

Joint School Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 6, 2020
Eastham Town Hall (Virtual)

Present for the Committees:

Region: Chris Easley, Richard Stewart, John O'Reilly, Judith Schumacher, Ian Mack, Josh Stewart, Ed Brookshire, Amy Handel, Robert Jacobus, Tom Fitzgibbons,
Brewster: David Telman, Judi Lech, Christine Peterson, Katie Jacobus
Eastham: Judy Lindahl, Moira Noonan-Kerry, Benten Niggel, Mary Lou Sette, Ann Crozier
Orleans: Hank Schumacher, Gail Briere, Josh Stewart, Ginger Marks, Sassandra Roche
Wellfleet: Betsy Pontius, Martha Gordon, Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, and Laura Baghetti

Present for the Administration: Thomas Conrad and Keith Gauley

Call to Order – Chair Lindahl called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

AGENDA CHANGES – none

CITIZENS SPEAK – None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

School Calendar

Superintendent Conrad welcomed the committees and audience. A video from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was viewed on safe ways to return to school using social distancing, masks, hand hygiene, students staying home when sick, and classroom configurations.

The Superintendent reported that he received a directive from the Commissioner of Education indicating that an additional ten days will be given for staff training on protocols before school begins, noting school should begin no later than September 16. There will be 170 student days of instruction this coming year. The Superintendent indicated that that September 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 15 will be used for professional development. He also indicated that two professional development days will be carried over into the year in the event that there is a shift and teachers/students need to go remotely.

WELLFLEET

Motion: On a motion by Jan Plaue seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted to accept the amended proposed calendar for 2020-21 school year. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Jan Plaue – yea, Martha Gordon – yea, Jill Putnam – yea, Laura Baghetti – yea, Betsy Pontius – yea

ORLEANS

Motion: On a motion by Gail Briere, seconded by Josh Stewart it was voted by roll call vote to accept the amended calendar for Orleans Elementary School going forward as stated by the Superintendent. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Josh Stewart – yea, Gail Briere – yea, Ginger Marks – yea, Hank Schumacher – yea, Sassandra Roche – yea

BREWSTER

Motion: On a motion by David Telman, seconded by Katie Jacobus, it was voted to approve the amended calendar for 2020-21 as presented. On a roll call the vote was as follows David Telman – yea, Judi Lech – yea, Katie Jacobus – yea, Christine Peterson – yea

EASTHAM

Motion: On a motion by Benten Niggel, seconded by Ann Crozier, it was voted unanimously to authorize Superintendent to adjust the start date for 2020-21 school calendar. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Ann Crozier – yea, Benten Niggel – yea, Moira Noonan-Kerry – yea Mary Lou Sette – yea, Judy Lindahl – yea

REGION

Motion: On a motion by Josh Stewart, seconded by Chris Easley, it was voted unanimously to adjust the school calendar as proposed. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Chris Easley – yea, Judith Schumacher – yea, Richard Stewart – yea, Ian Mack – yea, Tom Fitzgibbons – yes, Amy Handel – yea, John O'Reilly – yea, Josh Stewart – yea, Ed Brookshire – did not vote

Presentation from Superintendent on Reopening Schools

The Superintendent introduced the Principals; Mary Beth Rodman from Wellfleet Elementary, Julie Kobold from the Middle School and Chris Ellsasser from the High School who reviewed the plans for opening at the various levels.

The Superintendent shared his names of the members of the Nauset Administrative Task Force and outlined the work they have been doing including: PPE Purchases, the Learning Plan Template, Health and Safety Protocols, Cleaning Protocols, Surveys, Communication Plans, and Training Protocols. He gave a summary of the survey data indicating that 81% of families desire in-person learning. He also indicated that 182 families would prefer a remote learning plan. If the plan is hybrid, the parents prefer full days for in-person learning. It was mentioned that 11 families need internet access and 82 families need increased bandwidth. 20% of families would need childcare should they move to hybrid/remote learning. Parents also desired focus on core-content, social – emotional learning, specialist and elective courses, and extra-curricular activities including athletics. He reviewed the staff survey indicating that 31 staff members identified that they may need a leave and/or accommodation. 90% of staff will be comfortable technology-wise teaching hybrid/remote model after summer professional development. He indicated that the transportation survey had 65 % of families wish to utilize transportation services. He reviewed the dates information will be disseminated to staff and parents as well as the deadline of August 14th for plan submission to the Department of Education. He indicated that Executive Summaries of plans will be posted to the website. The Superintendent indicated that informational meetings will be held with staffs and families. A Commitment Survey will go out to everyone as to the choice they want for their child, whether remote or in-school learning. Once the results are tallied, Principals will be able to make staff and student assignments. He also indicated that the Nauset Educational Association, President and Vice President have been meeting with him weekly and are very good partners in this effort.

Assistant Superintendent Keith Gauley reviewed the process for creating the plans and the next 6 weeks of communicating, training, planning and professional development. He outlined the enhanced teaching and learning strategies, expectations and commitment to safety as well as a learning expectation agreement. He

reviewed what the Special Education mode for delivery of instruction will include. He talked about the building spaces, signage, assigned seating, disinfecting, and physical distancing. He talked about checking temperatures at home and students staying home if they are sick. He reviewed the protocols for masks, washing hands, distancing and assigned seating on buses and in classrooms. He also indicated that in remote learning there will be a strong teacher presence, a defined daily schedule, consistent grading, monitored attendance and dynamic student engagement.

Principal Mary Beth Rodman reviewed the plan for the elementary schools, both remote and in-school learning plans. Principal Julie Kobold reviewed the plan for the middle school, both remote and in-school learning plans. She indicated that 82% of the parents preferred an in person model and want the core classes, the social emotional learning piece and the exploratory subjects for their children. She described what an in-person model would look like with cohorts and block scheduling. She described what remote learning will look like with direct instruction, live and recorded, whole class and small groups. Principal Chris Ellsasser reviewed the high school hybrid model that include high needs students being on campus 4-5 days per week, cohorts on campus consecutive Mon/Tues. or Thurs. Friday rotation. Wednesdays will be online learning, building cleaning and disinfecting. He indicated the remote choice will have the same schedule as hybrid students with the same numbers of minutes and instruction, same lunch schedule and same mask/screen breaks. He reviewed the Special Education, English Language Learners and High Need students.

The school committee members were given an opportunity for questions and comments. Comments included:

- Why are students going back to school and is it safe?
- Consistency of platforms being used should be universal
 - Google Classroom will be used at HS and Middle School
 - Grades K-2 will be using See Saw
 - Grades 3-5 will use Google Classroom
 - Clever may also be used for easy accessibility
- Testing protocols – is there something in place requiring test or doctors notes
 - Superintendent working with a doctor on the possibility of creating a testing program
- Staffing of nurses – do we need more health staff in the schools?
 - Superintendent indicated that nurses will work with town health agents
- Six feet distancing vs. 3’ distancing was discussed
 - CDC recommendation is 6’
 - DESE wants to reduce that to 3’ with masks and other safety measures
- Students at Risk – may need instruction on campus relative to safety
 - Students with medical issues, the District will work with families
 - Mitigating risk for staff
 - Training provided by nurses, PPE ordered, allow staff member to wear additional PPE
 - Process if a person tests positive to COVID (this is still being worked through)
- DESE health video – not current – cases on Cape and in MA on the rise
- Middle School Plan – 100 minutes in class was questioned
- Remote learning same as in-school learning
- Not maximizing in-school days for labs and such
- Transportation concerns

- Air quality concerns, ventilation at high school
- Mask breaks, not masked, consequences
- Social distancing, staggering recess, limit cohorts in one area
- Concerns if staff members get ill
 - Confirmed that substitutes still want to sub
- Children can transmit the disease, middle and high school students susceptible too
- Parents will make the selection, remote or in-school
- Concerns about special teachers going between schools
- Students only wiping desks with paper towel and water, not disinfecting
- Wearing masks all day is tiresome
- Why rush to reopen?
- Budgets and costs
 - Technology, cleaning, additional staff
 - Covered by grants – CARES ACT, ESSIR Grant, and Remote Learning Grant
- Chapter 70 funding level funded
- For this to be successful, it requires so much precision and working as a community, some people out and not wearing masks
- 81 to 82% of parents want their children in school in person
- Cape Cod Collaborative pleased that children did really well with masks
- What if we start mid-September and then realize there are too many challenges, or if Covid rates go up – shift to remote learning – must be ready to shift
- Staffing is critical
- Limit visitors to schools, limit people coming into buildings
- District doing anything for safety beyond the guidelines
 - Masks K-12
- Plan for PreK
- Tracking attendance requirements
 - Attendance handled the same way in-person or remote
- Parents will have a ultimate decision – remote or in-school
- Will DESE let us wait a week – extension from August 14
- Executive Summaries released to staff on 8/7 at 7:00 a.m.
- Executive Summaries released to parents on 8/7 at 4 p.m.

Chair Lindahl asked if committee members wanted to review at a future meeting in their individual committees after they receive further comments from staff and parents. She thanked Administration for the options/plans. Members from Orleans, Brewster and Eastham wanted to hear more from parents and staff. Superintendent Conrad indicated that protocols will be in place very soon and he will share them with the committees.

Gail Briere shared her concern that individual school committee meetings were taking place after the deadline of submission of the plans to the Department of Education. She worried that schools needed to start planning for remote and in-person learning. Judy Schumacher commented that the committees need to think about what they are voting on. She understood that each committee may want to dig deeper. The

plans are due August 14 and the survey comes in on the 12th which may not give enough time to get results for a discussion and vote. She stated what the committee is voting on is giving the administration and the Task Force the benefit of continuing their work. She felt they will never have a plan that is the plan and that we need flexibility to move on. Committees cannot wait to vote until it is perfect. Let the Administration and Task Force continue their efforts. Everyone shares concerns of health and safety of staff and students. Chris Easley shared opinion that we vote the plans as this is the first phase and there is work that has to be done. The present goal is to get to re-open our schools. He felt this is a good start and that staff and parents need to have some idea of what the future might look like subject to changes. He felt it was important to vote tonight. Give some guidance to parents and staff.

Martha Gordon reported that she learned that the NEA voted to support that they not return until it is safe. Chair Lindahl clarified that the Superintendent is not asking for a vote for whether or not the school opens but that the Superintendent is asking the committees for a vote of confidence for the three plans; hybrid, in-person and remote.

Josh Stewart wanted time for parents and staff to react to the plans. He expressed his objection of the safety and educational piece on these models. He did not like the 100 minute block at the middle school. Can't vote the 3' distancing space. He had questions about grades K and 1. Ian Mack, if we are trying to give clear guidelines to parents and staff. The Task Force put in an incredible amount of work. They care so deeply for our community and he has the utmost respect for them. He has some real specific things that he doesn't agree with.

The Superintendent indicated whether committees vote today or not, the Task Force has to keep moving forward with protocols, Health Plans and tracing. He will talk to Union leadership about the vote. He indicated the challenge is DESE's request to identify the plans going forward. The Department of Education wants the school committee to take a stand on what plans they will open school with.

ORLEANS MOTION:

Gail Briere made a motion, seconded by Hank Schumacher to vote to approve the reopening in-person educational plan at OES and to further approve a remote learning option that will be available to families who choose to opt out of the in-person model. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Josh Stewart-nay, Gail Briere – yea, Ginger Marks – Abstain, Han Schumacher – yea, Sassandra Roche – nay
Motion did not pass.

Judy Schumacher suggested authorizing the Administration to submit the plans to DESE with the understanding that Administrative Task Force and School Committee will continue to work on those plans and refine them. She stated school committee members are here to support the administration and the plans as they are now.

Martha Gordon questioned the voting and thought the committees wanted to put it off. If the committees vote yes and the plans goes to DESE, if case crop up in MA and we learn that more

parents and staff are uncomfortable. Can we submit new plans?

