

RSU 23 Board Minutes

RSU #23 Board Meeting held at Old Orchard Beach Town Hall (Virtual Meeting) on August 20, 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 Chris LaSalle and seconded by Michelle Violette to accept the minutes from the July 16, 2020 & August 10, 2020 board meetings as written. Voted unanimously. Motion approved. (Roll Call; M. Violette, S. Beatty, P. Flaherty, C. LaSalle & D. Boudreau)

Public Session

None

Adjustments to the Agenda

None

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Suttie stated he had a couple of things he wanted to go over. We released our video, slide show, handbook and other forms around reopening to parents on August 7th. We have held 3 parent forums and got a great amount of feedback and collaboration around getting students back to school. Thank you to school board, community, parents and staff for all their help in getting this plan in place. For remote learning numbers, we closed the window and looks like about 12% of our students have opted to do remote learning K-12. Joanne Dowd is managing the remote learning plan for our students and teachers, and she has done an above and beyond job on this. Thank you to Joanne. Teachers are reporting back next Thursday, August 27th. I sent the agenda and plan for our first few teacher workshops out to staff yesterday. Students are returning starting with transition grades on Tuesday, September 8th and all students returning Thursday, September 10th. At our opening training days, a lot of work will be done on safety and managing students back to school. For instance, how we will handle lunch, cleaning, mask breaks, etc. They are going to help refine those procedures and put stickers and signs in place throughout the schools. Regarding fall athletics, they met and decided to push the start of fall athletics until Sept 8th. If we started in August, it would risk the spread of the disease and potentially push back the start of school. Lastly, reminder to all families to fill out the transportation/technology survey that was sent out. It will help set our protocols for transportation and technology in the fall. Thank you to the 175 families who have already filled out the survey. Masks are required on the bus as well as there will be hand sanitizer for when they get on and off the bus.

Board Presentation

None

Old Business

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None

New Business

A motion was made by Michelle Violette and seconded by Sally Beatty to approve policies; GBN: Family & Medical Leave, GBN-R1: Family & Medical Leave Administrative Procedure and GBN-R2: Maine Family & Medical Leave Administrative Procedure as presented. Voted unanimously. Motion approved. (Roll Call; M. Violette, S. Beatty, P. Flaherty, C. LaSalle, & D. Boudreau)

A motion was made by Peter Flaherty and seconded by Chris LaSalle to approve RSU 23's School Reopening Plan as presented. Voted unanimously. Motion approved. (Roll Call; M. Violette, S. Beatty, P. Flaherty, C. LaSalle, & D. Boudreau)

Committee Reports

Technology: Chris stated that the technology committee met this week and we are busy getting ready for the next school year. We are making sure all students are 1:1 with devices for the upcoming school year. The district will be able to provide these devices. Part of some of the CARES act funding will help us do that. The technology department is putting together new safety protocols on how they are going to prioritize repairs in a safe way and are setting up a platform to submit these requests.

Building: Peter reported that there is work being done on Jameson School. The project at Jameson critically needs to be taken care of and is well underway. I understand there won't be a problem with finishing what needs to be done inside by September 8th. Eric did a walk through with Kate this morning. The focus has been to close up the exterior of the office. It will be down to the hour. There is very limited teacher impacted areas. John stated that we put the wall at the high school on the back burner right now until we can have more community involvement. We are going to paint the other areas of the building and I want to spend the next couple of months and work on how we can replace or refurbish this. The alumni association would like to have a say in what happens.

Finance: Dave reported that the finance committee met briefly and went over a few things. As you know we had an emergency board meeting regarding the Jameson School. I want to just tell you about a Coronavirus relief fund that we received. \$564,197.74 is the amount we received and out of that we received a new bus to accommodate the social distancing. The bus has been bought and delivered and it's my understanding we bought the last bus in New England. We got another \$211,768 from a different grant. It's from the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund. It has a timeline of September 2021 so we put this on pause because we need to work down this grant before December and will use this first. I am happy we received grants like this as we don't usually get extras from the State. I think we are lucky for that.

Board Remarks

Peter stated he just would like to commend John and Eric and their administrative team in their return to school framework. It is well done and they did a lot of reaching out for parent involvement. We have 12% remote learning and 88% in house. I was excited to see what our remote learning students will be getting. It looks wonderful. As far as RSU 23 is concerned kudos to you guys.

Sally stated she would like to continue on with what Peter was saying to thank the administrators for all the work they have been doing all summer long. They have done a lot of work for everyone to come back to a safe environment. The stake holder meetings were very informative and I'm very impressed. Hope the administrators will have a few days before school starts that they can enjoy with their family.

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Michelle stated "you guys have not had a vacation." That was one of the things I was thinking about last week. Thank you to the community and teachers. We are going through this together and I think administration has done a good job including everyone in the decisions that were made. The parent forums were great. Questions were as good as answers. When there is a calm way to address this, it was a good feeling.

Chris stated he had few things. Back to school, I do support with going back with the hybrid model. Our county is green but I think we are making a smart and cautious decision to ease back into it. Over the summer I saw the administrative team put a tremendous amount of work into the three plans we have. They were robust and well thought out. They used outside resources to help with those plans and that was great. We are using our grant money excellently. Thank you and great job to those of you that spent the summer getting this ready. Thanks in advance to teachers and staff that will be going back into the buildings this fall. It is not easy. The superintendent, principals, board members and community have your back and will do our best to keep everyone safe.

Dave stated he agrees with everything you all say. I still have the meetings with different district boards. It's interesting this last one they mentioned how well we communicated our plan to the parents and staff. They heard how well we have done and how well we are preparing our students and staff to get back to school. Hearing people say they should do what RSU 23 is doing, is great. We hope the plan goes as smooth as possible and we are here to support you. I appreciate all your work and everyone coming back to make kid's lives a little normal. Everyone is going to learn from this and I hope it's a good experience for everyone involved that we have done all we can to keep them safe. I am sure we will have more meetings and things change on a dime. I think the community feels supported and safe. Let's hope it doesn't get worse out there.

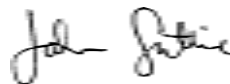
Adjournment

A motion was made by Michelle Violette and seconded Christopher LaSalle by to adjourn the meeting at 6:34PM. Voted unanimously. Motion approved.

Minutes prepared by:

Helene Stevens,
Transcriber

Respectfully submitted by:



John Suttie,
Superintendent