

## Newton Community School Board of Education

Regular Board Meeting

E. J. H. Beard Administration Center – East Conference Room

ZOOM 826 4099 9369

August 17, 2020 – 6:30 PM

### MINUTES

**Call to Order** – President Robyn Friedman convened the board to order at 6:33 PM.

**Roll Call** – Christine Dawson, Recording Secretary

**Present:** Donna Cook (via Zoom), Robyn Friedman, Cody Muhs (via Zoom), Travis Padget, Graham Sullivan (via Zoom), Mark Thayer, Tom Messinger (via Zoom), Tim Bloom, and Christine Dawson (via Zoom) **Present via Zoom** (50 including): Kayla Astelle, Jolene Comer, Cristy Croson, Risa Ergenbright, Sam Griffith, Carole Hall, Tammy Heriford, Brenda Hodnett, Nicki Hornbaker, Laurie Kramer, Kay Law, Trisca Mick, Bret Miller, Michelle Modlin, Ann Nelson, Jen Norvell, Cheryl O’Roake, Lisa Pageler, Della Payton, Nicole Russell, Laura Selover, Lucinda Sinclair, Jody Stiles, Jack Suttek, Karen Trout, Susan Wendel, Tara Zehr, KCOB, and Chris Braunschweig (Newton Daily News) **Absent:** Josh Cantu

**Iowa Code – Chapter 21 (Open Meetings Law)** – *Chapter 21 states electronic meetings can be held only if meeting in person is impossible or impractical. The August 17, 2020 board meeting was held electronically via Zoom due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic, and the need to limit audience numbers (to <10) and to maintain 6’ social distancing recommendations.*

**Communications** – Tom Messinger, Superintendent

**Letter of Financial Support – Beck’s Hybrids**

Superintendent Tom Messinger read a letter of financial support from Beck’s Hybrids, and thanked them for their generous gift of \$1,750.00 to the Newton Community Schools to be applied toward delinquent student cafeteria accounts.

**Purpose Statements** – Robyn Friedman, President

The mission, vision, district goals (2019 – 2020), collective commitments, and board commitments were reviewed.

**Consent Agenda** – Robyn Friedman, President – **ACTION #11058**

Cook moved, Muhs seconded to unanimously approve the Consent Agenda. Ayes: All Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Human Resource Update** – Laura Selover, Director of Human Resources

Bret Miller, Director of Teaching & Learning presented the Human Resources Update

**Licensed Personnel** – **ACTION #11059**

**Nicky Lampe** – (contract) – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Volleyball Coach (BMS) – beginning of 2020 – 2021 school year

**Brad Kahler** – (sponsor) – NHS Tickets & Bookkeeping (Spring) – beginning of 2020 – 2021 school year

**Emily Sutherland** – (one year contract) – 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher (WW) – beginning of 2020 – 2021 school year

**Eric VanderVelden** – (sponsor) – NHS Tickets & Bookkeeping (Fall) – beginning of 2020 – 2021 school year

Muhs moved, Sullivan seconded to approve the Human Resources Update – Licensed Personnel Report. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Classified Personnel** – **ACTION #11060**

**Rachel Abel** – (resignation) – Food Service (BMS) – effective July 10, 2020

**Bob Cass** – (resignation) – Bus Driver (Transportation) – effective July 27, 2020

**Steve Owens** – (resignation) – Bus Driver (Transportation) – effective August 4, 2020

**Dana Simbro** – (resignation) – Food Service (NHS) – effective August 4, 2020

Cook moved, Muhs seconded to approve the Human Resources Update – Classified Personnel Report. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Open Forum** – Robyn Friedman, President

None

**Superintendent’s Report** – Tom Messinger, Superintendent

**August 10, 2020 – Storm Update**

Superintendent Tom Messinger, along with Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services and Jack Suttek, Maintenance Supervisor gave an update on the status of district facilities and any damages and repairs to be completed prior to the beginning of the school year. Three school buildings (Aurora Heights, Emerson Hough, and Newton High School) sustained roof damage, and water leakage to the inside. The technology building was also affected by water leakage to the inside. The gas at the high school had to be shut off, and crews will be working to restore services. The roof project (already in progress) at the high school will be delayed by at least a week, and longer to re-install the roof top units. Suttek estimated that 40 – 50 trees were lost district-wide due to the high winds. Bloom has been working with insurance adjustors on the storm damages. Suttek commended the maintenance crew for mitigating any further damages.

**Return to Learn Plan – Google Site Update**

Dr. Jessica Ferguson, Director of Special Education gave an update on the Return to Learn Google Site. Dr. Ferguson highlighted recent enhancements to the site, including: chart explaining different learning model options; remote learning schedules; detailed Health & Safety Plan; Athletics/Activities tab; and addition of resources on the Parent & Family support tab. Families are encouraged to revisit the site frequently for updates.

**Return to Learn Plan – Mask/Face Covering Exemption**

Dr. Jessica Ferguson, Director of Special Education emphasized the district’s mask/face covering requirement upon return to school this year. She shared a document for requesting exemption from the mask/face covering requirement. The form will be available on the Return to Learn Google Site under the Health and Safety tab. An exemption may be submitted to the district office (EJH Beard Administration Center, 1302 First Avenue West), and must be for religious or medical reasons, and signed and notarized.

**Return to Learn Plan – Remote Mondays**

Bret Miller, Director of Teaching and Learning referenced the Return to Learn Google Site and available information on the Remote Learning tab in regards to Monday Remote Learning Schedules for all students, whether in an onsite/hybrid or fully remote learning option. He reviewed the sample Monday Remote Learning Schedules for all students at the different grade levels – elementary, middle and high school. Miller explained the significance of the **red** (live check in and closing/launch), **white** (teacher officer hours), and **gray** (use of Learning Management Systems, activities/assignments/tasks) shaded areas on the schedules.

**Return to Learn Plan – Fully Remote Learners**

Bret Miller, Director of Teaching and Learning referenced the Return to Learn Google Site and available information on the Remote Learning tab in regards to Fully Remote Learning Schedules, for families who have selected the fully remote learning option. He reviewed the sample Remote Learning Schedules at the different grade levels – elementary, middle and high school for Tuesdays – Fridays.

**Return to Learn Plan – Criteria for Closures**

Superintendent Tom Messenger shared two documents which will be posted on the Return to Learn Google Site (1) *Return to Learn: Reopening Iowa's Schools Safely and Responsibly* and (2) *Return to Learn – Evaluating Sick Students and Staff*. He explained the application process the district must go through should a school building need closed, or the district shut down. The criteria for such a request includes: student absenteeism, and rate of positive COVID-19 tests in county. Districts are working with the Iowa Department of Education to factor staff absenteeism into the criteria as well. There was a brief discussion on student exposure, staff, quarantine periods, and possible classroom shutdowns. The district continues to consult with the Jasper County Department of Public Health.

**Learning, Leadership, and District Business – Tom Messenger, Superintendent and Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services**

**Consider Amendment to the July 13, 2020 Board Adopted 2020 – 2021 School Calendar – ACTION #11061**

Superintendent Tom Messenger and Laura Selover, Director of Human Resources presented an amended 2020 – 2021 school calendar for board approval. Proposed amendments to the calendar include: **New Teacher Academy** rescheduled to August 26 – 28, 2020; **Teacher Professional Development, Collaboration & Work Days** August 31 – September 4, 2020; **School Year Begins for Students** September 8, 2020 (*approved at August 14, 2020 Emergency Board Meeting*); **Preschool Start Date** September 15, 2020; **Last Day of School** (students) June 4, 2020; **End of School Year** (teachers) June 10, 2020. There was discussion regarding the four days of Teacher Work Days scheduled at the end of the school year (June 7 – 10, 2020), and the possibility of taking two days (June 9 & 10) and exchanging them for no school days. This would put the end of the school year for teachers at June 8, 2020. District Administration will work with the NCEA, and the calendar (teacher hours) will be presented to the board for final approval at the August 24, 2020 meeting. Muhs moved, Padget seconded to Approve the Amendment to the July 13, 2020 Board Adopted 2020 – 2021 School Calendar. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Consider Approval of Employee Handbook for the 2020 – 2021 School Year – ACTION #11062**

Laura Selover, Director of Human Resources presented for approval an updated Employee Handbook for the 2020 – 2021 School Year. She shared that many of the edits had to do with COVID-19, Board Policy Updates, and online learning platforms. Muhs moved, Sullivan seconded to approve the Employee Handbook for the 2020 – 2021 school year. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Consider Approval of Resolution Authorizing Superintendent to Furlough Employees – ACTION #11063**

Superintendent Tom Messenger shared that Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services and Laura Selover, Director of Human Resources have been in contact with the district's legal counsel regarding employee furloughs, as needed. Superintendent Messenger acknowledged the impact on employee's income and livelihoods. Due to the COVID-19 Health Pandemic and the July 13, 2020 calendar amendment for the 2020 – 2021 school year designating remote learning Mondays, there are certain employee groups where support would not be necessary on those days. The employee groups include: Bus Drivers, Crossing Guards, Educational Associates, Food Service, and Part-Time Secretaries. There was some discussion about furloughed employees and eligibility to apply for partial unemployment. Those employees affected by furlough will maintain existing health and dental insurance benefits. There was some discussion regarding Educational Associates being included in this employee group. Padget moved, Cook seconded to approve a Resolution Authorizing the Superintendent to Furlough Employees. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Thayer Nays: Sullivan Absent: Cantu

**Consider Installation Cost of Replacement Roof Top Unit Equipment for the Newton High School from Warnick & Reeves Mechanical in the amount of \$140,868 to be financed with SAVE Funds – ACTION #11064**

Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services and Jack Sutteck, Maintenance Supervisor, presented for approval installation costs for replacement roof top unit equipment for the Newton High School, with a recommended award to bidder Warnick & Reeves Mechanical in the amount of \$140,868. Padget moved, Cook seconded to Approve the Installation Cost of Replacement Roof Top Unit Equipment for Newton High School from Warnick & Reeves Mechanical in the amount of \$140,868 to be financed with SAVE Funds. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Consider Purchase of Control System for the Replacement Roof Top Unit Equipment for Newton High School from Woodman Controls in the amount of \$34,505 to be financed with SAVE Funds – ACTION #11065**

Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services and Jack Sutteck, Maintenance Supervisor, presented for approval the purchase of a control system for the replacement roof top unit equipment for the Newton High School, with a recommended award to bidder Woodman Controls in the amount of \$34,505. Muhs moved, Padget seconded to Approve the Purchase of a Control System for the Replacement Roof Top Unit, Equipment for Newton High School from Woodman Controls in the amount of \$34,505 to be financed with SAVE Funds. Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Board Policy Review – First Reading: IASB Sample Policy Updates (100, 300 & 400 Series) – ACTION #11066**

Bloom reviewed the IASB Policy Primer and quarterly policy updates including: Changes to Policy Language, Administrative Changes to Policy, and Administrative Changes to Notes and/or Legal References Only for the 100, 300 & 400 Series. Cook moved, Muhs seconded to approve the First Reading of IASB Sample Policy Updates (100, 300 & 400 Series). Ayes: Cook, Friedman, Muhs, Padget, Sullivan, Thayer Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**Business Service Report – Tim Bloom, Director of Business Services**

**Approval of Bills – ACTION #11067**

Cook moved, Muhs seconded to unanimously approve the bills. Ayes: All Nays: None Absent: Cantu

**New Business – Old Business – Tim Bloom, Board Secretary**

**Future Meeting Dates:** August 24, 2020 – 5:30 PM – Board Work Session – TOPIC: District Goals (2020 – 2021) (EJH Beard Admin Center/ZOOM); August 24, 2020 – 6:30 PM – Regular Board Meeting (EJH Beard Admin Center/ZOOM); August 31, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Open Enrollment Meeting (via ZOOM); September 21, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Board Policy Review Meeting (via ZOOM);

**Upcoming Events:** Back to School: August 17 – 18, 2020 – Capturing Kids' Hearts Virtual Training; August 26 – 28, 2020 – New Teacher Academy; August 26, 2020 – 7:30 AM – Breakfast (EJH Beard Admin Center); August 31 – September 4, 2020 – Teacher Professional Development, Collaboration, and Work Days; Back to School Days – TBD; September 8, 2020 – First Day of School; September 15, 2020 – First Day of Preschool; NSBA Center for Safe Schools – School Safety Virtual Summit – September 16 – 17, 2020; 75<sup>th</sup> IASB Annual (All Digital) Convention & Trade Show (November 18 – 19, 2020)

*Christine Dawson will send out calendar invites for any Back to School events normally attended by Board Members.*

**Consider Open Forum Topics or Future Agenda Items**

None

**Board Highlights**

Board President Robyn Friedman expressed that the board highlights have been well received. This meetings highlights: Return to Learn Plan; 2020 – 2021 School Year – Calendar Amendment; Furlough Resolution

**Adjourn – ACTION #11068**

Padget moved, Muhs seconded to unanimously adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Ayes: All Nays: None

Minutes Mailed \_\_\_\_\_ (President)  
Approved by Action No. \_\_\_\_\_, 2020  
\_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary)