

SOMERS POINT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING August 06, 2020

Staci Endicott, President, called the Somers Point Board of Education Meeting to order at 6:07 P.M. as a remote/virtual meeting, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., and as amended by P.L.2020, c. 11.

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to two newspapers, posted on the bulletin board of City Hall and on the doors of the three schools as required in the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, and P.L.1975.

Ms. Endicott. led the Board of Education and the members of the public present in the salute to the flag.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jenna DeCicco, John Conover, Kathleen Dolton, Sarah Platt, Heather Samuelson, Mike Sweeder, Courtney Laut, Staci Endicott

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alice Myers

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools
Michele D. Roemer, Ed. D., Interim Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Public Forum – Agenda Items Only

Mrs. Endicott called the meeting open to the public at 6:12 P.M. The following people submitted emails for public comment:

Mario Montanero, Teacher

How many positive covid cases will it take to shut down school once it opens? Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder, Superintendent of schools responded that the guidance we have received is 2 or more within a 14 day period.

Did we hire additional staff to help complete the various tasks outlined in the reopening plan? Dr. CarneyRay Yoder, Superintendent of Schools responded that we have advertised for a full time nurse for the NYA school through the PEA Grant and additional custodial help is budgeted in the CARES grant.

Josh Tostevin, President SPEA

My name is Josh Tostevin, I live at 5 Alex Drive in Millville and I am the president of the Somers Point Education Association. On behalf of the SPEA, I would first like to thank all of the stakeholders who collaborated to develop the current plan to reopen the schools. We appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the process alongside the administration.

Our teachers have notoriously worked above and beyond their contract to ensure the social, emotional and academic needs are met of all students in a safe, equitable and welcoming environment. This upcoming school year will be no different.

It's important to note that all members want to be back in school under normal circumstances. It's no secret that the 2020-2021 school year is far from normal.

With that, we understand there isn't a one size-fits-all solution. While some of our members are high risk, others are going home to young children or elderly relatives who are also at high risk, others have spouses who work on the front lines causing them to be exposed at home on a daily basis, while others just aren't comfortable. In fact, they're scared! As professionals, we opt to keep our reasons personal. As such, we have no qualms ensuring rigorous teaching and learning happens regardless of the mode of delivery.

I'm sure we are all in agreement that the safety of our staff and students should be the number one priority. In this current environment, that means having an HVAC system that operates correctly and is correctly filtered. It means having the proper PPE on hand and in place at all times. It means setting clear guidelines and following through with them. In short, it means valuing everyone's humanity first. Teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn, if they are sick. We care about the kids of Somers Point as if they were our own!

There is a lot of information about the virus that is still unknown. However, what is known, is that the teachers, secretaries, nurses, counselors and paraprofessionals of The Somers Point School District will continue to challenge, empower and meet all needs of our students; in person, virtually, or a combination of both, given the proper means to do so.

As more studies are conducted at the state and local level, and more guidance is released about what "the new normal" looks like, we look forward to continuing to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure our students and Staffuly are safe.

Thank you.

As there being no further emails, Mrs. Endicott called the meeting closed to the public at 6:15 P.M.

Communications-Superintendent's Report

Motion was made by Dr. Dolton, second by Mrs. Samuelson to approve the submission of the Somers Point School District Reopening Plan for the 2020/2021 school year to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools. Revisions shall be at the recommendation of the Executive County Superintendent of Schools.

Questions re: Reopening Plan after the motion.

Staci Endicott asked will the schedule be the same for those students choosing hybrid versus virtual?
Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder responded yes.

If remote option will teachers teach from the classroom – Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder indicated that a determination will be on a case by case basis.

Dr. Dolton asked if the lessons will be recorded? Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder replied yes.

Staci Endicott asked about sports and activities. Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder indicated that there will be no fall sports or activities, would rather be safe than sorry and hopefully all districts will be able to begin to transition into sports and activities.

Mrs. DiCicco asked if the county was able to coordinate the same virtual day. Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder indicated it was considered, but no.

Did the Governor's announcement alter anything in the plan? Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder indicated that it may change the number of students and staff in a room if the children must wear masks from door to door. It is something that we are awaiting guidance.

Mrs. Platt stated that she, along with the other members appreciate Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder's efforts, as well as the other stakeholders. She also indicated that she would echo the comments and sentiments that Mr. Tostevin stated.

Motion carried on roll call vote 7-1-0. (Mrs. Samuelson voted no)

Policies

Motion was made by Mrs. Samuelson, second by Mrs. Platt to approve the first reading of Policy 6173.1 – Remote Learning. Motion carried unanimously on roll call vote.

Public Forum

Mrs. Endicott called the meeting open at 6:35 PM for the public. No emails were received.

Board Forum

Mr. Sweeder asked that the link to the meeting be placed on the front screen. He also asked if parent will be notified of the student's schedules, especially if they will be rotating. Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder stated that the plan is to send home the weekly schedule.

Adjournment

Motion was made at 6:39 PM by Mrs. Laut second by Mrs. Platt that there being no further business to present the Somers Point Board of Education Executive Session meeting be adjourned. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele D. Roemer, Ed. D.,
Business Administrator/Board Secretary