

**LEBANON BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE**  
**APRIL 7, 2020 ~ REGULAR MEETING ~ 7:30 P.M.**  
**MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE:**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	William Meese, Chair	Sarah Haynes, Vice-Chair
	Maureen McCall, Secretary	John Konow
	Alexis Margerelli-Hussey	Nicole McGillicuddy
	Matthew Smith	Dawn Whitcher
	Mark DeCaprio	Ani Rose Johnson, Student Representative

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent Robert Angeli, Kathleen Mozak-Pezza, Curriculum Director, Robert Laskarzewski, Principal, Jay Apicelli, Principal, Rita Quiles-Glover, Principal, Samantha McCarthy, Assistant Principal, Robert Sirpenski, Business Manager, Cheryl Biekert, Director of Pupil Services, Jeannette Picard, Teacher, Kathleen Smith, Teacher, Jacques Dulac, Director of Information Technology

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman W. Meese called the meeting to order at 7:32p.m.

**II. COMMUNICATION**

1. Letters of Resignation

Superintendent Angeli read 2 letters of resignation, the first from Erin Paradis, Special Education teacher, effective the last day of school in June 2020. The second, from Kristen Lauria, Middle and High School Band director at Lebanon Middle School and Lyman Memorial High School, effective the conclusion of 2019-2020 school year.

2. Letters of Retirement

Superintendent Angeli read 5 letters of retirement. These teachers would like to participate in the VERIP. The first from Leigh Hogan Ruckdeschel, Speech Language Pathologist. Trisha Muller, Speech Language Pathologist. Janice Godaire, Special Education Teacher at Lebanon Middle School. Marty Gomez, Physical Education Teacher. Marty intends to stay as a coach in Lebanon. James Motyka, Science Teacher at Lyman Memorial High School.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – BYLAWS OF THE BOARD #9324**

Public participation – 30 minutes; Individual speaker – 2 minutes

Jeanette Picard was willing to give an update from the teachers perspective of how distance learning is going, but an update will be given during the administrator's reports and report of superintendent.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of minutes

1. Enrollment/Communication/Goals Subcommittee Meeting – 03/10/2020
2. Strategic Plan/Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting – 03/10/2020
3. Finance/Facilities Subcommittee Meeting – 03/10/2020
4. LBOE Regular Meeting – 03/10/2020
5. LBOE Special Meeting – 03/16/2020
6. Budget Transfers

**Motion made by S. Haynes and seconded by A. Margerelli-Hussey to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion passes unanimously.**

## **V. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

- Governance - W. Meese said they met virtually last week to put together the agenda for tonight. There has been no action on the board retreat since the last meeting, but it is three months out and he will start to fill that in. He and Superintendent Angeli called in to the Board of Finance meeting last week and the Board of Finance came up with a new schedule taking into consideration the governor's allowance for extra time. The Board of Ed will follow the Board of Finance's schedule as far as working with the budgetary process. Another meeting will be held this Thursday night, where they will specifically talk about the Board of Education budget.
- Strategic Plan/Curriculum - S. Haynes reports the committee contemplated meeting this month to discuss a district wide distance learning plan moving forward, however that will be discussed during the Administrators' reports. If needed the committee will meet next month. If there are any policies that need updating S. Haynes will give an update.
- Safety/Security – Committee has not met. There may be something that comes out of the distance learning to continue safety for the schools and network. The committee continues to work on climate and behavior as well as overall safety. The committee will need to meet in person. The next meeting will most likely need to include updates on security of home devices and there may need to be some policies made if and when the next time a situation arises. Safety precautions have been taken for the devices given out at the elementary school level and it will be discussed further during the Superintendents Report.
- Superintendent's Evaluation - Did not meet this month, but will most likely meet the in the next month or so.
- Negotiations - Negotiations met 3/2/20 and there are two contracts expiring in June, the instructional assistants and secretaries. There was another meeting scheduled but it was postponed. The next meeting may be able to be done virtually for the 1<sup>st</sup> proposal exchange.
- Policy - Policy will schedule a meeting in the next couple of weeks.
- Enrollment/Communications/Goals - There was a meeting planned for tonight, but the update will occur during the superintendents update.
- Finance/Facilities - N. McGillicuddy would like to attend the Board of Finance meeting Thursday and schedule a meeting for Tuesday to look at the budget for next year.
- EASTCONN - There was a virtual meeting a couple weeks ago. They are struggling with their budget and maintaining payment to their employees and whether or not they are making payroll. A number of payments have been cut to them from different districts because they stopped using their services. The district is in an effort to save money. EASTCONN is in negotiations with their staff.

