

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE
TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

Special Meeting

Date: March 23, 2020

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Gala Meeting Room, Town Hall

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Tina Belanger, Mr. Richard Pearson,
Ms. Beverley Lord, Mr. Rob Canfield

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: Mr. Brent Ruter

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Amy Berdos, Dr. Alison Mello, Mr. William Yukna

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES: Were not present

Ms. Belanger opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. She extended her condolences on behalf of the Committee to the families of Patricia Donlon, a long-time FPS crossing guard, and Foxborough resident Mr. Bruce Hainsworth, a strong supporter of FPS. Both recently passed away and will be very much missed.

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Berdos updated the Committee on the impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis and provided a thorough report of current and future implications regarding school closures and the impact on staff, students and families. She reviewed the timeline of closures; discussed her communications with public health officials, directives from Governor Baker and guidance from the Commissioner of Education; and outlined how administration and staff have been working to provide online/electronic/remote enrichment experiences for students. Administration and staff are continually looking at ways to engage students, while understanding the classroom experience cannot be duplicated.

Other areas of discussion were the logistics of remote learning, equity and access concerns, and household variables; i.e., Wi-Fi access and computers/devices at home. Teachers have been collaborating remotely to implement ways to keep in contact with their students and provide meaningful learning opportunities for them. A recent survey found that of the 98.5% of the 66% of FPS families who responded have Wi-Fi access. The district will be providing laptops for those students who need one.

Mental health teams and the nursing staff are providing informational resources for families and students, and COVID-19 information is available on the FPS website. The food service department is providing bagged lunches to students and is using the Ahern School as their point of distribution.

Mr. Yukna reported that all school buildings are closed which will keep some of our costs down. Staff continues to be paid during this time, and many are still working.

Questions and discussion with the Committee followed.

Open Public Comment

Ms. Belanger read two questions/comments submitted by residents via the Community Inbox. The first was from FHS student Joe Gerraughty, and the second from Ms. Shelby Kornbluth of 20 Lawton Lane. The questions concerned April vacation week, determining the remainder of the school year calendar, completion of this year's curriculum, and the use of Google classroom to provide remote learning.

Dr. Berdos stated changes to the school calendar for the remainder of the school year have not yet been officially determined; however, the school calendar will not reflect 180 in-school days this year. Expectations for student work will become clearer as we move forward. We have been directed by the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) to provide enrichment opportunities and resources to students and families at this time. We are only in week one of this unexpected and unprecedented crisis and will navigate student expectations and accountability as the situation unfolds.

She further explained FPS is a Microsoft Office District, and teachers and students are using all of the communication and collaboration tools offered through that platform. We are not a Google district.

Questions and discussion with the committee followed.

Vote to Temporarily Allow One School Committee Member Signature on Warrants

Pearson moved; Lord seconded

Implement a one-signature format for signing FY '20 warrants effective immediately through June 30, 2020. Ms. Belanger will be primary; Mr. Canfield will provide back-up.

Vote: 5-0-0

Ms. Belanger closed the meeting recalling former FHS student Sam Berns' inspiring philosophy of life and TED Talk.

Canfield moved; Pearson seconded

Adjourn the meeting

Vote: 5-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Pearson

Clerk

Attachments:

Community Inbox Questions

Approved: March 30, 2020