

Unofficial Until Approved by the Board

SAU 21 Joint School Board - Weekly Update (Thursday, April 16, 2020)

Generated by Rhonda Evans on Thursday, April 16, 2020

Members present

Erin Stanton, Greg Parish, Gregg Duffy, Henry Marsh, Jim Kime, John Bailly, Leslie Lafond, Michael Rabideau, Rebecca Burdick, Sharon Gordon, Heidi Taracena, Jason Farias, Jennifer Hubbard, Kelli Hueber, Martin Tavitian, Nermina Peterson, Tony Delano Tom von Jess joined the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Superintendent Bill Lupini, Assistant Superintendent David Hobbs, Executive Director of Student Services Caroline Arakelian and Business Administrator Matt Ferreira

Absent: Mark Lane, Greg Marrow, Jessica Brown, and Forrest Carter, Jr.

Meeting called to order at 5:03 PM

1. Call to Order

Procedural: A. **Roll Call**

Chair Jim Kime opened the meeting at 5:03 by reading the following statement:

As Chair of the SAU 21 Joint School Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means: We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.1 All members of the SAU 21 Joint School Board, have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 929-205-6099 and Password 892 069 194 or by clicking on the following website address: (listed on the agenda)

<https://zoom.us/j/892069194?pwd=ZGN0UWczK0pBdXYxa1ZvOVozRVIUdz09>

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the SAU 21 Office at www.sau21.org.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-926-8992 ext. 103 or email at revans@sau21.org

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law

Roll call was taken.

2. Superintendent's Update

Information: A. **Update on School Closures**

Dr. Lupini started the update by reporting on Governor Sununu's announcement earlier today that all NH schools will continue remote learning through the end of this school year. He expressed that this was difficult news even though it was expected.

Summer programming will also be operated remotely.

Tom von Jess arrived at 5:09

We have already distributed a calendar for the end of the school year along with a letter under the assumption that this may occur.

Discussed what conditions would be necessary in order to allow reentry of the school such as keeping group sizes small, wearing masks, etc., all of which would be very difficult in schools.

Dr. Lupini met earlier today with Senator Sherman and several town officials from Seabrook, Hampton Falls and Hampton.

Conversations were about revenues and the shortfalls that are expected. Matt Ferreira and Dr. Lupini will be meeting with the Seabrook Town Administrator later this week and then with administrators from the other towns in the near future.

This Saturday's online forum will feature Raymond Pillsbury speaking on trauma, stress and taking care of oneself. Mr. Pillsbury is the Director of Special Services at Winnacunnet.

We also learned that the NHIAA (New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association) acted after the Governor's announcement and canceled all spring sports.

Dr. Hobbs reported that the Seacoast Curriculum Instructional and Assessment co-hort group met remotely this morning. Many are still talking about calendars and work days. Fortunately, we are past that phase. Assessments were a big discussion topic. SEL (Social Emotional Learning) was also discussed as this is a traumatic event for staff and students. We need to be ready to put the supports in action this summer and fall. The Math group was reinstated to look at the algebra transition for next year. Title 2 & 4 grant deadlines were extended by the State.

Dr. Arakelian attended a call with Special Education Directors earlier today discussing options and what is available to us. The Bureau of Student Support holds calls twice weekly providing information on changes being made with deadlines, holding meetings in this remote environment, completing paperwork among other requirements. Summer programming is required in many students' IEP's but we need to start planning now. Normally the programming and hiring would be completed by now. Starting to plan how to do this remotely.

Grade 8 transition meetings are occurring. IEP meetings are being held with the sending districts. Discussions include what

services make sense, what classes to assign and who the student needs to be connected with. Educational Associates are taking part in a data governance training tomorrow morning. The meals program has served over 10K meals to the community. The third route helps reach more families in a more streamlined and organized fashion. Two to three EAs are on each bus. A new feature has been added to SAU and each schools website. The Seacoast Care Team instituted a tip line for reporting of any type of concerning behavior. We've expedited this due to the dramatic decrease in referrals being received during remote learning. The issues still exist but are not being reported.

Matt Ferreira reminded the board that only essential personnel have access to the buildings. Outdoor grounds work has begun with upkeep while adhering to strict precautions. No interactive work is to occur with multiple staff members. School nutrition workers are using proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) while preparing and delivering meals. A proposal is being prepared to continue the meals program throughout the summer as it currently exists. We want to provide uninterrupted, healthy nutritious meals. We believe this to be an essential component to service our community and our students. School Nutrition Directors, Ed Comeau (WHS) and Abigail Kaplan (Seabrook), have both shown incredible leadership with implementing this. We should be eligible for reimbursement from DOE. Daily operations are continuing in the remote environment. Vendors are being paid on time and the hiring process is still happening. Meetings and interviews are occurring via Google meets or Zoom. All paperwork and documents are being signed via Docusign. The Technology team is also an integral part of our success. Jason Saltmarsh was thanked for taking a leadership role in assisting with technology support throughout the SAU. All of these behind-the-scenes employees are amazing and are the ones keeping our organization running. The teachers are doing an amazing job but could not do this without the support of all staff. A remote meeting was recently held with the Southeastern regional business administrators. It was noted that there will be challenges in the near future with revenues and property taxes. We cannot ignore the revenue shortfalls in our communities. We will need to be cognizant with how we spend our operating budgets. Individual boards will need to make decisions on how spending will be done in order to help our towns be fiscally stable. Also, we will need to remember this next fall when we're looking for our communities to support our budgets at the elections in the spring. We need to be conservative. The CARES Act will provide some funding but no exact number is yet known. FEMA funds may also become available. We are very confident for the 2019-2020 school year that we will cover all costs incurred. Now that we know school will not resume this year we intend to have numbers at the May board meetings.

Additional concerns and discussions included the following:

Ideas for graduations, meeting with town officials, how the number of meals served has doubled from when first started, incoming freshman and their transition from grade 8, and the process for any facilities projects that were anticipated to take place over the summer. RFP's and Walk-thru's have taken place for exterior projects. Interior projects are on hold until we can allow people in the building.

The high school is holding conversations on how to recognize scholarship award recipients.

Placement testing and where students will be at the beginning of next school year.

How today's announcement from the Governor can really impact morale for students, parents and teachers. The focus of Saturday's community update from the Superintendent is geared towards self care, coping and moral for all. SEL is being addressed for all levels in many creative ways. It was noted that this is affecting all phases of daily life, not just at work. It was noted that we are keeping the whole child in mind, not just academics. Many teachers are parents, with professional responsibilities as well as family responsibilities. We are concerned about care and not just content.

A question was asked whether districts have the option to not fund the expendable trust funds with excess money from the current year budget in order to return money back to the town budgets. It was explained that once it has been approved by the voters at the election the school does not have that option. The funding of expendable trust funds must abide by the results of the vote.

3. Questions and Comments from those in Attendance

Procedural: A. **Public Comment** - no comments were received.

4. Future Meetings

Information: A. **April 22, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. - SAU 21 Joint Board Weekly Update**

5. Adjourn

Action: A. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Motion by Michael Rabideau, second by Leslie Lafond.

Final Resolution: Motion Passed

Yes: Erin Stanton, Greg Parish, Gregg Duffy, Henry Marsh, Jim Kime, John Bailly, Leslie Lafond, Michael Rabideau, Rebecca Burdick, Sharon Gordon, Thomas von Jess, Heidi Taracena, Jason Farias, Jennifer Hubbard, Kelli Hueber, Martin Tavitian, Nermina Peterson, Tony Delano