

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 7, 2024, 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 Julie Knight, Member Jen Jacoby, Superintendent Furbush, Business Administrator Christine Vayda, Student Jacob Twombly, and Student Landon Toomire

Absent: Member Robin O'Day

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

SCHEDULED TOPICS

a. 2024-2025 Program of Studies

Principal Mazzone and Guidance Counselor Julie Morin outlined the changes made to the 2024-2025 Program of Studies. The changes include added details about the new credit requirements, a new section about the Career Exploration program, consolidated ELO information, and more. Heather noted that on page four and page six, there are names that need to be updated. She also asked if there has been any discussion about requiring AP students to take the AP test. They said there has been some discussion about it, but there are varying views on the subject. Heather asked if they could provide the number of students who take the AP test at a later time. She also asked if Honor Roll, since it is by semester, includes SST grades. Julie explained that if the SST course gives grades each semester, it is factored into the first semester Honor Roll, and if they just give a final grade, then it is factored into the second semester Honor Roll. Heather also asked if the grade for a student taking a high school level class while in middle school is factored into their high school GPA. Julie said that the grade for that course is included in their GPA. Julie also outlined the new courses that will be offered. Julie Knight asked how the EMT course has been going and if the students will be certified by the end of the class. Principal Mazzone said that the students who are on track to complete the program will be certified. He also mentioned the potential to offer the course to students from surrounding communities.

Heather asked if reducing the number of study halls has increased enrollment in some elective courses. Julie said she thinks the biggest impact will likely be in the next two years.

Superintendent Furbush added that a big piece of Raymond's decision was based on the courses offered.

b. Reduction In Force (RIF) Discussion - EES Science Program

Superintendent Furbush explained what the RIF entails. Principal Sousa and Principal Murphy spoke about the increased focus on numeracy, literacy, and work-study habits. They discussed the need to utilize resources effectively to continue the momentum and growth. They identified a need for increased math intervention.

Heather asked what UAs would remain. Principal Murphy said they would still have Art, PE, Library, Music, and STEAM. They noted the opportunities for exposure to science through STEAM and the White Pine program through SELT. Heather asked if the current K-5 teachers would need to incorporate the EES science curriculum into their classes. Principal Murphy said they would need to incorporate it. Julie said she thinks the need for intervention and the RIF need to be looked at separately. She also said that she is concerned about the burden this would put on other teachers. Ben asked for more information on how this would impact the schedule. Principal Sousa said they are gathering feedback to figure out the best way to move forward with the schedule. He said they are going to build interventions into the schedule. Jen asked if this was a permanent change or as a way to address a problem. Principal Murphy said she sees it as a permanent change and that the focus on numeracy and literacy will continue to be a top priority. Jen said she has concerns about the impact that this will have on the K-12 alignment. She feels that this may overwhelm teachers who are being asked to incorporate the science aspect into their classes. There was further discussion regarding impacts to the schedule and the need for intervention. Jen said she is fully onboard with having interventions for students who need them, but she is concerned about equity. She feels that removing the science program is taking away extra enrichment for the group of students that do not need the interventions. Principal Sousa spoke about the personalization of instruction and the opportunity for extra enrichment for students while others are working with an interventionist. Jen asked if other solutions had been considered. Principal Murphy and Principal Sousa said that they did look at other solutions that may work, but the other solutions don't support the goal of increasing numeracy and literacy.

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to reduce Unified Arts by one position for the 2024-2025 school year. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 3-1. Motion carries.

POLICY

a. BEDG - Meeting Minutes

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve Policy BEDG - Meeting Minutes as amended. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. BEDG-R - Access to Minutes and Public Records

This policy is being withdrawn and replaced by EH-R(1).

c. EH-R(1) - Public Access to School District Records/Administrative Procedures for Public Access to District Records/Right to Know Requests

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve Policy EH-R(1) - Public Access to School District Records/Administrative Procedures for Public Access to District Records/Right to Know Requests as amended. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

PERSONNEL

a. Retirement of Director of Student Services Cathy Zylinski

Superintendent Furbush commended Cathy for her years of service and dedication. Heather wished her the best and thanked her for her dedication to the students and the District.

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the retirement of Director of Student Services Cathy Zylinski with extreme regret. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Resignation of EMHS Science Teacher Terilyn Bettencourt

Superintendent Furbush wished her the best in her next endeavor. Julie asked if resignations require Board approval. Superintendent Furbush said that they do but resignations can't be stopped.

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the resignation of EMHS Science Teacher Terilyn Bettencourt. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Resignation of EMHS French Teacher Ahlem Hassine

Superintendent Furbush wished her the best in her next endeavor.

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept the resignation of EMHS French Teacher Ahlem Hassine. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

REPORTS

a. Student Reports

Jacob and Landon gave an overview of what different classes are currently working on. They also gave an overview of the recent and upcoming extracurricular activities. They also spoke about the upcoming World Cultures Fair and the State Math Competition. There was a discussion about graduation.

b. Principal Reports

EES

Principal Murphy and Principal Sousa spoke about the NH SAS testing that is currently underway. They also spoke about outdoor education with the White Pine program and the

upcoming Student Achievement Reports. They talked about the upcoming Kindergarten registration and Information Night. They noted upcoming events such as the Book Fair and Literacy Nights. They also discussed some community events and programs. They encouraged everyone to check out the Variety Show and EES Digital Art Gallery.

