

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
EPPING SCHOOL BOARD
October 17, 2019 - Town Hall
School Board Meeting - 7:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Deborah Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Deborah Brooks, Vice Chair David Mylott, Member Nicole Carleton, Member Ben Leavitt, Member Heather Clark, Superintendent Valerie McKenney, Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Student Faith Williamson, and Student Taya Morgado.

SCHEDULED GUESTS

a. Superintendent McKenney 20-21 Calendar

There is a new format for the 20-21 school calendar. The professional development dates are either on a Monday or Friday, or they're at the beginning or ending of holiday weekends. There was a general discussion about moving some of the professional development days to better accommodate election dates. Nicole brought up that the last day of school for the 20-21 school year, June 21, is a Monday. Heather would like to see the number of school hours listed on the new 20-21 school calendar. The graduation date for 2021 is June 11.

Member Nicole Carleton made a motion to have a hard stop set for June 25, 2021. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Superintendent McKenney - Withdrawal Data

Valerie looked at enrollment by school and compared data from October 1, 2018 to October 1, 2019. She discussed student numbers at the varying schools and dates. She also discussed the number of students who withdrew from each of the schools. In September, Valerie had met with Tracy Bell to gather data and learn a little bit more about the processes they use when students leave. From now on, when people leave the school district, the registrars will ask if they'd like to share why they are leaving. Christine Cue, administrative assistant, helped organize and analyze the data.

The grading scale hasn't changed at the elementary school, so the grading system isn't the reason why families are leaving the district at the elementary school level. Valerie knows that two students have left because of the grading system.

Nicole thinks that it is good information to have since the school district isn't that big, and it will be easy to keep track of.

Heather thinks the data should be reviewed annually at the second October school board meeting.

Valerie thanked the Board for the opportunity to create structure regarding this issue.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Parent Chris Sousa said that the withdrawal data still isn't posted, and that it has been eight weeks since it should have been posted.

Valerie said that all official information will be on the website. Christine could have uploaded the data before the meeting, but they didn't. Christine will start uploading the relevant information to the website on Mondays.

David said that it should be posted by Monday even if the School Board hasn't seen it yet. He thinks the data should have been done earlier.

Heather said that personnel issues and the manifest shouldn't be posted prior to meetings, but everything else can and should be.

Chris said that Christine and Bonnie are very responsive. He said that the issue should have been resolved by now.

The data numbers come from PowerSchool.

Chris commented that the Epping schools' data from the 19-20 school year on the state website is still not posted to the district's website. There are slight variations from the data Valerie supplied to the data on the state website. There is a steady decline in the middle and high school. Chris provided a plethora of statistics.

On Nov 21, there will be a student achievement update. The students have made improvements. There will be another update again in June.

Parent Robert Hodgeman recommends listening to Chris. If it is an issue, the School Board should be most concerned about the current 8th graders. He said that his son is in 10th grade and that 10 (actually 11) of his son's friends left the district. His son told him that they only gained one student within the sophomore class. Robert doesn't want kids leaving the district. He wants his son to have more opportunities to make friends, and it's better for sports team. He offered to tutor students and have pancakes at his house in the mornings. He's a licensed math teacher in three states. Heather asked if he had reached out to Mr. Ernest about the tutoring, and he is going to.

POLICY

a. DFA Investment - Second/Third Read

Member Nicole Carleton made a motion to approve policy DFA Investment Policy as written. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries.

b. EHAB - Data Governance and Security - First Read

Required by law. Was tabled until the next meeting.

c. JJA - Student Co-curricular and Extra-curricular activities - First Read

Valerie asked if they should post policies like this one ahead of time, and David thinks that they should. Heather thinks that the updated policy addresses issues mentioned at the previous meeting.

PERSONNEL

Heather asked if the school district was fully staffed. They're short a custodian or two.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

a. Superintendent's Report

Valerie discussed the Epping School District charter, upcoming picture retakes, the Monster Mash event, activity night, the UNH field trip, the upcoming play, conference days, and the workshop for bullying. She encouraged parents to call the school and tell a teacher or principal if their kid is getting picked on. She wants every kid to feel safe at school. Heather was wondering when school pictures would be coming home.

b. Student Report

About 20 juniors took the PSAT when it was offered. It was optional, but they filled all the desks.

Seniors are starting to apply for colleges. There was a college fair at UNH, and Faith said it went really well. She said that there were lots of schools there, and there was plenty of time to walk around.

