

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 16, 2023, 7:00 PM
EPPING SCHOOL BOARD
Epping Town Hall/Epping TV Channel 22/Zoom

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Heather Clark called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance: Chair Heather Clark, Vice Chair Ben Leavitt, Member Robin O'Day, Member Julie Knight, Member Jen Jacoby, Superintendent Furbush, Business Administrator Christine Vayda, Student Carly Sanborn, and Student Jacob Twombly.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Heather congratulated Board Members Robin O'Day and Jen Jacoby on their re-elections. She also thanked the community members for coming out and showing support on the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the Warrant Articles.

SCHEDULED TOPICS

a. American Legion Sponsorship and Winter Sports Review, Ben Bourgoin, Athletic Director

Ben discussed Policy KH titled "Public Solicitations and Advertising". He was presented with an opportunity from the Epping branch of the Sons of the American Legion (SAL). They are interested in sponsoring Epping Athletics via donations to the Athletic Department. In return, they are hoping to receive public recognition as a sponsor. Ben gave a brief overview of Policy KH and stated that the SAL are hoping to hang a banner at the sports fields.

Heather asked if the SAL is a 501(c)(3). Ben replied yes, they are a 501(c)(3).

Robin asked what the date of the Policy was. Ben replied that it was approved in 2007 and revised in 2014. Robin recalled a previous discussion about this topic and noted this type of advertisement is very common in other schools.

There was a general discussion about updating the Policy in the future and also about how potential monetary support could be utilized.

Julie asked if they would like to donate annually or as a one-time donation. Ben stated he thinks they are looking at this as an annual donation.

Superintendent Furbush stated that he felt this would not be an advertisement and would just be a recognition of their support. He mentioned other recent efforts that have been made to strengthen the relationship with the American Legion and the SAL. He also stated that he welcomes this type of relationship with community groups.

Jen asked Ben if he had any additional thoughts. Ben discussed the desire of the SAL to be able to impact more students than they are currently. He also mentioned that the donations could help offset the cost of keeping school sporting events free for the community.

Julie added that she would like the banner to include the specific items that the donation helped fund on the banner. This would highlight the impact the donation has on the students.

Heather mentioned that since she is currently the President of the Football Boosters she will not be voting on this topic. She asked who would be providing the banner, and Ben replied that the SAL would be providing it. As a follow-up, she requested that the final banner design be approved by someone in the District prior to the SAL having it created.

There was a brief discussion about the placement of the banner and where it could be moved for each sports season.

Member Robin O'Day made a motion to approve EMHS's acceptance of the Sons of the American Legion banner to be displayed at sporting events. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0-1. Motion carries.

Robin added that she would like to take a further look at the Policy as she sees it as a great way to increase donations to the school.

Ben gave a recap of the winter sports season. He discussed the teams that were offered and mentioned that the number of participating students was similar to last year. Three student-athletes were recognized for their performance at the varsity level, and Coach Mosca was named D4 Girls Coach of the Year. He also mentioned 37 student-athletes were named to the Honor Roll and Principal's List for their first semester academic performance. Two High School teams and one Middle School team qualified for post-season tournaments. There were zero concussions, zero injuries requiring emergency hospital visits, and zero injuries currently affecting student-athletes. There were zero ejections of fans, coaches, and players over the course of the winter season. Fall sportsmanship rankings were recently posted, and EMHS ranked 7th out of 27 schools in D4. Ben gave a brief overview of all of the sports teams and shared some of the season's highlights. He also gave a preview of the upcoming spring season and listed the teams that will be offered.

Robin asked if Athletic Banquets were still being held and if meals were provided at them. Ben stated that the Banquets are still being held, but they have not provided meals for quite some time. He added that it is something they would like to get back to doing and that there will be more conversations about this going forward.

b. Peru Trip Reconsideration, Karen McCallion and Sarah Swible, EMHS Teachers

Sarah spoke about the decision to change the Peru trip to a trip to Europe. The trip would include Italy, France and Spain for a total of nine days. She outlined the trip agenda and spoke about some of the highlights. The cost for the trip would be \$4,223 and includes all of the

excursions, airfare, hotels, two meals per day, and transportation. The only additional costs to students would be passports, baggage fees, snacks/lunches, and possible bus transportation to and from Logan Airport. The trip would take place during April break of 2024. Sarah requested that students going on the trip be allowed to leave early the Friday before Spring Break in order to travel overnight and begin their trip itinerary Saturday morning. She noted that this would interfere with these students' student-led conferences.

Robin asked if they knew the current security levels for Europe. Sarah replied that she has not looked, but the information is readily available.

Superintendent Furbush thanked Sarah for taking the Board's feedback and concerns into consideration when looking into alternate trips.

Heather noted that the presentation does not say if tips are included in the trip cost. Sarah said that tips are included in the cost, and she has the emails and documentation that state this. Heather also asked if there is a scenario where students are required to get tested for COVID if that cost would also be covered by EF Tours. Sarah said she is unsure if that is currently included but will work with EF Tours to get it taken care of. Heather also mentioned that students should not be held responsible to pay for lodging if for some reason they are forced to stay in Europe longer than expected. Sarah said this scenario is covered by the insurance policy that is mandatory for this trip. There was a brief discussion about which meals are covered in the cost. Sarah will check but believes only breakfast and dinner are included.

Julie stated she supports leaving early on that Friday and that she imagines the school would support rescheduling the impacted conferences if possible. Heather agreed and also noted that teachers who are chaperoning the trip will also be responsible for rescheduling their missed conferences.

Carly asked if students who took three years of a foreign language were going to be given priority for signing up for the trip or if it is open to everyone. Sarah said her understanding is that it is open to everyone, but she will double check. She also stated the recommended number for this trip is 40 students, and currently there is a list of approximately 30 who are interested.

Heather asked Mr. Nekton if he knew how many students on his last trip had taken three or more years of a foreign language. He said he didn't know but could check and explained how they typically offered spots on the tour.

Jen noted that all three of the countries on the trip are currently at a Level 2 which is "Exercise Increased Caution".

There was a general discussion about the excursions, price comparison to the Peru trip, ELO opportunities, and fundraising.

Member Jen Jacoby made a motion to accept the revised trip to Europe in April of 2024. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

c. EMHS Master Schedule 23-24, Chris Mazzone, EMHS Principal

Principal Mazzone introduced the team responsible for all of the work that has gone into the schedule. They talked about the goal of creating a comprehensive building-wide schedule.

They also discussed the challenges of having multiple schedules and outlined how one building-wide schedule benefits students. The team also identified the key steps in the process of creating a new schedule. They created a draft schedule to present to all of the different groups and then incorporated their feedback into the final draft. The team discussed the draft schedule and highlighted some of the key components including Year 1 SST moving to the morning to avoid conflicts with lunch.

Carly asked if the change to the morning SST session would allow students to drive themselves. Mr. Mazzone answered that students will still need to take the bus.

There was a general discussion about proposed class lengths and current class lengths.

Julie asked if some of the upcoming Professional Development time was going to be used to train teachers on the new block schedule. Mr. Mazzone said they are going to use some of the PD time this spring, and they are also looking into summer PD opportunities.

Jen asked if the SST times listed were actual class times or if they included transportation times. Mr. Mazzone said they include travel time.

Heather asked if the outdoor time that is in this year's schedule was still included in the draft schedule. Mr. Mazzone said that there are options for it.

There was a general discussion about the different options that will be available during the WIN (What I Need) Block and the way the blocks in the schedule will work.

Heather stated that she is impressed with this schedule and thinks it will provide great opportunities for the students. She asked if each student will be able to take their preferred Unified Arts (UA) classes. The team explained that each 6th grade student will take the same four UAs throughout the year. The 7th and 8th grade UAs will be different from those offered in 6th grade in order to expose them to as many classes as possible.

The team was very excited to share that with the draft schedule there will be an increase of 250 minutes of instructional time per core class each semester. This is the equivalent of two extra weeks of school without having to add any days.

Robin asked if students were provided with a "path" of courses that they need to take in order to meet their personal goals. The team explained that they meet with all of the 8th grade students to develop their goals and help them choose classes. Not all current high school students have meetings prior to choosing classes, but they are all met with before schedules are finalized so changes can be made to ensure they will reach their goals.

Heather asked if the list of electives could be shared with parents. The team has published a website that gives details on all of the electives and will be sharing the link.