## **VI. ADMINISTRATORS' REPORTS**

These are included in the board packets. R. Quiles-Glover thanked the teachers and families. There was a lot of positive feedback for Lebanon jumping into distancing learning quickly. R. Laskarzewski stated that LMS had a 5<sup>th</sup> grade parent meeting on Thursday to get feedback from the parents on distance learning and they were able to answer questions. There was a lot of positive feedback from the parents on distance learning as well. The PTO is trying to come up with a movie night event. This would include working with The Log Cabin and Redbox. J. Apicelli commended Superintendent Angeli on being prepared for distance learning long before our district shut down. K. Mozak-Pezza reported that curriculum has been doing a ton of work with the IA's in terms of professional development. There is a professional development session every day. The topics covered have been, special ed law and motivation behavior and engagement. There has been a lot of positive feedback from the IA's and Lebanon is getting recognition in the region for their program for IA's. C. Biekert would like to thank everyone for their work. The special ed department has individualized learning up and running for all the students across the district including related services professionals. Some are engaging in telehealth. Case managers are working on developing individualized distance learning support plans for every student with an IEP in the district. The State does not waive the requirements for the IEP students but their position is that schools are closed and IEP's are not being officially implemented. However, Special Ed will continue to provide continued educational opportunities for students. The administrators focused on the core education first and they are adding more as time goes on but did not want to overwhelm parents when the distance learning was first put in place. J. Picard reports the middle school teachers are working hard to make sure they are connecting with the students. At a CEA meeting Lebanon was recognized for getting the distance learning in place quickly and effectively. Grading is a work in progress. Each of the schools are going to maintain their current grading system, but with the understanding

that things have to be flexible. There have been three families that have had trouble with internet connection so Lebanon has purchased five hot spot devices through Verizon and they will be distributing to the students that need them. Spectrum was running a 2 month special for internet connection that some families took advantage of, but Lebanon has a lot of back roads so there were still a few that needed internet connection which is why Lebanon went the hot spot route. There are six students that have been identified that have not participated in distance learning at all and there are several students that are not participating fully. The specials are where the participation is low. PE is the lowest participation at this point. There are three students at the high school that have been identified as not participating and teachers, administrations staff and school resource officer has reached out and they have told them they are not going to participate. There are also three students at LES, one of which does not live in the district any longer and the other two Lebanon needs to work with the parents.

## **VII. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT**

AniRose reported that some high schools students felt they were given a lot of work at first but that has since decreased. Since Lebanon was already a Google school this process has been a lot easier, because the students are used to going onto Google classroom. The teachers have been really great with meeting with the students to explain the notes they are given.

## **VIII. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

1. Enrollment - Last month to this month we have had a decline of two students so we have gone from 995 to 993. Total student enrollment, we gained one at the elementary school, stayed even at the middle school and a decline of 3 students at the high school. Magnet school enrollment is 31.
2. COVID-19 - In the board packets are a list of Governor Lamont's Executive Order's issued in response to COVID-19 as of last Friday. Since then there have been 2 of 3 more orders. The 180 days of school order has been waived. As soon as the distance learning plan was put in place, those days can begin to count as educational days. Lebanon will still have to make up four days due to weather related issues. Later on in the meeting Superintendent Angeli will suggest the Board set the graduation date to June 17, 2020. That date takes into consideration the four days previous to COVID-19 and the date we started the distance learning program, which was March 16, 2020. The governor waived the necessity to have in person meetings. We are able to use apps such as Zoom. The executive order to close businesses was for the private sector not the public sector, which is how Lebanon is able to keep access to the district staff to the buildings. The custodians are coming into the building on a regular basis. There is no stay at home job for them. If schools are closed longer this year then the summer custodial work may be started early once arrangements are made to empty lockers and students getting all their personal belongings. Superintendent Angeli is in every day. The administrative team have been working from both home and in the buildings. The Secretary staff is also in and out, some things can be done from home, but some tasks require being in the building. Teachers are in and out getting supplies and materials. If they need to meet in person, they are arranging that ahead of time and practicing the appropriate social distancing. Lebanon had already had the Chromebooks in place which made the transition to distance learning a lot easier. Lebanon had already purchased and installed GoGuardian Software on the chrome books for 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students because they were already taking chrome books home. We quickly purchased additional software to install on the LES Chromebooks, so that parents could pick them up at the elementary school and start the distance learning as soon as possible. There has been a significant amount of work done with the IA's. Some IA's indicated they needed devices so we have purchased 30 additional chrome books and now believe there are enough devices to assist all of our staff and students. Lebanon was one of the first districts to enquire about providing meals to students. There are about 130 districts providing meals to students. The meal program allows Lebanon to provide meals to any child 18 and under, as well as holidays that we would not have normally provided meals for and also April break. The meal program will continue on the Monday, Wednesday, Friday distribution schedule. Any meal distributed to a student is a reimbursable meal so they don't have to be identified as receiving a free or reduced lunch which is why we are not charging. For the month of March there were 3,968 meals distributed, half were breakfast and half were lunches. As time goes on and the cases of COVID-19 increase in the state and town of Lebanon we continue to practice social distancing when distributing meals as well as wearing gloves, using hand sanitizer and sanitizing the tables. R. Sirpenski reported Carlos at Chartwell's has applied for 3 grants through GENYOUth which is up to \$3,000 to each school building in the district to be used for expenses related to COVID-19. We had a split month in March, because through March 16, 2020 was normal lunch periods and the other part of the month was the grab

and go meals. We have not received the financial statement for the month of March yet. One of the governor's waivers stated that school districts need to maintain their contracts with their transportation companies with the caveat that the companies have to be transparent regarding their costs during the COVID-19 closure. Superintendent Angeli has sent an email to M&J Bus Company to let them know we are looking to have a meeting to negotiate some sort of an amendment with the contract that we currently have. In another executive order 7R by the governor, school systems have to maintain employment with district staff where practicable. There were three employees laid off. Two long term subs in IA positions and the math tutor position at the elementary school. One IA sub would like to be recalled, the math tutor is going to be in contact with R. Quiles-Glover about what she could do online and we are waiting for a response from the other IA. Superintendent Angeli is relying on communication from the Commissioner of Education, bureau chiefs from the State Department of Education, CAPSS, and fellow superintendents and administrators. C. Biekert has published rules or guidelines for special ed which is distributed to the district staff. K. Mozak-Pezza put together a PD program for the IA's which will be documented. Each school has developed links off the school web pages that have resources for colleagues and parents. The communication with the distance learning plan is a work in progress. Letters were being sent to parents by Superintendent Angeli, administrators and teachers, which was over whelming so as the days go on the letters have been dialed back and are just being sent out as needed. On Thursday, Superintendent Angeli will most likely find out more information regarding a new deadline for schools to be closed until or if they will remain closed for the remainder of the school year. The SRO is still working a town constable shift but he is available to the district should the need arise. Our classrooms are available to people to visit already so having the meetings on a Google Meet is not a problem with security/teacher privacy. The concern is around FERPA requirements when you have students that are receiving special education services. The guidance has been to really educate the teachers on not doing anything overtly that would identify students as special education students. Staff is going to be doing their best to safe guard and protect as much as they can through this process. SRBI and the other components expectations are still things that the staff is working on. The teachers are using the early release time line to be in contact with the students and parents and the rest of the day they are using the time to schedule internal meetings. The virtual meetings have been taking longer than usual so some teachers have not been able to schedule Google Meets with their classes yet but will be scheduling to meet with their class soon. All the staff is engaged in distance learning with their students.

3. Middle School Schedule Update

There are no revisions to the middle school schedule yet.

4. Middle School Climate Update

The Board requested an update prior to the COVID-19 closure. The behavior issues had dwindled from the beginning of the year. The staff had been working with the students a lot which has resulted in a decrease in office referrals.

5. Lyman Oil Tank

An RFP is being worked out and hopefully will be posted soon so we can see what the bids coming in will look like.

6. Verizon Cell Tower

Superintendent Angeli was contacted by the town planner about moving forward with the cell tower project during school closure. It was originally delayed because there were still animals in the barn. All the lambs and ewe's have been relocated. Lebanon has given the go ahead to start the project we are just waiting to hear from the company when they will start. The project could take a month and a half to two months.

7. Memorandums of Agreement - There are two memorandums of agreement. The first between the Lebanon Board of Education and the Lebanon Administrators Association. The second is between the Lebanon Board of Education and the Lebanon Education Association.

**Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. McCall to suspend the rules and extend the meeting to 10:30 p.m. The Motion carried with W. Meese opposing.**

## IX. FINANCE REPORT

1. 2019-2020 Budget

With the COVID-19 closure some expenses will go up and some will go down, but overall we will most

likely have more of a surplus than what was originally anticipated. The synopsis was provided in the board packets.

2. 2020-2021 Budget

Unknown at this time. There is a Board of Finance meeting this Thursday.

**X. ACTION ITEMS**

1. Act on Letters of Resignation

**Motion made by J. Konow and seconded by S. Haynes to accept the letters of resignation. The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Act on Letters of Retirement

**Motion made by N. McGillicuddy and seconded by M. McCall to accept the letters of retirement. The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Act on 2020-2021 Special Education Rates

**Motion made by S. Haynes and seconded by N. McGillicuddy to accept the rates as presented. The motion passed unanimously.**

4. Act on 2020 Graduation Date

**Motion made by M. McCall and seconded by J. Konow to make June 17, 2020 the graduation date.**

**Discussion: Unforeseen circumstances if we can't get together for the ceremonies. Meetings are in progress to see what the senior class is looking for. The motion passed unanimously.**

5. Act on non-renewal of one-year contracted teachers

**Motion made by M. Smith and seconded by M. McCall to not renew the three long term substitute contracts. The motion carried with N. McGillicuddy opposing and D. Whitcher abstaining.**

**XI. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

1. Update on the payment to the bus drivers.
2. Distance learning plan and the grading format
3. What the Commissioner of Education decides during Thursday's meeting and how we will move forward with the rest of the school year.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted ,

Melissa Hashem  
Board Clerk