

BLUE MOUNTAIN UNION SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

June 3, 2020

Via Zoom

Present:

Board Members: Angeline Alley, Sara Dennis, Paul Hazel, Alison Ingerson, Judy Murray, Kristen Murray, Allana Page, Kelsey Root-Winchester, Sarah Sanders

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Scott Blood, John Barone

Members of the Public: Alex Nuti-de Biasi, Carl Bayer

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Angeline Alley, Chair. Those present were welcomed, and the agenda was reviewed. Summer Schedule was added under Other Business
- II. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Kelsey Root-Winchester to approve the Board minutes of March 4, 2020. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
- III. Principals' Report
 - A. Scott Blood: The Kindergarten celebration was held today, and it was a huge success. Kindergarten teachers, para-professionals, and Mr. Blood visited 34 different families with a sign, certificate, and goodies. It was amazing to see all the kids and parents. Air hugs were exchanged.
 - B. John Barone: 8th grade promotion will be held Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 5:30 PM. It will be a combination of virtual celebration and car parade. Cars will meet in the driveway to Bread and Chocolate. Staff members will be parked in the driveway with their cars decorated. At the carport, students' names will be called, and they will get out of their car and get their certificate. It will be videotaped, along with words from Dr. Barone and teachers.
 1. Graduation: Plan C. On Saturday, June 13th, the celebration will begin at 10:00 AM with a parade starting in Groton at Upper Valley Grill. Fire Departments will lead the parade, which will go through Groton, Ryegate, and Wells River, then up to the driveway at BMU. Two cars are allowed per student. Students will be sitting on each side of the stage, 6 ft. apart. There will be speeches by the Valedictorian, the Co-Salutatorians, and the guest speaker. Dr. Barone and Board Chair Angeline Alley will hand out diplomas, following safety protocols. The ceremony will be recorded and then uploaded to the web page.
 2. The Chair thanked Supt. Knisley for reaching out to Sec. of Education Dan French for permission to go with Plan C
 - C. Scott Blood: The staff has been focusing on 3-5 big concepts for 4th quarter. They filled out a plan and filed it for review. The Elementary moved to Google Sights. Teachers sent a menu to families once a week. The Specialists and Arts teachers could also post. Menus meant that the students had choices of which tasks to complete. It was important to be flexible.

D. John Barone: All 7-12 teachers developed lesson plan templates outlining 3-6 proficiencies. They used Google Classroom, Google Sights, and Zoom. Most students have been turning in assignments either electronically or in hard copy. Grading: students were held harmless for the 3rd quarter. During the 4th quarter, there were definitive due dates. Missing assignments were allowed to be made up at any time without penalty, including through the summer and the beginning of next year.

E. Special ed students have had a distance learning plan. Many are pushing into regular class presentations. Para-educators are also Zooming with students almost every day. Hats off to the paras, who have really stepped up during this time. All of the State Assessments have been waived for this year. We plan to do the POA assessment with K-2 as soon as possible after the beginning of the school year.

F. Drivers' Ed? John Barone: We have not received clear guidance. The 3rd quarter grade was based on classroom time. For the 4th quarter, Neil Emerson has been doing classroom work. Students will be given an Incomplete, pending a decision from the State of VT. The Secretary can't waive the requirements of driving hours. Next year, two sections of Drivers' Ed will be offered during both semesters

G. End of year. John Barone: snow days are waived. Students are done for the year on Friday. Staff will be in the building the following week, following all protocols, and will have staggered schedules. Students will bring back materials Friday and Saturday, and they will be disinfected. Support staff will be done on Thursday, and faculty members have a half day Friday. Exit Project for 8th grade was waived for this year. Senior Seminar has been waived for students to present their projects.

H. New hires: There were four openings that have been filled.

1. Forrest Matthews—High School Math
2. Shelby Peters—Middle School Social Studies
3. Casey Robibero—Physical Education
4. Scott Kleinschrodt—High School Special Education

I. Two openings have not yet been filled—Middle School Special Education and World Language.

1. New teaching assignments: Megan Warburton will be teaching 2nd grade, and Shelby Sarno will be teaching 5th grade Language Arts and Social Studies

J. Family news to be celebrated: Parrish Eiscamp and his partner have welcomed their new baby daughter, and Jim Nelson and his wife have welcomed their new baby son. The Board congratulated both families

K. Attendance:

1. Elementary grades: Used Infinite Campus system with daily attendance. If teachers worked with or saw a student academically sometime during the day, or if work was completed, the student was marked as being present. By Thursday, if a student had been absent all 4 days, a referral was made to the student outreach team, and they would contact the family. The team would work with them on how to improve academics and attendance.

2. Grades 7-12: MS students: attendance was taken every day during advisory. If a teacher didn't hear from the MS student, the teacher would email or call home. After 3 days of no contact, the student outreach team would be contacted.

- a. High School: when there was a Zoom session, attendance was taken. If an assignment was completed, the student was counted as present. Kelsey Root-Winchester: What percentage of students don't have internet, etc. so they can complete their work? Dr. Barone: About 3% of 7-12 students. The administration predicted that it was closer to 10% in elementary without internet access.
- IV. OESU Update—no report for lack of quorum
- V. VSBA Update:
 A. A statement will be forthcoming on anti-racism. The Legislature hasn't set the tax rate yet. There is a deadline of July 1 for Boards to submit resolutions for the coming year. The Legislature will not be back until August. How does it impact any schools in the SU who don't have budget yet? Act 173 Special Education grant funding is being looked at.
- VI. Public Participation--None
- VII. Action Items
 A. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Allana Page to accept Jonathan Young's resignation with regret. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
 B. Yearly tax anticipation note. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Judy Murray to authorize the Board Chair to sign the yearly tax anticipation note. Motion voted on and approved unanimously
- VIII. Next Board meetings were scheduled for July 1st and Aug. 5th.
- IX. The Board thanked Dawn Blanchard, Jen Dube, Jodi Hart, Michelle Kalnins, Todd Powers, and all others who helped with planning graduation
- X. The Board also thanked cafeteria staff for all the work they put in to provide meals for children in the district. A waiver has been extended to continue meals for children in the community through the summer. Sarah Sanders shared that her girls so look forward to the meals and to the connection with school. Angeline Alley thanked teachers, paras, and administration. Scott Blood thanked the custodians, instructional staff, and support staff. Feedback from families expressed appreciation.
- XI. Plans for Fall:
 A. Emilie Knisley: The district is preparing for in-person instruction, more rounds of remote learning, and some hybrid of the same. Until the virus is pretty much gone or there is a vaccine, we will probably be operating in various modalities. With suite configuration, there can be a lot of people in one suite. We are dealing with an evolving situation. Kristen Murray: Will there be improvements and adjustments of the structure we have been using? John Barone: We will be sending out a survey for feedback from parents and students. Kristen Murray: just build on what we've been doing and refine what we are currently doing. Scott Blood: Expressed concern for students whose parents have gone back to work.
- XII. The District will have financial information before the next meeting. Emilie Knisley: year-end financials look to be in good place.
- XIII. Next agenda:
 A. A projected number of incoming freshmen and tuition students
 B. Summer program for students?

1. John Barone: No plans at this time for early return for students who may be behind. There will only be summer services for special education students whose plan calls for an extended school year.

C. Negotiations? The Board and BMEA have not yet found a place to meet. They will continue on the current contract, which ends June 30th. If no negotiated contract has been reached, they will continue with the current one until a new contract is agreed upon. Kristen Murray: offered use of their new garage as a possible meeting place.

XIV. Motion by Paul Hazel, seconded by Kristen Murray to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM.
Motion voted on and approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.