

**AUBURN SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M.
AUBURN VILLAGE MEDIA CENTER**

These minutes have been approved.

Alan Villeneuve, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Those in attendance were members Janice Baker, Jason Tyburski, and Derek Berger. Also in attendance were Principal, Lori Collins; Assistant Principal, Lindsay Murray; Director of Student Services, Deena Jensen; Middle School Grade Leader, Kerry Boles; Technology Director, Keith Lord; Maintenance Director, Scott Dube; Superintendent William (Bill) Rearick; Assistant Superintendent, Marge Polak; and Business Administrator, Amy Ransom.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Scott Dube led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROOF OF POSTING

Bill Rearick provided proof of posting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Janice Baker, seconded by Derek Berger, to approve the August 10, 2021 Board meeting minutes with the following amendments: Page 2 under Public Input 'Jamie Shevlin asked how many teachers live outside of Auburn, to which Alan Villeneuve stated around 80%' and under Snow Day/Remote Learning should read '...observing 5 snow/cancellation days as recommended by the Superintendent..' and on Page 3, under Personnel should read 'the two new AEA Co-Presidents', and the motion carried unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Resident Heather Belanger addressed the Board with regard to her request for a new high school bus stop. Her first request was denied by the SAU Transportation Coordinator and was appealed by Ms. Belanger. Then it went before the Board's Transportation Committee where it was again denied. When Amy Ransom, the Transportation Coordinator was asked for her input, she stated that Ms. Belanger originally requested that the stop be moved so that students didn't have to cross Rt. 121 and that the change was made. Ms. Belanger then requested that an additional stop be added. Alan Villeneuve asked Amy Ransom what the requirements are for high school buses, to which Amy stated that a district is not required to transport high school students, but if they do, high schoolers can walk up to one mile to a stop. Alan said that he understands Ms. Belanger's concerns, but that any changes would impact other students as well. He said the Transportation Committee minutes state that the request will be reviewed again in October.

Resident Troy Shurtleff said he hoped the Board would revisit their optional mask wearing policy, citing rising DHHS data points.

Resident Jennifer Anderson echoed Mr. Shurtleff's statement in requesting mandatory mask-wearing. She also requested that the Board consider adding Family and Consumer Science to the middle school curriculum.

Jennifer Aldridge said she hoped that mask-wearing would remain optional and felt that it is a family choice and was what the majority of the community wanted.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATES

Bill Rearick summarized his report which was in the packet for review. He said he visited AVS yesterday and toured grades 3 and 4. He said that he monitors the Department of Health and Human Services Dashboard daily, looking for trends. The data points for Auburn show that the PCR antigen positivity rate has been over 10% which indicates substantial transmission at the community level (not county level). He said the school is doing a good job mitigating the spread but that the opening protocols put in place by the Board state that the Board would shift the mask requirements if the trends increase. When asked his opinion, Bill suggested implementing a mask requirement for a specified amount of time, and if trends go down, they could rescind the requirement.

Alan Villeneuve stated that the Board spent a long time developing a plan and in August and they agreed to rely on data. He said the Superintendent reviews trends daily and used the data points agreed upon, relying on local positivity rates.

Janice Baker said that she wants students to be comfortable but that she would support a weekly cycle of review in order to maximize instruction in the building. Derek Berger agreed with Janice in support of looking at numbers and mask requirements weekly. Jason Tyburski stated that the overwhelming majority wanted mask wearing to be optional, and is in favor of keeping it optional. Alan Villeneuve said the data met the previously determined criteria, and since the Board set the policy they should maintain it as written.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Resident Kirsten Wright thanked the Board for having optional mask wearing and asked if the Board would meet each time the trends change, to which Alan Villeneuve stated that the Board empowered the Superintendent to uphold the Reopening Plan.

Jennifer Aldridge said there is no need for masks outside. The Superintendent agreed.

Jennifer Anderson asked how it would impact lunches and if there would be outdoor classrooms, to which Lori Collins stated that lunches will not be affected, and Bill Rearick said that teachers would have outdoor classrooms when appropriate.

Jennifer Aldridge asked if kindergartners would have to wear masks, Bill Rearick stated that they would, as they can't keep 6' distances.

Resident Troy Shurtleff questioned the matrix/data points the Superintendent uses, to which he said he uses the 7-day PCR-Antigen test positivity rate, the number of active cases, and the number of new cases over the past 14 days.

Alan Villeneuve stated what matters is what is happening in Auburn, and the numbers are trending higher in Auburn.

Heather Belanger stated that kids will wear the mask at school and take them off after they get out of school. Masking for 6 hours a day does nothing.

Kristen Wright asked the Board to send out surveys.

Janice Baker suggested sending out a letter for parents be cognizant of increased numbers in the community. Alan Villeneuve said the reopening plan is in place with identifiers and the Board should stay with that.

Motion by Janice Baker, seconded by Derek Berger to approve the Superintendent's recommendation for mandating mask wearing as presented effective 9/16/21 – 9/24/21 with weekly review to occur each Thursday for planning for the following school week. With Jason Tyburski opposed, all others in favor, the motion carried.

Janice Baker asked what the language is in the bus contract with regard to extra-curricular activities.

Amy Ransom stated that they are following the contract but said if the Athletic Director notified her of a problem, she would contact the bus company who would have to address any issues.

Alan Villeneuve stated that part of the next bus contract should address negotiations for inconveniences stemming from a shortage of their staff.

REPORTS

Reports of Administrators

Janice Baker asked that the budget include competitive rates and to look into adding benefits for paraprofessionals.

Scott Dube said many things have been accomplished by the maintenance department which included: abatement/flooring/tiles/floor tiles/stage work.

Bill Rearick commended Scott and the custodial staff. Melissa Prunier also thanked Scott and his crew, Lori Collins and Lindsay Murray on behalf of the staff, for all they did in preparation of school opening.

Discussion ensued relative to locker use and class schedules.

Reports of Standing Committees

Policy meeting-October 20

Jason Tyburski stated that the Technology Committee met and talked about considering leasing Chromebooks. Alan Villeneuve suggested contacting Chester to see how their leasing program is working out.

OLD BUSINESS

Revised Instructional Time Schedule

The Board thanked Lori Collins for providing a more concise Instructional Time Schedule.

NEW BUSINESS

Plans to Identify Learning Gaps

Marge Polak presented a handout for the Board to review. She said there are more gaps in math than there are in language arts. Lori Collins said there is an ongoing assessment that looks at test scores and student work. She said AVS administrators and staff will look at student work and place them where they are in, in their progression. Marge said they have hired two consultants, one in Reading for K-6 and one in math for K-8.

Janice Baker said the three things to deal with regarding gaps: Problem/Target/Measure.

Alan Villeneuve it seems like there is an implementation problem and asked what is holding everything up; what is the roadblock. Marge Polak stated that time is a factor as there are not many subs to cover classes while teachers work in grade level team work. Alan Villeneuve suggested taking a day off from students. Lori Collins said they wouldn't need an entire day. Alan wants something sooner than later. Janice said that the gap conversation will continue more than a year. Marge Polak said she can put a timeline in place. Lori Collins said they use benchmarks from the NH SAS assessment program. Benchmarks target skills. The plan is for all students to do benchmarks. Alan Villeneuve said this is a high priority.

COVID Testing Options for Students and Staff

Bill Rearick stated that there are two different proposals offered to districts for COVID testing. Both require parent permission. Option 1 would be for asymptomatic individuals who participate in large group activities. Option 2 is for symptomatic students and would allow a rapid test to be performed at their school by a certified individual. Some discussion ensued.

Motion by Derek Berger, seconded by Janice Baker, to proceed with Option 2, and the motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL

Manifest Approvals

Motion by Derek Berger, seconded by Janice Baker, to approve the 8/9/21-9/10/21 manifest in the amount of \$819,066.97, and the motion carried unanimously.

Expenditure Report

The expenditure report was in the packet for review.

PERSONNEL

Ratification of Superintendent's Nomination

Motion by Janice Baker, seconded by Derek Berger, to approve the Superintendent's nominations as presented, and the motion carried unanimously.

Co-Curricular Nominations

Motion by Derek Berger, seconded by Jason Tyburski to accept the co-curricular nominations as presented and the motion carried unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Heather Belanger asked if it was possible to send a few kids at a time to lockers. Kerry Boles will look into seeing if area bins are available.

Troy Shurtleff asked if the Board based their choice in voting for Option 2 for COVID testing was based on cost, to which Alan Villeneuve said there is no advantage to go with Option 1. Cost was not a consideration. Mr. Shurtleff questioned what metrics/data points that are being used. Alan Villeneuve said complete data decisions are based on a variety of number and variables.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3 Section II (a-k) (if necessary)

At 9:00 p.m., motion by Janice Baker, seconded by Derek Berger to enter into a non-public session RSA 91-A:3 Section II (c). A roll call vote was taken. With all in favor, the motion carried.

The board resumed public session at 9:15 p.m.

Motion by Derek Berger, seconded by Janice Baker to seal the non-public minutes in perpetuity, and the motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL Items/Upcoming Agenda Items

Opening Day Enrollments
Professional Staff List

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Derek Berger, seconded by Janice Baker, to adjourn at 9:15 p.m., and the motion carried unanimously.

The next Auburn School Board Meeting will be Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Auburn Village School Media Center.

The SAU Board will meet on October 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. at the Henry W. Moore School Cafetorium in Candia.

Respectfully submitted.

Rebecca SJ McCarthy
Recording Secretary