

RSU 23 Board Minutes

RSU #23 Board Meeting held at Old Orchard Beach Town Hall (Virtual Meeting) on
March 26, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Called to Order

Dave Boudreau called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Present: Dave Boudreau, Peter Flaherty, Christopher LaSalle, Michelle Violette, Sally Beatty, and Superintendent John Suttie.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Christopher LaSalle and seconded by Michelle Violette to accept the minutes from the February 27, 2020 board meeting. Voted unanimously. Motion approved.

Adjustment to the Agenda

Cancel Executive Session

Correspondence

None

Public Session

None

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Suttie spoke about the RSU 23 school closure information and that the daily letters are all housed under the red banner at the front of the RSU 23 website page. The information includes lunch, closures, special ed and technology. Most of our structures are up and running. Food service is up and running and today we served 180 lunches. I would expect that number to go up as this quarantine continues. We will be holding the April 8th budget presentation like I was going to before the start of this virus. If we decide that we need to have another workshop before the April board meeting, we will do so. Once that happens and the board approves it, our budget will be on hold until we can gather as a community to hold the regional budget referendum meeting. Anyone with questions please contact me at jsuttie@rsu23.org. As soon as we can have a referendum meeting, we will have the budget already approved by the board and ready to go. We have rolled out our online learning for grades K-12. We are building as we go. There is a lot to learn in this process. I don't think we will ever have a snow day again. We are excited to deliver education to our kids as long as it lasts. We talked briefly about April vacation. I have surveyed the staff and they want to keep April vacation in place. I agree. Many staff members are taking care of elderly. We are online all the time and I think the staff in four weeks will really need to unplug. As far as the end of the year, the DOE and governor have waived the minimum day waiver. That means you as a board can end the school year any day you decide. It will be a local decision as to when you want to end the school year. As of right now we are slated to be back April 27th. We have to get together as administrators and decide how we want to proceed with staff evaluations. As far as special education goes, we got a clear message. We are still trying to work out that equity issue. There are a lot of lawsuits flying around in other states based on equity. We are trying to offer opportunities to our children daily and ask them to check in. Shout out to some employee classifications that are essential and have to work during this quarantine. I'll start with the custodial and transportation department. The custodians are splitting days and coming in every third day and transportation is working to help deliver meals to our students. Last but not least the food service employees. They are coming in daily. I cannot tell you how heroic these people are to be on the front

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lines of this situation. The governor has asked they continue to work to deliver food to our students and I can't thank them enough.

Board Presentation

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Peter Flaherty read the first reading of policies BEDH: Public Participation at Board Meetings and GCOA: Supervision and Evaluation of Professional Staff. All policies can be found at rsu23.org under school board section.

A motion was made by Christopher LaSalle and seconded by Sally Beatty to approve policy EFD: Charging Policy as written. Voted unanimously. Motion approved.

Committee Reports

Calendar committee: Michelle stated we are going ahead with documents. What you have before you is our draft form of the 20-21 school calendar. We have to take in mind the Biddeford Regional calendar as well as calendars from surrounding districts. Labor Day is late this year and we have to take into consideration our student's needs at the time. This is a committee that has representatives of all categories. Students will be starting the week of the 31st of August. The highlighted days are the days we will have workshop days, which will be the same as Saco and Biddeford. We will get out Friday, June 11th without any snow days. It was really a goal of the committee to be able to add snow days and still get out fairly early in June. It will be posted on the RSU 23 website in draft form.

Finance: Dave reported that regarding finance, we will meet if need be for an emergency but I did tell John and his staff whatever they need to do to support our staff and kids they should do. We want to make sure everyone is taken care of. We have until January to vote in a budget. If we don't vote one in by September things will still be the same operating as this year. We could possibly run out of money if we don't get a budget approved. I told them to move forward with the budget being brought to the board. It should be business as usual with budgeting.

Board Remarks

Sally stated she just wanted to thank all of our staff for the work they have been putting in getting the kids set up with virtual learning. Stay safe, take care of yourself and your families.

Michelle stated the same as Sally. Not only thank all of you here for everything you have been doing but all the staff. Be easy on yourself, stay healthy and be kind to each other. I have enjoyed the check-ins from schools. Home schooling doesn't look the same for everyone. Do what you can when you can.

Peter stated that this corona virus is such a horrible thing. The best thing that is coming out of it is how wonderful people are being to one another. In the end teachers will be more appreciated than they ever have been. He especially wanted to thank Caroline for getting the food out to those kids like you did last summer. It is very heartwarming to see that happen. Mr. Suttie definitely has a second career in gospel singing coming up.

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Chris stated he wanted to thank and acknowledge both this group and everyone working for the district for the amazing work being done to help our students and remote learning. He's been so impressed with the communication with the board, the communication to the parents, and all you do daily to keep the district running in these times.

Dave stated that he knows there are things going around about the food program. People think that if someone takes a meal it won't be given out to other kids who really need it. This is not true. Everyone will be fed. He would appreciate a letter be sent out saying anyone can get a meal. We have enough to feed everyone. I have had a lot of parents call me, and the first day of homeschooling, their kids were suspended. Again, as everyone said, he can't even say how thankful he is of the staff and administration we have. We are in the position today because of who you all are. In talking to other boards and districts he doesn't think they were as prepared with the information going out. I am very, very thankful. He calls John daily to see if he is okay. He doesn't want you all getting sick. You can't help us if you are sick. If anyone needs help please reach out and we will be here to do it. If board members want to help deliver food, reach out to Caroline. Fantastic job. Keep up what you are doing. It could be a lot worse if we didn't have the team that we have.

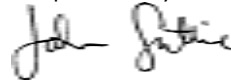
Adjournment

A motion was made by Christopher LaSalle and seconded by Sally Beatty to adjourn the meeting at 6:36PM. Voted unanimously. Motion approved.

Minutes prepared by:

Helene Stevens,
Transcriber

Respectfully submitted by:



John Suttie,
Superintendent