There is a lot of interest in the unified cheer team including some guys.

There was a general discussion about mental health week. There was a door decorating competition, a knock-out rock paper scissor tournament during flex, meditation, and apple cider and donuts. The seniors won door decorating. They played a slide show about mental health on mental health awareness day.

Heather asked about Flex Block, and everyone is onboard with it and used to it at this point in the school year.

Valerie commented on knitting and how much the kids love Flex Block. On most days, kids get their work done during flex, but most students make sure to have at least one fun Flex Block per week.

Heather asked about free application day for NH colleges. It is coming up shortly.

c. Committee Reports

At the facilities meeting, there was a general discussion about the upcoming work with Mike Davey.

At the committee meeting, there was a general discussion about the upcoming paving project behind the elementary school.

At the PTO meeting, there were questions from parents about expansion plans at the elementary school. There are no plans for expansion this year. There is a general concern about the large incoming Kindergarten class.

There was a general discussion about having a bus monitor on the bus with the elementary students. Valerie is going to look at the data and see how many bus issues there have been in order to see if a bus monitor is warranted.

Don Nichols would like access to dumpsters in order to dispose of old equipment that no longer works and is taking up space at all of the schools. He assumes the total cost for the dumpsters could be up to 5,000 dollars. Deborah asked if Don has the money in his budget for this. Bonnie said that he does. Heather asked if they can use town transfer stations and town vehicles for this task. They want to look into recycling and donating options. It was tabled for the next meeting.

Deborah reported about the superintendent search committee. There's 12 people on the committee. They're going to send out the survey for the community to take to determine what the community's desired traits for a superintendent are. The students need permission to take it. There was a general discussion where to find the survey to take. They need the data back by 10/28, and then Mr. Morse, senior consultant, will decipher the data and put out an advertisement.

Valerie reported on the parent safety group. The students are going to put positive messages on the back of bathroom stalls. Valerie sent out an email to see if parents got the message on school messenger and to make sure their contact information is accurate. If a parent didn't get a call, they should contact Valerie.

In regards to the SST meeting, Valerie discussed changes in the special education implementation.

The CBE oversight committee is going to be reorganized and have some changes made to it in the near future. At the last meeting, they discussed grading and communication.

At the middle school PTO meeting, they discussed the upcoming activity night.

At the field committee meeting, there was a discussion about the new drawing that is needed behind Epping High School.

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to grant up to 5,000 dollars to complete the surveying behind Epping High School. Seconded by Member Nicole Carleton. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES

a. Approve Employee Safety Program

Added policies. The link at the bottom of the document is incorrect, and Bonnie is going to fix it.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the Employee Safety Program with revisions. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Minutes for October 3, 2019

Member Nicole Carleton made a motion to accept the public minutes from October 3, 2019. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Nonpublic minutes from October 1, 2019

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept the nonpublic minutes from October 1, 2019. Seconded by Member Nicole Carleton. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to seal the nonpublic minutes from October 1, 2019. Seconded by Member Nicole Carleton. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST

a. Payroll

Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to approve payroll manifest #8 dated 10/18/2019 in the amount of \$516,850.09. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries.

b. Accounts Payable

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve the accounts payable manifest #8 dated 10/10/2019 in the amount of \$461,001.82. Seconded by Vice Chair David Mylott. VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries.

COMMENTS/OTHER

David said that anyone should be able to ask a question at any meeting. If the School Board can answer, they should be allowed to do so. Otherwise, the unanswered question will be put on the agenda for the following meeting.

Ben reminded people that they can still send an email in order to add to the agenda. Valerie added that there's value in contacting herself or a principal first if it's an issue that can be addressed that way.

Heather reminded folks that there's no meeting on Halloween and said to enjoy trick or treating.

Bonnie talked about the changes in state funding and the unanticipated money given back to town.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

- a. October 21, 2019 - Budget Work Session #1 - 6:00 pm Town Hall
- b. October 23, 2019 - Budget Work Session #2 - 6:00 pm Town Hall
- c. October 29, 2019 - Budget Work Session #3 - 6:00 pm Town Hall
- d. November 7, 2019 - Regular School Board Meeting

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II*

(*a. personnel, b. hiring, c. adverse reputation, d. property, e. legal, g. security functions, i. emergency functions)

ADJOURNMENT

Member Heather Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Nicole Carleton. VOTE: 5-0 Motion carries.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Minutes submitted by,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary