

MISSISQUOI VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD (MVSD)

Remotely VIA Google Meet

August 4, 2020

6:30 PM

**Present:** Board members joining the meeting remotely, Board Chairperson, Chris Shepard, Highgate, Don Collins (Swanton) Scott, (Highgate), Peter Magnant (Franklin), Joanne Johnston, (Franklin), Terri O'Shea (Swanton), Jen Chevalier (Highgate), Meaghan Conly (Swanton) and Devin Bachelder (Franklin)

**Others Joining Remotely:** Julie Regimbal, Superintendent of Schools, Lora McAllister, Business Manager, Dan Palmer, MVU Co-Principal, Jay Hartman, MVU Principal, Jennifer Desorgher, MVU Director of Teaching and Learning, Joyce Hakey, Franklin Principal, Yeshua Pastina, Highgate Principal, Dena St. Amour, Swanton Principal, Justina Jennett, Swanton Assistant Principal, Leonard Stell, Swanton Police Chief, Kosha Patel, MVSD Director of Instruction, Gordon and Debbie Winters and Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary

**Call the Meeting to Order-** Chris Shepard called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

**Agenda Review-**No changes

**Public Comments-** None

**Consent Agenda**

**Approval of the Minutes**

*Action: Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Steve Scott to approve the June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 board minutes as presented. The board approved the minutes on an 8-0-1 vote. Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Jen Chevalier to approve the July 7<sup>th</sup> minutes with revisions. The board approved 7-0-2 vote. Steve Scott moved, seconded by Terri O'Shea to approve the July 14<sup>th</sup> minutes with revisions. The board approved 8-0 vote. (Peter Magnant was disconnected from the meeting at this time)*

*Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Terri O'Shea to approve the July 21<sup>st</sup> board meeting minutes with revisions. The board approved the minutes (Peter Magnant was disconnected at this time.) Steve Scott moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to approve the July 29<sup>th</sup> board meeting minutes as presented. The board approved on a 9-0 vote.*

**New Business**

**SRO Grant Agreement**

Swanton Police Chief Stell was present and reported that they applied for a community policing grant from the Dept. of Justice for three years. They could provide the elementary schools with an SRO for three years and on the fourth year, the district

would be required to fund the position for one additional year. This position is an opportunity for a police officer to foster good relationships and mentoring in the schools. There have been some disparities across the country and the state regarding SRO positions. He wants to make sure that we develop an SRO program for Elementary Schools to foster and promote education and not be a disciplinary individual. The SRO works in a collaborative effort with the administration, and staff in school safety and education. Chief Stell stated that most SRO positions has been positive especially at the elementary school level. Julie Regimbal would like an educational component of education around substance issues, and have the SRO collaborate with the administration during safety meetings and planning. They will do some proactive planning with the SRO and put boundaries in place within an MOU.

#### **Action**

Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Don Collins to approve the addition of an SRO position for the Elementary Schools.

#### **Discussion**

Don Collins noted that he wanted to ensure that Franklin received their fair share of services from this position. Meaghan asked for reassurance that the SRO does not identify students of color, poverty etc. Chief Stell explained that they do bias training each year plus staff must treat the community citizens with respect. The screening process will recommend a person and the administration will interview the officer and make sure it is a good fit for their schools. The administration needs to oversee the SRO and ensure that the officer is not overstepping their boundaries. They are to mentor and be a friend for the whole student body. The SRO being recommended has extensive training on behavior and substance abuse issues, has 17 years of experience in law enforcement and is a paramedic as well. Peter asked what the costs is for the fourth year. Julie responded that they are estimating approximately \$75,000 with salary and benefits with no commitment beyond the fourth year.

#### **Action (continued)**

Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Don Collins to approve the addition of an SRO position for the Elementary Schools. The board approved 9-0 vote.

#### **New Business**

##### **Covid related Finance Update**

Lora McAllister reported that they are paying attention to the CRF Funds and the information being received. She is working collaboratively with VASBO to make the best use of these funds as possible. They have been using COVID funds to offset expenses incurred specifically as a result of the pandemic. MVSD stopped the delivery of food over the summer with parents picking up the meals. They will submit for

reimbursement of the food service. Don Collins requested a listing of purchases as a result of COVID 19 for the board each month not for their approval but so that they have some sense of how much is being spent on COVID specifically. Lora said that they have been coding COVID costs and should be able to provide that information to the board.

