

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Present: School Board Members Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Dawn Leamer, Ada Vadeboncoeur, and Tony Clements (remotely); Student Representative to the School Board Mason Lord (remotely); Interim Superintendent of Schools David DeRuosi (remotely); Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore; Lamprey River Elementary School Principal Laura Yacek; Raymond High School Principal Steve Woodward; Iber Holmes Gove Middle School Principal Bob Bickford.

Proof of Posting: It was noted that the meeting was properly posted.

Pledge of Allegiance: All those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input: Sandra (Gilbert) Swiechowicz approached the Board and stated that she's speaking as a parent, not for other teachers, these are her own opinions. She stated that she doesn't believe the State has any right to tell the district that we can't offer remote education. She is also disappointed that there wasn't a survey put out for the mask mandate. She stated that she feels Raymond has a good case for students to be remote for two weeks to clear the current cluster of cases.

Motion to Amend the Agenda: MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Dawn Leamer, to amend the agenda to include District COVID, action. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed. It was agreed to add this new agenda item after the topic "Our Students/Our Schools."

Report of Student Representative to the School Board: Mr. Lord stated that he's heard from students that a number of classes have become the equivalent of study halls until teachers return. He stated that this is also the opinion of teachers he speaks with. He said also that some students are glad that a mask mandate has been instituted.

Donation Acceptance: The Board reviewed the donation offered to Lamprey River Elementary School from Timothy Boynton, the son of former longtime LRES teacher Susan Boynton. He offers this "Triple S" award annually to one elementary school employee to be used toward school or classroom supplies. "Triple S" stands for "Susan's Shopping Spree." MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to accept the donation of \$1,000 to be used for Lamprey River Elementary School. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

Our Students/Our Schools: Third grade teachers Peter Elsemore and Deb Daniels, and students Alexis Laroche and Jadya Kotsopoulos discussed the recent field trip to Mt. Agamenticus. They discussed how they hiked up three trails of the mountain, and shared stories about the people and the sights that they saw while hiking. They participated in a scavenger hunt, a story walk, studied animal tracks and scat displays, and enjoyed a picnic lunch.

The District and COVID-19: Dr. DeRuosi stated that due to the increasing number of positive COVID-19 cases at Raymond High School, he was advised to speak with the NH Commissioner of Education. When Dr. DeRuosi spoke with the Department of Health last Friday, the advice at that time was to implement a mask mandate and keep up with cleaning protocols. Today, there are 56 positive cases of COVID-19 at the high school. There were 103 absences, with 30 of those pending results but many absences with symptoms of COVID-19. Dr. DeRuosi is consulting with the Board now to determine if it would be wise to close Raymond High School to in-person classes for the next two days, allowing the long weekend for the building to be empty and to stop the spread to other buildings. Dr. DeRuosi stated that the Commissioner of Education confirmed that this Thursday and Friday, being remote, would not count against the District. Dr. DeRuosi suggested that the situation can be reassessed regarding return to in-person classes on Tuesday.

Dr. DeRuosi commended the nurses on their work during this increase in case numbers. He stated that Mr. Woodward is ready to message out to the community as soon as a decision is made. He also noted that the District will have rapid test kits soon, which would require parent consent, and it may also be helpful for staff.

Ms. Leamer asked why a closure wasn't also being implemented for the middle and elementary schools, as their siblings attend the high school. Dr. DeRuosi stated that siblings of high school students who tested positive have already been in quarantine.

Mr. Harmon stated that it would be his recommendation that Lamprey River Elementary School and Iber Holmes Gove Middle School also have masks required until the high school is out of this cluster situation. He asked Mr. Woodward if the high school would be ready for remote learning in the morning. Mr. Woodward stated that the school does have the ability to connect with all students remotely. Some teachers will have to modify their plans for the day, but the technology is available and they can make the day count. Mr. Harmon stated he believes the high school needs to go remote and he suggested that masks be required in the other two schools as long as masks are required at Raymond High School.

