

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

April 29, 2020 at 5:00 PM (Remote Meeting)

Members Present: Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, Joanne Powers, Ashleigh Randall, and Mary Wallace

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Keith Hinds. Roll call attendance was conducted.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds explained how public participation and public comment portions of remote meetings would take place, referencing the Public Participation and Public Comment procedures document. He asked board members to keep themselves muted while in the meeting, unless they needed to speak to reduce background noise. He explained that all voting would take place through roll call.

Mr. Hinds thanked Superintendent Thompson and the West Bath School staff for all that they have done to transition to remote learning in a short amount of time. He said that it was impressive how prepared the school was for closure. He thanked the food service department and Bath Bus for ensuring that families were able to access school meals. He thanked the parents, students, and community for the support for education, stating that their efforts have been "top notch". He said he wished to give out the same appreciation to the neighboring school districts who educate West Bath's 6-12 students. He said that remote learning has been a monumental task to undertake, and that he is proud of what the school district has accomplished.

Approve/Amend Minutes of 2/26/20:

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to approve the minutes of 2/26/20. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

Adjustments to Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

Committee Reports:

1. Policy Committee – Mr. McDaniel said that there is one policy to review related to the replacement of a board member who is unable to complete his or her term, for one reason or another.
2. Facilities Committee – No Update
3. Finance Committee - Mr. Hinds thanked the school staff and town staff for keeping warrants on the same schedule, and following the procedures without any hiccups. He also thanked Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Wallace for stepping in to review the AP warrants.
 - a. Payroll Warrants – Mr. Hinds stated that the payroll warrants had been signed by him on 2/28, 3/16, 3/27, 4/8, 4/23
 - b. AP Warrants – Mr. Hinds said he signed AP warrants were signed by Mr. Hinds 3/4 and Mr. McDaniel on 3/5, signed by Mr. Hinds, Mrs. Randall, and Mrs. Wallace on 3/18 and 4/8, and signed by Mr. Hinds on 4/23 and by Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Wallace on 4/24.

Superintendent's Report

1. Financial Report

Mrs. Thompson said that with 16% of the year remaining, 29% of the budget remained. She said that while all lines were tracking appropriately, some of the March bills and April bills were just coming in and are not reflected in the financial document.
2. District Updates
 - a. Teacher of the Year - Mrs. Thompson said that Mrs. Ida Beal had been named a top 3 finalist for county teacher of the year. She has had her final interview and is awaiting word. Mrs. Thompson said she is deserving of this title and honor, regardless of the panels final decision.
 - b. Better World Day - Mrs. Thompson said that students and teachers had submitted photos and videos thanking essential workers for helping to keep us all safe during this time. Miss Marco is in the process of compiling the videos into a thank you video to send out to community agencies to express West Bath's thanks and appreciation.
 - c. Downeast Magazine - Mrs. Thompson said that this month's Downeast Magazine has a feature on Bath, and that she had learned that it also features photos of West Bath students at the Boat shop at Maine Maritime Museum.
 - d. ACES - Typically the first Wednesday of the month of May is ACES - All Children Exercise Simultaneously. The school is planning to hold this event remotely, and explore what happens when the whole school comes together remotely.

Old Business

1. Pre-Kindergarten Lottery

Mrs. Thompson said she wished to inform the board that the pre-kindergarten lottery was underway remotely, and that families were still able to apply for a spot, even though the building was currently closed.

New Business

1. Approval of the Remote Learning Plan & Waiver of Requirements of Student Days

Mr. Hinds said that while he understood that approving the learning plan waives the requirement of student days, he would like to discuss the waiver of the requirement of student days as part of the next agenda item.

Mrs. Thompson shared the Remote Learning Plan document with the board, and walked them through steps taken to prepare for the closure of the school building. She explained the communication plan and how ongoing information is disseminated to the families. She highlighted the structure of remote learning, including grade level expectations in regards to content and synchronous activities, stating that most teachers have offered optional activities, read alouds, and extension activities as well. Specialists have provided a matrix of activities, and are posting in Google classrooms and participating in classroom crew meetings as well. In addition to classroom instruction, Mrs. Thompson explained that special education direct instruction was taking place in Google meetings, as are annual IEP meetings, and the special education ed techs are continuing to work with students and support the classes remotely.

