

**Millbury Public Schools
School Committee**

Regular Session
Meeting Minutes

OCT -3 AM 8:43
MILLBURY MASS

Date: August 5, 2020

Present: Mrs. Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson
Mr. Chris Wilbur, Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Julia Lagerholm, Member
Mr. Nick Lazzaro, Member
Mrs. Jessica Bristol, Member
Ms. Lizz Boutiette, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Ms. Kate Ryan, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Richard Bedard, Jr., School Business Manager
Mr. Gregory Myers, Superintendent of Schools

Location: Millbury Jr/Sr/ High School Auditorium

Time: 7:00pm

Mrs. Nietupski opened the meeting at 7:10 PM and led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Nietupski stated that Mrs. Bristol would be using zoom to attend the meeting. Mrs. Bristol acknowledged that she was present.

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lazzaro asked for a correction to the minutes (change typo "Mrs." to "Mr."). Mrs. Lagerholm made a motion to accept the minutes of July 22, 2020, seconded by Mr. Wilbur. Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES, Mrs. Lagerholm - YES, Mrs. Bristol - YES. All approved (5-0).

Mr. Lazzaro made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes of July 22, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Lagerholm. Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES, Mrs. Lagerholm - YES, Mrs. Bristol - YES. All approved (5-0).

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to accept the minutes of July 29, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Lagerholm. Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES, Mrs. Lagerholm - YES, Mrs. Bristol - YES. All approved (5-0).

Mr. Wilbur made a motion to accept the Executive Session minutes of July 29, 2020, seconded by Mrs. Lagerholm. Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES, Mrs. Lagerholm - YES, Mrs. Bristol - YES. All approved (5-0).

2. Report of the Administration

Mrs. Nietupski asked to take items on the agenda out of order so that the proposed plan for reopening schools could be heard last.

3. Budget

DESE Technology Grant

Ms. Boutiette informed the Committee that the District recently won a \$64,399 competitive technology grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The grant will be used to purchase Chromebooks, hotspots, and Chromebook cases for students.

5. Unfinished Business

a. Report of the Millbury Jr./Sr. High School Field Renovation Project

Mr. Myers showed the real-time progress of the project on the construction camera. He also stated that the Athletic Field Building Committee has awarded Green Acres Landscaping Alternate #1 for the synthetic field's brock infill at a cost of \$31,875. Mr. Myers stated that the project is currently under budget with a contingency fund of \$174,432. Mr. Bedard stated that outlines of the football and soccer fields are taking shape. He also stated that the athletic light poles have been wired.

b. Shaw School Project Update

Mr. Myers stated that the School Building Committee has completed the 60% construction document phase and are starting the 90% construction document phase. The Owner's Project Manager will begin the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for a school building project general contractor on August 12, 2020. The RFQ's are due on September 1, 2020.

Mr. Myers stated that the Shaw Building Committee will host an update and Public Forum on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at the Millbury Jr.Sr. High School auditorium.

2. Report of the Administration

a. Return to Learning Plan

Mr. Myers presented the Return to Learning Plan, which is required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Mr. Myers outlined the risks of transmission and illness in the school, despite aggressive safety precautions, but also identified risks associated with keeping students at home this fall, citing a recent communication from the American Academy of Pediatrics. In order to balance both of these risks, Mr. Myers recommended that using a hybrid model to return to school this fall would take both of these risk factors into consideration.

Among the safety precautions in the plan, Mr. Myers specifically listed:

- Masks required for all; with the exception of those with physical or medical conditions that prevent mask usage
- 6 ft of separation
- Heightened & continued cleaning routines
- Deep clean 2X week
- One way directionals
- Staggering classroom dismissals eliminate amount of students in hallways
- Bubblers will be discontinued for usage
- Bathrooms will have limited number of students

Mr. Myers stated that in order to keep up with the additional cleaning requirements, the district will likely need to hire additional custodial staff. Mr. Bedard stated that all overtime would have to be offered to current staff members if they are not interested in the over-time then we would seek an outside agency to deep clean. Mr. Myers reviewed protocols that will be used if a student or staff member exhibits symptoms of COVID:

- Student or staff would be accompanied to a comfort area while awaiting dismissal
- Contact tracing and procedures for close contacts
- Negative test results or 14 day quarantine to return to school

Mr. Myers stated that parents should keep students home if they have cold symptoms. He stated that the absentee rate may be high, but the Commissioner will provide flexibility for attendance and hours on learning.

Mr. Myers stated that a hybrid model would allow students to return to school safely with a combination of returning to school for in-person learning and remote learning from home.

- 50% student physical attendance
- Allows for 6 ft of physical distance in classrooms
- Reduces traffic in hallways
- Reduces the number of students on the bus

Mr. Myers stated the student population would be divided into four cohorts: Cohort A (A-K) would attend in-person at school on Mondays and Tuesdays and would be remote Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Cohort B (L-Z) would be remote on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and would attend in-person school on Thursdays and Fridays. Cohort C are students with complex/significant needs will attend in-person school on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and will attend a half-days on Wednesdays. Cohort D students whose families decide to keep them out of school will engage in 100% online instruction through a third party platform.

Mr. Myers stated that Cohort D students will be attending a third party platform and will not have Millbury teachers. He stated that if a family decided that they do not want to continue with this platform they will be able to return to the district's hybrid or fully remote model after six weeks. There is no cost associated with this platform.

Mr. Myers stated that the Commission changed the amount of school days that students must attend from 180 to 170. He stated that he would like the School Committee to consider delaying the start of classes to allow for additional preparations, including staff training and modifications to classrooms and common areas. Mr. Myers is recommending that teachers return to school on August 24, 2020 and classes for students to begin on September 8th. Mr. Myers stated that the training for teachers will be on the new protocols, professional development on remote learning, trauma-informed practices, and updated classroom configurations.

Mr. Myers reviewed a possible schedule for all students and teachers for the first week of school. He stated that Tuesday through Friday should be half days which would allow teachers to meet to discuss what they needed and the students needed that were not considered when the plan was created.

Mr. Myers discussed bus requirements and the addition of bus monitors to help students follow the protocols. Mr. Bedard stated that he has seen from the parent survey that 40% to 45% of parents will be driving their children to school.

Mr. Myer stated that all students at the Elmwood Street School and Shaw Elementary School (remote and in-person) will attend synchronous sessions starting with a Daily Morning Meeting; the end of the day will include daily closing activities for 15 -20 minutes by reading aloud, preview for tomorrow etc. He stated that they will work on privacy issues. He stated that remote learning students will work independently at home. However, students will be able to schedule appointments with their teachers for extra help or clarification of their workload. It was also stated that the junior and high school students will have a similar beginning and ending to their days.

A discussion took place regarding Cohort D students not having any relationship with Millbury teachers in Millbury and should be included in some way for part of their week. Mr. Myers stated that Cohort D students need check in times and touch basis time more often. He stated that some staff are at high risk and could possibly be the person that checks in with the students on a daily basis.

It was stated that clinicians must identify themselves to the parents and why they are calling. A question was asked if there are enough clinicians for all students dealing with social and emotional difficulties. Ms. Ryan stated that Shrewsbury Youth and Family Services are available for students. It was stated that there is a concern for the seniors that will need assistance with college plans.

Mr. Myers presented what a typical remote school day would look like:

- Students would engage in synchronous & asynchronous learning activities designed to allow independent work with support as needed
- Teachers will set expectations regarding assignments to help guide students and families. This work will be required
- Grades will count for school records and transcripts.
- Classroom teachers will provide support during the remote learning week as needed, with appropriate availability by e-mail or video.
- As appropriate students may also be supported by a variety of educators (special educators, teachers of English Language Learners, librarians, counselors, etc.

A discussion took place regarding special education students and covering IEP's.

Mrs. Nietupski asked what the metric was for shutting down schools, if all students are learning remotely will teachers teach from their classrooms, and can we shut down one school only if needed. Mr. Myers stated decisions must be made on scientific data. He stated that the Governor is in the process of determining a matrix in order to determine if a school needs to be shut down.

Mr. Bedard stated that there are areas of savings in the budget because of COVID and there are also expenses that the district has incurred. He stated that the district has spent \$67,000 so far on COVID 19 related expenses. The district is hoping the \$225 per student grant will help with these expenses. Mr. Bedard stated that it will cost an additional \$160,000 if a bus monitor is

assigned to each bus. Mr. Bedard stated that there will be savings in transportation as there is one day a week that transportation is not needed. There may be savings in athletics, clubs, student activities and substituting teaching. Mr. Bedard stated that the budget could support a hybrid model. Mr. Bedard stated that they are looking into how sick time should be used.

There was a discussion about a waiver for parents to sign that would accept the risk of sending their child to school and will not hold the district responsible if their child gets sick.

There was a discussion about next steps and reopening timelines.

Mrs. Nietupski asked for a vote to table the vote on the Return to Learning Plan to Wednesday, August 12, 2020. She stated that the State has allowed more time for districts to make this decision. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Lagerholm - NO, Mrs. Bristol - NO, Mrs. Nietupski - YES. (3-2). The motion passed.

6. New Business

7. Executive Session

The Committee considered moving into Executive Session in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, §21(A)3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Millbury Teachers' Association because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

A roll call vote was taken. Mrs. Lagerholm - YES, Mr. Lazzaro - YES, Mr. Wilbur - YES, Mrs. Bristol - YES, Mrs. Nietupski - YES. All in favor.

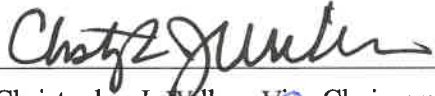
8. Future Topics

9. Next Meeting: August 12, 2020 Regular SC Meeting, 7:00PM

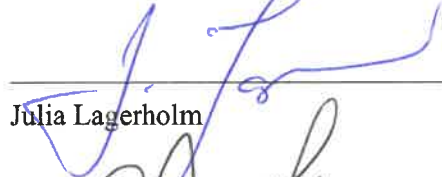
10. Adjourn - Mrs. Nietupski stated that the meeting will close after the Executive Session without discussing further business.

Approved:

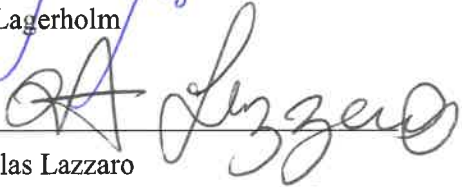
Jennifer B. Nietupski, Chairperson



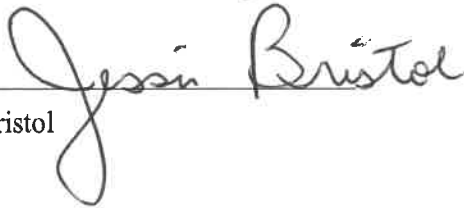
Christopher J. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson



Julia Lagerholm



Nicholas Lazzaro



Jessica Bristol