Mr. Saulnier asked if the District will need to ask permission from the Department of Education if we want to go remote longer than two days. Dr. DeRuosi stated that it wasn't ruled out, and that he may be calling the Commissioner at some point to say that we're still at that level of need. However, he did not ask for more than the two days, Thursday and Friday, at this point. Mr. Saulnier stated that he supports the high school going remote for two days and, if allowed, the entire following week. He also supports a mask mandate at the elementary and middle schools as long as masks are required at the high school.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to authorize the Superintendent for the next two days to go remote at the high school and then also in addition, with the State's approval,

through Friday the 15th remote at the high school. During discussion, Mr. Clements asks if the mask mandate is in effect for two weeks after the last positive test, would the mask mandate then be required for two weeks after any individual case? RHS Nurse Kelsey McDermott replied that right now, cases are being considered part of the cluster. As new cases are identified, if they are isolated incidents, they would not be considered part of the cluster. We would go from the last positive case of the cluster. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

Mr. Saulnier suggested discussion of whether students, especially quarantined students, will be able to remote in while class is going on. Mr. Woodward confirmed that at RHS, Google Classroom is kept up to date, and students who are out due to COVID-19 are currently remoting into class. Mr. Bickford stated that at IHGMS there is no live streaming and students who are out for an extended amount of time follow the assignments on Google Classroom. Mrs. Yacek stated the same at LRES, that students have access to Google Classroom but not livestream. Ms. Leamer asked about those IHGMS students who go to RHS for foreign language classes and the fact that they've been exposed. Does the need for students to be remote involve those students? Mr. Woodward stated those classes are provided remotely. Dr. DeRuosi stated that they checked with the Department of Health about those students who attended the school for one period a day and they were told there is no need to isolate those students as long as they were following any mask mandates in place. Mr. Bickford noted that the lack of bus runs to the high school on remote days means those middle school students will be arriving to those foreign language classes late. He also mentioned the need for personnel to supervise a remote classroom for those students at the middle school.

Ms. Leamer expressed her concern for the middle school students who attend foreign language classes at the high school to continue to be allowed to go back and forth between the schools (when the high school is not remote).

Mr. Harmon asked Mr. Bickford and Mrs. Yacek to comment on what providing remote instruction in their buildings would look like and how it would be managed. Mr. Bickford stated that it can be done, but it won't be the quality education we'd like it to be. Mrs. Yacek stated that she would like to talk to teachers, they do a great job communicating with families, it might work for them.

Mr. Harmon stated he's still unclear as to where administration stands on allowing students who are home due to COVID-19 to remote into class at LRES and IHGMS, which is already happening at RHS. Dr. DeRuosi recommended allowing it, with some massages. Having the policy in place at the high school and not at the other schools sets up a level of inequity in the other grades. He thinks we could make it work for each grade level.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to allow students that are out because of COVID, to allow them to remote into classrooms on a case-by-case basis, as parents want at the elementary school and/or middle school starting Tuesday the 12th. Upon roll call vote, Joseph

Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

Ms. Vadeboncoeur asked for clarification as to whether the high school building is also closed to staff. Dr. DeRuosi would like to see the option that if staff are equipped to do so, that they remote from home and empty the building for at least the next two days; that would be the priority. If classes remain remote into next week, he would expect teachers to remote from the building at that point unless they're quarantining at home. Mr. Harmon suggested that those who are not immediately equipped to work at home tomorrow be given the technology to do so by Friday.

There was some discussion about how Seacoast of School Technology (SST) would react if students were required to stay home from SST as part of managing this cluster. Mr. Woodward stated that SST has always been cooperative with the districts. He offered to talk with the SST Principal as to whether she would like those students who are not required to quarantine to continue to come to SST.

Mr. Saulnier asked if teachers should be able to remote in if they are being quarantined or have COVID-19. The issue is that if the teacher is home, the students who are present in the school building still need adult supervision. Ms. Swiechowicz stated that multiple classes of students using Chromebooks can use one large room such as the cafeteria. Mr. Woodward discussed how remote classes have been managed at the high school. He stated that he feels it wouldn't be much different moving forward than it is now. Decisions are made in the best interest of the students. He stated that coverage priority would go to the common core and electives would be second. Dr. DeRuosi asked, regarding remote teaching, is that for a staff member who has tested positive and needs to be out, or would it be for close contacts who need to be out? He believes if it's COVID-19 related and documented as such, that's one issue. If it's someone choosing to be out, that's something different. If COVID-19 related, remote teaching days wouldn't impact a staff member's sick time. Mr. Saulnier, Ms. Leamer, and Mr. Harmon expressed their opinion that any allowances for sick time would be specifically for COVID-19 related absences. Dr. DeRuosi stated that he would like to work on this with the administrative team and then get back to the Board.

Mr. Woodward stated that the SST buses will run tomorrow and SST students who are not quarantining can catch the buses for SST at the high school.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to implement a mask mandate at the elementary school and middle school that will mirror the timeframe that's at the high school. Mr. Saulnier noted during the vote that he had always said that if numbers went up masks may be put into place. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, and Dawn Leamer voted in the affirmative and Tony Clements voted in opposition. Motion passed.

New/Revised Policies - First Reading: The School Board reviewed the following proposed revised policies:

BDB Board Officers  
EEA-R Transportation  
IO Class Size  
JICJ Personal Communications Devices

It was recommended that Honors Physics be added to the exceptions listed in the last line of policy IO Class Size.

Establishment of Superintendent Search Committee: It was the consensus of the Board to establish a Superintendent Search Committee as follows:

1 Business Administrator  
2 Administrators  
2 Teachers  
2 Support Staff  
2 Parents  
2 Community Members

It was agreed that letters of interest would be submitted to the SAU Office by noon, October 18th.

Committee Reports: Mr. Harmon stated that the Transportation Committee continues to receive bus stop change requests, and one appeal is coming forward to an upcoming Board meeting. He has all of the information requested from the bus company and he has started the process of reviewing the routes.

Mr. Harmon stated that the Policy Committee met to review some other policies and to go over remaining financial policies.

Mr. Clements stated that the Budget Committee reviewed the year-end school budget and answered some questions. He asked if town board or committee meetings can still be scheduled at the high school building while students are remote. Mr. Saulnier stated yes, but the mask mandate is in place.

Mr. Saulnier stated that the Budget Committee had emailed and asked if the School District could do our Budget Presentation on November 30th and has not received a response. Mrs. Whitmore stated that she could do November 30th.

Mr. Saulnier stated that the Cable Committee reviewed the cost to retrofit Torrent Hall to do meetings. They're hoping to possibly use money from emergency funds that the Town has. They discussed a few pieces of failing equipment and discussed their budget. Mr. Harmon asked if it's the Board of Selectmen's intent to hold all their town board meetings at Torrent Hall and no longer the high school.

He stated he was trying to understand the logic of expending the money to build this at Torrent Hall when the ability to host meetings is in place at the high school.

Annual Report Card to the Community: Mr. DeRuosi noted that upon his review of the Annual Report Card to the Community, he noticed a steady decline in the percentage of students who are pursuing two-year and four-year post graduate education. It was noted that the RHS SAT information had yet to be added to the document. Mr. Harmon noted that on the last page of the report, Merrimack College is listed twice. MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Dawn Leamer, to authorize the Annual Report Card once completely updated to be released to the community. During discussion it was recommended that the SAU Office distribute notification of the Report Card to the Community more widely, including requesting that notice be posted on the Town website and social media pages. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. DeRuosi stated his appreciation for staff, and that the vaccination clinic recently held resulted mostly in flu shots being administered. Right now things are at a fast pace. He stated that he feels that everyone has come together to work through things.

Inclement Weather/ "Blizzard Bags": Dr. DeRuosi stated that he feels, apart from a few small pieces to tweak, that the plan presented this evening to the Board is a solid plan. They're looking at a possible modification of the day, meaning students wouldn't be in front of a screen for the full day but still have adequate interaction with the teacher. Each of the principals reviewed their individual plans with the Board. During discussion:

- At the high school, the "skinny block" would most likely be scaled down. Mr. Harmon suggested that "30 minutes" instead be stated as "a third of the class."
- Teachers would still be available for help during RAM Time.
- Mr. Harmon suggested that if there's no time to plan ahead, then he would suggest not doing a "Blizzard Bag," but instead a traditional snow day. It was generally agreed that the determination of whether a day would be a traditional closed day or a remote instruction day should be at the discretion of the Superintendent.
- Mr. Bickford described the Response to Intervention block for 4th and 5th grade students. Teachers reviewed data from assessments and students with similar needs are grouped together, or are placed together in enrichment groups. Classroom teachers, interventionists, and special educators all have assigned students. At the end of six weeks the students are assessed to see if there has been growth and students may be regrouped based on those results.
- Mr. Bickford stated that IHGMS WIN time would still be in place during a Blizzard Bag day unless there is an abbreviated day. Mr. Harmon stated that it's his opinion that Blizzard Bag days should not be abbreviated days.

- Ms. Vadeboncoeur asked about what para-educators are responsible for during those days and how that will be recorded, and is there a violation of anything in the contract? Dr. DeRuosi stated that the union president has said we have to discuss this further, that it may be considered a change of working conditions, so we may need to look at that moving forward. Mr. Saulnier asked what the change in working conditions would be? Dr. DeRuosi stated that he hasn't had that conversation yet. Regarding para-educators, Mr. Woodward stated that he thinks Blizzard Bag days would look very similar to remote instruction as they've been doing it, during which para-educators will reach out to individual students.
- Mr. Harmon stated his agreement with the idea that student cameras be on for active learning.
- Mr. Harmon stated he feels the threshold for percent participation should be higher than the state-required minimum of 80%, and that we also need to have a certain percentage of teachers participating for this to count. On a daily average, non-COVID day, what is the regular absenteeism, and then that is the minimum percentage that we should meet. Mr. Harmon suggested 90%. Mr. Saulnier recommended keeping it at 80% in case there is one group of students that can't participate due to unforeseen circumstances. Mr. Saulnier stated he agrees with the 90% requirement for staff. Dr. DeRuosi stated he can get those numbers - staff absence percentages, pre-COVID, district-wide.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to approve the Blizzard Bag proposal put forth by the administration with the amendments made by the Board tonight, which include: teacher participation rate, active RAM Time and WIN Time, and special education para-educator involvement. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

RHS/IHGMS Grading Policies: Ms. Vadeboncoeur stated she felt like it was important to revisit this as the first grading period is coming to an end. She understands that the policy is attempting to tie competency based grading to a number of credits at the high school. She was asking for clarification about if a student gets a D, then they receive no credit? Mr. Woodward stated he re-watched the Board meeting when that discussion was had. He stated that during the meeting, Mr. Saulnier said it best when he said if we're not going to award credit for a D or a D-, why not just call it an F? Mr. Woodward stated that making the decision to not award credit causes confusion. Regarding competency-based grading, administrators have been talking about removing the D grade level altogether since that doesn't show any level of proficiency or mastery. Ms. Vadeboncoeur asked what the options are for the student if they get a D or a D- to bring that grade up so that they can receive credit? Mr. Woodward stated that any formative can be retaken, and that's where RamTime and interventionists can help. Mr. Bickford stated that the IHGMS is very similar to the high school, but not the same. The formative is not used to determine a grade in the way that summatives are. If a student receives a 1.5 on their summative, they're required to retake it. So they have the ability throughout the year to retake those summative exams. At the end of the term if the student is still not doing well they have the ability to complete competency recovery.

Mr. Saulnier stated that the previous Board had looked at students retaking an assessment more than once, and the original implementation of competency based grading in the district did try to marry the traditional grading scale with competency based grading.

Correspondence: None.

Manifest Signing: A quorum of the Board signed the manifest. Accounts Payable total \$685, 701.84. Payroll total \$440,785.10.

Approval of Minutes: MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to approve the minutes of September 15, 2021 with the following amendments: correct the student name during Public Input to Maggie Paris, and add Brianna Waldron as a second student. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed.

Non-Public Session: MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) "Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting." Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Dawn Leamer, Ada Vadeboncoeur, and Tony Clements. The Board entered into non-public session at 8:45 PM and resumed public session at 8:55 PM. Other than the vote to exit this non-public session and seal the minutes (which was moved by John Harmon, seconded by Ada Vadeboncoeur, and upon the Board members being individually polled, was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Dawn Leamer, Ada Vadeboncoeur, and Tony Clements), one motion was voted during this non-public session.

Adjournment: MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Dawn Leamer to adjourn the meeting. Upon roll call vote, Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Ada Vadeboncoeur, Tony Clements, and Dawn Leamer all voted in the affirmative. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,  
Raymond School Board Clerk