EMHS

Principal Mazzone spoke about recent and upcoming events. He discussed the new community service requirement and some opportunities that students have to participate in community service activities. He also recapped the recent sports season and thanked everyone for a successful awards night. He also spoke about the upcoming PD day.

c. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Furbush thanked the Fremont community for their participation in learning more about EMHS. He encouraged everyone to go out and vote. He also spoke about the interview process for the Student Services Director position.

He discussed the proposal to make the Curriculum, Data & Assessment position a two-person position. The proposal is to have one position for Pre-K through 5th grade and another for 6th through 12th grade. There was a discussion about how this would work financially, how the two positions would work collaboratively, and what would be best for the students. Principal Murphy added that by having someone in this position dedicated to each building, it would help to support teachers more. There was also a discussion about the challenges with the timing of the proposal. Principal Mazzone added that the support is especially beneficial for teachers in their first few years; he also said he believes the investment in this position now will reduce the costs associated for interventions in the future. Principal Sousa added that he believes the position is unsustainable as a one-person model due to the varying needs of each school. He believes the community would support this even with the timing of it. There was further discussion about the need for the extra support, the difficulties presented by the timing of the proposal, and the need to be fiscally responsible. Superintendent Furbush clarified that this proposal would not increase the budget. He suggested tabling this discussion until the next Board meeting due to the upcoming vote. The Board agreed to table this discussion until the next meeting.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES

a. Approval of Food Services Grant Funds

Christine explained that \$22,819.56 was awarded by the USDA to help support Food Services programs.

Member Julie Knight made a motion to accept the Food Services Grant from the USDA in the amount of \$22,819.56. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Approval of Lead Funds

Christine explained that the District has gone through the water testing process. The next step is to accept the funds. The amount awarded will cover the necessary items to fix the issue.

Member Julie Knight made a motion to accept the funds from the State of New Hampshire in an amount to be determined. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Approval of Safe Grant Funds

Christine explained that these funds (\$27,671) will be used to update the keycard access system at the school buildings to the same system that is currently in place at the SAU building.

Member Julie Knight made a motion to accept the Safe Grant funds in the amount of \$27,671. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

Further funds were awarded in the amount of \$23,468 to replace two cameras on the exterior of the school buildings.

Member Julie Knight made a motion to accept the Safe Grant funds in the amount of \$23,468. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

d. Year-to-Date Report of Operating and ESSER Funds

Christine gave a brief overview on the current state of the Operating Budget. She also gave an update on the status of the ESSER Funds. She gave an overview of how the money remaining in the Tutoring and Staff Appreciation lines will be used. There was a discussion about how the Staff Appreciation funds will be used.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Meeting Minutes January 18, 2024

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Public Meeting Minutes from January 18th, 2024 as written. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Public School Board Retreat Meeting Minutes January 25, 2024

The approval of these minutes was moved to the next meeting.

c. Non-Public Meeting Minutes January 25, 2024

Member Julie Knight made a motion to approve the Non-Public Meeting Minutes from January 25th, 2024 as written. Seconded by Vice Chair Ben Leavitt. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST

a. Accounts Payable deposited on January 26, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on January 26, 2024 in the amount of \$298,312.58. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Accounts Payable deposited on February 9, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on February 9, 2024 in the amount of \$144,528.06. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

c. Accounts Payable deposited on February 15, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on February 15, 2024 in the amount of \$100.00. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

d. Accounts Payable deposited on February 23, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Accounts Payable deposited on February 23, 2024 in the amount of \$283,488.79. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

e. Payroll deposited on January 26, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on January 26, 2024 in the amount of \$176,653.16. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

f. Payroll deposited on February 2, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on February 2, 2024 in the amount of \$575,092.31. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

g. Payroll deposited on February 9, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on February 9, 2024 in the amount of \$406,261.81. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

h. Payroll deposited on February 16, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on February 16, 2024 in the amount of \$306,082.10. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

i. Payroll deposited on March 1, 2024

Vice Chair Ben Leavitt made a motion to accept Payroll deposited on March 1, 2024 in the amount of \$666.36. Seconded by Member Julie Knight. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

BOARD COMMENTS/OTHER

a. Board Comments

Jen said she appreciates that everyone can disagree without being disagreeable. She also encouraged everyone to go out and vote.

Ben encouraged everyone to take a look at the budget and warrant articles and to go out and vote.

Julie echoed both Jen and Ben's comments and said she is hopeful that the community will support the Paraprofessionals Contract.

Superintendent Furbush encouraged everyone to vote.

Christine encouraged everyone to vote.

Heather encouraged everyone to vote, and she also reminded everyone of the upcoming Unified Arts Celebration and School Concert.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED

a. March 21, 2024

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II Non-Public Meeting **is scheduled** for March 7, 2024 after the public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to enter the Non-Public Session and adjourn thereafter at 10:43pm. VOTE: 4-0. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Dagny Wilkins

School Board Secretary