

**Sebago School Department  
Regular School Committee Meeting  
September 28, 2021**

There was a Regular Meeting of the Sebago School Committee on Tuesday, September 28, 2021 in the Library of Sebago Elementary School at 6:30 p.m.

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The following School Committee members were present – Donelle Allen, Chair, Justin Fariel, Joe McMahon, Wendy Newcomb, and Tina Vanesse. Also present were Superintendent David Galin, Secretary Allen Crabtree, Randa Viitala, Phil and Claudia Lowe, Chris Balchunas, Norma Sicotte, Cassie Winslow, Marcia Christiansen, Avery Thomas, and Jock McGregor. Principal Kirsten Goff joined the meeting by video link.

The meeting was called to order by Donelle Allen, Chair, at 6:30 p.m.

**Call to Order**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Adjustments to Agenda**

A motion would be made under Action items to amend the motion made at the August 24 School Committee meeting to have the School Committee review the reopening plan on a regular, vs. monthly, basis.

**Minutes**

A motion was made by Joe McMahon, seconded by Justin Fariel, to approve the minutes for the School Committee meeting of August 24, 2021. Vote Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

**Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were none.

**Presentation/Report**

There were none.

**Principal's Report**

- We did our first round of Pool Testing on the 20th. It went pretty smoothly and we ironed out some procedural efficiency details. We will get even more efficient as time goes on. Unfortunately, due to some technical issues with uploading information to Concentric, our samples were not processed. So, our first official round of pool testing took place yesterday.

We have at least 30% percent of the students in each classroom participating. We have received the results on five out of the seven pool samples that were sent and they are negative.

- We had a couple of positive cases on one of our school busses related to an outbreak at the high school. Thankfully, due to the most recent federal bus safety guidelines, Pool Testing, and some of the older students being able to be vaccinated, we did not have to quarantine the entire bus.
- Open positions - Long term sub PK ed tech (starts 10/25) five days a week, special ed teacher starting 11/1 through the end of the year (2 days per week), and we need a bus driver (we are offering a \$1500 sign on bonus)
- Ron Hanscom, our spare driver, has committed to be our regular driver for the remainder of the year. However, this means that if he or Michelle is ever out for any reason, we do NOT have a spare driver. This would mean an entire bus route would most likely require the parents of ort middle and high school students to transport their children for the amount of time that Ron or Michelle is out. Parents of elementary students would switch to 100% remote learning. We have reached out to our connections, but haven't had much luck yet.
- On the 16th I attended a virtual conference put on by Drummond Woodsum about Maine's updated restraint and seclusion law. Thanks to the conference, we have the template to update our policy and I will be sharing what I learned with staff next week at our staff meeting.
- Remote learning packets have been sent home to cover our students in case we call a snow day in advance of a storm or for the first two days should we have to switch to remote learning, which allows our teachers to gather and prepare current materials for an extended period of time. As for snow days, this year will be a little different. If we know a storm is coming and we have time to prepare bag lunches to send home with students, the following day will be considered a student day, and students will need to work on their remote learning packets. In the event we do not have enough time to send home bagged lunches and school is called off for the following day, it will be a true snow day and will have to be made up at the end of the school year.
- We just received word that going forward (not just for this year) all students will be able to get FREE breakfasts and lunches at school! We have definitely noticed an increase in our numbers. We are averaging about 50% of the students getting breakfast and about 75% are getting lunches! These numbers are up from an average of about 30% for breakfast and 55% for lunches.

### **Chairwoman's Report**

There was no report.

