

Mt. Blue Regional School District Board of Directors

Minutes

NOTICE: Pursuant to RSU 9's Health and Safety guidelines, ***face masks are required*** to attend an in-person event inside a school building.

DATE: March 8, 2022

Place: The Forum

Time: 6:30pm

Meeting Video: <https://vimeo.com/686234514>

In attendance: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb (entered at 6:32pm), Irv Faunce (entered at 6:32pm), Cherieann Harrison (entered at 6:37pm), Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith

Absent: None

Also present: Keith Acedo, Nancy Allen, James Black, Jeff Brazee, Beth Christopher (Zoom), Chris Elkington, Nichole Goodspeed, Dan Higgins (Zoom), Jennifer Pooler, Monique Poulin, Lisa Sinclair, Joel Smith, Melissa Williams (Zoom), Tracy Williams

- I. Called to Order at 6:31pm
 - II. Pledge of Allegiance
 - III. Adjustments to the Agenda
 - A. None
 - IV. Report of the Chairperson - Carol Coles
 - A. [BCA Board Member Code of Ethics](#)
 1. Focus item - G
 - a) Chair Coles reviewed paragraph G - to support decisions of the board graciously, even if not in agreement
 - B. Two Public Comment Period Tonight
 1. COVID Comment Period after Superintendent's Data Review and Recommendation
 2. Other after Good News Stories from Board/Administrators
 - V. COVID Reopening Plan Check-In and Possible Adjustments - Elkington
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A. Data Review

1. No questions from the board on the data review

B. [Superintendent's Recommendation](#)

Two-Phase Approach

Phase One

- **Change** from Universal Masking to **Masking Optional** (based on local data) in school and on buses
- **Continue:**
 - To ask parents, staff and students **to follow the daily health screener before heading to school**
 - **With Pooled Testing** for Spring Sports
 - **To recommend** that all students and staff participate in **Pooled Testing**
 - With **increased school building and bus cleaning**
 - With **classroom spacing expectations**
 - With present **lunchroom spacing expectations for Grades PreK - 5**
 - **To open windows in classrooms and on buses** whenever the temperature makes it possible
 - **To not allow most during the day visitors into schools until May** while we continue to monitor school and county data and prepare to safely (for students and staff) bring back some of these events and visitors
- **Implement a 5-day isolation** and quarantine period AND an additional **5-day masking** protocol for students in **grades 6-12** who test positive (*this is current practice for students in grades PreK-5 and a CDC Recommendation*)
- **No outdoor masking**
- **Grades 6-12 return to** non-COVID Breakfast and Lunch expectations
- Schools may look at and return to grade level assemblies with some spacing but avoid full-school assemblies until May 2nd
- Give the Superintendent the authority **to return to universal making at an individual school and the buses they ride** for a two-week incubation period if there is an increase/outbreak in cases deemed concerning by ME CDC

- **Contact tracing will not be reinstated.** If none of the following *exemptions* are met, only those with reported exposure outside of school will quarantine.
 - *Exemptions*
 - Covid-19 in the last 90 days
 - Fully vaccinated
 - Participates in pooled testing

Phase Two

- We will come back to the Board at their April 12th meeting with a draft plan for visitors and events to begin May 2nd if our county continues in Medium or moves to Low per ME CDC and Federal CDC guidance.
 - **Inside the school, after school events** such as concerts and parent nights following the Pod format that athletics has been using
 - **Daytime school visitors** - we will continue to monitor school and county data and prepare to safely (for students and staff) bring back some of these visitors, hopefully by May 2, 2022.

Discussion was heard that there is no local data specifically stating that any of our schools would not be able to be masking optional tomorrow.

Next Steps and Safety Protocols

- RSU 9 is securing fit-tested N95 masks for staff (based on their request)
- KN95 masks will continue to be made available for all RSU 9 staff
- KN95 masks will be made available to students (based on parent or their request)
- Principals and guidance counselors will develop talking points to review with students around the two-phase plan and the importance of showing support and respect for mask choice with classmates
- Principals and guidance counselors will visit classrooms or meet with grade levels (Grades 6-12) to discuss the two-phase plan and the importance of showing support and respect for mask choice with classmates.
- Negative student-to-student comments towards students who either choose not to wear masks or choose to continue to wear masks will not be tolerated and depending on the context will be considered either

BULLYING or HARASSMENT and will receive immediate and age-appropriate consequences.

C. Public Comment One

1. Review by Chair Coles - reviewed the guidelines and policy for Public Comment

<p><i>Motion to extend public comment by 30 minutes</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Kirk Doyle Seconded: Cherieann Harrison Motion: Approved</p>
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No discussion was heard.

- a) Shawn Quimby, Starks - Supports free choice in masking and does not support the request for Supt. to implement masking at a school or bus if conditions change.
- b) Matt Allen, Wilton - Supports choice in masking.
- c) Alexander Creznik, Farmington - Supports choice in masking; does not support request for Supt. to implement masking at a school or bus, should only be a board decision
- d) Sarah Abbott Pinkham, New Sharon - Supports family choice in masking.
- e) Dalton Fagan, New Sharon - Supports masking as a parent's choice.
- f) Carla Fitch, Wilton - Voiced concerns over staff singling her student out because of his masking and to end masking.
- g) Kathyann Boulay, Farmington - Have compassion, empathy, and understanding for all students.
- h) Robert Geisser, Industry - We need to do better for our students.
- i) Amy Ward, Farmington - Let our children be children.

- j) Joseph MacConnell, Farmington - Time to move on. Masks don't work.

<i>Motion to extend public comment 10 minutes</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Kirk Doyle Seconded: Debbie Smith Motion: Approved
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No discussion was heard.

- k) Jesse Sillanpaa, Industry - Concerns for mental health issues masks are causing students. Supports free choice in masking.
- l) Garren Jewett, New Vineyard - Questioning why people who don't have children in the district are making decisions for our children.
- m) Hank Washburn, New Sharon - Appreciates the cautious approach the district has taken over the past two years.
- n) Bryan Williamson, Farmington Falls - Unfitted face masks don't work.

D. Board Review and Discussion

<i>Motion to accept the superintendent's recommended changes to the RSU 9 COVID Plan, effective immediately</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Kirk Doyle Seconded: Cherieann Harrison Motion: Approved
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Discussion was heard about the difficulties during the past two years, especially for those with children, was acknowledged by the Board.

Recess from 7:40pm - 7:52pm

VI. Communications

- A. The March 4, 2022 Morning Meeting w/Legislators was postponed due to lack of availability by legislators. Hope to reschedule later this spring.
- B. RSU 9 Staff Members of the Month for February 2022
 - 1. Support Staff - Joyce Smiley, Bus Driver/Custodian, MBMS, CCHS
 - 2. Professional Staff - Kathryn Clement, RN, School Nurse, WGM

VII. Good news stories from the Board or Administrators

- A. Josh Robbins, Vienna - Nordic Eastern High School Championship Team was selected recently and 8 of the 24 spots are girls from the MBHS team; members from both MBHS girls and boys teams were selected for the Northeast U16 ski team
- B. Cheriann Harrison, Wilton - Gymnastics has returned to AHS, nice to see it; Melissa Williams was recently recognized as one of the women leaders in CTE in the state
- C. Chris Elkington, superintendent - New Forwarder in Forestry Program; Mid-Maine Youth Orchestra, Mt. Blue students dominate membership and Hope Chernesky has been the Concertmaster for three years. Wow! Mt. Blue Blue Crew is competing this weekend at Thomas College.
- D. Kirk Doyle, Farmington - Hope's talent is amazing. Good to see most of your faces.
- E. Lisa Laflin, New Vineyard - Kudos to Hope Chernesky and others. Went to the concert and believes MMYO concert is still available online.
- F. Monique Poulin, MBHS principal - MMYO concerts were live-streamed, possibly on YouTube; theater performance Friday night, another one coming up in early May.
- G. James Black, MBMS principal - One-act play on Friday. Franklin County Spelling Bee champion is from MBMS, Elizabeth Strickland. She will be competing in the State Championship at USM on March 19th
- H. 6-12 administrators today worked on the language that needs to be used about being respectful of masking choices made by all students and staff.

VIII. Public Comment Two

A. None

IX. [Superintendent's Report](#) - Christian Elkington

A. New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements

1. Board members thanked Cindy Dixon for her years of service; she is leaving the district after many years. Board members also acknowledged long-term employees who are retiring at the end of the school year, such as Matt Allen who was at tonight's meeting.