The Superintendent indicated that there are guidelines of how DESE want us to proceed going forward. If it is not safe, they decide if we do not bring kids back in to school. First and foremost is about health and safety of our kids. Survey results are compiled and the Task Force is racing to the data received from parents. Things are ever-changing. The video shown tonight won't reflect what is happening this week. We have to be flexible and watch the data all the time and make decisions for the well-being of all staff and students.

If the District and school committee thought it was unsafe, they would make a decision to go to remote learning.

David Telman inquired if DESE did not like the plans, would they give an extension to come up with additional plans. The Superintendent indicated that he was not sure that would or would not happen. He thinks DESE would work with us. The Superintendent did not think that they will move the start date as they have already given additional days.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Ian Mack and seconded by Ann Crozier to reconvene the Joint School Committee until Tuesday August 11 at 6:30 to vote on the issue. No vote taken.

Katie Jacobus asked for clarification on the language. She suggested approving this plan by Nauset Administrators and put forward to DESE with the idea that the Task Force, Administration and School Committee will continue to work on it.

Chair Lindahl clarified the motion to submit the current plans to DESE by the deadline date with the understanding that the Administration, School Committee and Task Force will continue to work on those plans as conditions warrant.

Ian Mack withdrew his motion and Ann Crozier her second.

Laura Baghetti asked if elementary schools can have different decisions.

Judi Lech stated the purpose of Joint School Committee is that we are all getting information in real time and that committees may vote differently.

Motion: Gail Briere made a motion that was seconded by Hank Schumacher, to approve the reopening in-person educational plan at Orleans Elementary School and to further approve the school's remote option that will be available to families who choose to opt out of the in-person model. On a roll call the vote was as follows: Josh Stewart – nay, Gail Briere – yea, Ginger Marks – Abstained, Hank Schumacher – yea, Sassandra Roche – nay 2 yeas, 2 nays and 1 Abstention - The motion failed.

Dave Telman asked if Administration could create a motion so all schools can be voting on the same statement going forward. He did not want 4 different motions stating 4 different things. He wanted to be all together as a district with the submission to DESE, One District – 4 elementaries, Middle and High School.

Sassandra Roche acknowledged the different facets and confusion on the vote.

Motion:

Ian Mack made a motion that was seconded by Ann Crozier, pending the scheduling of the next school committee meeting, that they meet as soon as possible pending review from Administration, to take a vote of all members.

Betsy Pontius made a Point of Order as there was already a motion and a second.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Ian Mack and seconded by Ann Crozier to reconvene the Joint School Committee until Tuesday, August 11 at 6:30 to vote on the issue.

REGION

Roll call vote was as follows:

Ed Brookshire – nay, Chris Easley – no vote , Judy Schumacher – yea, Richard Stewart – nay Ian Mack – yea, Josh Stewart – nay, Robert Jacobus – yea, Tom Fitzgibbons – nay, Amy Handel – nay
John O'Reilly – yea

5 nays and 4 yeas – not to schedule another meeting to continue conversation

WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Roll call vote was as follows:

Martha Gordon – nay, Jill Putnam – nay, Laura Baghetti – yea, Betsy Pontius – nay, Jan Plaue – nay
1 yea, 4 nays

ORLEANS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Roll call vote was as follows:

Josh Stewart, nay, Gail briere, nay, Ginger Marks, nay, Hank Schumacher, nay, Sassandra Roche – nay
5 nays

BREWSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Roll call vote was as follows:

Judi Lech – yea, Katie Jacobus – yea, Christine Peterson – nay, David Telman – yea
3 yeas – 1 nay

EASTHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ann Crozier – yea, Ben Niggel – yea , Mary Lou Sette – nay, Moira Noonan-Kerry – nay, Judy Lindahl – nay
2 yeas and 3 nays

Chair Lindahl indicated the motion did not pass.

WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Motion: On a motion by Betsy Pontius, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted to authorize Administration to submit Wellfleet reopening plan to DESE with the understanding that the plan may change with data and feedback from stakeholders. Roll call vote was as follows:

Jan Plaue – yea, Marth Gordon – nay, Jill Putnam – yea, Laura Baghetti – nay, Betsy Pontius – yea
3 yeas and 2 nays

EASTHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Moira Noonan- Kerry made a motion that was seconded by Ann Crozier to postpone the meeting vote until a date next week, before the August 14 deadline.

Roll call vote was as follows:

Ann Crozier – yea, Ben Niggel – yea, Moira Noonan-Kerry – yea, Mary Lou Sette – yea, Judy Lindahl – yea
5 yeas – motion passes

REGION SCHOOL COMMITTEE

On a motion by Richard Stewart, seconded by Tom Fitzgibbons it was voted by roll call vote, 7 yeas and 3 nays to approve the Region plan to reopen Region schools with the three variable elements with in-person, remote and hybrid learning and be forwarded to DESE.

Roll Call vote was as follows:

Chris Easley – yea, Judi Lech – yea, Richard Stewart – yea, Ian Mack – nay, Robert Jacobus – yea, Tom Fitzgibbons – yea, Amy Handel – yea, John O'Reilly – nay, Josh Stewart – nay, Ed Brookshire – yea
7 yeas, 3 nays the motion passes

BREWSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

On a motion by David Telman, seconded by Christine Peterson it was voted 4 yeas to allow the Administration to present the plan as described with the understanding that there could be changes going forward after the presentation and discuss at their own school committee meeting.

Roll call vote was as follows:

David Telman – yea, Katie Jacobus – yea, Christine Peterson – yea, Judi Lech – yea
4 yeas the motion passed

ORLEANS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

On a motion by Sassandra Roche, seconded by Gail Briere it was voted unanimously to reconvene at a date before the due date to discuss as the Orleans School Committee to make a decision that is best for our own school. Roll call vote was as follows:

Josh – yea, Gail Briere – yea, Ginger Marks – yea, Hank Schumacher – yea, Sassandra Roche – yea
5 yeas – The motion passed

The Superintendent thanked the School Committee for their time and effort. He indicated they are seeking the same outcomes, getting the best educational outcomes for our students and keep everyone safe, staff and students.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Union 54 – January 23, 2020

On a motion by Moira Noonan-Kerry, seconded by Josh Stewart, it was voted to approve the minutes of January 23, 2020.

EASTHAM – Judy Lindahl – yea, Mary Lou Sette – yea, Moria Noonan-Kerry – yea

ORLEANS – Gail Briere – yea, Hank Schumacher – yea, Sassandra Roche – yea

BREWSTER – David Telman – yea, Katie Jacobus – yea, Judi Lech – yea

WELLFLEET – Martha Gordon – yea, Laura Baghetti – yea, Betsy Pontius – yea

Joint School Committee meeting - January 23, 2020

On a motion by Chris Easley, seconded by Josh Stewart, it was voted to approve the minutes of January 23, 2020.

WELLFLEET – Betsy Pontius – yea, Laura Baghetti – yea, Jill Putnam – Abstain, Martha Gordon – yea, Jan Plaue – Not voting

ORLEANS – Josh Stewart – yea, Hank Schumacher – yea, Gail Briere – yea, Ginger Marks – yea, Sassandra Roche – yea

BREWSTER – David Telman – yea, Judi Lech – yea, Katie Jacobus – yea, Christine Peterson – yea

EASTHAM – Moira Noonan-Kerry – yea, Mary Lou Sette yea, Ben Niggel – yea, Ann Crozier – yea, Judy Lindahl – yea

REGION – Chris Easley – yea, Judith Schumacher – yea, Richard Stewart – yea, Ian Mack – yea, Robert Jacobus – Abstain, Tom Fitzgibbons – yea, Amy Handel – yea, Josh Stewart – yea, Ed Brookshire yea

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Chris Easley, seconded by Josh Stewart it was voted to unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 p.m.

Submitted by
Ann M. Tefft