### **Superintendent's Report**

- We included information in the school committee packet from MSMA. There are drafts of resolutions and information about the upcoming annual conference that all of you may attend.
- Water Quality - In setting up the filtration system that the state approved for our copper level issue, we had one water test that did not meet state levels for drinking water and we had to put a “Boil Water” plan in place. All tests since that date have been within state guidelines, we are drinking the water again, and we are looking forward to having the original copper issue resolved soon. This water issue came with unexpected and unbudgeted costs and we are working to identify funding in the FY22 budget.
- I have approved the leave request from Jordanna Rees to take unpaid leave after her maternity leave ends for the remainder of the 2021-22 school year. We wish her the best. Ashley Russo will step in as our replacement teacher.
- Unfortunately, we have not yet been successful in finding an ed tech to fill Ashley Russo’s current role. We are still actively recruiting but I want you to know that if we are not successful we will propose going to two and a half days a week or half day sessions or for our pre-k. We know that this is not ideal and will impact both students and families. If this happens, the school committee will need to take action on this, as it is a change to the school calendar.
- Again, I am sharing a challenging staffing concern. Kate Sterling, our director of special education, agreed to fill our .4 teacher opening. You will act to approve her nomination later this meeting. Unfortunately, after trying to balance all her responsibilities, she has resigned from the position. Kate is working with us to try and find a replacement.
- Operations Committee met today, 9/28, and began work on developing a multiyear facilities and maintenance plan. We will have this prepared for the School Committee as part of the FY23 budget development process.

## **Action Items**

### **Policy – Second Reading**

#### **A. Remote Participation in School Board Meetings, File Code BED**

A motion was made by Joe McMahon, seconded by Justin Fariel, to amend the proposed policy. Superintendent Galin commented that this policy is needed to meet requirements when the one or all of the School Committee attends meetings remotely. Vote on the amendment: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Wendy Newcomb, seconded by Joe McMahon, to approve the second reading of the policy as amended. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

### **Policies – First Reading**

- A. Use of Physical Restraint and Seclusion, File Code JKAA
- B. Procedures on Physical Restraint and Seclusion, File Cod JKAA-R

A motion was made by Tina Vanesse, seconded by Joe McMahon, to approve the first reading of the policies. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

#### Personnel

- A. Nomination of Kate Sterling as Special Education Teacher (0.5) for the 2021-22 school year only (grant funded)
- B. Appointment of Elizabeth Connell as an Educational Technician III (0.6) for the 2021-22 school year (grant funded)
- C. Appointment of Bill Secord as a part-time Evening Custodian for the 2021-22 school year

A motion was made by Wendy Newcomb, seconded by Justin Fariel, to approve the above appointments. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

#### Emergency Management Plan

- A. Annual Review of the Emergency Management Plan by the School Committee

A motion was made by Justin Fariel, seconded by Tina Vanesse, to approve the emergency management plan. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

#### Reopening Plan

Superintendent Galin reported that the school has now been open on a five-day basis for a month. We have pool tested students and have found new positive COVID-19 cases. There have been questions from parents about the “golden ticket”, all students and staff are masked while in the building, physical distance is maintained at lunch with two lunch sessions and four students to tables, if there is a positive test in one of the classes the entire class will be quarantined at home. School Nurse Chris Balchunas said that it takes 1 ½ hours to pool test the entire school, calling one grade at a time and testing in the hallways. Test will be done weekly, on Monday mornings, and test results are back on Tuesday. Students have been very cooperative. Randa Viitala said that the testing went very well.

A motion was made by Tina Vanesse, seconded by Joe McMahon, for the School Committee to review the Reopening Plan on a regular basis (vs. monthly as voted on at the last School Committee meeting). Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried.

Chris Balchunas noted that the flu clinic will be held by Northern Lights for staff and students on November 9. If approved for ages 5 to 11 year-olds, COVID-19 shots might also be made available then.

#### **Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items**

Jock McGregor addressed the School Committee and raised his concerns about teaching Critical Race Theory at Sebago Elementary School. He wants a public review of the SES curriculum and work books. Claudia Lowe read a statement on Critical Race Theory, and Phil Lowe said that it is important that we learn from the mistakes of history.

### **Information Items**

- School Committee Workshop – October 26, 5:30- 6:30 p.m., SES conference room
- School Committee meeting – October 26, 6:30 p.m., SES library.
- The MSMA Fall Conference will be held October 28 – 29, 2021

### **Executive Session**

A. Elected official, M.R.S.A. 405.6.(A)

A motion was made by Justin Fariel, seconded by Tina Vanesse, to go into Executive Session at 7:24 p.m. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried..

The School Committee came out of Executive Session at 8:04 p.m. No actions were taken during Executive Session.

### **Adjournment**

A motion was made by Wendy Newcomb, seconded by Justin Fariel, to adjourn. Vote: Yes-5, No-0. Motion carried..

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

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Secretary

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Date Approved