

Ashland School Board Meeting
Remote/Virtual Meeting
Public Participation remote access @ <https://www.youtube.com/user/AshlandES>
August 4, 2020

MINUTES

Members Present: Mr. Stephen Heath*, Chair; Ms. Sandra Coleman, Vice-Chair;
Mr. Stephen Felton*; Ms. Jennifer Foote*; Ms. Leigh Sharps*

Members Absent: None

Administrators Present: Mrs. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent; Mrs. Trish Temperino,
Assistant Superintendent; Ms. Elaine Dodge, Director of Student
Services; Mr. Stephen Guyer, AES Interim Principal; Mrs. Kelly
Avery, AES Associate Principal

Others Present: Public, Press

**Remote attendance (School Board) confirmed location at AES or home & alone*

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Heath called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. The Chair stated that, with no objections, the order of the Agenda would be change due to weather conditions that may create power outages in the area. There were no objections to moving the School Opening Plans to the first item of the meeting.

REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENT

Mrs. Moriarty read the following regarding electronic meetings of the Board:

As Superintendent of the Ashland School District I will announce that due to Covid-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note there is no physical location for the meeting for this meeting. Additionally, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm 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 the Google Meet platform for this electronic meeting. All School Board Members have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Google Meet platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen/participate to this meeting by contacting Marilyn Martell at 279-7947 for details

- b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;*
We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting through notice on the Ashland School District website.

- 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 Marilyn Martell at 279-7947.

- d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.*

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by a Roll Call vote.

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NEW BUSINESS

A. School Opening Plans for 2020-2021

Mrs. Moriarty reviewed the summary of information that was reviewed last week at the School Board Work Session relative to the 2020-21 School Opening Plan (*attached*). It was noted that after discussion with Ms. Tucker, Town Clerk the recommendation is to allow elections to be held in the gymnasium, cleaning of the space after elections will be coordinated and conducted to CDC standards.

Notice: Live Chat interaction is not open for public input at this time (6:43 p.m), questions from the public can be emailed to Ms. Avery, Associate Principal at kavery@aes8.org to be read to the Board. There were approximately 23 people accessing live feed. Mr. Lester Brent indicated that he can restart the live-stream to enable interaction via live feed. There was no interruption in hearing all that was being said.

Mrs. Moriarty presented the full Opening Plan document (*attached*). It is important to remember this is a dynamic plan and will be adjusted as the need arises to accommodate situations as they may change.

At 6:46 p.m. Ashland Elementary School lost internet connectivity; Board Members and Administrators were eliminated from the meeting. Members still engaged suggested recessing for a few minutes to see if connection could be re-established.

Mrs. Moriarty contacting members via phone, they will call into the meeting. Members of the public were asked to contact via email with questions and to confirm they are still able to hear the meeting (mary.moriarty@interlakes.org).

Between 6:54 p.m. and 6:58 p.m. Mr. Heath and Ms. Coleman rejoined the meeting by phone. Community access was re-established at 7:02 p.m.

After the brief recess, the in-depth review of the AES 2020-21 School Opening Plan was resumed by Superintendent Moriarty.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR #1 (7:16 p.m)

Questions and comments from the public relayed by Mrs. Avery:

Why is the plan to open school at all, what is the reasoning for not opening fully remote, why take chances? Mrs. Moriarty responded that the incidence in this area are low, we are moving forward with efforts to mitigate risks; the plan is giving families a personal choice for their students – understanding that it may be a difficult decision. There are tools on CDC website relative to making that decision regarding returning to school that will be made available.

C: Opening schools in other countries has created spikes in COVID-19 cases.

Q: Does a transparent face shield help prevent aerosol transmissions. Mrs. Moriarty responded that the face shield with a drape or face cloth covering is recommended by CDC. Proposeing shield with drape will provide an alternative option for people with sensory issues.

C: Thank you for going through plan.

Q: With wanting parents to pick up and drop-off children; what will be the timeframe for that? Mrs. Avery and Mr. Guyer with the Leadership Team will tease out those specifics and get letters out to families with detailed information – once plan is approved.

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Ms. Sharps asked for clarification of how, in reality is it going to work for teachers in classrooms; are teachers going to teach physically in the room and then teach remotely or are they streaming live in the classroom, or co-teaching. Mrs. Avery responded that the plan is for co-teaching, it is difficult to give specifics at this time; the structure will be developed once families have made commitment to have students' in-class or remote. Mr. Guyer stated that is one of the reason additional days are requested before school starts to work with staff as a team and talk about strategies, go into a room and look at space to ensure social distancing.

Mr. Felton asked if asked if scenarios have been looked at and developed based on student enrollment with staff. Mrs. Moriarty responded that many scenarios have been looked at, we have to be flexible and we are willing to work with and support both staff and students. We need to have a confirmed enrollment piece to begin putting plans in place. Once the plan is approved we home to have numbers by next week.

Q: After School Program run by Parks and Recreation – once the plan as presented is approved to go forward; a meeting will be set up with Park and Rec Director to see what options there are available.

C: Appreciates having a choice and planning to address to the every evolving environment

C: Looking at the Middle School schedule there is a remote teaching block built into each content areas and specialist.

Mrs. Moriarty indicated that it is possible to edit the plan from what has been presented; if the Board is in favor to support the Parks and Rec Program for the afterschool program. They do utilize the facility; child care is a reality and need. Mrs. Avery stated that students in the afterschool program are picked up at school and brought to the Ball Field and Booster Club – they do not stay on campus for their program.

