**Sebago School Department**

**School Committee**

**August 25, 2020**

There was a Regular Meeting of the Sebago School Committee on Tuesday, August 25, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the Sebago Elementary School.

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Tina Vanesse, Chair, at 6:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the Sebago Elementary School.

Members of the Sebago School Committee present:

Tina Vanesse, Chair

Joseph McMahon, Vice Chair

Donelle Allen

Audrey Schoolcraft

Wendy Newcomb

Administrators present: Marc Gendron, Superintendent of Schools

Kirsten Goff, Principal

Guest present:

Allen Crabtree, Clerk

Randa Viitala

Chris Balchunas

Jenni Null

In addition there were several individuals who followed the meeting via the live-streaming video.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Agenda Adjustments**

There were none.

**Minutes**

A motion was made by Audrey Schoolcraft, seconded by Donelle Allen, to approve the Minutes from the August 11, 2020 Sebago School Committee meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

Randa Viitala raised concerns about plans for the music program and the library. Tina Vanesse said that these concerns will be brought up in the Discussion section of the agenda.

**Presentations/Reports**

There was no presentation but there was a discussion on the Before and After School Care program. There has been no response from Naomi to a request from Superintendent Gendron for a proposal, and there was concern over reported comments from her that children in the program will not be required to wear masks. Tina Vanesse was very concerned about the lack of mask wearing and the impact that might have on infection coming from children in the day care spreading it to SES students. Donelle Allen and Joseph McMahon had similar concerns. Superintendent Gendron said that other options will be looked at. The grant that could assist in this program (desks, PPE, equipment) must be spent by December 31.

Donelle Allen asked if information from other schools on their Before and After School Care programs would be helpful and suggested looking at how Stevens Brook’s program is run. Superintendent Gendron commented that schools with a 2-2-1 schedule would have a different program than the 5-day schedule that Sebago Elementary School has.

Donelle Allen said that the person who used to run a Sebago day care might be interested.

**Principal’s Report**

* To help maintain social distancing, the playground has been split up into 7 areas. Two pieces of equipment are designated for Pre-K only since those are the only ones they can use. The remaining six areas will be used by students in K-5 on a daily basis. Per Dr. Blaisdell, the sun kills the coronavirus. By rotating through the areas of the playground and limiting access to each area to one group per day, we should have no transmission of the disease.
* We still have two families that we have not heard back from and another two students that we think are enrolling. That being said, as of this morning, we have 114 students and 23 are choosing to go remote. That is 20% of our student population. We are interviewing for a remote learning teacher tomorrow.
* We are very excited to say that we are now working with Westbrook Transportation Department to service, repair, and inspect all of our school vehicles. Speaking of transportation, Jay and I, have been working on creating the bus routes for the busses. Between A and B days, which are different for different grades for the first few days, it has been a juggling nightmare. But Jay is on it. We will upload them to the website as soon as possible.
* Staff officially return on Monday. We have four very full days planned. We will have training on the new Social Emotional Learning Program, safety procedures, Adori (our special education software), and Safety Care recertification. There will be a drivers' meeting, time for staff to watch all of the mandatory videos, staff pictures, and committee meetings.
* At the very end of June we found out that we now have Title I Schoolwide Authority. That means any of the funds that we receive through Title I can be used for any student’s needs, not just for students who have been specifically identified. It also changes the status of all students and teachers to being Title I students and teachers. I have updated the Family Handbook to reflect this change. I have also updated the section regarding picking up and dropping off students.
* Finally, the school was awarded $15,380 as part of the Rural School Grant. This money is very flexible in how we spend it.

**Superintendent’s Report**

Superintendent Gendron reported on the following:

* The School Committee will be notified of any positive COVID-19 cases in the school, whether it is a student or staff member, within 24 hours of notification from the parent, physician, or staff member.
* A weekly update will be sent to the School Committee each Thursday on how things are going at the school with the reopening. He reminded the School Committee that the current plan is intended for a six-week trial, with changes made as appropriate after that period.
* There are four COVID-19 Grants in play right now.

1. The $5,000 FEMA grant for the period March through June, most of which has been spent.
2. The ESSER grant under the COVID-19 relief package for $19,802 is expected to be received by September 21.
3. The Cares Act (ECR) for $142,000, which if approved must be spent by December 31, 2020. Plans are to spend $35,000 of it toward a new school bus. We have located a 3-year old used bus with 48,000 miles on it. Also funded through this grant will be a Distance Learning teacher.
4. An after-hours day care grant which has not been applied for yet.

* A touchless Water Filling Station will be installed for $2,500.
* Personnel Update
  + A Distance Learning teacher will be hired.
  + An opening for a social worker has been advertised.

**Action Items**

There were none.

**Discussion Items**

Music, Library, and Arts Programs

There was discussion on the changes to the music program under the new COVID-19 requirements. Would keyboards and percussion instruments be allowed but not wind instruments over concern for spreading the virus? Randa Viitala said that modifications can be made to wind instruments including bell covers to reduce the spread of potential vapors from them. Superintendent Gendron said that the instrumental music program has been suspended for one year and there is no provision in the budget for a teacher for it.

Randa Viitala asked about the library program, and whether the enthusiasm for signing out books will be sustained, and if any provisions were made for reshelving books. Superintendent Gendron said that there is a person in the budget for the library. Donelle Allen commented that the Spaulding Library is available.

The art program will be held for 80 minute sessions, 2 days a week.

Meals

Superintendent Gendron reported that there is a year-end surplus of $17,232.98 in the nutrition expenses line item. Meals for students doing distance learning would be available for them for 5 days weekly. The cost is $18.62. All school lunches are free if students qualify.

Research Opportunity

Chris Balchunas reported that Sebago Elementary School may be eligible to take part in a Harvard University study of the effectiveness of a saliva test for COVID-19. Superintendent Gendron asked if we had been approached by Harvard to take part? Chris Balchunas said we had not, she was only aware that there could be an opportunity. Donelle Allen cautioned that we would need to get feedback from parents for their children to take part in any such study. Wendy Newcomb said that this could be a “win-win” opportunity for our children and SES. Tina Vanesse said we need more information before taking any action.

A motion was made by Wendy Newcomb, seconded by Tina Vanesse, to instruct Chris Balchunas to explore the program and bring a report back for School Committee discussion at the next meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Bomb Threats

In the event of a bomb threat at the High School or Middle School that results in an evacuation, Lakes Region buses will bring Sebago students back home.

MSAD # 61 Board Meetings

The Sebago School Committee needs to attend the MSAD #61 monthly Board meetings, starting in October.

Donelle Allen said that there needs to be better communication with the Sebago parents of Middle and High School students. She suggested all-student text messages and phone calls to parents.

**Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

Laptop Insurance

Insurance for student laptops was discussed. Superintendent Gendron said that a $25 fee would be collected from parents to cover loss and damage to the laptops their children have. If the parents decline then they would be liable for the entire cost of damages or loss.

Virtual School Committee Meeting Attendance

Wendy Newcomb asked if members of the School Committee could attend future meetings of the School Committee by video rather than in person. Tina Vanesse said that would be possible as long as advance notice is given so that arrangements could be made.

**Information Items**

Future Meetings

* School Committee Meeting– September 22, 2020 – 6:30 – 7:30 p.m., SES cafeteria

**Adjournment**

A motion was made by Audrey Schoolcraft, seconded by Joseph McMahon, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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Secretary

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Date Approved