Mrs. Thompson spoke about the technology plan, explaining that prior to the school building closure they had surveyed all families to find out what families had for technology devices and internet capacity at home. Children who needed to have a Chrome Book to give them 1:1 access at home were provided one. T-Mobile hotspots were ordered for families who did not have internet access at home. Mr. Bowdish has been working with teachers and families to ensure they have the ability to use the technology provided to access remote instruction.

The school nutrition staff, Jessie Sutfin and Wendy Morton, supported by David Lindall has made 2,214 meals for West Bath children to date. Families can sign up for free breakfast and lunch on the school website, and meals are delivered on Mondays and Thursdays by Bath Bus service. Allison Cosgrove has also helped to support this effort through obtaining grant funding, food resources, and disaster relief kits from Good Shepherd Food Bank.

Mrs. Thompson expressed great appreciation for the work of the West Bath faculty, and the effort students and families have put in to remote learning. She highlighted that staff have put together weekly videos to be shared on Fridays when the school would typically have schoolwide meetings. She thanked Miss Marco for her efforts in assembling those videos for the faculty.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to approve the remote learning plan. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

2. Discussion of the Final Student/Teacher Day

Mrs. Thompson explained that given snow days and power outage days the last student and staff day is currently scheduled for June 19th. She said that several districts are choosing to end remote learning earlier than the scheduled regular calendar, to allow time for faculty professional development and for families to close out their school year, as remote learning in its current form is a lot for families to manage. She said that the faculty had discussed ending new learning on June 5th, using the week of June 8th to 12th for crew meetings and special events (talent show, field day, step-up) and that this week could be optional for families. Then the final week of June 15th to 19th would be used for writing progress reports, packing up classrooms for summer cleaning, and professional reflection and development as we plan for the fall and a possible continuation of remote learning. She said that 6/19 would be the final staff day, and the final day of food service, pending any further state waivers. Mrs. Thompson said that RSU1 had since determined that they would be ending the student school year on 6/5, and therefore the staff had also discussed that scenario. While the majority of teachers would like to stick with the proposed plan, Mrs. Thompson acknowledged that it would be more family to be consistent with our neighboring district. She asked the board for their feedback on the two models, saying that the staff knew the board made the final decision.

Mrs. Wallace said that as a parent, she felt like it would make the most sense to match the neighboring district and have everything wrap up together. Hearing feedback from families, she also felt that families would support that decision. She also said that she respected the staff at West Bath and did not want to go against their wishes, but her opinion is that June 5th would make sense. Mrs. Randall said that she appreciated the hybrid concept, of ending on June 5th, but having a week of special events, and she would not want the students to miss those opportunities. Mrs. Thompson explained that if the board chooses to have the last student day be June 5th, those special events would still happen, they would just be scheduled for that first week of June instead. She said that faculty is open to either the 5th or 12th as an end date, wanting to do what is best for families.

Mrs. Randall made a motion to have the last day of student learning be June 5th. Mrs. Wallace seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

Mr. Hinds made a motion to waive the required number of student days for this school year. Mr. McDaniel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

3. Approval of the 2020-2021 School Calendar

Mrs. Thompson walked the board through the proposed school calendar, and explained where it was similar and different from neighboring districts. The calendar has a student

start date of September 1st.

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to approve the calendar as submitted. This was seconded by Mrs. Randall. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

4. Review of New Budget Calendar

Mr. Hinds shared the draft of the new budget calendar, which had been altered due to meeting rules regarding COVID-19.

5. First Reading of Board Policies

a. First Reading of Policy BBBE - Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies

Mr. McDaniel provided a run-down of the policy, saying that it reflected the legal reference on the policy. He said the only difference is that the legal reference says that a vacancy can be declared if a board member misses 3 consecutive meetings. He said the policy committee chose to not add that into the policy. Mrs. Powers asked if the absences referenced illnesses? Mr. Hinds said that it referred to unexcused absences, and that the absence clause was not added to the policy.

6. Open Discussion Regarding 5th Grade Programs - Chewonki and Boat Building

Mrs. Thompson said that Mr. McDaniel had asked to have this added to the agenda, so that the board could discuss options for the 5th grade programming. She said that, like her 5th grade teacher feels, she feels that these two programs are part of the tradition of being a West Bath 5th grade student, but at Mr. McDaniel's suggestion she has reached out to the two organizations to begin to talk about what other options there might be if the COVID-19 pandemic does not allow for the programs to continue as they have in the past, and what the cost of alternatives might be.

Public Comments

None

Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations

1. May 13th - Remote Meeting to begin at 4:30 PM.

Adjourn

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 6:01 PM. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,



Emily Thompson