

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
DRAFT MINUTES: Tuesday, April 7, 2020  
Greenfield MA**

*Note: This meeting was held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20.*

**Present:** Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Jordana Harper (JH) (attending remotely); Susan Hollins (SH) (arrived 6:18); Glenn Johnson (GJ); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW)

**Absent:** None

**Also present:** Steve Nembirkow, Business Manager; Eliza Calkin, Director of Food & Nutrition Services; other school staff and citizens.

### **I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present (KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW), Chair Proietti opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

### **II. Approval of Draft Minutes:**

- KC moved to approve minutes of January 27, 2020. RW 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.
- KC moved to approve minutes of February 12, 2020. JW 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.
- RW moved to approve minutes of March 4, 2020. JW 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.
- KC moved to approve minutes of March 16, 2020. SE 2nd Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.
- KC moved to approve minutes of March 24, 2020, SE 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW; Abstain – RW. Motion passed.

### **III. Public Comment**

None

### **IV. Reports**

#### **A. Chair (AP)**

Praise for exceptional work by GPS staff, School Committee members and especially Food Service staff for providing 500+ meals/day.

#### **B. Superintendent (JH)**

- Thanked Mayor, City staff, first responders for coordinated work in public health challenge. Also thanks to everyone for staying home.
- Thanked principals, administrators & staff for extraordinary efforts, especially in supporting remote learning plan, preparing Chromebooks for students.

#### **C. Subcommittees & SC Representatives**

None

## V. New Business

### A. Remote Learning Plan Update

Supt. Harper introduced the draft remote learning plan. Focus on equity, considering needs of all students, including special education students. Teachers have been working to set up remote learning systems. Draft MOUs with Units A & C. Goal to provide opportunities for families without being overwhelming. Will use separate platform for mental health & special education services. Parents will be provided one-page guide. Assignments are credit/no-credit. Need for flexibility.

Discussion:

- Staff without dedicated home computer (40% IAs, 20% teachers) will receive Chromebook. 20% staff lack reliable internet at home.
- Essential staff (principals, tech staff, custodians) allowed in school buildings. No other staff to enter school buildings, following direction of public health officials.
- Plan to distribute Chromebooks: will inform families tomorrow, distribute later this week.
- AP relayed advice from Liz Lafond, Mass. Association of School Committees, clarified that School Committee should not formally approve remote learning plan; not its role to approve curriculum.
- SH disagreed that School Committee had no role in approving as a new program, especially given budget expense.

**SE made a motion that the School Committee is encouraged by the remote learning plan as presented and looks forward to its application. RW 2nd.**

- Continued discussion of School Committee's authority/obligation re: remote learning plan.
- Plan is still draft. MOUs not finalized. Vote would be premature.
- Policy BBA, School Committee Powers & Duties: revision has had 1st reading, not formally adopted.
- School Committee to approve of additional funding for remote learning?

RW called the question. SE 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion to end debate passed unanimously.

**Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.**

### B. April Vacation (April 19-23)

No firm guidance from state re: April break. Commissioner's guidance = local decision. If GPS continues instruction Tues-Fri (Monday is state holiday), last day of school moves from June 17 to June 11.

**RW moved to work 4 days in April that are currently scheduled for April break, taking 4 days off at end of school year, putting the last day of school as June 11. JW 2nd.**

Discussion:

- Families not going away on vacation anyway.
- Supports momentum of learning.
- Could begin summer programs earlier (e.g., Title I, summer school), benefiting students.
- Many teachers support this plan.

- Minimal budget impact.
- Concern that if schools open in May, there are fewer in-school days for students with high needs or in unsafe situations.

**Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **C. Vote on 2020-2021 Lunch Prices**

Business Manager Nembirkow provided overview. Federal USDA rules require raising prices every year to maintain reimbursement. 25-cent increase for 2020-21, won't have to raise prices following year. Increases in past years did not affect participation.

Elementary \$2.75 now \$3.00

Middle \$3.00 now \$3.25

High \$3.25 \$3.50

All schools offer free breakfast. At AEL, Newton, Federal Street schools, lunch is free for all.

**SH moved to support the new school lunch prices as recommended by the administration, an increase of 25-cents. GJ 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.**

### **D. Vacancy for Director of Pupil Services**

Dr. Janet Dickinson is interim director. Supt. did not advise us to undertake a search at this time.

**SH moved to extend Dr. Janet Dickinson's interim appointment as Director of Pupil Services until such time as the School Committee picks up the recruitment for a permanent position. GJ 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously.**

**VI. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (2), (3) & (6):** (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; (3) To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares; (6) To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

**RW moved to enter Executive Session. 2nd JW. Roll call: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW, RW. Motion passed unanimously. Entered Executive Session at 7:32 p.m.**

Returned to public session at 8:54 p.m.

### **V. New Business – continued**

#### **E. Unit C Staff**

**KC moved to compensate members of Unit C through the duration of the COVID-related school closure in accordance with the guidelines of the remote learning plan. SH 2nd.**

**Roll call: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP; Not present JW, RW. Motion passed 5-0.**

#### **F. Contract, Hourly & Non-Union Employees**

**KC moved that, effective April 6, 2020, all contract employees, hourly employees & non-union employees will be paid as per current contract with work hours and assignments as defined by the superintendent or designee. SE 2nd.**

**Roll call: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP; Not present JW, RW. Motion passed 5-0.**

#### **G. Food Service Employees**

**KC moved to compensate food service workers who are preparing or providing meals through the duration of the COVID-related school closures at time-and-a-half. SH 2nd.**

**Roll call: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW; Not present RW. Motion passed 6-0.**

#### **VII. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn. Roll call: Roll call: Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW; Not present – RW. Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Farber  
Recording Secretary

#### **Meeting Documents**

- Agenda April 7, 2020
- Draft minutes: January 27, February 12, March 4, March 16, March 24, 2020
- Letter to Parents/Guardians from DESE Commissioner Riley re: remote learning, March 30, 2020
- Letter to Superintendents et al. from DESE Commissioner Riley, “Remote Learning Recommendations during COVID-19 School Closures, March 26, 2020
- MIAA Board of Directors Conference Call Meeting Highlights, March 30, 2020
- Memo to School Committee from Eliza Calkins, Food Service Director, re: School Closure Meal Service Update COVID-19, April 2, 2020
- Proposal for School Lunch Price Increase for 2020/2021 School Year
- Memo to School Committee from Steve Nembirkow (Finance Director) re: Budget FY20, April 1, 2020, and Financial Reports