

Richmond Community Schools

35276 Division * Richmond, Michigan 48062 * (586) 727-3565 * www.richmond.k12.mi.us

Margaret Teltow, President
Jessica Sexton, Vice President
Kristine Furtaw, Secretary
Kyle Simmons, Treasurer
Sandra Fortuna, Trustee
Angela Pacitto, Trustee
Sherri Zube, Trustee

Brian J. Walmsley, Ed.S.
Superintendent

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

7:00PM, NOVEMBER 23, 2020 VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM MEETING

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated in Agenda Item 8.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by M. Teltow at 7:02pm

M. Teltow announced K. Furtaw's absence, with notice. A. Pacitto will serve as the Board Secretary tonight. M. Teltow announced that the election results still have not been certified, so that is why we have S. Fortuna present for this meeting.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Education recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. MISSION STATEMENT

Angela Pacitto, Board Member, read the District's Mission Statement, "*At Richmond Community Schools, we provide a quality education that empowers students to be successful in a global community.*"

4. ROLL CALL

Present: M. Teltow, J. Sexton, K. Simmons, S. Fortuna, S. Zube, A. Pacitto

Absent with Notice: K. Furtaw

Quorum: 6-0

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion for Approval of Agenda and the addition of item 11E: Approval of the Letter of Agreement

Motioned by S. Fortuna; supported by J. Sexton

Ayes: 6-0

Nays: 0

Motion carries: 6-0

Non-Discrimination Statement

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6. BOND UPDATE

Gerry McClelland from Auch Construction provided an update on projects.

A. Elementary Bond Project

- Foundation and underground utility work is complete
- Structural block is complete on the additions
- Structural steel substantially complete on the south end. They are moving to the north end; projected to be completed by the end of next week
- Brickwork is continuing
- Taking advantage of evening work to get some electrical and mechanical items in place to lessen the load on next summer's work
- Condensing for air conditioners to get this work done also

B. Richmond High School and Sitework Bid

- Bids for both the High School and Middle School were received on November 17th
- 31 contracts that will be awarded for the High School; approximately 11 million in trade work expected for site building, canopies and renovations
- We received 115 bids for work in those 31 categories

C. Richmond Middle School and Sitework Bid

- There will be 30 contracts that we will be receiving approval on
- We received 105 bids for the 30 contracts
- Same process as High School, but the contracts, permits, etc. will be separate

D. District-wide Fire Alarm System Bid

- We received proposals for the fire alarm system on 11/10
- We will need to have the same fire alarm system for all buildings to operate the same
- We put the proposal ahead of our electrical bids; no Board actions will be required for this; The work has been assigned to the electrical contractor

E. Elementary Sitework Bid

- We are bidding out the parking lot at Lee Elementary
- Bids will come in on December 2nd
- Auch is anticipating 12-15 bids for the 4 categories that will be included; These should be validated before the Board meeting and will be coming next month
- Auch will be reviewing/validating bids and also confirming that they have complete scope and that the low bidders are able to complete the work
- Auch identified a name that they aren't and the District isn't familiar with; the company is being validated as well

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B. Walmsley's updates

- Mr. Walmsley provided feedback to the Board regarding the itemized list of all the contracts that Gerry referenced is in the Board packet that Board members received.
- At the December 14th Board meeting, the Board will be asked to approval about 20 million dollars in contracts.
- They have gone through each bid through the interview process
- Reminded the Board that when we bid out the Elementary, Middle and High School projects, we added air conditioning. There is a significant part of the budget that is part of the air conditioning. He added that we believe the District will still be in very good shape.
- All three buildings should be air conditioned when we open our doors next fall

Gerry McClelland provided additional feedback in response to K. Simmons's question regarding the extended parking lot at Lee and M. Teltow's question regarding an anticipated finish date.

- Extended parking lot at Lee is completely parking now
- Each project will have different completion dates based on certain components. It's anticipated that all of the work for occupying the school will be done by the fall. Gym addition at High School is not going to be complete with the opening of school, it will be complete around winter.

B. Walmsley added that some of the contractors at the Elementary School have been working during evenings to try moving things ahead. Auch and the District team have begun planning for what that would look like for the Middle School and High School. For the main office and the Board Office, they believe we have a plan for work to be done around Spring Break to allow more time for the main project during the summer.

M. Teltow asked for clarification regarding us telling the electrical company that was bidding, who they were going to use for the fire alarm system ahead of time and whether or not this is a common practice.

G. McClelland confirmed that this is a common practice when you have district-wide work occurring. The only difference is that it is typically done a little sooner. It is not out of the norm to want consistency across the board. There is much work that the electrician needs to do to make the electrical system work. We'll want that to be under one contract.

7. PRESENTATION

A. *Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan (Section 98a)* for the 2020-21 School Year (Update)

1. Student and Parent Survey

B. Walmsley provided an update regarding the Student and Parent Survey:

- Student and parents survey for in-person and virtual learning
 - Surveys for students were sent to their school email addresses

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- Some of the comments received
 - MS in-person from students
 - Concerns with mask breaks, # of students elected for in-person; some felt it was crowded
 - MS virtual from students
 - Challenges with students seeing the same things as in-person students such as lab experiments
 - Technical issues (login and connections to Schoology); amount of printing that students have to do from home
 - Home concerns with students not being able to concentrate because of being a virtual student
 - HS in-person from students
 - Concerns regarding the amount of time they have to wait outside the school until the doors open at 7:30
 - Some felt temperature readings are useless
 - Classmates are not wearing masks, teachers have to constantly remind students
 - Perception of inconsistencies with staff reinforcing the requirement of wearing masks in classes
 - HS virtual from students
 - Some felt they didn't have as much attention received, versus in-person students.
 - Some students are trying to figure out ways to streamline our technology.
 - Some suggested to use TEAMS rather than Schoology
 - Students are missing out on some for the announcements
 - Parent responses in-person
 - Requiring students to wear masks (split: some thought students need to wear them, some felt usage of masks violates constitutional rights...)
 - Length of time students are in front of a computer
 - Make up work for virtual students who are absent
 - More individualized time with teachers of their students
 - Connection issues
 - School communications
 - Response time for virtual students

M. Teltow inquired about our plan to correct things, like people not wearing masks as they are supposed to, virtual students receiving the same materials as in-person students, etc. She would like to know if this has improved, what we doing and what our plan is to respond to the survey. M. Teltow would like to ensure that we have a plan to address concerns for when we go back to in-person instruction.

B. Walmsley's feedback

- Principals have been trying to accommodate at trying to meet the needs of all kids.

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- By the January meeting we will have a plan for how we are addressing concerns addressed in the survey
- There will be a follow up survey to both, parents and students right after the Holidays

2. Review of Weekly 2-way Interaction Rates

B. Walmsley provided an update regarding the District's 2-way communications.

- As long as there are two present codes, they can be counted as a 2-way communication
 - Week of 10/19: 99.42% Average
 - Week of 10/26: 99.04% Average
 - Week of 11/2: 99.42 Average
 - Week of 11/9: 99.1 Average
- December's activities will be reporting on 11/16, 11/23, 11/30 and 12/7
- Expecting averages to be lower during the week before Thanksgiving

M. Teltow asked for clarification regarding the two-way communication to confirm that it is only for virtual students. She also inquired regarding why the numbers would be lower, if two-way communication is only for virtual students. What is our obligation for students, even if they are unable to login?

M. Walmsley provided additional feedback:

- We may have families who were unable to make childcare arrangements
- Some may have had technology problems
- We were distributing hotspots and have gone through all of our hotspots
- We should have all of our hotspots in soon; we have about 15 families to issue hotspots to
- Two-way communication starts with the classroom teacher; if the teachers aren't getting anywhere, the office or principals follow up
- We have three families in the District that T-mobile isn't working in their service areas; we are trying to figure out other options for those families

S. Zube inquired as to why teachers, rather than the office staff are doing the two-way communication. B. Walmsley clarified our current process. Office staff still make the efforts if there is an absence in the system.

3. Instructional Delivery Discussion

Recent challenges

- Many staff have been out from being in quarantine
- 3 staff members are currently in quarantine and will not return when we return from Thanksgiving break

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Discussed recent Executive Order suspending in-person instruction for K-12; Wednesday, November 18th-December 8th

Recommendations to the Board: Extend Virtual Learning through Friday, January 8th. Students would return on January 11th.

Concerns

- 11/26: Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve and Christmas
- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
- Opportunities for families to gather in the next couple weeks
- We are currently at an approximate 18% positivity rate in Macomb County as of today
- Concerns regarding staff who will be in quarantine, which will result in shortage of staff to cover classrooms
- There are staff who are extremely concerned about taking precautionary measures. They are concerned about their own safety and health and also the health of their families
- Risk of seeing more positive cases as a resulting of gatherings for Thanksgiving and Christmas

M. Teltow: Would like to hear from the Administrators about virtual instruction is going so far at the schools over the last week.

A. Kastl

- 1:1 conversations with teachers have been positive
- Teachers are impressed with the number of students showing up
- Students are logging in and engaged; attendance has been good
- Not many parent issues; minimal concerns from students and parents
- We had hotspot issues at first, but these have been handled

S. Fortuna inquired about whether or not students are still able to talk to social workers and counselors.

A. Kastl provided feedback in response to S. Fortuna's inquiry.

- Social workers and counselors are reaching out to students who have known concerns.
- Social workers and counselors have been involved in helping to provide support to other students identified as well.

M. Teltow asked a question regarding the 2nd ½ of the day where we talk additional and targeted instruction/support. How is it determined what students are getting that instruction?

A. Kastl provided feedback in response to M. Teltow's questions.

- A document was sent out to High School staff asking them to identify between 3-5 students they felt were high risk or needed some extensive instruction. They were asked to return those to them in the office so that Ms. Borwick and he could follow up.

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- After 3 weeks the teachers will re-evaluate where students are. Hopefully, there will be additional students identified after the 3 weeks.

K. Bartels provided an update for the Middle School

- Last week there was a general meeting with the teachers (each grade level)
- There were rumors regarding us being done after 11/25
- Teachers have formed strategic groups by splitting their classes into 2 groups.
 - One group will meet Monday & Wednesdays (blue group) during their hours with their teachers and the other group would meet on Tuesday and Thursday (white group) with their teachers
 - Friday is open office hours from noon-3pm for anyone to get help. Every group has something to do for the afternoon.
 - We are attacking our struggling learners and those who need additional help, but we are also trying to elevate our high achievers
 - Deeper classroom discussions to allow students to work on items
 - Response for participation has been remarkable
 - Robocalls have been less and less for students who are absent; If a student is marked absent, a Robocall goes out to the parent
 - If a student misses for three straight days, the teacher is reaching out to the parent; if within the 24 hours they can't make the communication, it's turned over to Anthony (Dean of Students) or K. Bartels and they call the parent.
 - Things are going pretty good
 - Social Work and Speech have schedules as well

M. Teltow asked for clarification regarding the schedule. K. Bartels provided additional feedback.

D. Kochan provided an update for the Elementary School

- Technology was a challenge initially; kindergartners did not have laptops before so the devices were new to them; we've worked through some of the challenges
- He did classroom observations during quarantine; he and Ms. Mangune also visited classrooms to see how things were going.
- Day 3 of virtual learning went very smooth
- Parent concerns were mostly that they aren't able to look at Schoology
- Every teacher has small groups to help students who need additional help with homework or assignments
- Special Education staff are supporting the students
- Things are going relatively smooth with 100% virtual

J. Sexton asked if there is something easier to help elementary student get back and forth to classes for their specials.

D. Kochan provided feedback that they haven't received a lot feedback regarding this, but he'll reach out to the specials teachers tomorrow to see if they've identified any students who are having challenges.

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S. Fortuna inquired regarding whether or not classes are recorded so that students may access the recordings if they are absent.

- Elementary School: At the Elementary, they do not record. Students/parents can reach out to the teacher to get what was missed.
- High School: Encourage teachers to record but it isn't required. Some teachers record and some don't
- Middle School: Not that K. Bartels is aware of

B. Walmsley clarified that we did not require recording in our contract that was signed. Parents can call teachers if information is needed. He provided feedback regarding classroom disruptions such as parents and background noises; people walking by the screen causing distractions. He thinks there is some caution regarding this.

Addition discussions regarding what Mr. Walmsley's talked about regarding staying virtual.

A. Pacitto and J. Sexton had questions regarding current teachers and staff who are out. Beyond teachers are will low on support staff?

B. Walmsley provided an update:

- We were low when we were in-person with *Special Ed para-pros* because we had some who were in quarantine
- *Special Ed and Title I para-pros* have been assigned a scheduled that they are providing services virtually
- We were tight in-person because of staff being quarantined
- Bus drivers if we have quarantines, we are using Deb Dobbs, our Transportation Director to assist, if she is not available to drive we are shutting down a run. We have one substitute bus driver in training
- Lunch/Food Services: Opening at the Middle School; we are still short in these areas
- Currently while we are in virtual bus drivers are helping to distribute meals in the community
- Childcare we moved to help out in Food Services
- Pre-School and Pre-school aides are doing this virtual; using Zoom because students don't have email accounts
- IT is still here
- We are staffed currently, but majority of the days we are short
- If we had 5 teachers out, we would not have enough staff for instruction

Board discussed Mr. Walmsley's recommendation for students to return and pros/cons of other alternatives.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT** on *Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan*

1. **Lisa Barrett** (two questions):

1. As a parent, how does she know if her child needs special help and if they don't need extra help, do they have to attend the afternoon sessions.

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K. Bartels's response

Afternoon sessions are for everyone. Yes, you have to attend. It isn't just for struggling learner. It is enrichment for something you did earlier to get a deeper knowledge; it's a deeper discussion from the lesson that was earlier also. Teachers will identify students who need extra help and will provide the support to students. Title I aide are also working with teachers and students.

All students are signed in groups, and they are going to sign-in two to three times per week. This is when the extra help will occur. Parents can also login to PowerSchool to see updates as well.

2. 2) If we do virtual until January, will teachers have the option to do it at home virtually?

2. Shelby Major

1. She has 5 kids doing virtual school. She doesn't have a computer for her child. It's also difficult to get a 3-year old to sit in front of a computer. She also prepaid for preschool tuition and would like to know if there are any plans for refunds. It isn't working out very well right now for her preschooler.

Walmsley's response:

We have been trying to get enough laptops for preschool. Of all of the laptops purchased, we have taken every usable laptop and redistributed to K1-2. Preschool, we have looked at options. We cannot put filter systems on tablets. We are required by law to have the filter systems on devices to protect students from internet issues. We are trying to pull whatever laptops we have left for those families that do not have one, them to get them new laptops.

We are trying to prorate preschool for the time that they didn't get for instruction that they paid for. This hasn't been finalized yet but will be soon. Mr. Walmsley or Ms. Napier (Mangune) is going to follow up regarding the laptop concern.

3. Amanda Holsing (two questions and one comment)

1. Could there be an optional period during the day or the end time for students to talk with their friends?
2. Is there a way to just record the teacher screen so you don't see the kids?

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3. She made short cuts of the URLs for her child's classes so that her daughter doesn't have to try to go to the different classes. She made a video for a friend of how she did this, so she could send it to someone also.

Mr. Kochan's response

For optional friend time, we have some teachers who are already incorporating this. He will share this with the staff tomorrow.

There are communications with specials teachers to make the process easier for student to move from class to class virtually.

4. Sarah Barsey (2 kids ages 6 and 8)

1. She is thankful for teachers who have gone out of their way to make the best of this.
2. Her 8-year old gets a lot of help and resources. No matter what, he isn't learning at home at all. It's a struggle every day. Her 8-year old is having meltdowns, breaking stuff and not handling this. She wants to know if there is a way to make this better.

Mr. Kochan will reach out to the family regarding things we can do to address the parent's concerns.

5. Janice O'Neal

1. Teachers are doing a great job making these tough decisions.
2. She has a hotspot that will be expiring in about a week. What does she need to do for the hotspot to be resent or will she get the same hotspot back?

B. Walmsley's response

Hotspots shouldn't expire, so you would keep the hotspot that was issued to you if we go virtual. Mr. Walmsley will double check and will reach out to the parent tomorrow.

M. Teltow asked the Board if anyone will have a problem if we answered some of the questions, although we typically don't do it with Public Comments. Board members supported this. Please refer to responses noted in questions from parents.

5. Reconfirm/Amend Instructional Delivery Method

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8. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments

9. SUPERINTENDENT AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislative Update

- No much happening
- Leadership of House and Senate-There is not much for educational updates before new elected members are in place.
- Conversations about lowering requirements to be a substitute staff member. The last he's heard was if you are 18 or older you can substitute in a building. There is District discretion if the District once to set a bar that is higher.

District Update

Today is a ½ day and tomorrow is another ½ day, then we start our Thanksgiving break. Mr. Walmsley wished our staff, students and families a Happy Thanksgiving and reminded them to stay say.

10. ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

No items of interest.

11. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of amendment to/confirmation of *Extended COVID-19 Learning Plan*

Motion by S. Fortuna accept recommendations by the superintendent in the attached documentation and approved the extended learning plan, that we would be all virtual until **January 8, 2020**; motion seconded by J. Sexton.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes: S. Fortuna, J. Sexton, S. Zube, A. Pacitto, K. Simmons, M. Teltow

Motion carries: 6-0

B. Second Reading and Approval of Board Policies motioned by J. Sexton, seconded by S. Fortuna.

1. 3115 Non-Discrimination and Retaliation
2. 4101 Non-Discrimination
3. 4102 Anti-Harassment, including Sexual harassment
4. 4104 Employee Complaint Procedure
5. 4104-F Discrimination-Retaliation Complaint Form
6. 5205 Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Against Students
7. 5301 Compulsory Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy

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B. Walmsley clarified that all policies were presented on 11/9 was 5301 was presented on 10/26/20.

Ayes: 6-0

Nays: 0

Motion carries: 6-0

C. Approval of Resolution for Summer Tax Collection motioned by K. Simmons; seconded by J. Sexton.

Ayes: 6-0

Nays: 0

Motion carries: 6-0

D. Approval of amendment to the Master Agreement between Richmond Community Schools Board of Education and Educational Paraprofessionals Teamsters State, County and Municipal Workers Local 214 (Expiration June 30, 2024), motioned by S. Fortuna; seconded by K. Simmons.

Ayes: 6-0

Nays: 0

Motion carries: 6-0

E. Approval of Letter of Agreement motioned by J. Sexton; supported by S. Fortuna. S. Zube inquired about whether or not we have an estimate of what the attorney's fees were. Mr. Walmsley stated that he currently does not. It will come in the December bill.

Ayes: 4-0

Nays: 2-0 (S. Zube and A. Pacitto)

Motion carries: 4-0

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by M. Teltow at 9:43pm.

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