

Regular Session Meetings

August 12, 2020

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in virtually in Swampscott, MA commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Amy OConnor, SC Chair, Ms. Suzanne Wright, Mr. Delano, Ms. Carin Marshall, Mr. John Giantis, School Committee members. Also, Present: Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools, Jean Bacon, Director of Teaching & Learning, Martha Sybert, Business Administrator, and Martha Raymond, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services.

The School Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, fully remote via teleconferencing, practicing social distancing, and in accordance with the Governor's suspension of certain open meeting laws. The meeting was being recorded and broadcast live on the local cable station.

Public Comment:

Ms. OConnor noted that Public Comment would be held off until after the Superintendent presentation. She stated that they may be able to respond to simple questions but some may take more thoughtful responses. A public meeting is for people to share comments. All questions and comments will be gathered. The SC has read every single letter, question, comment, listened to teachers and everything has been considered. There was a ten minute limit on Public Comment. Questions may be emailed to the SC.

Michelle Yanofsky SHS Science teacher spoke on behalf of the Swampscott Teacher Union (SEA). She thanked the district for their hard work. SEA is more convinced that classes should be Remote Learning. Ms. Yanofsky spoke about the science behind COVID-19 and how much is still unknown, cases of children with the virus, studies, and the distance the virus can travel. She stated they would all love to return to teaching if it was safe to do so but we were risking lives assuming 6-feet and masks are enough. Ms. Yanofsky stated that her own children will remain as Remote Learning. She thanked the district for their research & planning but expressed the better plan was Remote Learning while we are still learning more about the virus.

Ms. Keiko Zoll thanked everyone for their work on the plans. She discussed families of privilege being favored in the remote model. She discussed Elementary parents that would need to make choices between their jobs and children.

Ms. Tasia Vasiliou asked about responses to questions. Ms. OConnor restated her comment from the start of the meeting regarding compiling questions, public meeting violations, and FAQs being up shortly.

Ms. Diane Gwin thanked everyone on the task force. She expressed concern that the Hybrid model falls short, the struggle to make a decision on whether to opt out of Hybrid Learning so quickly without enough information.

Ruty Dorcy spoke about concerns for the Boston METCO families including busses. She felt the survey was not clear, and not enough time to make a decision regarding remaining Remote or going Hybrid, especially for working parents. She requested families have the documents to read. Ms. Angelakis stated that Ms. Ogunbona has been a part of the planning teams.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Angelakis' report will be posted on the Superintendent's Page under the Swampscott Public School's web page.

Ms. Angelakis gave shout outs to football champions receiving their rings.

Ms. Angelakis noted everyone is struggling with decisions but the district is doing what is best for students and understands families need to do what is best for their families.

ReOpening of Schools: (vote requested): Ms. Angelakis reviewed the Reopening Plan. The highlights were Technology (Google Classroom, Seesaw, Parent Technology Training), COVID testing, and Lavallee Brensinger Architects building HVAC systems assessment (final report due 8/21).

Wednesday, September 16th will be the first day of school as Remote Learning with High Needs students attending in-person. Ms. Angelakis stated the Hybrid model will be beginning October 26th providing health and data guidelines remain the same. She stated that regardless of the model, parents have the right to select full remote.

Mr. Kohut reviewed the High School Remote and Hybrid Schedules with built-in teacher collaborative time each day during both models. The Remote and Hybrid Schedules have the same blocks with Learning Community time, IBlock (additional time students/teachers can check-in and get enrichment time and interventions). Three additional cohorts have been added to the HS Hybrid Schedule which is a 2-1-2 model for all students (except High needs) with a half-day remote on Wednesday.

Ms. OConnor asked about cohorts that were in every day. Mr. Kohut explained that the Navy Cohort is the high needs population that will be there every day. Ms. Angelakis noted that this is to follow state guidelines.

Ms. Marshall asked about what the cohorts are doing on the days they are not in-person. Mr. Kohut stated that they will be preparing remotely for the lesson on the day that they are in-person, attending Zoom and other asynchronous learning/practice. He stated there will be times students are expected in class even during Remote Learning and attendance will be taken.

Ms. Wright asked if the teacher was assigning remote work. Mr. Kohut stated it could be an assigned project.

Mr. Delano mentioned that having support mechanisms in place was as important as the schedule. Mr. Kohut stated IBlock could be used for additional check-in with guidance.