Ms. Foote asked if a second bus is needed, is there a commitment for the year or can it be used as needed. Mrs. Avery responded that bus company said commitments are being made by term or semester by other schools; we would need to see what is best for our students. Mrs. Temperino noted that we are committed to the full bus run, we would work with Durham Transportation when we are more confident of the need for a second bus. We will work to limit liability when we do not need a second run.

Discussion ensued regarding possible issues associated with masks being worn, mask breaks, and plans to address not following the rules of wearing masks in school.

Q: With the delay between symptoms and testing results how are we going to know if our child has been exposed until it is too late. Mrs. Moriarty responded that it is a risk that needs to be weighed to make the choice for their child to be in school or remote. The goal is to keep illness out of the building, it is critically important that everyone works with us on that. If a child feels sick they need to stay home; DHHS has established guidelines that we must follow.

Mr. Felton asked what the timeline was for communication to families. Mrs. Moriarty stated that once the plan is approved information would be shared with families this week regarding the timeline for making a choice now that they know the plan.

Mrs. Avery provided an overview of the parent feedback session conducted yesterday; it was a productive meeting with approximately 40 people remoting in. The majority of questions centered on health protocols that School Nurse Rubbe fielded.

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Ms. Foote asked if the next survey will ask families about access to a thermometer. Mrs. Avery responded that question was asked in the first survey; 95% responded they would have access. For those who do not have a thermometer one will be provided.

Student's temperature will be taken at home.

Q: Will letter to families include document that Mrs. Moriarty went over, which is more detailed than documents on website. Mrs. Avery responded yes.

Mr. Felton asked about the timeline for collecting responses and developing a plan, is there enough time. Mrs. Avery responded that when the first survey went out within three days we had a majority of responses. If the plan is approved, the survey will go out immediately with a deadline set for Monday. Plymouth Regional is giving a 2-day turnaround for commitment.

Q: Elaborate on ventilation situation in K-5. Mrs. Temperino there is not mechanical ventilation in that section of the building, doing the best we can with fans with fans purchased to exchange air whenever we can.

At 7:45 p.m. Superintendent Moriarty loss connectivity; re-established via phone

Q: Will we have access to survey results without identifying information. Mrs. Avery which survey the original one or new one coming out about commitment? The person was referring to the first survey, Mrs. Avery will compile data and put on website.

Mrs. Avery reported that all questions and comments received via live stream chat have been responded to or shared.

Ms. Coleman discussed the importance of screening and taking the student's temperature at school. Ms. Sharps supported Ms. Coleman's suggestion.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of taking a student's temperature at school versus at home by the parent.

7:52 p.m. Mrs. Moriarty rejoined the meeting via phone.

Ms. Foote asked about cleaning, wanted to make sure safety protocols were in place not allowing students to spray down desks and moving on to next classroom. Feels responsibility should be removed from the students; other members agreed.

Mrs. Avery responded that we will be sure students do not have access to any products that are not safe for their use. Mrs. Moriarty indicated that we can put something in the plan to state that cleaning products used by students will be safe for their use.

C: Feels that students should be screened before arriving at school to ensure students are not exposed at school.

C: If cleaning products not safe for students, they should not be made available to the student

Ms. Sharps asked how substitutes were lined up if more than one teacher is out; is there a sufficient substitute list. Mrs. Moriarty indicated that there is never a sufficient substitute list; this concern is being looked at and is an area that will be monitored.

Mr. Heath asked if there was any further discussion or questions; no hearing any are we ready to move forward.

Ms. Sharps moved, seconded by Ms. Coleman, to approve the School Opening Plans for the Ashland Elementary School for the 2020-2021 school year as presented this evening.

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Mr. Felton wanted to be assured that it would be noted in the plan that students would not have access to any cleaning products that were not safe as discussed this evening. Ms. Coleman expressed that she feels temperatures should be taken at school. Ms. Foote noted that in the plan it is written that an informal screening could be done by the teacher if needed.

Mr. Guyer suggested the importance to get a decision to go forward to enable parents to receive the information so they can make a decision. He further noted that everything in the Opening Plan has been done with the best interest of the kids.

With no further discussion on the motion, the Chair called a roll call vote as follows:

YES: Ms. Coleman, Mr. Felton, Ms. Sharps, Ms. Foote, Mr. Heath

NO: --

The motion passes 5-0.

BUSINESS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. General Operating Expenses

Ms. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton, to approve the payment of bills, manifest # 2020 and #2002. The Chair called a roll call vote as follows:

YES: Ms. Coleman, Mr. Felton, Ms. Sharps, Ms. Foote, Mr. Heath

NO: --

The motion passes 5-0.

Mr. Felton moved, second by Ms. Foote, to table the remaining Agenda items until the next meeting. The Chair called a roll call vote as follows:

YES: Ms. Coleman, Mr. Felton, Ms. Sharps, Ms. Foote, Mr. Heath

NO: --

The motion passes 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

Board members acknowledge administrators and all those involved with developing the School Opening Plan.

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Ms. Foote to adjourn at 8:13 p.m. The Chair called for a roll call vote as follows:

YES: Mr. Felton, Ms. Sharps, Ms. Coleman, Mr. Heath NO: --

The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn G. Martell
Recording Secretary