

# ***Mt. Blue Regional School District Board of Directors***

## **Minutes**

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**DATE:** September 14, 2021

**Place:** The Forum

**Time:** 6:30pm

**Meeting Video:**

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**In attendance:** Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laffin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith

**Absent:** Kirk Doyle, Scott Erb, Cherieann Harrison

**Also present:** Keith Acedo, Cynthia Bernstein, Jeff Brazee, Beth Christopher, Laura Columbia, Chris Elkington, Nichole Goodspeed, John Jones, Jennifer Pooler, Monique Poulin, Melissa Williams, Tracy Williams

- I. Call to Order and Declaration of a Quorum
  - A. 6:31pm
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Adjustment to the Agenda -
  - A. Add Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(E) Legal Rights and Duties of the School Unit, Consultations between the school unit and its attorney

Motion to add Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(E) Legal Rights and Duties of the School Unit, Consultations between the school unit and its attorney	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laffin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	Motion: Debbie Smith Seconded: Josh Robbins Motion: Passed
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Craig Stickney, the former board representative from Chesterville, addressed the Board and read from his resignation letter.

Jesse Silanpaa, the former board representative from Industry, addressed the Board and shared he plans to be here on a regular basis.

<p>Motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(E) Legal Rights and Duties of the School Unit, Consultations between the school unit and its attorney</p>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith  Nays: 0  Abstained: 0  Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Lisa Laflin  Seconded: Gwen Doak  Motion: Passed</p>
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Time entered: 6:39pm

Time exited: 7:15pm

IV. Public Comment

- A. Matt Allen, teacher at Mt. Blue Campus, gave thanks to the board for the decision for universal masking. Glad to be back with students in the classroom and that kids are happy to be back also.
- B. Brenda Burnell, teacher at WG Mallett, also thanked the board for the masking decision, especially at her grade level where students are not eligible for vaccinations.

V. Report of the Chairperson - Carol Coles

- A. Two director resignations since the August 24, 2021 meeting
  - 1. Craig Stickney, Chesterville
  - 2. Jesse Sillanpaa, Industry
- B. [BCA: Code of Ethics](#)
  - Focus Item B
- C. [Committee Assignments](#) - Updates and vacancies
- D. A review of the importance of Committee Work

VI. Good news stories from Board / Administrators

- A. John Jones, director of special education, shared an update on staffing in special education - have consolidated two positions and filled six others with two more in process. This will leave two teaching positions open. They have established a new system of support for new and current staff. Students are adapting well to being back in school and routines are being established.
- B. Libby Kaut, board member from New Sharon, shared that she attended opening day and the excitement was infectious. Shared her thanks to the clerical staff supporting the schools and administration.
- C. Chris Elkington, superintendent, wanted to thank our drivers who are giving it their all working to get our students to school safely. Shared that the Western Maine Remote Academy has started classes this week. Thanked all of our

nursing staff and administrators who have been putting in long hours with contact tracing this past week and weekend.

- D. Jeff Brazee, director of technology, shared that the technology team issued over 1,300 laptops to students in grades 6-12 and close to 1,000 iPads to students in grades K-5 last week.
- E. Laura Columbia, director of curriculum, shared how well she thought opening day went.

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

- A. New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements
  - 1. We continue to interview for teachers, custodians, and other needed staff, but still have 40+ positions open.
- B. Strategic Planning Process Plan - Elkington
  - 1. Work with Mary Jane McCalmon
  - 2. Proposed [Strategic Planning Map](#)
  - 3. [Strategic planning proposed process](#)
  - 4. [Charge to the Strategic Planning Team](#)
  - 5. [Contract letter of understanding](#)
- C. Short-term (32-34 months) moving of RSU Central Office staff to leased space using ESSER 3 Funds
  - 1. Using approximately two percent of the ESSER 3 funds the superintendent reviewed how space would be freed up for several possible options.
- D. Update of Superintendent Evaluation policy work
  - 1. The Ed Policy Committee agreed to adjust the timeline. This will be brought to the board at the next meeting to vote on.

VIII. Admin Updates

- A. [Academy Hill School & G.D. Cushing](#) - Keith Acedo
  - 1. The front entrance to the school has been redone and is now handicap accessible.
  - 2. Question and discussion were heard on the decrease of discipline referrals, and how smaller class sizes may have contributed to that along with improved test scores.
- B. [Franklin County Adult Education](#) - Nancy Allen
  - 1. New logo for Maine Adult Education Association.
  - 2. They are excited to be in the new building.
  - 3. Our Adult Ed Program met all of the state benchmarks last year.
  - 4. Literacy Volunteers are back on-site working with adult learners.
- C. [Mt. Blue Middle School](#) - James Black
  - 1. Thanked Patty Flagg and Tab Mitchell for all of their additional work while a secretary is on leave.

2. Shared building updates, new staff members, and technology implementation.
3. A comment was heard about the importance of mentoring new staff.
4. Question and discussion were heard about the day treatment program at the middle school. Approximately five students are attending currently, with the hope of eight to 10 within the next few years.
5. Question regarding assessment scores at the middle school. Mr. Black will pull information together for distribution and sharing at a future meeting.

IX. Presentations

- A. None

X. Consent Agenda

- A. Minutes from [August 24, 2021](#)

- B. Committee Report Outs and Minutes

- Operations Committee - [September 7, 2021](#)
- Personnel & Finance - [September 7, 2021](#)
- Educational Policy - [September 7, 2021](#)
  - Adult education graduation requirements was added to future agenda items.
- Drop-Out Prevention - None

<i>Motion to approve the consent agenda</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	Motion: Wayne Kinney Seconded: Gwen Doak Motion: Passed
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XI. New Business

- A. Reopening Plan Update

1. A full update will happen at the next board meeting.
  - Contact Tracing
    - Is a very involved process.
    - Masking, spacing, and vaccinations are making a difference with the total number of students who could be quarantined.
  - Student Quarantining Instructional Expectations
    - The expectations in our handbook in regards to the support for students in quarantine were not read or made as clear as they could have been. We are looking at that as an admin team and

expect to send clarity regarding instructional expectations to staff and students/families by early next week.

- Other
  - Questions and discussion was heard about testing for those who are considered close contacts; how we count close contacts and if there is a difference between those who are close contacts and those who have to quarantine based on vaccination status.

B. Acceptance of the Cole Grant

- [Grant Summary](#)

<p><i>Motion to accept the \$7,000 grant from the Galen Cole Family Foundation</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith          Nays: 0          Abstained: 0          Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Doug Dunlap          Seconded: Lisa Laflin          Motion: Passed</p>
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No discussion was heard.

C. Approve New Hires

<p><i>Motion to approve the new hires as presented in the Superintendent's Report.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Avalon Amador, English Teacher, MBC</i></li> <li>● <i>Becky Barrows, Art Teacher, AHS, CBS, CCHS</i></li> <li>● <i>Tess Cote, Health/PE Teacher, MBMS</i></li> <li>● <i>Daniel Greaves, GT Teacher, MBMS</i></li> <li>● <i>Wendy Simpson, Librarian, MBMS</i></li> </ul>	<p>Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith          Nays: 0          Abstained: 0          Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)</p>	<p>Motion: Irv Faunce          Seconded: Gwen Doak          Motion: Passed</p>
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Superintendent Elkington shared that he is impressed by the number of Mt. Blue grads wanting to come back, work, and give back to the Mt. Blue community.

D. Approve Strategic Planning Proposal

<i>Motion to approve the Strategic Planning Process presented and to enter into a contract with Mary Jane McCalmon to facilitate the process.</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	Motion: Wayne Kinney Seconded: Debbie Smith Motion: Passed
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Ed Policy Chair Wayne Kinney shared that he was impressed by Mary Jane McCalmon's presentation at the committee level and is looking forward to working with her. Mary Jane McCalmon spoke about the need for a great deal of community involvement and sharing before creating a plan of action. How important it is to create the Mission, Vision and Guiding Principles before you do the goals and action steps. You need to know who you are and where you want to go, before you can plan for it!

E. Second reading of [RSU 9 Affirmative Action Plan](#)

<i>Motion to adopt the RSU 9 Affirmative Action Plan</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	Motion: Debbie Smith Seconded: Gloria McGraw Motion: Passed
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The Board is appreciative of all of the work Katie Duchesne put into the plan.

F. Second reading of [GCI: Professional Staff Development Opportunities](#)

<i>Motion to approve board policy GCI: Professional Staff Development Opportunities (second and final reading)</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	Motion: Irv Faunce Seconded: Gwen Doak Motion: Passed
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No further discussion was heard.

G. Moving RSU 9 Central Office staff to one space

<i>Motion to approve the moving of RSU 9 to one location within the Farmington area</i>	Yeas: Carol Coles, Gwen Doak, Doug Dunlap, Irv Faunce, Betsey Hyde, Judith	Motion: Lisa Laflin Seconded: Betsey Hyde Motion: Passed
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<i>through a leased space agreement for 32-34 months using ESSER 3 Funds.</i>	Kaut, J. Wayne Kinney, Lisa Laflin, Gloria McGraw, Josh Robbins, Debbie Smith Nays: 0 Abstained: 0 Vote: 11:0:0 (635:0:0)	
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Discussion was heard regarding who would be moving - Central Office, Business Office, Special Education Office, Operations and Maintenance Director, and Director of Technology. As well as the proposal for how the new space would be used. Questions: What is the process for the location approval? Superintendent will bring one location to the board for approval.

XII. Adjourn 8:34

<i>Motion to adjourn without objection</i>		Motion: Carol Coles
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Adjourned at 8:34pm

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS**

September 28, 2021 - 6:30pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

October 12, 2021 - 6:30pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Operations - October 5, 2021 - 5:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Personnel & Finance - October 5, 2021 - 6:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Educational Policy - October 5, 2021 - 7:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus