district, students who struggle are retaught and reassessed. The cycle starts with objectives and teacher instruction and moves to formative assessments such as quizzes and exit tickets as feedback to determine moving forward. Teachers can tailor their instruction based on this feedback to provide reteaching and extending learning. A final summative assessment, which may include tests, essays and projects, assesses the students' ability to demonstrate the

competencies. Students who continue to struggle can be retaught and reassessed during Flex period, a general learning lab, or a more specific math or writing lab.

Suzanne dispelled competency myths pointing out that they are not new and have been around since 2005, that they increase rigor and relevance using higher order thinking skills, they require application of information and skills, and they allow content to enhance the learning. Furthermore, she explained how competencies tie into the core beliefs at ORCSD. She stated that currently the district is improving upon their work in areas of language and consistency between the buildings. She will provide a presentation on assessment and grading at a future date.

Denise Day raised two concerns, one related to the grading stating some parents don't always know if it's good or not good when they see "progressing", and another concern related to whether relearning and retesting could factor into a student not taking a test seriously the first time since they can get another chance. Student representative Olivia Gass shared about her test anxiety stating she does better in classes that allow relearning and sometimes her anxiety might have caused a lower performance the first time around.

Brian Cisneros raised questions about the challenges and consistency among staff for making sure everyone is grading and following the teaching and relearning cycle. Dr. Morse stated that they continue to discuss consistency with staff, and they are not there yet.

Other questions from the Board were about how competencies look across the state, how teachers handle moving on to cover all the curriculum if there are relearning loops, and how our graduates do transferring to college where assessments are often final.

Suzanne said she hasn't heard of any issues with college performance and stated that a lot of high schools teach in a competency-based model. She acknowledged that our high school students are learning how to engage with faculty and advocate for themselves, which is an important skill for college. During COVID graduate follow-up lessened so Dr. Morse is going to start up the process of gathering feedback, which he feels will be helpful to the board, community, and staff.

Suzanne let the listening audience know that the high school competencies can be found at the district website under resources. She said they will be updating them this summer for language and consistency.

Yusi Turell felt it was a great first presentation and foundation for competencies and suggested allowing the school board to offer their questions ahead of time so the presentation can touch upon them. Dr. Morse agreed and asked the Board to send their specific questions about the grading and assessment component to Wendy.

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

### Fall Spirit Collaborative with Portsmouth High School

Andy Lathrop asked the School Board for approval to add a Fall Spirit Cooperative with Portsmouth High School, similar to the football cooperative. He explained the coed team will cheer at football games and compete at the NHIAA Championships under the leadership of certified coaches. The district will pay \$0, and participants will pay Portsmouth the \$300 fee as well as provide their own transportation. Andy anticipates around ten students having interest for next year and if a student has a financial need, it will not prevent them from participating.

**Brian Cisneros made a motion for the Athletic Director to enter into a Portsmouth Cooperative Agreement with Spirit, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matt Bacon. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

### Middle School Destruction

Dr. Morse reported that all safety protocols are in place for the deconstruction phase. He explained that all abatement work was done before demolition and assured everyone that any dust in the air does not contain hazardous materials. Also, he reported that the new ventilation system works well. Dr. Morse thanked Jim Rozycki for repurposing furniture and a generator to other schools, which has kept a tremendous amount of waste out of the landfill.

Dr. Morse announced that a ribbon cutting ceremony will take place on April 20<sup>th</sup> with guests including town dignitaries and any board members who can attend. The State Board of Education is holding their May 12<sup>th</sup> meeting in the Music Hall from 9-3pm. Also, the middle school grand opening is scheduled to take place on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and state & local dignitaries will be invited to attend.

Regarding Tona Brown's virtual event, Dr. Morse felt it was outstanding and is looking forward to her coming back next year in-person. He felt it was amazing how close a connection she made with students despite being virtual.

#### Middle School Fees

Dr. Morse provided the Board with the proposed middle school facility use fees to be put in place for the remainder of the school year.

#### **Brian Cisneros made a motion to accept the middle school fees as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Heather Smith.**

It was discussed that groups within the school district will not be charged to use the space, including Durham Parks & Rec, Maximum Velocity, and the Durham Youth Association, except for lighting and custodial fees. Preference will be given to school and district groups, and outside groups can request the space if it is available. The school district has the right to deny an event if it does not align with the school mission, and this can be determined ahead of time through the purpose portion of the request form.

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

#### UNH Community-Wide Communication Survey Results

Dr. Morse stated that a subcommittee has sorted 700-800 parent comments and categorized them by theme. He shared that Amy Sterndale has volunteered her professional time acting as a consultant to the group, and felt her time and expertise is an incredible gift. Next steps will be sharing the comments with the Administration Team, and the community comments will be available at the next school board meeting.

Denise Day thanked those in the community who took the survey and shared a comment asking the district to consider the residents without children when they revamp their communication.

#### **C. Business Administrator**

Sue Caswell provided a budget update stating they are trending in a good direction.

#### **D. Student Representative Report**

Olivia Gass shared that the Student Athletic Leadership Team and the Sustainability Club will be hosting a combined Earth Fest & Pep Rally on April 22<sup>nd</sup> to celebrate Earth Day and school spirit. She said advisories participated in the Digital Citizenship presentation and although many students felt they knew a lot of what was presented, they still had great discussions. A quarter 3 Coffee House will be held on April 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the release of MOR's third issue, and the Senate is currently holding a Class Coin War to raise funds for the Spring Social. Olivia said the seniors are enjoying the senior space that is now open and 380 prom tickets will be on sale tomorrow for juniors and seniors at a cost of \$50 per ticket.

#### **E. Finance Committee Report**

Finance Committee will meet on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm.

#### **F. Other:**

#### **VII. UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGENDA**

Michael Williams reminded the Board that the Unanimous Consent Agenda consists of items that may not require discussion. He asked if any items needed to be discussed and there were no concerns from the Board.

Nominate Non-Tenure Contract Professional Staff Members as submitted by the Superintendent.  
Propose Friday, June 17, 2022 as the last day of the 2021-22 School Year.  
ORHS Maternity Leave of Absence from Beginning of Year to November 25, 2022.

**Michael Williams made a motion to approve the Unanimous Consent Agenda as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Denise Day. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

## VIII. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

### School Board Chair Committee Assignment Recommendations

Michael Williams asked the Board to review the chair committee assignment recommendations for approval. He also asked for nominations to fill chair assignments for the DEIJ Coordinator Search Committee. Brian Cisneros, Yusi Turell, and Heather Smith volunteered for the committee. Brian Cisneros raised concerns on whether there was a perceived conflict of interest in the community regarding Yusi's professional work at UNH. Dr. Morse asserted there is no legal conflict, she's not in close contact to NH Listens, and the committee doesn't make the final decision, rather they narrow down candidates for him to decide. A few board members shared their support for Yusi stating she would be an asset to the committee since she has had long-term involvement with the DEIJ committee work.

**Denise Day made a motion to approve the committee assignments as presented with addition to Brian Cisneros, Yusi Turell, and Heather Smith for DEIJ Coordinator Search Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dan Klein.**

Yusi asked Matt Bacon if he'd serve on the World Language Committee since he has children in the elementary school, and Matt accepted the assignment.

**Yusi Turell made a friendly amendment to add Matt Bacon to the World Language Committee with consent given by Denise Day and Dan Klein. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

### Review Required Annual "B" Policies

Michael Williams stated that the Annual B Policies about governance and public access to the Board are up for annual review to ensure familiarity by board members.

**Brian Cisneros made a motion to accept the review of the policies, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dan Klein. Motion passed 7-0 with the student representative voting in the affirmative.**

At 8:55 pm Michael Williams called a 5-minute recess and Olivia Gass left for the night.

Meeting resumed at 9:02

### Future School Board Meeting Topics

The Board held a discussion on an outline of future meeting dates and topics. Members commented on it being a good way to look at the year, that they appreciated the sequencing, and they liked that it's a living document that provides transparency of what's coming.

## IX. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE UPDATES - None provided

The Manifest Committee met and completed the following manifests.

Vendor Manifest #21 \$907,520.69  
Vendor Manifest #22 \$1,121,034.27  
Payroll Manifest #19 \$1,493,447.26  
Payroll Manifest #20 \$1,005,334.44

**X. PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None provided

**XI. CLOSING ACTIONS**

**A. Future Meeting Dates:** April 20, 2022 Regular Board Meeting – ORHS Library  
May 4, 2022 Regular Board Meeting – ORHS Library  
May 18, 2022 Regular Board Meeting – ORHS Library

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

**NON-MEETING SESSION:** RSA 91-A2 I (a) {If Needed}

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Brian Cisneros moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Heather Smith. Motion passed 7-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Karyn Laird, Records Keeper