Ms. Wright asked about meeting time for teachers during Remote Learning. Mr. Kohut mentioned collaborative planning time, teacher meeting time blocks, and Wednesdays.

Ms. OConnor asked about time to meet with kids staying with Remote Learning. Dr. Bacon said that there would be one set of lessons regardless of whether Remote or Hybrid Learning so the planning and curriculum are all the same. She stated that during the Hybrid model there would be less teacher time for those that choose to remain with Remote Learning. Dr. Bacon mentioned that they might shift staff and have a secondary teacher for fully remote check-in. They will know more when they see the numbers.

Ms. Marshall noted that not every teacher will have a class every period like “normal”. Ms. Wright asked about the ten minutes between classes for foggers. Mr. Kohut mentioned the state guidelines state, traffic patterns, each floor having its own entrance, and kids having time to take mask breaks.

Ms. Angelakis stated that the plan is a fluid living document. As the plan plays out it will be revisited, reviewed, and rewritten.

Ms. Wright noted it was nice to see a full curriculum with electives. Mr. Kohut stated they wanted to honor requests made in the spring though some classes may be better remote only.

Ms. OConnor asked if any classes may be a big challenge. Dr. Bacon stated that they are investigating software for virtual labs.

Mr. Delano asked if there were kids with internet problems. Mr. Kohut said it is being addressed. Dr. Bacon stated it was a question in the most recent parent survey. Ms. Sybert mentioned grant funding access for families in need.

Mr. Calichman reviewed the Middle School Remote and Hybrid Schedule. He noted every day starts with Homeroom/Advisory. Students will have every class every day but not Zoom all day. The MS Hybrid Schedule is a 2-1-2 model which is 2 days In-person, 1-day Remote, and 2 days In-person with AM/PM cohorts so students are in school four days a week.

Ms. Wright asked if there were teams and if kids or the teachers will be moving classes. Mr. Calichman said the students will move with a staggered class release. Mr. Calichman and Ms. Sanborn will be guiding students.

Ms. OConnor stated the schedule seems tight and questioned teacher planning time. Mr. Calichman said teachers are seeing kids live almost every day. He stated that being remote on Wednesdays takes Zoom lesson planning off the table.

Ms. Wright asked about high need students. Ms. Angelakis stated that the MS schedule didn't delineate students as they are all in every day but Wednesday. Ms. Raymond stated that they are obligated to provide IEP services regardless of the model.

Mr. Delano asked about METCO busses. Ms. Sybert stated there will be a survey for METCO families and they are looking into how to optimize transportation.

Ms. Bebhick reviewed the Remote Learning schedule which includes two 80-minute ELA/Math content blocks per day, 30 min What I Need (WIN) Block, a minimum of 4 touchpoints with the teacher, and a whole class meeting at the start and end of the day.

Ms. Shea spoke about the Hybrid Schedule which is similar to the MS 2-1-2 schedule. She spoke about the AM/PM sessions, and ELA & Math content blocks and asynchronous learning when not in person. Special Ed students may be in all day every day or four days.

Ms. OConnor asked if PE/Specials would be able to meet outside during Remote Learning. Ms. Angelakis stated that it is all fluid and a teacher may need to deviate to get outdoor time.

Mr. Delano asked about school dismissal. Ms. Angelakis noted all dismissal and arrival will be staggered.

Ms. Raymond spoke about the Pre-K schedule goals. Their schedule is the same for Remote and Hybrid Learning. She stated that it is a Special Education program mandated by the state. The Pre-K staff has consulting time at the start of every day. There will be no instructional time on Wednesday or Friday afternoon. Ms. Raymond spoke about weekly learning kits, instructional videos, and Zoom. Hybrid Learning starts on September 16th. The students go home at noon but may attend afternoon story and circle time via Zoom. There will be only 2 Peer models per day at the start.

Ms. Angelakis reviewed the DESE color-coded guidance. Swampscott is in green which is full in-person or Hybrid Learning. The comprehensive plan is due to DESE 8-14. The plan will be shared with families on August 17/18. Between August 31-September 15 teachers will be in for planning and collaboration. She reviewed the District and Building to-do list and draft training schedule.

Mr. Delano asked if the building would be open pre-September 16th. Ms. Angelakis spoke about the sign-in logs for guests and self-certification.

Ms. OConnor asked about families opting to stay Remote having to make a commitment until November. Ms. Angelakis was looking to pick a target date for Thanksgiving. She is hoping families will stick with what they choose for consistency.