B. Budget Meeting Reminders

C. FY20 Title I Summer Reallocation Grant

D. A few celebrations

X. Presentations

A. Strategic Planning Next Steps: Drafting Mission & Vision - Strategic Planning Committee Chair Lisa Laflin

1. [Mission Vision Presentation](#)
2. [Agenda for 2/10/22 Meeting](#)
3. [Strategic Planning Committee Charge](#)
4. [Data Themes from 2/2/22](#)
5. [Mission/Vision Traits](#)

Chair Laflin described the process and timeline used for collecting input from our ten communities and the timeline to complete the work.

A special thank you to Lisa Laflin for all the work she has been doing as Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee from Board Chair Coles.

***Budget Committee Update - Gloria McGraw has replaced Wayne Kinney on the Budget Committee. The full-day budget workshop (Day 1 presentation) has been postponed. The Committee will meet for full-day presentations at the Mt. Blue Campus Forum on March 17 and now on 24 (9:00am - 4:00pm) - all board members are welcome and encouraged to attend the meetings.

<i>Motion to extend the meeting until 9:00pm, if needed.</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin,	Motion: Cherieann Harrison Seconded: Wayne Kinney Motion: Passed
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	Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	
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No discussion was heard.

XI. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes from [February 15, 2022](#)
- B. Committee Report Outs and Minutes
 - 1. Operations Committee - [March 1, 2022](#)
 - 2. Personnel & Finance - [March 1, 2022](#)
 - 3. Educational Policy - [March 1, 2022](#)

<i>Motion to approve the consent agenda.</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laffin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Dee Robinson Seconded: Gwen Doak Motion: Passed
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No discussion was heard.

XII. New Business

- A. [2022-2023 Calendar Draft](#)
 - Not for a vote tonight - As this is the first time you have seen it. We still have one too many dissimilar days among CTE sending schools. Don't expect a change on our calendar, but that another sending school will change. The calendar will come back to you for a vote on March 22.
- B. [Budget Presentation Template](#)
 - The draft template of what the building level budget presentations will include was shared

C. Approval of New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements

<p><i>Motion to approve the New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements as presented in the Superintendent's Report.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teena Gusler - Sp. Ed. Teacher - Mallett</i> • <i>Makenzie Hart - Social Worker (DT) - Mallett</i> • <i>Victoria Petersen - SLP - District</i> 	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Dee Robinson Seconded: Lisa Laflin Motion: Passed</p>
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Discussion - kudos to attracting new professional staff to the district mid-year. Frontline online application tracking system is live. Question made about moving this section of the agenda back to the Consent Agenda.

XIII. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) Employment of officials/appointees/employees

<p><i>Motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(A) to discuss the employment of officials/appointees/employees</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Cherieann Harrison Seconded: Kirk Doyle Motion: Passed</p>
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Time Entered: 8:34pm

Time Exited: 8:43pm

<p><i>Motion to approve the leave of absence request as</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug</p>	<p>Motion: Cherieann Harrison Seconded: Debbie Smith</p>
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<i>presented to the board for employee A.</i>	Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Passed
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No discussion was heard.

<i>Motion to approve the leave of absence request as presented to the board for employee B.</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Cherieann Harrison Seconded: Scott Erb Motion: Passed
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No discussion was heard.

<i>Motion to approve the leave of absence request as presented to the board for employee C.</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Kirk Doyle, Doug Dunlap, Scott Erb, Irv Faunce, Cherieann Harrison, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Mark Prentiss, Josh Robbins, Dorothy "Dee" Robinson, Debbie Smith Nays: None Abstained: None Vote: 16:0:0 (1001:0:0)	Motion: Cherieann Harrison Seconded: Lisa Laflin Motion: Passed
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No discussion was heard.

XIV. Adjourn

<i>Motion to adjourn without objection</i>		Motion: Cherieann Harrison Passed with no objection
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Adjourned at 8:47pm

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS

March 22, 2022 - 6:30pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

April 12, 2022 - 6:30pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Operations - April 5, 2022 - 5:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Personnel & Finance - April 5, 2022 - 6:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Educational Policy - April 5, 2022 - 7:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Operations - May 3, 2022 - 5:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Personnel & Finance - May 3, 2022 - 6:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Educational Policy - May 3, 2022 - 7:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus