

Minutes

1. Meeting called to order by Co-Chair, Ms. Joyce/Ms. Pezza at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Mr. Burlingame, Mr. Dupuis, Ms. Joyce, Ms. Keeling, Mr. Mara, Ms. Pezza, Ms. Swanson, Ms. Worthy

Also in attendance: Dr. Barnes, Ms. Odom-Villella, Ms. Almon, Dr. Palazzo, Mr. Butash, Ms. Marcotte

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Discussion and/or vote on the following:

4. Public Comment

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a. Open Session Meetings on January 5, 2021

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Mr. Dupuis to approve the minutes of the open meeting on January 5, 2021.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

b. Executive Session Meetings on January 5, 2021

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Ms. Worthy to approve the minutes of the closed meeting on January 5, 2021

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

6. Approval of Monthly Bills

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Mr. Dupuis to approve the bills as listed on the Monthly Expenditure Report dated January 27, 2021 in the amount of \$1,342,174.10.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

7. Business Manager's Report

The School Nutrition Program was approved for 7 Day Pack Out, meaning the students will be provided breakfast and lunch for a week rather than having to come in Daily. By doing this they are hoping to increase the sales and increase participation. A member pointed out that it looked like the district was slow in receiving tuition and Bridget said the bills have gone out, she will send out reminders and that the time frame of payment was typical.

8. Assistant Superintendent's Report

There was a discussion on Ms. Odom-Villella's staff survey report on how staff are feeling. A member asked if there is anything they can do as a school committee. Ms. Odom-Villella stated that the staff feels overwhelmed and they are looking for time and more support. One member said that she has received emails from teachers stating informational links for mental health and PD aren't enough. She stated that the district needs to do something to boost morale and recommended trying to improve a sense of community. There was also a discussion on absenteeism of teachers. Ms. Odom-Villella stated that even though the numbers appear high, many of the teachers who were absent were still teaching

remotely. There were also questions regarding if there were changes in the way sick time is currently being used for quarantine. Dr. Barnes explained the Cares Act has expired, so some of the laws have changed. He stated there was a signed MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) with the teachers regarding how COVID absences were treated and nothing has changed for them. There is no signed MOA contract with the ESP members, so when the Cares Act agreement expired, some protections no longer exist without the law or an MOA, so the current contract is being followed. A member asked, if an employee is forced to quarantine, but is healthy enough to work, then can the employee work virtually and get paid. Dr. Barnes stated that is true for most employees because not all employees can work from home. For example, a custodian can't work from home. Ms. Almon stated that employees can apply for TDI.

Numbers for homeschooled students were discussed. There was also a discussion about students leaving Edgenuity and going back to Ponaganset courses. Ms. Odom-Villella also stated that all the middle school students that wanted to return to in-school courses have returned, however, not all high school students have been able to return because of state guidelines suggesting students having to be six feet apart. Dr. Barnes expressed to the school committee how the district is fortunate to have staff that has stepped up and commended their efforts. Dr. Barnes also informed the school committee that they have added new report card comments, based on teacher feedback, that better fit with online learning. There is a feeling locally, state-wide, and nationally that there is learning loss. He also said there talk of a round of funding for schools that is earmarked for learning loss.

9. Draft Foster-Glocester Regional School District Budget for the 2021-2022 school year.

The Budget Committee has met and they are comfortable with the budget as long as Lynn Richardson is comfortable with the tuition numbers. There is a less than 2% increase in the budget. Ms. Richardson stated that she was comfortable with the tuition numbers. It was also suggested to reach out to homeschooled students and try to bring them back to the school. Dr. Barnes reported that superintendents had a conference call with the Department of Health and the Department of Education and discussed budget and finance. The legislature committee for the RI Superintendents Association is in discussion with state legislatures regarding ways to account for an increase in homeschooled students, and RIDE stated they are in support of the idea. The idea is in reference to districts having an increase in homeschool kids, so they will see a decrease in state aid, so they are suggesting a 3-year average to determine state aid. This would require a legislature change as there is a strict formula on how funds are distributed. Dr. Barnes said later that night, he would provide a copy of the draft budget to Adam from the town of Glocester. There were no objections to the draft budget.

10. Superintendent's Report

Personnel - Resignations, Appointments, Retirements, Leaves, Lay Offs, Job Sharing, Recalls and Other Personnel Actions (Informational)

Dr. Barnes announced the appointment of an Instructional Teacher Assistant and a resignation of a teacher. The district has advertised for a long term sub for the teacher who has resigned. Dr. Barnes explained the district has less substitutes then in the past due to COVID. The district has worked with the Highland Institute to help acquire substitutes and have also advertised for substitutes. The district has hired new substitutes to add to the substitute pool, but it is a challenge to have the number of substitutes needed.

11. National Federation of State High School (NHFS) Network School Broadcast Program

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Ms. Pezza to authorize the Superintendent to sign the NHFS Network School Broadcast Program Contract.

The contract wasn't signed because they required a 5-year contract and Dr. Barnes wanted to be sure he had the approval of the committee before signing the contract. NHFS has this contract in other

communities and will not drop the amount of years. The contract is at zero cost to the district. The company requires a 5-year contract because that is their payback period, since they buy the equipment up front. Parents and students would pay admission to watch the game on a subscription basis. Dr. Barnes stated that a contract beyond 3 years is not aligned with state law and is likely not unenforceable by both parties as advised by legal counsel. The question was asked; how do families watch the game if they can't afford the subscription? Dr. Barnes stated there would have be a separate agreement between NHFS and families. The suggestion was made to add this as a future agenda item to discuss discounts for student subscriptions and for families who may not be able to afford a subscription. The contract exclusivity clause was questioned because of playoffs and such, but Dr. Barnes confirmed that the Interscholastic League has an agreement, so the clause would not affect them. NHFS owns the footage and can rebroadcast it at their discretion. The network infrastructure was questioned as to whether it had the capabilities to live stream and if the network is strong enough to use the program. Dr. Barnes said yes the wireless infrastructure was just redone and the bandwidth was significantly increased.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

12. Vote to Seek to Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining with Teachers Association (NeaPon) and Education Support Personnel (ESP).

Motion by Ms. Pezza supported by to Convene to Executive Session per RI General Laws 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining with Teachers Association (NeaPon) and Education Support Personnel (ESP).

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Mr. Dupuis to reconvene to open session.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

13. Return to Public Session and Announcement of Votes, if any

One vote was taken and passed.

The person discussed in executive session was properly notified according to general law, in writing, prior to the meeting.

14. Vote to Seal the Minutes of Executive Session

Motion by Ms. Swanson supported by Mr. Dupuis to seal the minutes of executive session.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0

15. Communications

There were no further communications discussed.

16. Future Agenda Items

Discussion of Graduation

Equity in access - anything families have to pay for and to discuss free and reduced lunch as a standard for equity

17. Adjourn

Motion by Ms. Pezza supported by Ms. Worthy to adjourn at 8:34 pm.

Motion Passed: 8-0-0