Ben said that he is impressed and that this schedule is the most cohesive he has seen in a while. He asked how feedback will be incorporated after the new schedule is implemented. The team said they are going to give some time for everyone to get used to the schedule before making any changes. They will still welcome feedback but will not make any changes initially.

Heather asked if there was any feedback gathered from students. The team said they did ask students, and most were excited about the changes.

Jen stated that she knows how hard everyone on the team has been working on this and that she is happy they have something to show to the community that demonstrates the amount of effort they have put in.

Superintendent Furbush thanked the whole team for all of their work and for creating more opportunities for the students.

Heather stated she is looking forward to seeing the schedule in action and thinks the kids will like it as well.

d. 2023-2024 Paraprofessional Calendar

Superintendent Furbush spoke about the differences between the paraprofessional calendar and the teacher calendar. He also noted that feedback has been gathered and incorporated into the calendar.

Heather asked how many in-service days are scheduled. Superintendent Furbush said there are a total of six.

There was a general discussion about moving a PD day to the end of the year so that the paraprofessionals could also enjoy the end-of-year barbeque.

Superintendent Furbush will bring this topic back to the Board after receiving feedback about moving the PD day.

e. 2023-2025 CBA Approved for School Board Signatures

Heather said that the CBA passed, and the documents were signed by the two members of the negotiation team and herself.

POLICY

a. KE - Public Complaints About School Program, Staff, and Students - 2nd/3rd Read

This Policy was tabled until the next meeting.

b. IHBA - Programs For Children With Disabilities - 1st Read

This Policy was tabled until the next meeting.

PERSONNEL

a. Nomination of Interim EES STEAM Teacher, Andrea Cole

Superintendent Furbush explained the changes made to this role to encourage more applicants and that the position is through the end of the current school year.

Member Robin O'Day made a motion to accept the nomination of Andrea Cole for the Interim EES STEAM Teacher position. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt.

VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Discussion: Julie asked if Ms. Cole has already started in this position. Superintendent Furbush explained that she has started and that is due to the four-week span without a Board Meeting.

There was a general discussion about the timing for posting of permanent positions and when the contracts are sent out.

REPORTS

a. Student Reports

Carly and Jacob discussed what some of the different classes are working on. They also gave an update on recent and upcoming extracurricular activities including the Student Government field trip to New England College (NEC) and the “NH Sportspage” game.

Ben asked if there were any more details on the trip to NEC. Carly and Jacob explained that they had been given limited information on the trip to this point. Superintendent Furbush added that the meeting will be an exchange of ideas between students from across the state. The Board would like to hear back about some of the sessions attended during the NEC trip.

b. Principal Reports

EES

Principal Lizier gave a shout-out to the Kindergarten team for putting together a successful Kindergarten Information Night. She noted that some of the EES students’ artwork is on display in the Exeter Town Hall in celebration of Youth Art Month. She also mentioned the upcoming Parent Advisory Committee meeting will focus on communication, student-led conferences, and work-study practices. She talked briefly about the upcoming Family Literacy Nights and Book Fair. Student-led conferences will also be happening soon, and sign-ups are available now. She shared staff shout-outs which highlighted many staff members’ dedication, hard work, positivity, and willingness to help others. She noted that the only open position currently is the permanent EES STEAM Teacher position for next school year.

There was a brief discussion about the changes made to the EES STEAM Teacher position and what the STEAM program could look like in the future.

Robin asked if EES has ever touched base with the local art center. Superintendent Furbush said they have a great relationship with them, and multiple students are in their programs.

Julie asked if the topic of recess can be discussed during upcoming presentations about the master schedule to allow the community to be heard and understand the decision. There was a general discussion about master schedule presentations.

EMHS

Principal Mazzone spoke briefly about the “NH Sportspage” game and the facilities management involved with it. He gave shout-outs to staff members and everyone who keeps everything up and running during remote learning and snow days. He also highlighted recent and

upcoming events including the Clark Terry Jazz Festival and “The Addams Family” play. He mentioned there is scholarship information available in the Guidance Office. He also spoke about the current open positions at EMHS. He mentioned the upcoming PSATs and SATs; he wanted to remind everyone that these tests are very important and doing your best on these tests can help create opportunities in the future.