Ms. OConnor mentioned health status changes and whether we had enough staffing. Ms. Angelakis stated she is looking to utilize staff in any capacity. She has no intention to reduce staffing.

Mr. Giantis asked about fall athletics, Ms. Angelakis stated the MIAA has not made a final decision yet.

Ms. Marshall asked about the reasons to start as Remote Learning. Ms. Angelakis spoke about the use of the CDC 6 feet guidance, classroom spacing, and teachers needing to get used to being back in the building and time to adjust to the protocols.

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Marshall to accept the ReOpening Plan & seconded by Mr. Delano.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 5 to 0 via roll call vote.

Swampscott school district reopening/closing decisions will be based on data and recommendations from the Governor, the MA DPH, the CDC- (vote requested):

Ms. OConnor is grateful the state shared the Data Dashboard. Ms. Wright commented on the conflicting guidance between DESE and CDC. DESE was removed from the decision-making guidelines.

Motion: It was moved by Mr. Delano to accept the SPS reopening/closing decisions & seconded by Ms. Marshall

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 5 to 0 via roll call vote.

School Business Administrator:

FY21 Budget Update: Ms. Angelakis requested to move this item to the September agenda as it is not urgent or time-sensitive.

Chair:

Appoint SC Subcommittees & Liaisons: Ms. OConnor mentioned spreading the workload. A discussion took place on the Sub-committee and Liaison positions.

Sub-Committees 20-21:

- Bargaining: Amy OConnor & Carin Marshall
- Budget/Finance: Ted Delano & John Giantis
- Communications: Carin Marshall & Ted Delano
- Policy: John Giantis & Suzanne Wright
- Wellness: Suzanne Wright

Liaisons 20-21:

- Liaison for METCO PCO: Ted Delano
- Liaison for Renewable Energy: Not needed-Max Kasper
- Liaison for District SEPAC: Ted Delano
- Representative for Regionalization Committee: Suzanne Wright
- Liaison for Article 6: Suzanne Wright

Sub Committee:

Policy EBC Supplemental (first read): Ms. Wright read the Draft for the Creation of a General (Interim) Policy on COVID-Related Issues policy. She spoke about the SPS Policies Added.

Policy EBCFA Face Coverings (first read): Ms. Wright read the policy and added “other personal protective equipment” to the title. Ms. OConnor asked about neck gaiters. Ms. Wright said they are not prepared to add anything about gaiters at this time. Ms. OConnor thought there were no exceptions to wearing face masks in-person. Ms. Wright asked what if someone had a Dr. note. Ms. Raymond stated that they will work on a plan with families whose students are challenged wearing a mask. They may be outside then transitioned to inside when they are able to wear a mask.

Ms. Wright said they may need to rewrite to clarify the face mask requirement for all. Ms. Wright discussed adding that a-mask plan will be developed and no inside instruction without a mask no matter the reason. Ms. Marshall stated how a kid transitions to wearing a mask does not need to be in the policy. Ms. Marshall said there needs to be no ambiguity. Mr. Delano asked about face masks during Band time. Ms. Angelakis stated Band is in the Remote plan.

Policy ACAB Harassment (first read): Ms. Wright pushed out the reading of this policy as they will need to adapt the policy based on information coming out from the Federal government.

Consent Agenda:

Ms. Wright read the purpose of the consent agenda and the items on the agenda.

- A. Regular Session Minutes – August 5, 2020
- B. Donation Sal Simeone - Photography Equipment

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wright to accept the agenda & seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 5 to 0 via roll call vote.

Next meeting to be held on August 26, 2020

Adjournment:

Motion: At 9:56 p.m. It was moved by Ms. Marshall to accept the motion to adjourn & seconded by Ms. Wright.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 5 to 0 via roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
/dmm

Date: August 27, 2020

Supporting Documentation:

 08.05.2020 FY21 Revised Budget.pptx 



 8.12.20 SPS Reopening Fall 2020 Plan .pdf 

 August 5th, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final 

 Copy of 2020-2021 Committee & Subcommittees blank for reappointments 

 Donation-Sal Simeone-Photography equipment.pdf 

 DRAFT COVID POLICY EBC Supplemental FOR SC 081220.docx 

 Policy ACAB Harassment MASC update.pdf 

 Policy EBCFA Face Coverings.docx 