### **Presentations (Information)**

#### **MVSD Reoccupancy plan and reopening framework (Information)**

Julie reported that the plan is not comprehensive and still needs to be completed. She has aspects of the plan that are ready to share with the board. The intent of this document is to plan for the fall re-opening of school. It is understood that guidance and direction from the VT Department of Health and the Agency of Education will impact the direction of this plan. As she has reported in previous meetings, there is a steering committee made up of administrators, teachers, President of the Association, a nurse leader, and Directors of Buildings and Grounds Representatives working collaboratively to put together this document. The committee breaks up into tasks teams made up of logistics, health, and safety, teaching and learning and communications and Human Resources. Dan Palmer, Justina Jennett and Lora McAllister are working on the Logistics committee with representatives from the Directors of Buildings and Grounds with input from Food Service managers and bus transportation contractors. Dan Palmer presented how they are cleaning the building, what does the daily custodial checklist look like, and making sure that everyone has completed the VOSHA requirement. They are ensuring that disinfecting will occur daily after each bus run day and night, seating arrangements on the buses and talked about providing PPE. They are planning how the custodial staff will be trained and have a cross training of custodians so that everyone is following same protocols and will have back up if someone should be ill.

There are three steps: Step 1 is when schools are closed with the highest risk level, Step 2 Schools are open Hybrid PK-12 Medium Risk Level and Step 3 Schools are open 5 days a week for PK-6, and hybrid for 7-12 grade. This is the lowest risk level. Our school district is opening with the hybrid model. The hybrid model has the students divided into two groups (blue and white grouping) with the blue group coming in on Tuesday and Fridays and the white group coming in on Mondays and Thursdays. The document also goes into how staff will be trained in one-way traffic flow patterns when possible, identify isolation areas for those that may be positive or developing symptoms. They are also identifying how gyms and libraries will be used and Physical Education will need to be held outdoors. Plexi Glass will be used in the science classrooms and on food delivery carts. There will be signage for maximum numbers in rooms and the food service will deliver food to the classrooms. The bleachers will be removed, and the playground structures can not be used. He explained how high touched surfaces will be disinfected. Any volunteers and visitors will be allowed in by appointment only. Justina

Jennett added that they plan to prepare and feed kids that are not in school. They will make sure to keep indoor air controls working and changing filters frequently. The custodians and principals will work with staff during in-service. They are continually re-assessing where they are at going from Step II to Step III and Step I. They are reviewing how they will perform health screenings, separate entrances, screening prior to boarding the buses, what might it look like if there is an outbreak on the bus, staggering arrival, and departure times etc.

Julie reported that they will have a Town Hall on August 6<sup>th</sup> in the evening for parents interested in having their kids receive totally virtual learning. Jen Desorgher and Kosha Patel will join Julie in the Virtual Town hall presentation. The virtual instruction is provided in partnership with VTVLC. The instruction will be provided by Vermont Educators with some of them may be from MVSD teachers. Julie said that information will go out this week regarding hybrid learning. There is a minimum number of hours per week required for students for schooling. Don Collins asked if parents decide that this is not working, can they opt out and go to the hybrid learning method. Jen Desorgher explained that students can not go in and out of virtual learning. There is so many slots for students to be in virtual learning due to limited number of teachers. There may be an opportunity to exit during a semester point. Joanne Johnston congratulated the team and the task force for the endless hours of work.

Julie explained the reasoning for choosing AB/AB day. Each day the schools are required to be deeply cleaned and disinfected. Kosha Patel said that they are using the strategies from the Marzano Framework. The educators provide direct instruction on the first day and the second day, the students practice the work. If you do two days in a row of instruction, then a whole week will go before students will see their teachers again and get instruction. Students will forget and the teachers will need to re-teach the material. If you teach and then practice the skills the next day, and anything a student does not understand, can be re taught within a day instead of paralyzing the student from learning for a whole week. On Wednesday, the teachers can front load by assigning the reading assignment for the next day so that students are prepared to learn the skills at the next in person instruction. These are instructional best practices to teach, then practice and teach, then practice. Yeshua Pastina added that the steering committee weighed the pros and cons and felt strongly about their decision and fully support the AB hybrid model.

Peter Magnant asked about additional busing costs. Julie said that there may be different arrival and departure times. Bus routes will be rearranged as efficiently as

possible. There will be fewer kids on the bus and there will be no busing on Wednesday so she anticipates there may be no additional cost.

The Department of Health determines the step schools are in and may change going from a step 2 to step 3 and/or step 1. This will be challenging to parents and staff. The State of Vermont thinks it is unlikely that we will close but we must plan for every step. Justina Jennett stated that parents will need to be educated on arrival times and the delay due to temperature checks that must be done. Julie said we will have to have staggered times between student drop off, bus arrival and walkers.

Debbie Winters (community member) understands about the hybrid model but asked what happens the other three days especially for working parents. Julie responded that the Vermont Child Development Division and Let's Grow Kids are looking at all the options to see if they can find additional spaces for local childcare. She hopes that they can move to the five day a week in-person instruction, but it will depend on the spread of the virus.

#### **Old Business**

##### **Check Warrants**

Steve Scott read the breakdown of the July check warrants as follows: Accounts Payable \$343,498.32, Payroll \$22,950.12, Payroll other disbursements \$1,323,348.76, Payroll Deductions \$849,884.75 for a total of \$2,539,681.95.

##### **Action**

*Meaghan Conly moved, seconded by Terri O'Shea to approve the check warrants as presented totaling \$2,539,681.95. The board approved the motion on an 8-0 vote. (Devin Bachelder left the meeting as it appears, he has been disconnected)*

##### **Food Service Management Contracts**

Lora McAllister reported that the food management service contracts need to be renewed for the 20-21 school year. The business office is recommending the Abbey Group at this time because this would be a challenging year to change contractors due to the pandemic. The Abbey Group has been great to work with and very responsive. They will need to renew the food service contract for Highgate, MVU and Swanton. There may be a need for additional staff and equipment such as food carts due to the in-classroom delivery. This could incur extra costs and the district may need to adjust for this purpose.

##### **Action**

*Donald Collins moved, seconded by Steve Scott to renew the school food service management contracts for the Highgate Elementary School, Missisquoi Valley Union*

*School, and the Swanton Elementary School for the 2020-21 school year. The board approved the motion on an 8-0 vote.*

#### **Hot Lunch Paid Student Lunch Bad Debt (Action)**

Lora McAllister reported that attempts have been made to collect hot lunch debts, however, they still have about \$1,753 in bad debt in their account. Lora stated that a negative balance can not follow the student to another school. In order to clear the debt, the funds will need to come from the general fund.

#### **Action**

*Terri O'Shea moved, seconded by Meaghan Conly to use the general funds not to exceed \$1,753 to clear the bad debt accounts. The board voted to approve the motion on an 8-0 vote.*

#### **Schedule Board -Superintendent Goals work session review and next steps (Discussion)**

Julie has put a shared google document for board, district, and Superintendent goals in the board drive. Terri O'Shea went over the suggested goals, divided as board, district and Superintendent goals. Terri tried to capture the strategies that the board intended. The board reviewed the goals. In the interest of saving meeting time, the board agreed to send Terri email suggestions or call her to provide feedback directly on the goals. Once feedback is received, the subcommittee of Terri, Devin and Julie will work on the goals and strategies suggested. Don felt that they should work specifically on the job description as well. Terri asked Pierrette to send the board the Superintendent job description she had on file.

#### **Updates on Highgate parking project and Swanton Garage project (Information)**

Lora provided an update on the Highgate Stormwater and Parking Project. Tyler Mumley, Ruggiano Engineering and Scott Martin, Highgate Facility Director provided the following information:

- Photos have been taken of entire project along the way
- Tyler and Amanda have done several site visits
- All 3 stormwater chambers have been installed
- The electrical conduit has been installed
- The sidewalk and curb work are complete
- All the parking lot subbase stone has been installed
- Final clean-up / punch-list items were to be completed last week
- Paving has commenced - expected to be at least one week of work
  - Discussing leaving the coarse base layer exposed for a week or so before applying the topcoat in order to help expose any low-lying areas

- More to be completed to a small berm along the north side of the back-parking area.
- Clean-up around stairs / edges of building / etc. will be finished when the pavement is done
- Walkway / runoff area at south chamber out to playground has been installed
- The base coat of pavement has been installed in the back-parking lot. They will see how the rain runs off with the pending storm and the water flow.

Lora also provided an update on the Swanton Garage Renovation Project.

Jason Butler, Swanton Facility Director provided the following information:

- Contract has been executed, proof of insurance received, and deposit has been paid to contractor.
- State and town permits have been submitted and approved. Waiting for the 15-day waiting period to expire.
- Contractor has arranged for the concrete and ordered the roof trusses
- Once the waiting period is over the contractor will demo the existing shed and start the concrete work.
- Jason feels everything has been on track.

#### **Other Business (Action)**

Parent continued enrollment request (may require executive session finding) (Action)

Employee request for leave of absence (finding for executive session) (Action)

Julie stated that the Parent Enrollment request and Employee request are confidential student and employee matters and appropriate to request a finding for executive session.

#### **Future Meeting Dates**

The next school board meeting is scheduled for August 18th, 2020 at 6:30pm to be held virtually. Reminder that there is a Virtual Town Hall Meeting on August 6th at 7pm.

*Executive Session Where premature public knowledge would clearly place the Board or other party at a substantial disadvantage*) Potential executive session for confidential student matter and confidential employee matter.

**Action**

Peter Magnant moved, seconded by Don Collins to enter executive session for a confidential parent student request and employee request inviting Julie Regimbal at 8:45pm. The board approved the motion on an 8-0 vote.

The board exited executive session at 8:54pm

**Action**

Don Collins moved, and Meaghan Conly seconded a motion to approve an employee request for a leave of absence. Motion passed 8-0 vote

The board discussed the parent request in executive session. No motion was made.

Peter Magnant brought up the desire to have a facility committee. Don Collins supported this idea. It will be placed on the next board agenda for discussion.

**Adjournment**

**Action**

Peter Magnant moved to adjourn, seconded by Meaghan Conly. Motion passed 8-0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:03pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Meaghan Conly, Board Clerk

Submitted by Pierrette Bouchard, School Board Secretary