Julie asked if this information had been sent out via ParentSquare, and Mr. Mazzone said it was sent to all the parents of high school students. He also explained what grade levels are released early and that seniors have the day off. Julie encouraged Mr. Mazzone to use this day as a field trip or career exploration day for seniors. Mr. Mazzone explained that due to the proctoring requirements for the PSATs and SATs, there likely would not be enough staff members to chaperone a field trip.

Mr. Mazzone gave several staff shout-outs highlighting many staff members’ dedication to students and creativity. He also mentioned Karen McCallion has been selected as the New Hampshire State Finalist for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Julie reminded everyone that Lynn Lyons will be coming to the Allen Gym to give a presentation on emotional skills and encouraged everyone to attend. There is no cost for this event, and babysitting will be provided if needed.

Jen stated that she believes when it comes to a decision regarding grading and reporting it should be made by school administrators, but they can’t ignore the number of community members who voted on the issue. She believes some things need to change with grading and reporting procedures, and she is happy to hear they are being worked on. Superintendent Furbush clarified that the work in these areas was not reactionary and that it has been in progress prior to the warrant articles.

c. Superintendent Reports

Superintendent Furbush mentioned the “Late Start” meeting went well and had a great turnout. The video of the meeting is available for those who could not attend. He also mentioned that in addition to the PSATs and SATs, SAS testing is coming up. He also spoke about Christine’s goal to modernize and digitize many processes. For her work on this goal, she is being recognized by Tyler Technologies at the 2023 Connect conference and will receive a Tyler Public Sector Excellence award.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES

a. Financial Report

Christine spoke briefly about the financial report and highlighted some of the key components. She provided answers to Board questions from previous financial reports. She also gave an update on the ESSER grant and stated that the plan is available online. Superintendent Furbush added that the tutoring at the Elementary School has been very well utilized and is entering its 4th round.

Ben asked if there were any changes to the plan for the ESSER funds. Christine stated that the plan can't change, but they are required to provide updates on the spending.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Minutes of January 19, 2023

Member Jen Jacoby made a motion to approve the Public Minutes of January 19, 2023 as amended with Julie's changes and Jen's addendum. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

There was a discussion about including a link in the meeting minutes to the website where the documents for each meeting are located.

b. Public Minutes of February 2, 2023

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Public Minutes of February 2, 2023. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

c. Non-Public Minutes of February 2, 2023

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Non-Public Minutes of February 2, 2023. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

d. Public Minutes of February 16, 2023

Approval of the minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

MANIFEST

a. Payroll deposited on February 17, 2023

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on February 17, 2023 in the amount of \$375,288.23. Seconded by Member Jen Jacoby. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Accounts Payable deposited on January 27, 2023

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on January 27, 2023 in the amount of \$188,573.09. Seconded by Member Jen Jacoby. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

BOARD COMMENTS/OTHER

Jen recalled a previous meeting where the warrant articles were discussed. She wanted to make it known to the members of the community that there was a reason provided for abstaining from some of the votes. She apologized and said she did not feel that abstaining was the right move for her and she regrets doing so. She also referenced an email from a community member

expressing disappointment in the Board for abstaining. She stated she appreciated the way the concern was brought to the Board. She also thanked the voters for re-electing her to the School Board.

Ben recalled a discussion at the Deliberative Session where Mr. Hodgman brought up the change that Sanborn Regional had made to their grading policies. Ben believed this was incorrect information based on what he found on the school website; however, Mr. Hodgman pointed him to the student handbook which showed the changes made to the grading policies. Ben apologized to Mr. Hodgman. He also reminded everyone of the upcoming Harlem Wizards game.

Julie stated that ParentSquare has been a bonus this year in terms of communication, and it helps parents stay in the loop. She was very pleased with the amount of people who voted this year despite the weather. She also talked about the ongoing conversations about changing the location/layout of School Board meetings. She stated she felt the recent remote day was called too early, but she understands the decision-making process. There was a general discussion about the process of calling for a remote day versus an in-person day.

Robin thanked the voters for re-electing her to the School Board. She also thanked the facilities staff for all of their help.

Heather thanked everyone for going out and voting. She also highlighted some upcoming fundraisers, including a Taco Tuesday and a Murder Mystery dinner.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

a. March 30, 2023

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II Non-Public Meeting **is scheduled** for March 16, 2023 after the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to enter a non-public meeting and to adjourn thereafter at 10:31 pm. VOTE: 5-0. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary