

**New Hartford Board of Education
Virtual Special Meeting - August 12, 2020
MPR Room - Antolini School @ 6:00 pm**

Present: Chairman Tim Goff, Members: Tom Buzzi, Karl Hermonat, Tim Klepps, Penny Miller, Tony Persechino, Heather Tomala, Kelly O'Dell Longhi (virtually),

Others present: Supt. of Schools Brian Murphy, Linda Fitzgerald, Paul Carmen.

Absent: Mary Stempien

There were up to 100 attending this virtual meeting.

Chairman Goff opened the meeting at 6:09 pm. He stated that this is a special meeting and the only public comments were those emailed to him either before or during this meeting.

The board joined together in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Murphy reviewed the 2020-2021 New Hartford's reopening plan. The plan can be found on the school's website. Jennifer Kertanis from the Farmington Valley Health District met with the reopening school committee today at their meeting. New Hartford Public Schools will reopen with all the students and staff present. Surveys have been sent out to the parents. The last two meetings of the Reopening Committee have been open to the public and can be found on the school website under sub-committee meetings.

All students will be required to wear masks. Pre-k students are exempt as well as medical exemptions.

New desks and student dividers have been purchased. The dividers are for the tables when there is a group discussion. The new desks will ensure that all desks are 5-6 feet apart. There will be arrows in the hallway. Posters on proper sanitizing will be placed in the hallways, bathrooms and classrooms.

Information will be sent to parents regarding distance learning. The teachers and administrators did a fantastic job this spring when they transitioned to distance learning.

Thirty students will be taking part in distance learning this fall. Four students will be home-schooled. These 4 students will be disassociated from New Hartford Public Schools and will not receive any materials or resources. Finally, four students are undecided as to what they will do.

Ms. Tomala said that some parents had not received the survey – herself included. Mr. Murphy will resend it out. He stated that the school principals have the link and that parents can contact them for it.

This virtual meeting maxed out at 100 people. The meeting will be recorded and put on-line.

Each school will have an isolation room for students that have COVID symptoms. The school nurse will evaluate the student and if necessary, call the parent to come pick them up.

Visitors and volunteers - will not be allowed following the recommendation of the state. No community organizations will not be allowed to use the school after school. Ed Advance is the only exception.

Students will go out for recess and stay in their cohort groups. Lunch will be served in each classroom. There will be less items on the food menu.

Tents have been purchased – 3 for Antolini and 2 each for Bakerville and New Hartford Elementary – for outside classes. The gazebo is still on track to be completed at Antolini School. Masks do not need to be worn outside.

Music and physical education classes will be held outside as weather permits.

It is being recommended that parents drive their students to school. Pick-up and drop-off times are being adjusted to accommodate this increase.

There will be 25-30 students on the buses and they will have assigned seats. Masks will be required on all buses for all students and bus driver.

Sharing of materials is going to be limited. Each student will have their own chrome book.

During hot days there may be early dismissal.

Dattco will clean the buses after each time. Between runs from regional to our schools there will be a deep clean. It is not possible to put sanitizers on the buses.

As long as there are less than 10 confirmed positive cases in the town the schools can go to full reopening.

Ms. O'Dell asked about installing air conditioners in the classrooms. Mr. Murphy responded it would be expensive to purchase the air conditioner, retrofit the windows plus install electrical outlets. When asked if it was possible for either the teachers to purchase their own air conditioners or a parent, he said it wasn't possible.

Cameras will be installed in each classroom so those students that are taking part in distance learning will be included. It will be a stationary camera for the most of the day.

During group time - they cameras may not be on. There will be an opportunity for input from the class. Those from home will be able to take part in what is happening in the classroom. The majority of the time the camera will be facing towards the front of the classroom.

Most of the specials will be part of live instruction. Spanish will be live streamed with the class. Some art classes will be live streamed. Physical ed and music will be not live streamed. There will be proper social distancing.

Chairman Goff went through the questions submitted by the board. That packet is included with these minutes. Some questions and answers can also be found on the school website under Frequently Asked Questions.

Motion: by Buzzi that before the Superintendent switch plans that a special board meeting be called to inform the board as to why this is happening.

Second by Miller.

Discussion followed and the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. Persechino stepped out at 8:02 pm and returned at 8:04 pm

Mr. Murphy was asked why wasn't the hybrid version considered by New Hartford when Region 7 is doing this. He replied that with our class sizes we can properly socially distanced where the middle and high schools have a harder time doing this.

The COVID rooms will be in close proximity to the nurse.
Several questions were sent to Chairman Goff and they are filed with these minutes. The responses to those questions can be heard on the recording filed with these minutes.

School calendar

Motion: by Miller to approve the New Hartford Public Schools for 2020-2021 with school starting on August 31, 2020. Second by Persechino.

Discussion followed. When asked if we have to shut down for 2-3 days would those be tacked onto the end of the school year. Mr. Murphy said no. The first 3 days of school will be early dismissals. If we have any snow days Mr. Murphy hopes that we can do distance learning on those days.

Unanimous

Ms. O'Dell reviewed policy 3516.1 - COVID-19 Policy Plan/2020-2021

Mr. Goff left the room at 8:42 pm and returned at 8:44 pm

Mr. Goff said that the question had come up about what our policy is regarding room parents, visitors or volunteers. Mr. Murphy said that volunteers and room parents are important to our schools. As of now, no volunteers or room parents will be allowed. We know this is short-term. There will be some circumstances where parents need to meet with the teachers for PPTs. No volunteers will be allowed into our buildings during this COVID crises.

Mr. Goff asked if the Appendixes in this policy - the health assessments - will these be sent to our staff, parents and visitors? Mr. Murphy said the school secretaries will have these forms for the visitors to complete.

Mr. Goff asked if this has been vetted by our attorney, policy subcommittee and has the reopening committee looked it. Mr. Murphy said it has been vetted by our attorney and policy subcommittee. The reopening committee has not looked at this. Our attorney recommended making these temporary changes to our policy.

Motion by Miller to adjourn at 9:12 pm, second by Buzzi.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller
Secretary to the Board of Education

Attachments:
BOE comments before the meeting
Comments during the BOE meeting
Nora Murphy letter