

## **West Bath School Administrative Unit**

### Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2020 at 4:30 PM (Remote Meeting)

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**Members Present:** Keith Hinds, Alexandra Jungbluth, Joanne Powers, Ashleigh Randall, and Casandra Whorff

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Patrick Bowdish, Emily Thompson

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 PM by Emily Thompson. A roll call attendance was taken.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

#### **Nomination and Election of Board Chair**

Mrs. Thompson called for nominations of board chair. Mr. Hinds was nominated by Mrs. Randall. This was seconded by Ms. Powers. There were no further nominations and no discussion. Roll call vote (5-0).

#### **Nomination and Election of Vice Chair**

Mr. Hinds called for nominations of vice chair. Mr. Hinds nominated Mrs. Randall. Ms. Powers seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations and no discussion. Roll call vote (5-0).

#### **Comments from the Chair:**

Mr. Hinds thanked Mrs. Jungbluth and Mrs. Whorff for stepping up to serve on the board for a 3 year term. He asked and encouraged people to make wise decisions as the holidays approach, so the building is able to remain open for in-person instruction.

#### **Approve/Amend Minutes of 10/21/20**

Mrs. Randall made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/21/20 as written. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

#### **Adjustments to Agenda:**

Mr. Hinds added 12.3 - Adjustment to the School Calendar to the agenda.

### **Public Comments:**

None

Mr. Hinds reminded the public how to submit public comment during remote meetings.

Mrs. Randall asked Mr. Hinds to give an overview of why this meeting is set up differently than other meetings, due to it being the first meeting after an election, for the new board members.

### **Committee Reports**

1. Policy Committee - No report
2. Technology Committee - No report
3. Facilities Committee - Mrs. Thompson said that while the students are not in the building the next week, several building projects will be taking place. She said that Siemens will be finalizing prior ventilation projects in the special education room and Title I room, adjusting air flow, fan speeds and, setting flow to code. They are also going to do the duct work on the next round of ventilation which will be the office spaces, guidance, and possibly in the RTI office if time allows. Premium H2O is planning to be swapping out our classroom and bathroom faucets with touchless faucets, although materials have not yet been confirmed. She said that these facilities projects are being funded by the CRF funds. The gym floor will be cleaned and waxed, and hopefully enough time will remain for putting up the coat racks for classes for physically distanced winter clothing. She said that it's a lot for a 3 day turn around and some projects may need to be pushed out to the winter break, but it's good timing to have a few days without children in the building to get this work done.
4. Finance Committee
  - a. Payroll Warrants - Mr. Hinds said that he had signed payroll warrants on 10/26 and Mrs. Randall signed warrants on 11/9.
  - b. AP Warrants - Mr. Hinds said that AP warrants were signed by he and Mrs. Randall on 11/4 and 11/18.

### **Superintendent's Report**

1. Financial Report -

Mrs. Thompson said with 62% of the year remaining, 72% of the budget remains. Lines are tracking appropriately. She pointed out on page 1 that there were unemployment costs that are not typical in the lines of unemployment professional and unemployment sub. Due to COVID shutdowns, there was an increase in unemployment claims, across the state and nation. She explained that in West Bath's case, these costs related to prior personnel and substitute teachers. She also said that while the first round of CRF fund expenses had been moved out lines where they had been temporarily placed, the second round of expenses needed to be moved. She said those were located in instructional equipment on page 1, and other items and other expenses on page 9.
2. District Updates -

- a. Student Led Conferences - Mrs. Thompson reported that conferences are scheduled for Monday and Tuesday with students and parents in 30 minute blocks of remote meetings. The first part of the conference will be for the student-led portion, allowing for extra time to connect with families, as face to face time is limited this year.
- b. Report Cards - Report cards will be mailed home next Tuesday.
- c. Community Crew - Mrs. Thompson said she would like to give special thanks to the West Bath Community Crew. While there's no in-person meetings, there is a small but mighty group in the background still working to support the school in any way that they can think of. This has included Halloween treats for the staff from the Bath Sweet Shop, an upcoming socially distanced holiday tree sale, the continuation of Clynk, they they are currently holding an online fundraiser. Mrs. Thompson said that she appreciates their ongoing efforts and support.
- d. Mrs. Thompson said that she again needed to thank West Bath families, for they are making choices outside of school that allow for teaching and learning to be able to continue at school. She thanked the students for continuously showing that they are flexible, resilient, and positive despite living through a global pandemic. She also thanked the staff who without hesitation has put the needs of the students, families, and the community first and have worked as hard as they possibly can for them every day. She said she feel fortunate to have had the opportunities they've had for in person instruction this fall. Ms. Powers asked for a reminder of what the plan would be if the governor shuts down in the schools. Mrs. Thompson referred to the "red plan" as the remote plan, stating that the collaborative planning group focused their back to school plan on the remote plan first, focusing a great deal of attention on what solid remote learning looks like. She explained that the school had invested in an online platform for their literacy modules, and is piloting a new math program at grades 2-5 that has a strong on-line component. While in school, students and teachers have been using Google classroom to assign and turn in schoolwork, and the literacy and math modules can be embedded into Google Classroom. The structure of remote learning is in a 3 hour block, mostly synchronous direct instruction, with asynchronous specials 4 days per week, with one flexible day. Times may be adjusted for K and 1 depending on their needs at the time.

## **Old Business**

### **1. In-Person Instruction Updates**

Mrs. Thompson reported that things continue to go very well at school, but that part of that is luck as the school has not yet had any cases of COVID in our immediate school families. But that luck comes from families and staff making good, safe choices outside of school. She said she is grateful for that help and support. She said that believes that if there is a case associated with the school, that all of the DOE and CDC requirements that the school is required to meet will help to keep the case from going any further. Recent reports from Dr. Shah from the CDC have stated that they with a few exceptions, that while there are cases associated with schools, those cases are coming from community actions, and are not from school transmissions. Mrs. Thompson said that at the prior meeting she had reported that the school had moved into a nice rhythm. Families were accessing the health screening daily, communicating with the school nurses to talk about

symptoms, following their required guidance from the DOE through the flow chart for when students needed to be tested, and easily accessing testing, getting results quickly and coming back to school. But over the last week or so, as there's been a surge in the state, testing has been a little harder to come by, and Mrs. Thompson said that she felt that is problematic for supporting the infrastructure of being in school in person. She said that families are reporting that they are being told that there's a 7-10 day turnaround for testing. She said that she spoke with Dr. Hanna about testing in the region. Dr. Hanna said that patients of Maine Health groups can access the swab and send for 14-36 hour turnaround and that the school nurses will work with families to find access to testing. Mrs. Thompson reiterated that this felt like a fragile piece of the puzzle.

Mrs. Thompson reminded the board that they've talked about local conditions, and at what point the school would want to talk about remote instruction over in-person instruction. She explained the Department of Education's advisory system which look at the positivity percentages and the 14-day positivity rates. She said that 2 days ago the state positivity rate was at 2.69, but that locally it was at 1%. She said that schools were forewarned that if the state had greater than a 3% positivity rating, that there may be shutdowns. However, while the state data is high, they need to be mindful to be paying attention to the local factors when making decisions about schools. She said that like the board talked about earlier, trend data needed to be watched rather than daily data, as in a small county like Sagadahoc County the numbers can really fluctuate and impact the daily data. She said that she's watching the data carefully, as is the Department of Education. She said that locally schools can make their own decisions, and if at some point the school needs to talk about remote instruction before the state deems the county to be in the red zone, that is a local decision.

Ms. Powers asked if days that kids are absent while waiting for testing days are days that students are considered to be absent? Mrs. Thompson said that this has not yet been decided by the state, but that she has been keeping records of when students are absent by attending remotely, so that she can correct the attendance records as appropriate if given the go ahead to do so.

Mr. Hinds asked if there are any challenges that had not been anticipated for colder weather that the board should be aware of now that colder weather has arrived? Mrs. Thompson said there's definitely been less outdoor instruction time than there was on the 70 degree days, but that the school participated in Winter Kids for the last two years, and students were outside for most of the month of January for great lengths of time. She said that with CRF funding, Mrs. Cosgrove worked with LLBean to purchase snow pants, hats, and mittens for every child so that they can leave sets of cold weather gear at school, and there was never a concern about them not having what they need. She also highlighted that inside the building there has been a focus on ventilation and filtration upgrades, to help to increase the safety of being inside as well.

## 2. School Board Meeting Calendar/School Board Orientation

Mrs. Thompson said that with a new board, she wanted to be sure that the meeting times and dates of the meetings worked for the new board members. She discussed the purpose of meeting remotely, and the timing for remote and in person meetings. She said that she's also discussed dates for the board orientation with MSMA and he gave dates for

consideration. She suggested that they use December 10th at the orientation day, and hold the regular meeting afterwards.

Mr. Hinds asked if 4:30 for remote meetings still worked for everyone. The board agreed. He asked if it made sense to move the December meeting to the 10th and piggy back on the board orientation? The board agreed to the schedule adjustment.

## **New Business**

### **1. Board Standing Committee Assignments**

Mr. Hinds walked the board members through committee options and potential roles.

Board standing committees are as follows:

*Facilities - Mrs. Randall & Mrs. Whorff*

*Finance - Mr. Hinds & Mrs. Randall*

*Policy - Mr. Hinds & Mrs. Randall*

*Negotiations - Mr. Hinds & Ms. Powers*

Board Ad-Hoc committees are as follows:

*Wellness Council - Ms. Powers & Mrs. Jungbluth*

*Comprehensive Planning Committee - Mr. Hinds & Mrs. Randall*

*Technology Committee - Ms. Powers*

### **2. Board Goals**

Mr. Hinds read the prior year's board goals to the board, and asked them to be thinking about what their priorities are as a new board, entering a new budget cycle.

### **3. Calendar Request**

Mrs. Thompson asked the board for flexible consideration for the December calendar. On the schedule the 21st and 22nd are slated to be 1.5 student days. She requested the board allow for those to be scheduled as staff days, with the student days ending for break on the 18th. She said she felt that this gives a clear cut off for families for break, and allows staff the opportunity to have time to be prepared for whatever January brings, citing how challenging it has been to find professional time within the school week.

Mrs. Randall made a motion to approve the calendar change. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

## **Public Comments**

None

## **Set Next Meeting Dates and Locations**

1. December 10th at 4:30 PM for a board workshop with MSMA (remote)

2. December 10th following the workshop for the regular School Board of Directors Meeting (remote)

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Hinds made a motion at 5:28 PM to enter into an executive session pursuant to Title 1, Chapter 13, Section 405,6,A. of the M.R.S.A. for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Mrs. Randall seconded the motion. Roll call vote (5-0).

### **Return to Regular Session**

The board returned to regular session at 5:49 PM. Mrs. Jungbluth did not return.

### **Adjourn**

Mrs. Randall made a motion to adjourn at 5:51 PM. Ms. Powers seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote (4-0).

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Thompson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emily Thompson