

Gilford School Board Meeting
Monday, March 16, 2020
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The Gilford School Board held a meeting on Monday, March 16, 2020 at Gilford High School. Present were Board members, Gretchen Gandini, Jeanin Onos, Karen Thurston, Chris McDonough and Rae Mello-Andrews. Gilmanton Board members present were Malcolm MacLeod. Administrators present were Anthony Sperazzo, Peter Sawyer, Brenda McGee, Jay Moody, Johnathan Dupuis, Esther Kennedy, Ken Mulleavey, Kirk Beitler and Scott Isabelle.

School Board Chair Chris McDonough called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance and confirmed posting of the meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Beitler thanked the Leadership Team for grabbing the bull by the horns and taking the lead in working with staff to prepare for remote learning. Superintendent Beitler stated that Esther Kennedy has met with case managers, Scott Isabelle and Johnathan Dupuis have met with food service and we are encouraging direct deposit for payroll. We are working to keep everyone employed, including offering kitchen staff the opportunity to do cleaning of desks and classrooms.

Remote Learning Updates

Esther Kennedy commended the staff for their exceptional work today in planning for remote learning. Esther highlighted some of the areas being focused on:

- Getting permission from families to do online learning via email confirmation.
- Sending materials home for students that have a hard time with online learning.
- Google Classroom and Google Hangouts will be used for online instruction.
- Prepare a menu of activities for online learning for families.
- There is relief from the State to alleviate the 60 day testing window.
- IEP meetings can be held via telecommunications.
- Preparing a menu of lessons.
- Counseling needs can be done either online or via telephone.

Malcolm Macleod questioned how OT and speech services would be handled. Esther replied that they would be through online communication as well. Karen Thurston asked if help would be given to parents to teach them about Google Classroom. Esther stated that directions will be given to families and thanked the Board for their continued support of technology. Because of this, we are way ahead of other Districts and more prepared.

Jay Moody, Network Administrator, outlined the efforts in technology.

- Making sure staff and students are equipped with a device for remote learning.

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- Met with some of the technology forward thinkers in each school to put together a Google Classroom for collaboration of ideas and resources.
- Focusing on utilizing Google GSuite Core Services (gmail, meet, classroom, chat).
- Working on remote access for administration for access to On prem resources and applications.
- Stressed that as everyone is relying heavy on the internet and services that there will be frustrating times of technology not working perfectly and to be patient.
- Surveying students and figuring out who is in need of a hotspot to provide internet
- All classroom voicemails will be forwarded to email inboxes.

Malcolm Macleod questioned how a family would get a hot spot. Jay responded that they would contact the building principal. Gretchen Gandini asked about the response from the internet survey regarding internet access. Anthony Sperazzo responded that he had heard from 15 families. Both Peter Sawyer and Danielle Bolduc responded that they heard from 3 families.

Johnathan Dupuis, Food Service Director outlined the efforts in Food Service.

Plans are in the works to feed students during the time out of school. We have 202 students on free and reduced lunch. It would cost \$9090.00 to provide breakfast and lunch for these students.

Gretchen Gandini asked why this would be different than if the students were in school. Johnathan replied that the cost is not reimbursable through the government.

Scott Isabelle explained that some districts have summer and after school programs to feed students. The government has not addressed schools like us yet who do not have these programs. We can set up the kitchen, have families sign up, bag breakfast and lunch and have families pick up the bags in the GMS bus loop. Scott explained that the food service account does not have any surplus money to cover this but we could take it out of the general fund.

Superintendent Beitler questioned if the offer should be opened up to all families rather than just the families that qualify for the free and reduced program. Karen Thurston opinioned that it should be offered to everyone so that no one feels singled out. Rae Mello-Andrews commented that it would also give the food service employees a chance to work. Scott Isabelle stated that the food service employees have been given the opportunity to clean desks and other light custodial work. The goal is to keep everyone employed as long as we can. Karen Thurston question if there is plan to get the bags to Gilmanton. Scott Isabelle replied that we can work with Gilmanton to drop off the bags.

Jeanin Onos commented that people are offering to donate food. Superintendent Beitler replied that it is best to go through Gotlunch. Meg Jenkins is a contact person with the program.

Chris McDonough questioned what account the money would be taken from. Scott Isabelle replied it would come from the track change account as there is money in that account.

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Gretchen Gandini motioned to approve to feed 202 students and otherwise for up to of \$9090.00. The motion was seconded by Rae Mello-Andrews and passed unanimously.

Scott Isabelle asked the Board if this continues and we have to go past the 3 weeks, can we get a general consensus from the board to extend the food bags or would they prefer a meeting. Chris McDonough stated that a general consensus was fine.

Ken Mulleavey, Director of Buildings and Grounds, outlined the efforts in maintenance.

- All buildings are getting a deep cleaning with heavy duty cleaner and then disinfectant.
- As staff works from home, classrooms will be clean and closed off.
- Other areas (weight room, auditorium, gym, locker rooms etc.) will be closed off after cleaning.
- Floors will be disinfected with #5 product.
- Having the added help from food service will be a bonus.

Chris McDonough stated that there is no reason to believe the virus was present. Superintendent Beitler responded that the virus is not present in the District.

Scott Isabelle stated that we are looking out for the safety of the custodial crew and purchasing coveralls for them.

Rae Mello-Andrews suggested putting a sign on all entrance doors stating that if you have a fever or a cough, do not enter the building.

Superintendent Beitler informed the Board that we have shut down the Meadows. The maintenance crew will deep clean it and it will stay shut.

Scott Isabelle stated that all school related and outside building use requests have been cancelled.

Anthony Sperazzo outlined the plan for remote learning at Gilford High School and said the Administrative Team met with every department to review expectations.

- We are not going to get through all of our curriculum.
- Put yourself in parents shoes, please communicate with students often (within 24 hours).
- Trimester 2 will be extended one week until March 27 to allow for missed work to be turned in.
- No final exams.
- Teachers will give students every opportunity to demonstrate competency because there will be no comp recovery.
- Project-based learning should be the focus.
- Trimester 3 will begin March 30.
- Google Meet will support instruction.
- Case Managers will be invited to the Google Classrooms.
- Paras will be checking in with students daily to provide one on one support.
- Teachers will have “office hours.”

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Chris McDonough asked if there was a schedule yet. Anthony replied, no but assignments are to be posted by 9:00 a.m. Rae Mello-Andrews inquired if Google Classroom records. Superintendent Beitler replied no but Google Meet does.

Anthony Sperazzo stated that we are prepared to launch on Monday, unless we are ready to go sooner. Chris McDonough asked if there were any classes that were not going to be offered 3rd trimester. Anthony replied no, there are not.

Superintendent Beitler stated that the latest from the CDC was that we were looking at 8 weeks but that has not come from the Governor yet. In his message to staff this morning, Superintendent Beitler told them to plan for 2 weeks but it could be 8 weeks. Malcolm MacLeod asked if we were out for 8 weeks, would we consider canceling April vacation. Superintendent Beitler stated that he had planned on putting that out to the Board.

Gretchen Gandini asked about the Huot classes. Anthony Sperazzo replied that they too would be done through Google Classroom.

Peter Sawyer outlined the plan for remote learning at Gilford Middle School.

- Staff began the day "anxious" but finished the day in much better spirits as they got a good start on planning for the next few weeks.
- Sean and Peter met with each grade level to answer any questions regarding the end of the trimester and plans for remote learning.
- Staff will utilize videos (both "homemade" and "canned" from online resources)
- Staff was to focus on two essential areas for learning and not to think of these as 10 separate days of Blizzard Bags

Rae Mello-Andrews suggested a mini check list for parents so they are aware of the needs of students.

At this point in the meeting, Chair McDonough left the meeting for business.

Danielle Bolduc outlined the plan for remote learning at Gilford Elementary School.

- All teams met with Danielle and Katie Bryant to discuss communication with parents, structure, instruction and assessments.
- Teachers were instructed how to use Google Classroom and other online resources.
- Families were sent a form to fill out and instructions on how to pick up resources at the school on Tuesday and Wednesday.
- All report cards will be mailed by Friday.
- All teachers are planning this week and will start online learning on Monday, March 23rd.

Gretchen Gandini inquired about NHIAA. Superintendent Beitler said the latest communication was that practices would not begin until the end of April.

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Rae Mello-Andrews asked about the guidelines for graduation. Superintendent Beitler responded that the Governor has not waived the attendance requirement. Rae inquired if it would be in the best interest of the Board to write a letter requesting a waiver. Superintendent Beitler stated the current requirement is 180 days or 945 hours of instructional time in the elementary level and 990 hours of instructional time at the middle and high school level. At this point, we have not calculated the hours. Gretchen Gandini suggested we give them a week before writing a letter.

Scott Isabelle asked what it would look like for hourly employees should the buildings close completely. In the past, we have paid hourly employees if the buildings have been closed as it is no fault of theirs. Superintendent Beitler said this was on the minds of the employees. Malcolm MacLeod opinioned that it is already in the budget.

Rae Mello-Andrews inquired if we would get a refund from the bus company. Superintendent Beitler stated that they are expecting payment. Scott Isabelle said he will contact Primex as there may be some offset. It's just too new.

Karen Thurston inquired about the trip to Spain. The trip has been canceled and we are working on trying to get families refunds.

Superintendent Beitler informed the Board that he asked Brenda McGee and Jay Moody to bring Chrome Books for the Board in the event that would need to meet virtually.

Superintendent Beitler asked the Board if they could be present at the recount scheduled for Thursday, March 19th at 3:00 p.m. The time was changed to 5:00 p.m. on the 19th.

Superintendent Beitler asked for the Board's reconsideration of the Board's policy to limit spending of \$2,000 more without Board approval or if not in the budget in the event that we need an emergency purchase so that we are able to address issues immediately. He asked for consideration to contact the Board Chair and have a conversation rather than have to have a full Board meeting. Gretchen Gandini inquired as to the dollar amount. Superintendent Beitler responded between \$6,000- \$10,000 but he would contact the chair no matter what the amount was over \$2,000. Gretchen felt that was high number. Karen Thurston stated that we have to have faith in the Board Chair, Superintendent and Business Administrator and worries about tying their hands. She suggested a time frame be put on the request as this is unchartered territory. Gretchen agreed and thought a fair timeline would be 8 weeks.

Karen Thurston motioned to allow Superintendent Beitler, Scott Isabelle and the Board Chair to make the decision to spend up to \$10,000 until the next Board meeting on April, 6, 2020. The motion was seconded by Rae Mello-Andrews and passed with a unanimous vote.

Rae Mello-Andrews commended the staff stating that as a teacher who is going through this, she understands the amount of work, trial and era that is going into this planning and she applauds not only the staff but the Leadership Team as well.

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Kyle Sanborn asked for clarification on the date the students return to school. Peter Sawyer replied that students are scheduled to return on April 6th as it stands right now.

At 7:32 p.m., on a motion by Karen Thurston and a second by Rae Mello-Andrews, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanin Onos
School Board Secretary