

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
Thursday, December 17, 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); Susan Hollins (SH); Glenn Johnson-Mussad (GJ); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW).

Absent: None

Also present: Jennifer Hoffman, Greenfield Interim Health Director; other school staff, citizens, and the press.

I. Call to Order

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

II. Public Comment

None

III. Decision on In-Person Learning

SE moved to take from the table the motion from the Dec. 15 meeting: to return students and staff to in-person instruction. GJ 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

KC read statement from Joint Labor Management Safety & Health Committee, which met earlier today to review most recent data:

In light of rapidly rising cases and with the prediction of a continued rise after the holidays, the Joint Labor Management Committee for Health and Safety recommends resumption of Phase 2 in-person learning no sooner than January 11th with the understanding that a further extension might be needed. The Joint Labor Management Health and Safety Committee resolves to meet regularly after the holidays to continue considering the health metrics and to advise the School Committee regarding the possible resumption of in-person learning as new epidemiological information is released. Please remember that other groups and bodies may have information that affects our recommendations.

Discussion:

- Concern for transmission risk because some Phase 2 students unable to follow safety protocols (e.g., wear face masks)
- Two separate questions: Returning to Phase 2 before December vacation and after.
- Consider likelihood of post-holiday surge of infections.
- Union agreement requires giving staff several days' notice to return to in-person.
- Agreement on value of in-person school. Phase 2 students had made significant strides in 1½ weeks.
- Transitions are especially difficult for many Phase 2 students.
- How to proceed with special education evaluations? Phase 1A allows for special education evaluations and 1:1 services. Can proceed safely with modifications, in consultation with Board of Health.
- Although children get COVID at lower rates, risk of very serious COVID episode is significantly higher for Phase 2 students with health challenges.

Motion withdrawn.

GJ moved that we resume Phase 2 in-person learning no sooner than January 11 with the understanding that a further extension may be needed. KC 2nd.

Discussion:

- Close buildings entirely until January 11? Some teachers voluntarily working in school, clearly informed that some rooms don't have HVAC testing or HEPA filters. Supt. has clearly communicated: If you have health/safety concerns, you should teach from home.
- Empathy for parents of Phase 2 students.

Roll call vote. Yes – KC, SE, SH, GJ, JW, RW. Abstain – AP. Motion passed 6-0-1.

SH moved that individual services and assessments for students will be scheduled by the Superintendent or designee, at her discretion. SE 2nd.

Already part of Phase 1A; intent to continue 1A as much as possible. Supt. will work with health officials on precautions, modifications.

Roll call vote: KC, SE, SH, GJ, JW, RW. Abstain – AP. Motion passed 6-0-1.

III. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (2): (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel

JW moved to enter Executive Session. SH 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

No intention to return to public session. SE moved to adjourn public session. RW 2nd. Motion to adjourn public session passed unanimously.

Public meeting adjourned, moved into Executive Session at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary