

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD**

**JULY 21, 2020**

**MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Tuesday, July 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Kenneth Haag, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Erin Sarris, Vice Chairman  
Karen Jew, Secretary  
Rebecca Howie  
Alison Marsano

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent  
Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services  
Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School  
Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy  
Amanda Morin, Special Education Administrator

**AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

A request was made that the public comment portion of the agenda take place following the presentation on the Return to School Building Plan 2020-2021.

*There being no objection, the agenda was adjusted as requested.*

Vice Chairman Sarris questioned if public comment would also be permitted following the presentation of the Community Resolution on Racism. The Board discussed questioning the desire of the public when reaching that point in the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Brookline School Board ..... [June 17, 2020](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO APPROVE, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

Brookline School Board - **Public Hearing** ..... [June 17, 2020](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO APPROVE, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**NOMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his receipt of a Letter of Intent to Retire from Barbara Sobol, Librarian, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA).

**MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT THE LETTER OF INTENT TO RETIRE RECEIVED FROM BARBARA SOBOL**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**DISCUSSION**

- Return to School Building Plan 2020-2021

Superintendent Corey spoke of the yeoman's work that has gone into the Return to School Building Plan (Plan). The Plan has been tailored to the needs of Hollis and Brookline based on the data available for those communities.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson stressed the importance of remembering the schools never closed; in March when the Governor issued his Executive Order closing the schools, we went into remote learning. It is important, when talking about the 2020-2021 school year, that we note the discussion is around re-opening of our buildings.

The SAU is offering parents the opportunity to have their children remain in remote learning or return to the physical school environment. It is believed, based upon current local conditions, that the SAU can offer this for a September 3<sup>rd</sup> start. Currently in the two communities there are zero active cases of COVID. We have seen, since May, that the data seems to be trending in a positive way for our State; number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths is decreasing. Should this trend continue, it is important to have a solid plan for returning students to our building. We also need to have a plan in the event that the numbers trend in the opposite direction.

This is about parent choice, and the number of parents the Administration has talked to since schools went into remote learning that have deep concerns about the social-emotional wellbeing of their children; depression, isolation, and concerns that perhaps remote learning for their child is second best to an in-person education. Those parents want to see their children get back into the schools. The Leadership Team wants to facilitate that process. At the same time, there have been a number of conversations with parents who are really deeply concerned; perhaps their child or a member of their family is immune compromised or perhaps they are just not comfortable with the risk tolerance that is needed to send your children to school during a pandemic. We need to be able to provide those families with a robust enhanced remote learning option.

To develop a comprehensive return to school model, SAU41 created a task force of working groups comprised of more than 50 school district stakeholders.

The process for planning the 2020-2021 school year began in April. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Governor Sununu issued an Executive Order saying that all schools would remain in remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. At that time, the Task Force began developing plans for the return to the school environment, which included analyzing dozens of government and non-government reports, participating in global phone conferences and State level conversations with various agencies and organizations, e.g. DOE, DHHS, EPA. They also enlisted the help of the school nurses to ensure that the information being looked at is accurate and really informs our decisions.

The Incident Command System (ICS) plays an important role when trying to develop streamlined communication and decision making models. ICS is utilized in emergency management, which is something the SAU does really well. That is the approach that was used for planning for a return to school. A framework was developed based upon critical areas that require attention if looking to provide either a remote option or an in-school option. Many of the reports the Task Force leaned heavily on were from American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (June 25<sup>th</sup> report), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Center for Disease Control (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Learning Policy Institute (LPI) (identified countries that have already re-opened their schools and what those re-openings look like), National Association of School Nurses (NASN), National Council on School Facilities (NCSF), New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-To-School Guidance (issued last week), New Hampshire School Nurses Association (NHSNA), and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Each one of these approaches the reopening of schools from a different lens. Many of the reports provide considerations; things that needed to be thought about before considering a final plan for the reopening of schools. Utilizing the ICS they were able to separate the discussion points into several categories. Stakeholders from within the buildings (teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff) were engaged and each one assigned to one of the committees with representation from each one of the school districts, and they were given the list of considerations from the reports that were analyzed. Each one of the groups were facilitated by either a building principal or assistant principal. Facilitators met weekly with SAU Administration to report out progress and brainstorm. There were over 60 stakeholders throughout the process. Using those guiding resources, they developed a set of recommendations.

Once the work of the sub-committees was completed, a community advisory group was established. That group was made up of physicians, nurses, people in mental health; individuals having real specific expertise when it comes to health and safety. This group vetted the very lengthy plan the team came up with. A summary report was created based upon the recommendations and the vetting of the advisory group, which is what was contained in the agenda packet.

Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent, spoke of a survey sent out at the end of the 2019-2020 school year; one to all families and a separate survey to teachers and support staff who participated in instruction with our students. What was telling and guided some of the work of the team was the family survey. This question was asked directly “Based on what we know today, if precautions are taken, but social distancing was not possible, would your child attend school in person in the fall?” There were highs and lows with an average of 72% yes. That told her our numbers in the fall, if we were to open, were already going to be reduced. That would assist with the ability to hold in-person school knowing that we would have a remote option for those that needed it.

A draft plan roadmap was developed. It is a summary document of a much larger, really detailed document. The summary document was released as part of the agenda. What that document does is shares the options. Families need to reflect on their personal risk and make the choice that is best for them. Every family has their own dynamics and their own comfort level with returning to school.

Option 1 is return to in-person school on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Parents would also select if they were to drop off and pick up their child from school or, if needed, select bus transportation with mandatory mask wearing. In addition, all students will need a dedicated device with them at all times. They can either bring their own device, assuming it meets the specifications, or utilize a district loaned device. The other option is students and families can choose to resume remote learning on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Those families would review and accept remote learning 2.0, which incorporates improvements/changes that have been made to the process as a result of responses to a survey distributed to families and faculty. Those students would also need a personal dedicated device. If needed, one could be provided by the district.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug discussed how each of the options are outlined:

### **In-Person Learning**

Prior to students arriving on campus, parents will assess each child using a brief screening tool, which includes taking a daily temperature.

Parents would be required to contact the school to report any symptoms. Parents are to send their students to school only if they are symptom free and free of exposure. Parents would drop the students off at the designated time or at the bus stop. Students arrive and are required to follow the protocol for entering the school building, including wearing a mask and maintaining physical distancing.

### **Early September**

Training will be provided to students on personal and public health measures, new procedures in the school building, which include identifying which spaces are not available, e.g., library. Training on new technology tools used in the classroom will be provided to students, teachers, and parents (including passwords), and as guidance around COVID-19 changes over the course of the year, students will be provided with updated training.

### **Arrival**

Students will use hand sanitizer at the station prior to entering the classroom and will follow procedures and walk straight to their assigned desk, which is physically distanced per CDC guidelines (6'). Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted she and Assistant Superintendent Thompson visited each of the classrooms and physically moved and measured all desks. They identified that in all of our classrooms, with the exception of some of the kindergarten classrooms, which have a lower capacity to begin with, they could fit 20 desks with 6' of separation. Some of the high school science labs could fit up to 24, which is their max. They feel comfortable in being able to meet CDC guidelines. Students would have their own set of materials, including a charged Chromebook or similar. Elementary students would remain in their homeroom and specialists would travel to them. Food service will offer bagged breakfast and lunch to those interested.

### **During the Day**

If a student or staff member displays symptoms of COVID, they will be masked, brought to the secondary nurse's office (isolation station), and sent home. A review of all spaces was conducted to identify the best location for the isolation station, e.g., has closest access to an exit, provides circulation, etc. A doctor's clearance or clearance by the school nurse will be required for students to return to school. Guidance released earlier in the day states for individuals symptomatic and confirmed with COVID-19, requirements include at least 10 days have passed from when symptoms first appeared, at least 24 hours since the last fever, symptoms have improved, etc. Staff members will be required to follow the established procedures in Human Resources. In the case of a positive COVID test, notification will take place, per State requirements, and contact tracing will begin. Response varies based on tracing. As an example, if the positive test was a preschooler who is driven by a parent directly to school and entered the preschool classroom with potentially 6 or 8 students would have a different response than a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student who took the bus and was in 7 different classrooms with 7 different groupings of students throughout the day. She spoke of the suspected case the District had back in March where the District analyzed the situation, possible exposure, and made a decision believed to be most appropriate given the tracing that was completed. The same would be true for the school year.

### During the Day & Dismissal

Students will wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds periodically. When soap and water are not available, they will use hand sanitizer at the classroom station. Students will have a staggered dismissal to alleviate traffic caused by additional personal vehicles. Students will bring their device home each afternoon to charge and complete homework, as necessary.

### Remote Learning 2.0

Direct instruction will follow the in-person instruction model in regard to the schedule and expectations for learning. Daily live Zoom sessions are required for instruction. Session length and daily frequency are based on district determined best practice, e.g., what a 15-year old is expected to participate in varies greatly from what a 5-year-old is expected to participate in with regard to screen time. Specific expectations for learning will be shared at the onset by the teacher including the mandatory specials in elementary. In the spring, some of the specials became optional; if and when you could participate. As part of the mandated educational curriculum, they will be required in remote learning. Pacing will mirror in person instructional model. Assessment expectations will be shared at the onset.

### Specifics

- Elementary

There will be a required morning meeting. There will be daily Math and ELA mini lessons, Science/Social Studies will be every other day. After the mini lessons, there will be classwork to participate in. After the whole class instruction there will be practice, remediation, and small group instruction. Students will participate in small group instruction potentially via a separate Zoom invite or in a breakout room within the Zoom. Feedback provided in identified format (single location).

- Secondary

ROCK/CAV Block provided. Students log into Zoom following daily schedule. Practice to follow mini lesson. Homework assigned for all students whether in person or remote and will be assigned over Google Classroom. Feedback provided in identified format.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the two documents created; one with the various working groups (lengthy) and the Summary Report, which was included with the [agenda](#). The summary report was outlined.

### Health & Safety

There will be daily health screenings of students that parents are expected to do, which will include temperature checks. A symptoms checklist would have to be completed daily. Noted was that there have been a small number of students in special education who have been receiving onsite services. Many of the health & safety protocols recommended have been in place since March and have been very effective.

Targeted temperature checks will be conducted by the school nurse; students visiting the office, students returning from an absence (for any reason). Masks will be required when social distancing is not possible; at all times on the school bus, in the hallways, if there is a classroom where desks are not spaced 6' apart. Dismissal times will be staggered (different in each building based on the schedule). There will be reduced student movement. Hand sanitizer and wipes will be available in classrooms and common areas.

### **Instructional**

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug went over the plan for instruction. Before last year came to a close, there was an extensive review of the year of curriculum. There was an expectation that some content was simply not covered in remote learning. In the professional development days that follow the school year, teachers began the process of identifying specifically what was not covered, and then shared that through their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with the next grade level. That work will continue. Collaboration time will be built in for teachers to discuss student progress. There will be development of enhanced remediation for struggling students. Instruction in personal/public health measures will be provided for students. Where appropriate, instruction will be moved outdoors. Recommended is an increase in the number of recesses per day for the onsite model so that students are able to begin to reacclimate to working with their peers. Shared instructional materials and spaces will be eliminated. Elementary specials will take place in the homeroom classroom.

### **Technology**

All students will have access to their own device. Students will be assigned a school laptop when one is not available at home, with the expectation that devices will come to school charged each day.

### **Human Resources**

There will be in place restrictions on volunteers. Opportunities for volunteering would be open in some areas but not in others, e.g., reading to a class could be done remotely. Staff development will be provided in evidenced-based public health practices and the use of digital tools. In surveying teachers, tools that were most beneficial, those utilized most frequently, and those believed to be critically important to advance instruction were identified. Those are the ones that will continue to be used. Videos and how-to documents will be provided for teachers as well as families for students who are in remote. Custodial responsibilities will be adjusted to include increased deep cleaning. As part of the approved budget, there is an additional sub-nurse. The SAU is in the process of recruiting for that position. That nurse would be directed where the need is across the 6 buildings. Out-of-state professional development for teachers will be prohibited.

### **Facilities**

Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the expansion of the health offices in all 6 of the buildings within SAU41 to include an additional site; one will be for routine traffic and the second auxiliary location is where any student identified as being symptomatic would be sent. Access to common areas will be reduced, e.g., computer labs would not be needed with each student having his/her own device and the space could be utilized, if needed, for the nurse auxiliary space or additional classroom instructional space. Access to lockers will be restricted. Excess furniture will be removed from classrooms to accommodate social distancing. The SAU is contracting with storage providers to allow for the removal of excess furniture. Airflow will be increased by opening windows and interior doors when appropriate. An independent consultant has been hired to review the HVAC system.

### **Student Services**

Students who are unable to attend physical school will have access to a remote environment. Students will have increased socialization time. At an elementary school level, that could mean an additional morning meeting or additional recess. At the middle school it could be added advisory time or an extended outdoor lunch time, and at the high school it could be expanded CAV Block. Each school will further develop their social-emotional programming. Last year the District implemented the Choose Love Program; the intent is to continue this work.

The social-emotional needs of our students are very important and will continue to be. IEP/504 and student progress meetings will be held remotely. Staff will receive training in the research-based program Mental Health First Aid.

### **Food Service**

The District will move to a grab and go breakfast/lunch option for students including students who are in remote learning. A cashless purchase model will be utilized. No student will be refused. There will be limited occupancy in the cafeteria during lunch times. Donated food items are prohibited. Concessions at sporting events will be suspended.

### **Extra-Curricular**

Guidelines are driven by the NHIAA. There will be temperature checks for students and no mask requirement when engaged in strenuously physical activity. Students will bring their own water. There will be limited public attendance at games per guidelines established by the organizations. Parents will remain in their vehicle during student pick-up. There will be no access to locker rooms by opposing teams and limited facility use by outside groups. School sponsored overnight travel is suspended.

### **Transportation**

Parents are strongly encouraged to provide transportation. Face masks and use of hand sanitizer are required for bus travel. There will be assigned seating (allows siblings to sit together and for easy identification of where students were sitting in the event of an outbreak), and when possible, windows will remain open. There will be routine daily sanitizing of buses. There are Federal regulations that limit some safety protocols being put in place on a bus, e.g., plexiglass.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented the lengthy report from the committees (working document; approximately 45 pages) includes the various considerations, and building level guidelines that accommodate the individual needs of each school. That document allows each school to reflect on the need for that building. Each building has developed their own re-opening committee, and they can take that larger document and apply the standards as they see necessary. Those plans will be vetted through the SAU to ensure a level of consistency and that all health and safety measures are considered.

It also identifies processes and procedures, provides minimum standards/directives for remote learning, and is designed to be nimble, allowing for quick transition from each of the three models; remote, hybrid, and full return, based on current conditions. With local conditions being what they are right now, it is believed the SAU can offer an on-site physical learning environment. That could change in a few weeks. If it does, the SAU may go to a hybrid model, which could be a few days a week or a fully remote model. There is the need to be able to pivot between the 3 models very quickly.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided examples of the material covered in the larger working document, e.g., questions posed, recommendations for addressing in the 3 models, and discussion items.

Under the heading of Human Resources, a question posed was related to the process for staff members who are unable to work or return to work, including telework. All requests would go through the typical confidential process with H.R., and all appropriate laws would be applied to every specific circumstance, e.g., CARES Act, FMLA & ADA.

The recommendation for serving lunch is a classroom model combined with electronic lunch count. If students travel to the cafeteria to pick up food they can state their student ID number as opposed to punching it in themselves and touching that surface.

Under the heading of Facilities & Student Services, the committee looked at expanding the nurse's office to allow for greater isolation. They looked for spaces with increased ventilation. They looked at and were able to create separate isolation rooms, and are looking at different filters for the health office and related spaces to ensure best and clean airflow. With regard to progress monitoring, the District began looking at students and their progress prior to the Extended School Year (ESY). That process will be repeated in September. The thought is that there is potential regression amongst all students, not just identified students, and there is the need to understand what the possible regression is across the board. The SAU is looking at utilization of a number of tools and assessments to get that information. The District is creating an expanded focused RTI time, separate from class time, to offer that remediation and Tier II support to all students who might need it.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of having worked together, as a community, over the past few months to develop this robust plan. Chairman Haag expressed gratitude to the 60 team members who worked so diligently to put this Plan together. He spoke of numerous emails received by the Board, and the intent to provide responses either through answering of questions raised through the public input process of the meeting or following that input.

Kathy Leavitt, 2 Birch Hill Road

Teaches in the Nashua School District. She thanked everyone involved for the work that has been done.

She read the following statement into the record:

*"No one is harmed by non-discrimination training and education. There is real demonstrated harm in communities such as Hollis-Brookline that ignore the necessity of non-discrimination and equity training in education."*

Ms. Leavitt read into the record a statement provided by Kacie Petrin Ellis of 7 Smith Road:

*"While I cannot attend the School Board meeting this evening in person, I would like to write to the School Board to express our family's support of the Hollis-Brookline Non-Discrimination and Equity initiative. My family has lived here for 5 years, and one of our primary reasons we sought out Brookline was for the highly rated Hollis-Brookline school system. We quickly fell in love with the quaint New England charm and small-town community feel. This community is important to our family as we have settled in a beautiful home and made wonderful friends here. While our children have thrived in Brookline schools, they are minorities, and I am concerned that the existing non-discrimination policy is limited in protecting minority children from racism in the school system.*

*Our children need policy and curriculum that goes beyond embracing diversity and tolerance. National and local events have been unsettling, disturbing, and scary for families like mine. Racism is taught and such learned behaviors inevitably will and have spilled over into the classrooms. Implicit bias affects us all, and something teachers must be keenly aware of so that they can effectively teach and engage all students of different backgrounds, races, and ethnicities.*

*I, like many residents, are aware of how costly our taxes are and how a majority of them support our school system. While the added cost of a consultant may seem like an unnecessary expense, we must consider the cost of a discrimination lawsuit against the school system. According to the United States Department of Justice*

*website, regarding the case of the United States of America versus the Falcon School District 49, in 2008 the U.S. Department of Justice started investigating Colorado Springs Falcon School District 49 in response to complaints that the district was not adequately responding to incidents of racial harassment and discrimination in its schools. The modified settlement agreement requires the district to adequately address incidents of racial harassment by keeping adequate records, analyzing those records, training teachers and students, and providing appropriate disciplinary responses. I have attached a press release of the settlement, which delineates the settlement agreement that includes hiring a consultant to “identify any additional measures the district should take to affectively address, prevent, and respond to harassment and discrimination.”*

*I imagine 7 years of an investigation and lawsuit was very costly for the Falcon School district so this is something we must not take lightly in considering simple and effective policy presented in a non-discrimination and equity initiative. Anti-racism and equity benefits everyone.*

*I hope the School Board considers the non-discrimination and equity initiative.”*

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Questioned the ability for K-3 students to wear masks for any period of time, even on a bus ride.

Superintendent Corey noted, at this point, the Plan indicates it is strongly recommended. Last night the Hollis School Board and the Administration heard from a great many residents who indicated the desire to see everyone wear masks and others who are concerned with the issue. At the conclusion of the three school board meetings and receipt of the public input from each, the team will review the input, and come back before the boards with the final recommendation. At that time, the boards will take a formal vote.

Mr. Pauer commented during the Governor’s recommendation he noted 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and below is a grey area for masks. He spoke of the passage of all-day Kindergarten, and questioned if a half-day program would be an option for remote learning. Superintendent Corey stated it would be all day or not at all as that is what was passed by the voters. Kindergarten is now recognized in the school spectrum of K-12.

Mr. Pauer questioned the number of staff members who have indicated a preference/need not to teach in-person, if there will be enough teachers for the District, and if there will be those who only do remote learning.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded the plan is that there will be teachers who are remote and those who will be in-person.

Asked if it is believed the right mix is attainable, she replied “That is the million dollar question.”. On August 1<sup>st</sup> or thereabouts, an electronic back to school registration will be sent out. Although it typically goes out in the middle of July, it has been intentionally postponed in an effort to avoid confusing parents because they would not have been sure of what school will look like. Included in that is a choice of whether the student will be remote or in-person and whether selecting transportation or parent pick-up/drop-off. Once that information and feedback from teachers is received, the process of putting all of the pieces of the schedule together will take place.

Mr. Pauer questioned if it is anticipated the District will be able to educate the students, with all of the provisions required, and still remain within the budget. Superintendent Corey stated costs are being incurred as a result of the provisions being made. The auditors are inhouse this week and the books for this past year will be closed out. Regular quarterly updates will continue to be provided. It will be a difficult year.

Asked what would happen if the entirety of the budget were expended prior to the end of the fiscal year, Superintendent Corey stated the mechanism for that is a deficit appropriation; you go to the taxpayers in March and provide the detail on what was expended and why.

Shannon Sinclair, 1 Lancy Brook Road

Thanked all involved in the creation of the Plan. As a parent, she was thrilled with the Plan; there is something for everybody. She felt it is an unusual and special school district that can actually provide so many accommodations for so many differences. When looking at it as a teacher she had one concern, which led to an idea that led to another thought, and then a question.

She is the Music Teacher at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS). Her concern originally was that she would travel to the classrooms. Specialists will have likely 100 exposures without masks each day. If a child sneezes on her, she brings that into the next room. She is a huge fan, and will likely even give no changes at all, of teaching outside. RMMS has a challenge as there isn't any shade. She believes she can do it in most inclement weather.

It occurred to her that they could Zoom in from the music room into the given classes. Then there is the problem of that being the teacher's prep time. We also need to teach these kids how to do remote learning. She questioned the possibility of the school day being 45 minutes shorter allowing for 45 minutes of all school teacher prep time at the end of the day.

In that case, we would teach music as always, and there would be full community prep time. There would be 45 minutes less student instruction. She thought the students could use that time to have a small bit of their remote learning on their personal device that goes home. They can make that 45 minutes up at home. Not understanding the other issues such a proposal would bring up, she questioned whether it is able to be considered.

Superintendent Corey stated it to be something that could be looked at. There are a number of things that would be impacted by that with the Collective Bargaining Agreements, but it is not something that they cannot at least look at to see if it would work.

Moira Revis, 6 Talbot Road

Stated she was speaking for Kelly Zakar, MSN, Boston Children's Hospital, 5 Cider Mill Road.

*"Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft proposal for re-opening the schools in SAU41. Thank you to the task force and working groups that have contributed their expertise, time and talents in developing the roadmap to re-opening our school buildings."*

Kelly is a pediatric nurse practitioner, substitute school nurse, volunteer in both Brookline and the COOP districts, has children in the class of 2020 and a rising 9<sup>th</sup> grader.

The feedback she wished to provide focused on the health and safety needs of the students, teachers, and staff in the setting of on-site instruction. Specifically, daily symptom monitoring assessments for each child, teacher, and staff member prior to arriving at the physical local. Secondly, supporting the district's school nurses and their ability to efficiently and safely manage the health needs of the students.

*"First, there would need to be a mechanism for self-reporting the brief daily symptom monitoring assessment for each child prior to their arrival at the building or even getting on the bus. While the roadmap does not mention the need for teachers and building staff to complete this affirmation and symptom assessment, it is essential that they are included in this requirement. Each person; parent, individual student, teacher, onsite staff needs to attest whether or not they have any of the following symptoms:..."*

*“Also, they should attest to whether or not anyone in the house has tested for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. SNAP, which is the School Nurses health management software, has the capability to collect this information through the parent portal and has developed the ability for building staff to use it as well. This type of remote affirmation may also be done with a database program or Google form. It is too late to have the students provide the results of this monitoring when they arrive at school as you do not want the symptomatic students getting off the bus and entering the building to be screened by the nurse.*

*Secondly, and most importantly, is the district’s ability and willingness to support their nurses who will be responsible for managing and mitigating the risk for their school and by extension the greater community. Currently, each school has 1 nurse. The middle school has 1 nurse and the high school has 2 nurses. It is important to note that the additional school nurse currently being hired, as bulleted in the Human Resources section of the roadmap, is the same district float position that was budgeted for the last academic year. This position was difficult to fill last year and substitute school nursing positions are difficult to hire for in general. The roadmap does not provide for the district adding any additional nursing support in response to COVID-19 pandemic. The plan for expanded healthcare offices in all schools with a separate location for potentially symptomatic students does not account for the nurse being able to monitor those students in the separate location.*

*According to data collected in SNAP, school nurses average 30-40 visits in the 6 hours of each school day. In each building there are at least 10 children who have medication or treatments administered during the day, and every diabetic student averages 4 visits to the school nurse per day. According to roadmap, nurses will be expected to conduct targeted temperature checks and provide clearance for all students returning to school after an absence. In addition to managing the responsibilities related to COVID-19, the school nurse must also continue to safely administer and document medications and treatments, evaluate students and adults sustaining injuries onsite in addition to communicating with parents regarding student illnesses and injuries. Can they do this; absolutely. School nurses have been able to multi-task and manage many complex health issues at the same time.*

*One of my greatest concerns is that a planned phase out of the SNAP health center Electronic Health Record (EHR) going forward at this time of rapid change and increased responsibilities for professionals. The district’s professional nurses have already asked to postpone the transition for one additional year. The new PowerSchool health module has not been fully developed and the nurses have been advised that this module will not be fully functional until the end of this school year.*

*I have had the opportunity to view the webinar using an EHR to prepare and protect for the reentry during the COVID-19 crisis, which among other things details added tools to manage COVID-19 within SNAP. This is not the time for your nurses in the SAU to change their student health management from SNAP to a new module being released by PowerSchool.*

*Our nurses are going to be under considerable stress this fall with the proposed return to school under consideration. It is not fair nor safe to expect them to put their licenses on the line trying to implement a new documentation platform at this time. As a community and a district we should support them to work with systems that they already use and are proficient with.*

*As we move towards opening our schools September 3<sup>rd</sup>, we need to be thoughtful and have efficient planned approaches in place to manage the guidelines put forth in the SAU roadmap. These approaches must, in my opinion, include a systemic way of submitting and monitoring daily affirmations for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure screening. This approach must empower our school nurses to use the resources and tools available to them to manage the health and wellbeing of our students and communities without added burden. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share this feedback.”*

***Chairman Haag opened the floor for public comment on the Community Resolution on Racism.***

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Noted the Brookline School District already has excellent model policies on all forms of discrimination including racism. Specifically, Policy AC - Non-Discrimination, which states that the Brookline School District shall not discriminate in its education programs and activities, and also has a grievance procedure in the unlikely event that discrimination does occur. Policy KED - Grievance Procedure for Alleged Discrimination is to address alleged violations of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act. Therefore, it is unclear to her why this School Board deems it necessary to expend time, energy, and resources to craft a solution that already exists, and also to utilize taxpayer dollars to hire an outside consultant to evaluate current district policies and practices. Moreover, it is unclear why the expenditure of taxpayer dollars to support professional development and school curriculum as it pertains to social issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion is the appropriate use of taxpayer funds.

She is not against parents or guardians teaching their children about these important issues, but is uncomfortable utilizing taxpayer resources as well as valuable classroom instruction time at the expense of basic curriculum teaching such as English, history, mathematics, science, and the arts. Especially, when a significant percentage of our students are not proficient in these subject areas. The public school district here in Brookline must focus on the mission of educating students in the basics, and leave discretionary teachings to the families.

Caitlin Parikh, 8 Petersen Road

Spoke of her support of the resolution on non-discrimination. She grew up in Vermont in a really small town a lot like Brookline, and was taught she was not racist from the time she was really little. That because they were in a New England town, there were never slaves there, and being racist was bad. That was her world view, and then she left for college and realized a lot of her world view and the way she did things was racist. She wishes that this was something that had been talked about in school when she was young, had a flexible mind, and was able to understand these things and understand how important it is to treat everybody fairly.

As a mother of two, she pleaded with the District to consider bringing in an outside consultant. She commented she didn't know what she didn't know when she left, and she thinks that is where a lot of folks are right now. That is why an outside person is really important because they can take a look at things that we all feel very emotional about.

Scott Grenier, 1 Senter Drive

Spoke in support of the non-discrimination and equity initiative stating his belief it is an important initiative to undertake as soon as possible. While there is a cost associated with the consultant's review of our existing policies, that cost is outweighed by the cost of litigation we are exposed to by not having completed that review. Any judgements against us would likely require us to complete the review that is being requested today.

He also believes that proof of such a review is likely to soon be a requirement for school districts who are accessing state or federal funds. It is a trend that is going across the business community right now. It is understood to be a risk for a potential discrimination lawsuit. If we wait for the requirements to be established we will be competing with many other school districts for the same pool of consultants, and those consultants will become unavailable or unaffordable.

He believes it important to begin this work as soon as possible because it is the right thing to do. We need an outside consultant to complete the review because systematic racism is the system that taught us. We understand that our intentions are not racist, so we assume our policies are not racist, but racism is defined by the person who is experiencing the racism not by our intentions.

A full review of our policies and curriculum is required to ensure we are providing a welcoming environment for learning for all students, and the time to do it is now.

Tania Vera, 6 Nightingale Road

Spoke in support of the Hollis-Brookline Non-discrimination and Equity Initiative. She has resided in Brookline for 12 years, has a master's degree in psychology and trained in assessment. She has worked with parenting, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence support. She is also Latina. During her own education and training she has experienced and witnessed many racist acts across different communities and states regardless of whether they were intentional or not. She provided the example of when she was 15 and transferred from a predominantly black neighborhood in Newark, NJ into a predominantly white community in PA. Despite having excellent grades in advanced classes, and over her objection, her guidance counselor insisted on placing her in a lower track class than she was used to. These were easy, and the classes were also fairly diverse. After several months, by the request of her teachers, she was switched to honors classes. It was a welcome change for her, but she also noted that her peer group became predominantly white. She was the only minority student. She believes the students were tracked based on tests administered in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

It has been a few decades since then, and she is hopeful much has changed since, but when looking at overall U.S. trends, she is not certain it has. She is fairly certain that our local numbers are not reflective, e.g., the 13.4% of the black population in the United States. There is an achievement gap in racial groups overall in this country, which is not reflective of inherent ability, but of systemic racism. Students of color in New Hampshire as well as nationwide are more likely to be disciplined and disciplined more harshly than their peers. That is data from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

Locally she has heard of young children of color being called racial slurs by their classmates, has seen on Town community lists posts about racist words to their neighbors. In June she was having a discussion with someone she believed to be working at a school in southern New Hampshire, not here in this Town, on race, and she wrote to her "In black regions, teachers can't normally teach students. The population is aggressive and doesn't want to get education, just scream for rights. Black children in those schools are crushing constantly computers, furniture, and assaulting teachers." When asked, she did not see her words as racist, which goes to the point made. She stated her belief when you grow up in a system where you don't see it and you believe that you are well intentioned, you don't see it, which is the importance of bringing in an outside professional.

Considering that we live in a relatively racially homogeneous community it is easy to go day-by-day and believe that racism is not present here. She commented she cannot say for certain what practices would need to be changed, if any at all, but does believe it is important to assess our systems. Regardless of the current demographics of the community, the world is very diverse, and it is important to prepare our children for their roles in the larger community.

In fact, in a more homogeneous community, we have to be very intentional about educating our children appropriately on these issues and assessing bias within the system. While contemplating this initiative, she had several questions. What are the racial demographics of the town, students, teachers, coaches, administrators, and how do they compare to national numbers? In this curriculum, how is racism covered? Is black history contained to just one month or are the experiences of black people and other racial groups, which are fundamental to the establishment of our country, part of the curriculum year round? Are there racial differences

in discipline and outcomes? What training is done for cultural competency across teachers, administrators, and board members? How is racism towards students and teachers of color by white students handled? How is the district preparing students here for talking about race in the overall world? She stated her belief many residents would agree that racism is not welcome. She suggested a closer look be taken of the Hollis-Brookline district to see how we can be part of the overall solution for racial inequities that we see present in the U.S. She believes this initiative to be a step in the right direction.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Commented when he saw the initiative proposed to the School Board he questioned what the problem is that is looked to be solved. There are antidotal statements on Facebook, but you have to look and see what is happening in the schools. If you are going to look at this resolution seriously you need to look to see the number of complaints we have had in the Brookline School District related to discrimination. The District has a very comprehensive non-discrimination policy, which talks about non-discrimination for all of the protected classes, and it has been updated frequently as well as the RSA 354-A:7, which is the equal opportunity law in the State. There are a lot of protections within that law, e.g., people can file complaints. There is a separate District policy just for grievances, which has a district Civil Rights Coordinator to handle those complaints when they come in.

If the Board is going to review this, he suggested members look to see the number of complaints in the recent past and if they have been substantiated. Look at that to see if we really do have a problem. Good ideas are always good ideas, until you look at what the tradeoff is between doing something and not doing something. In the school district we have a limited budget and limited time. We are potentially going to be talking about making the school day shorter. If you take something like this and put it ahead and make it top priority, something else is going to have to fall off. You have to figure out what will be the opportunity cost in terms of curriculum, funding, strategic priorities. The harm is really in the opportunity cost of doing something. If we have a problem and it is mandated then we have to do it, but to go ahead and spend money and resources at a time like this is really not the right time, in his opinion.

Values such as racism, sexual orientation, gender, all of those protected classes are values best taught by the parents not by the schools. The school should be teaching us about our government, the U.S. Constitution that all men are created equal. That is where we should focus.

When critically thinking about this proposed initiative that has been brought forward, think about what it means and think carefully before spending money and doing anything. There is no other such resolution in the State that any other school district is doing, and he questions why we have it.

The current policies are very comprehensive. We subscribe to the New Hampshire School Board Association which does a good job ensuring the policies are legally complete and in compliance with RSAs. He does not see the need for this initiative to be funded. It looks like a resolution initiative looking for the problem. We don't have a problem right now. We can revisit it in the future if we do feel there is a problem or if you uncover a number of complaints that justify that expenditure then maybe you look at it.

Scott Grenier, 1 Senter Drive

Encouraged the Board to obtain input from the study body. He is uncertain reviewing prior complaints is the right way to go about it. He believes it very difficult for someone to file a formal complaint, and that people would respond to an anonymous survey.

Kathy Leavitt, 2 Birch Hill Road

From a teacher's perspective and as a mother and step-mom, there are values she teaches her children at home; values that are important to her as an individual, as a mother, as a veteran, as a teacher. There are values the thousand students she has had over the course of her teaching career brought to school with them. Sometimes those values that they learn at home are not compatible with a harmonious, peaceful, productive society. She is in support of parents teaching their children values at home. When your kids come to school and join society-at-large there are values that they must adapt to and adopt in order to become harmonious productive members of those societies. When you participate in society you are obligated to be a productive positive member of that society. One of the ways we learn how to do that is at school.

Moira Revis, 6 Talbot Road

Noted she is a registered nurse who relocated here from lower New York State having been born and raised in New York City. The first thing she and her husband noticed was it is white in this state. If there is one thing that greatly disturbed her when the policy was read out by another member of the public was the word alleged discrimination. That needs to be struck. Harassment and discrimination are in the eye of the victim.

Mentioned was the implication that children from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and under are too young to grasp the concept of using a mask and keeping it on while they are on the bus. That means any child with eyesight issues can't control themselves and not take their glasses off, etc. It is said values can be taught at home for racism, then she expects the parents can make it implicitly clear to these children that a mask can be worn and will be worn all day.

Shannon Sinclair, 1 Lancy Brook Road

Remarked if a little one takes their mask off; the response is not "go to the office you took your mask off". That is not what this is about. It is "well clearly you needed a break; good job listening to your body. Give yourself a little space, take your mask off, get a breather, and put it back on when you are ready." These are little people we are talking about. They just need to be taught.

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Requested those who were in the room do their due diligence, research masks, and be open minded. Seek out studies on both sides. Anyone can find reports, studies, opinions supporting and not supporting masks. Her education is in engineering, and as a result she is a critical analytical thinker. She solves problems. In her analysis, masks do do harm. She feels wearing a mask should be a choice that is respected. does not feel it is constructive to start dividing people over who is wearing a mask and who is not.

Senator Melanie Levesque, 2 McDaniels Drive

Noted a resolution differs from policy. It is a formal expression of opinion or intention made. There are three components to the proposed resolution; to denounce all forms of institutionalized racism by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, to render services from an outside consultant, to evaluate and advise district administration and educators on their policies, practices, and procedures relative to race equity and inclusion, and to develop a plan to address the findings.

This resolution came from members of our community. In part the events of the past 6 weeks, starting with the death of George Floyd were a catalyst. This event unearthed disparities that have long since been present in the areas of education, the workplace, and law enforcement. It is up to each of us to be a part of the solution. This resolution is a first step.

Senator Levesque commented she is the type of person that wants to get along and work with everyone. She does not look at color; she deals with people as people. When she sees people murdered without accountability or hears about young children of color that are told by their teachers “don’t even try because you are not going to pass, you will never graduate” or when she hears about young people in their teens that are stopped for a crime and labeled with a felony which changes their lives forever, those things she feels deeply. It wasn’t until the murder of George Floyd that she felt that she had permission to feel these things and to express them outwardly.

Last night she went to the Hollis School Board meeting. She commended the SAU for the re-opening plan. She heard people talk about this resolution and say things like a consultant does not know our community. She sat there and said it is our community, it is my community too, and how do you know what I feel as a member of our community. We have to remember this consists of all of us. She stated her belief what is needed is someone who is a person of color to be able to articulate some of these issues. She believes it is important to bring someone from outside of the community that the School Board approves.

Another opinion heard was that it is not the right time, we have too much to do. Yes we have too much to do, but this resolution is important, and it is not so much about racism as it is about our humanity and our commitment to understanding each other. Sometimes that takes a deeper look at ourselves. She requested the Board support the resolution, make it their own, and work for all of us understanding the resolution is a declaration of our humanity. It is never the wrong time to do the right thing.

Chairman Haag noted receipt of numerous emails from community members on a variety of issues in relation to the re-opening. The information was consolidated and categorized. Each member of the Board was assigned a category for which they would lead the discussion/response.

A concern was noted with regard to specials as well as specific concern around physical education and respiration (droplets). Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated specifics would come from the individual school. Depending on the activity, it will look different. Certainly if there is singing involved, outdoors would be the location to go to. For physical education there will be restrictions on close contact sports. For example, right now in basketball we won’t play a game but might do skills and drills. Similar restrictions will be in place and change over time. With outdoor activities, often times our physical education classes will utilize the 110 acres we have here and the field at RMMS. Our Physical Education teachers are also our Health teachers. There are a lot of activities that can and need to be done in more of a classroom environment such as instruction around self-monitoring and relaxation techniques. We have plenty of curriculum to cover in both inside and outside larger spaces.

Superintendent Corey added the music teacher at the high school went for professional development and has been trained on the different methods and things that can be used for playing instruments, singing, etc. He will be used as a resource to share his training with the elementary teachers. A lot of the staff in specials have been reaching out and doing their own professional development so they would be well prepared.

Another question was around teachers being different for in person versus Zoom classes. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that is true for the elementary schools. However, in specials such as music, if we have one music teacher then we have one music teacher.

Member Marsano commented there is a very real possibility that we will end up bouncing back and forth between in-person and remote learning. We will have separate teachers doing remote learning and in-person. If and when moving to an all remote learning, would the students continue to have the same teachers? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the in-person teacher would pivot to a remote learning teacher as well, which is why it is so important that we all have the professional development on our digital tools, we are utilizing our

Chromebooks in the classroom or at home so that we are ready to go; there is no learning curve if we have to pivot.

Member Marsano questioned if there would be the ability, once making the decision of in-person or remote, for parents to transition their kids. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided the example of a student who is attending in-person, but has been exposed to a confirmed case. That child cannot come to school for a set period of time. We cannot legally say alright see you in 14 days. We have to pivot that one individual to remote learning. There will be times when it is not necessarily by choice, but it won't be back and forth like "Oh I missed the bus, I will just do remote today.". We cannot do that because it is a matter of switching classes. There is a process that would have to take place for a student to transfer from one classroom to another. Member Marsano provided the example of a parent's work or health situation warranting the child going to remote learning or in-person, and questioned if that parent, in a rare situation like that, would be able to transition their child. Superintendent Corey stated it would be based on the individual circumstances. They are looking to build into the process check-in points throughout the year so that they are monitoring and communicating with families.

Superintendent Corey noted he would likely be coming before the Board with recommendations for slight changes to the school calendar, e.g., traditionally the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week are school days. He believes he will be recommending those become remote learning days for everyone as it would provide an opportunity for an entire week without students in the buildings so that a deep cleaning could be done, data could be reassessed and for remote practice. A similar request may be made for the winter holiday.

Plans continue to be finalized. The desire was to make the presentation to all three school boards and be able to obtain Board and public input.

Member Jew commented the Bedford School District has asked families to make a commitment for the first semester and then in January, can decide if conditions are still conducive to in-person. She questioned if that is an option that would be offered or if parents are being asked to commit to one or the other. The response was they would be looking for parents to commit to one or the other. There will be check-in points.

Vice Chairman Sarris questioned what would be considered an absence. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated for remote learning the difference is mandatory Zoom participation. If you don't show up to morning meeting, you are marked absent. Just as was done in the spring, parents are asked to contact the school if their child will not be able to participate in remote learning. In that instance they would be marked as absent. If the parent does not call, the district will call.

Asked whether there are any recitals planned for the school year, Superintendent Corey remarked if asked today, he would likely say no or that they would be via Zoom. Activities such as parent/teacher open house, will need to be via Zoom. This early in the year, the desire is to keep things very contained and organized. If things continue to trend well, we will open up more.

Asked if the school day or year would be shortened, Superintendent Corey stated he cannot see that happening unless it would be something that would provide assistance in working with students. The school year is always up to the School Board.

Chairman Haag commented the question of a hybrid model has been raised several times. He asked that the reasoning for choosing not to go in that direction be restated. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded preliminary data from families showed that there are roughly 72% that would send their children back, meaning 28% would remain in remote. The class size policy, given that 72%, allows for us to be in a much lower total population in buildings. That combined with a follow-up question that was asked about hybrid/remote/in-

person; there were very strong statements about zero support for a scenario of 2 days on/2 days off because it is impossible for certain families. The instructional sub-committee discussed in-person/hybrid/remote, and came to the realization that if a teacher is teaching one group on Monday and Tuesday and a different group on Thursday and Friday, they can't also be creating video lessons for the Thursday Friday group or the Monday Tuesday group. The instructional coverage would be at 50% at best.

Superintendent Corey remarked when some of his colleagues in other districts are doing this 2 days on/2 days off, it is because their class sizes are between 25 and 30. When they do this, they will be down to 15. We anticipate somewhere between 10-20% of students not attending. That would mean your kindergarten numbers with 10% only would be down to 15, your 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade would be down to 18 as a maximum and 4-6 down to 20. When looking at districts like Bedford or Merrimack, that is because there are 5,000 students and they are looking at the entire district. Their models have to be different.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked for health and safety, that does not reduce exposure for our faculty or students because we have more students traveling in and out of the building just on different days. That increases our cleaning requirements as well. It simply did not seem to be the best model from any perspective.

The question was asked of whether students would be able to supplement learning in a hybrid model through VLACS. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated VLACS is a school that anyone can access at any time. Our students currently do and would be able to in the future. Remote learning or in person it really makes no difference. Chairman Haag clarified that would supplement the curriculum. They would still have to complete all current curriculum. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked there are a few requirements to be able to go to VLACS; typically you enroll in a course or two and demonstrate that you can be successful, and if you so choose, you could then transfer. It is a school in NH, and you could be a full-time VLACS student. Our students could choose to transfer or take supplemental classes. It is a conversation for every individual student. Maybe a student wanted to be in remote, but can't do or follow our daily bell schedule, and then VLACS might be a preferred option for that family, but that is a transfer.

Superintendent Corey stated under the Commissioner's new plan, if a family were to contact the district because they were interested in VLACS and the district was to work with VLACS, we would continue to keep our funding or adequacy money for that child and that child would technically be our student. The question then becomes do you accept those credits. That is easy K-6. It gets a little more difficult 7-12.

With regard to substitute teachers, the question was asked of whether they would be available and what protocols would be in place to confirm the substitute has been properly screened. Superintendent Corey stated substitute interviews were conducted earlier in the day and people continue to come in. They would use the screening mechanism for them. When looking at the pool of funding for substitutes consideration is being given to whether there is a benefit to hiring 1 or 2 permanent substitutes. That would mean you are guaranteeing them employment every day, which you can because you are going to have at least one person out. If we did have a day when everyone was in, there are still plenty of things they could do.

The Administration is looking at a few possible models. Some of the districts that will open remote will likely increase the substitute pool. Some doing hybrid may increase our substitute pools. We pretty much share substitutes right now, which is a bit of a concern.

Brought forward were additional questions posed by members of the community through email communication.

If a teacher were to have to quarantine for 14 days, is that something we are vetting substitutes for in terms of availability. Superintendent Corey spoke of having a permanent substitute and a para-professional. If knowing a teacher would be out for 14 days we would probably first go to the paraprofessional who is familiar with the

students. The teacher can still direct remotely. His concern would be with a long-term illness and an uncertainty of what the substitute pool will look like.

Asked whether we would allow tuitioned students from outside of our communities to attend, he remarked if they are tuitioning under JFAB, that would be Board approved, and those students who, in many instances, have been our students for a number of years, would continue to be. In most cases, they are the children of faculty.

Asked how the SAU will proactively support additional anxiety and stress of faculty, staff and students, Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated part of the selection of the Choose Love Program was that it is universal; components for staff, students, and families. In addition, each building needs to develop deliberate ways to be able to address teacher burn out, stress and anxiety. Choose Love has developed a full remote learning curriculum.

Asked if staff and faculty will receive hazard pay and if sick time will be granted to avoid impacting their usual allowance, Superintendent Corey stated, as a district, he does not see anything happening with hazard pay. If something came out through the Federal Government (some sort of program), that would be something that would have to be discussed at the Board level because sometimes best intentions come with strings. With regard to sick time, teachers get their sick allotment at the beginning of every school year and are able to accumulate, in Brookline, up to 90 days. It is all dependent on how many they have banked. There are some specific pieces under COVID where if they or their child were to contract the disease, there is some availability through H.R. for specific cases. They are all eligible, should there be a concern or health reason, to reach out to H.R. under the Americans With Disabilities Act, and we will provide reasonable accommodations, e.g., some of those teachers may become our first people to go to remote learning. Once it is understood the number of students that will be in-person and how many will be remote, we will start pairing up remote learning.

Asked if there is any opportunity to assist with childcare if teachers must return to school, Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of an email communication from the Director of the YMCA in Nashua indicating there are opportunities for our staff should they be in a position where they have to return to work full-time, but the children in their town are only going part-time. There is an opportunity at a very low cost.

The question was asked of whether the SAU has considered a staggered schedule to reduce the number of persons inside the schools at one time. Superintendent Corey remarked that comes back to the hybrid piece. Additional information will be available in August once the numbers are understood. He believes the numbers will be down. If down by 20% in a school having attendance of 300, we would be down to a number he would feel quite comfortable with in regard to traffic in hallways, etc. with mask requirements.

What does this statement mean in practice: Both students and staff will be required to wear a face covering when physical distancing guidelines as determined by the Center for Disease Control are not able to be achieved? Assistant Superintendent Thompson responded right now social distancing guidelines for the CDC are at 6'. We intentionally used CDC guidelines as opposed to saying 6' in the event those guidelines change. It is not an all or nothing thing with masks. If we have a classroom that has 10 students in it and that classroom is 900-1,000 sq. ft., separating those students by more than 6' would be able to be achieved, and students would be able to remove their masks.

Member Marsano spoke of being a mask proponent, and commented on having done a great deal of research on the wearing of masks. She has pulled a lot of data from Asia because they have worn masks for a very long time; looking at what they did in elementary schools. One influenza study showed they tried vaccines and masks, and found vaccines really were the best thing for the lower elementary because they mess with their masks all the time, and found that making them wash their hands all the time was actually worse because it was a communal activity. In the upper elementary the kids got used to wearing masks. She believes the wearing of

masks slows the asymptomatic spread. Having them in the classroom as much as possible to slow things down is critical so that we can keep these kids in school. She believes having them in school is one of the best things we can do for them.

The question was asked of how feasible open windows and outdoor class sessions are in the winter. Chairman Haag commented kids certainly can go outside in the winter. He is hopeful the school will be open, and parents will be instructed to send their kids in coats, hats, and gloves so that they are prepared for that. Superintendent Corey remarked we have environmental classes in Hollis and Brookline. If the agenda is to take them out, the kids are going out. Noted was that 20° is the standard for recess.

Will there be fully transparent daily reports of potential infection sent home due to health concerns? Will the SAU provide testing and who will track testing and cases? Superintendent Corey stated the SAU is not providing testing. We simply cannot get it at this point. There are State laws around certain childhood illnesses that have to be reported. If the school nurse contacts him and informs him there is a case of COVID, it will be reported to DHHS. We will then be informed how we will react. It is the intent of the Administration to make the call and let families know.

Chairman Haag noted <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/> is the most local resource for testing. It is in the Milford Armory.

Will all of HB be required to get flu-shots and who would track? Member Marsano added, if there is a COVID vaccine, would that be required? Superintendent Corey stated for staff the District provides onsite flu shots and encourages everyone to get them.

Noted was that the district will follow CDC and DHHS protocols in regard to quarantining if having a presumptive positive test. DHHS held a conference call the previous day during which they provided updated guidance to schools. It was sent to the community advisory group and the nurses for feedback (by Thursday) so that the plan can be updated. In essence, anyone who has come into contact with someone who is positive would be subject to a 14-day quarantine. What is being worked out is out of New England travel (restrictions) and how long you keep a student out who exhibits symptoms. Understanding symptoms could be related to allergies, etc., they are trying to be thoughtful because of the implications of excluding someone from physical schooling.

Chairman Haag advocated whenever we have the opportunity to defer to a local or federal guideline versus making our own on the COVID symptom situations, that we do so. Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated his belief that is the essence of this plan.

Member Marsano questioned travel restrictions, e.g., if a student travels outside of New England, will they be required to be quarantined for 14 days? Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated DHHS guidelines that came out were that travel outside of New England would result in a 14-day quarantine. The questions that we have include is it travel as a family, student travel, what if you have a parent who travels for business. There is the need for clarification. Like what has been done with all of the guidelines, the Administration will run through every “what if” and make sure that we have something in place so that when we adopt a guideline it makes sense as the right thing to do.

Vice Chairman Sarris questioned if there is a threshold for the decision to move to remote learning. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated there is not an identified threshold at this time. There is a series of questions that would be asked about the level of risk in terms of the exposure in a school or the district, e.g., we look at the time of year; perhaps just need to close for the week of Thanksgiving where we shift over to remote to do a deep clean. If in a situation where we did not have the substitute coverage and had a number of staff members

who were exposed and on a 14-day quarantine, that could cause a shift to remote. There could be the threshold of the Governor just closing schools.

Vice Chairman Sarris stated the request for a single location where information will be posted, and the importance of informing the public that things could shift at any point in time. Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented that is usually the first conversation he and Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug have in the mornings; they look at the data. John Hopkins is the first website they open. They also look at Nashua Public Health, which is the catchall area for the schools, and the CDC data for our county, state, United States, and world. The Plan presented is based upon the numbers in Hollis and Brookline.

A question posed spoke of installing humidifiers, UVC air purifiers at HVAC system and then noted big cities have come up with innovative ideas to make their crowded places safe. For example, Hong Kong is using robots to dispense hydrogen peroxide in the subway systems and New York is using UVC lighting to sanitize their subway cars.

Superintendent Corey stated buses will be disinfected regularly. They have the materials and equipment to do that. With regard to HVAC, the consultant is saying the biggest thing we can do is air flow; to change the air as frequently as possible and get fresh air in the building. Next Friday he and the Assistant Superintendents will visit a local dentist office where they have installed foggers. They have been invited in to review the system.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug cautioned equipment that is appropriate for say an ambulance, may not be rated for a school environment. There is the need to ensure whatever it is we intend to do is rated for the space it is intended to be used in. Superintendent Corey added some of the systems have a limited positive affect and a huge outlay of cost.

How often will bathrooms be cleaned? Superintendent Corey stated the SAU is looking at regular protocols for the custodial staff, which are still being worked on. There are two sets of bathrooms; some in classrooms and other communal. Surface areas will be cleaned regularly. The Administration is looking at reducing the shifts for custodians to be more 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> shift. That is one of the reasons we probably won't have facilities open at night (won't have custodians).

What kind of impact will this have on the budget for next year if necessary changes need to be made for safety purposes? Superintendent Corey stated it will be a difficult year. He has already made the decision not to fill the open science position understanding the funding might be needed for a remote/classroom teacher. The Administration is pulling back on some of the expenses in preparation for the unanticipated. He is concerned with being in 20-25 year old buildings and what might come back from the HVAC report.

Are there areas/rooms in the schools that will not be utilized due to issues with existing ventilation, mechanical systems, size of room, etc.? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded, in the Brookline School District, we don't have any known spaces that won't be utilized for ventilation purposes. However, there are spaces that won't be used in their traditional capacity. We are reinventing spaces. Some might become storage; some might become a new instructional space. The computer lab will absolutely not be used as a computer lab for this school year; however, the space will be used.

Vice Chairman Sarris commented on the Board having heard from teachers. There was one concern about the time incorporated for professional development plus all of the stuff that they have to do with their classroom space; how will that be accounted for in the amount of time that they have?

Superintendent Corey stated there is the potential the Administration could come before the Board in August with a request to start school September 8<sup>th</sup>. If something like that occurred, it would be because of the desire to add more professional development. He has asked if staff could start earlier and then re-look at the school calendar. The Administration has had ongoing discussions with the union president and legal counsel to go over a Memorandum of Understanding around working conditions because it is a changing environment.

Noted was that in one of the proposals either from the Commissioner of the Board of Education or the Governor, three additional days of professional development were added that a district has the right to put anywhere, and those would count as instructional days. He would not necessarily want to use them all up on the front end only because if we had to go to remote learning he might decide to do a couple of professional days. Chairman Haag questioned removal of objects in the classroom and whether teachers would be responsible for doing that. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated every year, everything is removed, and floors are waxed.

Desks are put back but not necessarily exactly where the teachers want them to be. That is work that they do. However, in terms of arranging the desks, they will make the building principals aware they need to look at every classroom and ensure they are meeting the specifications. If a teacher cannot figure out how to create the spacing, we will get that done for them. Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the Joint Loss Management Committee, which does routine building inspections that involve going classroom to classroom throughout the year. One thing that has been talked about is adding those inspections prior to the start of the school year.

Vice Chairman Sarris commented on the idea of tents. She suggested that could make outdoor learning more of a norm/opportunity to have it be the classroom. She questioned if that is something that, from a facility standpoint, is a possibility. Superintendent Corey responded he and Assistant Superintendent Thompson had a discussion earlier in the day around that possibly being one of the items that is not budgeted. They may choose to lease for a school year. They are also looking at where they would be placed. We have to balance all of the other fears we sometimes have as school administrators with children being outside, e.g., reverse evacuation drills, etc. He stated his belief those will be seen.

Will families be asked to limit non-essential travel outside of New Hampshire during the school year, and will they be required to report any travel outside of New Hampshire? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked essentially the answer to the question is yes, we will. What specifically that will look like is something that will be updated by the end of the week.

How will the death of a student or faculty member due to COVID-19 be handled? Superintendent Corey stated it would be handled the same way any death is handled. We work with our State counterparts to do everything we can to prepare building, families, and students, and would support them through the entire process.

Will there be a task force identified to meet regularly throughout the year in order to assist this Plan, respond to concerns, and adapt to needs? Superintendent Corey stated the advisory committee has already been informed that they will remain in place for the year. Each of those individuals brings an expertise that we don't have. He spoke of the level of community support and knowledge that is always readily available.

Will bus drivers be tested regularly? STA has not talked about testing bus drivers. Superintendent Corey remarked, it is a company decision he is uncertain they have fully made. Their bus drivers will wear masks, will have very similar protocols in calling in, and will be encouraged not to drive if having any symptoms. What STA, as a private entity is doing, aligns very well with what we want done.

Asked if they are aware they will have the staff to provide busing, he indicated we have staff +2. Right now the mechanic and dispatcher, who are also drivers, do not have assigned routes.

Will the bell schedule be adjusted to allow for any changes in bus routes, staggered arrivals or departures, and would the students miss instructional time as a result of that? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked overall, but some kids won't be missing something that another child would have. The SAU is looking at staggering by a few minutes just to get carpool in and out and then allow for buses. Each building has a specific task to figure out all the details. RMMS and CSDA are pretty well configured for carpool. There are a few other schools she is more concerned about in terms of location, close proximity to the road, and lack of space for vehicles.

What does lunch service look like? Will it just be bagged lunches? Will children still have an opportunity to walk through the line and select hot meals? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that will vary by building, but it is bag breakfast and lunch only.

Are there specific procedures/protocols to determine which teachers are selected for remote and which teachers are selected for in-person? Part of the process will be based on the needs of the individual. As an example, if there are teachers who cannot teach in the building because of a pre-existing condition, the priority would be to utilize those people in remote first. If it gets to the point where we have more remote students, they will start to look at approaching specific staff. One of the pieces of concern is too many people at one grade level. The unions have already been informed if necessary, someone would have to be moved, and that could be late in the year.

How do we provide adequate movement breaks for students who are sitting at desks all day, in bad weather, etc. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked they will be at desks, but will be 6' apart in all directions from their peers. There are plenty of opportunities for movement breaks that we already participate in in the classroom. The same movement breaks would take place in addition to going outside, etc.

Do you have questions or needs from the community, e.g., do you need people to start doing the interview process just to have backup substitutes, etc. Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated that to be the biggest issue; we need substitutes. Superintendent Corey spoke of targeted volunteers; if someone could give an hour. When the little ones are going to the bathroom sometimes it takes someone standing there saying did you wash your hands. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented August will be really busy. Once the registration is out, it is a process. This year it is more critical than prior years to get that completed and communicate with the buildings the plans for the year. For the elementary schools, class rosters have already been created, but have not been released because the expectation is they will very likely change. There is the need to plan for that and the only way that can happen is if we know the intention of the family.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented we need the community to be patient with us. This is brand new for all of us. It was really difficult moving into the remote environment, and is even more difficult planning for the return to school. There is no roadmap for us to look at.

Chairman Haag commented masks for children would likely be a very helpful community donation to all the schools. Superintendent Corey noted the Hollis Brookline Rotary has already stepped up with a donation for masks. It's one of the things they did as a geographic region.

Vice Chairman Sarris commented during one of the Governor's press conferences he mentioned CARES Act funds; the State is going to ensure we don't need any hygiene supplies. She questioned if the SAU has received any specific information. Superintendent Corey responded there had been opportunities throughout the summer to acquire PPE. Kelly Seeley has done yeoman's work on that. The CARES Act funding will go through the Title I allocation formula. We choose as a SAU not to take Title I because we get very limited funds and the amount of paperwork and hoops required to be jumped through do not make it worthwhile. We will still get our CARES Act fund allocation, but it will not be large dollar amounts. Total across the SAU will be about \$30,000. There is talk of another stimulus bill where they would be sending out more money to schools. He understands why they used Title I, but a student is a student, and he is hopeful that the next round of funding would just be more of an equitable split between districts.

Member Howie questioned if a teacher at high risk has no choice but to go back to school, could they require that the students wear masks in the classroom, and who could enforce that? Face shields are not necessarily required, but it keeps the surgical mask clean if there were droplets to fall on it. It might look not scary but different to younger children. It is another layer. Superintendent Corey stated the SAU has face shields

already. If you think of speech and language, it will be very important for children to be able to see the person's lips. They will be used from an educational standpoint as well as to assist faculty. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, what you are asking about is a reasonable accommodation. He believes there will be parents who will want their child to be in a classroom where there is constant mask wearing (perhaps set breaks). He believes that will be able to be accommodated. He goes back and forth on the K-3 mask issue because again what is coming out now is even more in favor of masks. If we are going to make it through to June, we are going to have to take that approach.

Chairman Haag questioned if there would be power strips available for students whose laptops require charging. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked there is no expectation that a student is actually on them for the 7 hours. However, the expectation is they are ready to go when discussing this is how we access Google Classroom, this is how you access where the assignments will be, etc. Chromebooks can last 8 hours without needing to be charged.

Chairman Haag questioned having an online tool where students can be affirmed before entering the school so that we are not dealing with that onsite. He spoke of appreciation of the concern expressed regarding nurses moving to a new tool during what is probably the most stressful year of their careers. He questioned if there is the thought that would be easier and if it has the application capability where we could delay that a year.

Superintendent Corey remarked the process around the SNAP program started about two years ago. It is not perfect timing. He is working with the nurses trying to arrive at a solution. He is uncertain he can make the solution happen because the SNAP program doesn't comply with State law HB1612. We have had some concerns with data privacy. If it doesn't meet certain specifications, there is the potential that system is hacked easier than others. It hasn't happened. He spoke of the great respect for the nurses who have offered a great deal of advice, support, and guidance during this process. The issue is one he hopes to be able to resolve. He has indicated he would be able to give them an answer by Friday.

There is agreement with looking to have the affirmations before the start of the school day, and the hope parents would, if there is a negative response, not bring the child to the bus stop or building. Their worry is the sheer volume of information. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated, the Plan currently states the expectation that it is done prior to boarding the bus and getting in car pool so that we are not doing that symptom verification upon arrival.

Vice Chairman Sarris expressed her appreciation to the attention to the social-emotional learning that has been placed on the Plan. When we went into remote learning something was said to the teachers, and it was the right thing. It was such the right thing that it got to her; she saw it in the way the teachers conducted themselves, in her kids, and she felt it. That is what social-emotional learning is in her mind. It is great that there is curriculum and training, but it is something that comes from the top, a culture in the school. It will be incredibly important because when the kids go back to school it is going to be a lot like March. We cannot expect it to be different. There will be teachers who will be dealing with all of the issues discussed tonight, e.g., wearing masks, classrooms being different, they have to meet new students for the first time in this environment, their health, etc. If these teachers do not have the space and ability to feel good, that will be reflected in the students. She is hopeful when the year starts, there is space for that to happen. There are a lot of concerns about catching up on instruction and regulations. None of those things will matter at all if the teachers aren't in a space where the students can function. We have been so fortunate that so many of our teachers know this and are naturals at it. We also can't expect it to be natural to everybody. Whatever it is you said to our teaches in March, do it again. It is going to be harder for them because they don't know these kids. They knew their students in March. She knows the teachers have this, and she wants to ensure they have the space to develop those relationships, that trust, and that bond with their class before they move into anything instructional.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented it begins with social-emotional learning. We have students and staff returning to the building who have experienced trauma. Some of our students have been isolated for 6 months, have seen horrific things on television whether it is related to a pandemic or to race. When students experience trauma, they are unable to learn. It literally changes the pathology of the brain. Last year as we were unveiling our social-emotional programming we kept coming back to that concept of trauma and how we introduce trauma informed schools. That will be a big piece of what we need to do. If we don't do that work, none of the instructional work that we intend to do is going to be able to happen effectively. That means we need to have a lot of recess and we need to have a lot of finding ways to celebrate little things.

Member Marsano commented the entire country is behind academically; none of us are where we would have been before this. The important thing is to get these kids back emotionally, socially, where they need to be. Academics will come. They have plenty of time for that.

Member Jew commented on the importance of supporting the teachers.

- Community Resolution on Racism

Superintendent Corey stated the desire to have the Resolution vetted by legal counsel. There is a difference between a Resolution and policy, and the desire is to provide the community with a clear understanding of those differences.

Were we not in the midst of a pandemic the proposal for a consultant would not have been brought forward. When the group brought this forward a month ago the concern was that there simply was not the bandwidth to address it. This is an issue of great importance to him as it is an issue he hears about from children. When he talks to students in grades 7-12, this is a topic for them.

He would look to come back before the Board at its August meeting with a legal opinion. He has reached out to the Anti-Defamation League. They have a program that is sort of self-guided. His concern there is whether we have the skillset on this complex issue. He has a diverse background on this topic and is quite comfortable with it, but believes fresh eyes on an issue is a good thing. He reached out to a consultant who spoke at the Superintendent's Conference this year. This is what he specializes in. He resides in the State and has worked with many prestigious colleges and universities on the matter.

He commented no matter what approach is taken, this will be a slow walk, not because he is trying to delay something, but because this is something you have to get right. He has communicated with Senator Levesque and a few other families of color within the District. They have shared their thoughts. They are looking for the discussion to begin, and are not expecting a solution tomorrow.

Vice Chairman Sarris stated her belief the reason she believes there to be a sense of urgency to this is because a Resolution, from her understanding, is an opportunity for the Board to express its opinion on a matter. If there is a consensus on the way the Board feels about something, it is an opportunity to tell the community that this is what we believe. They tend to be timely, because it is a response. In this case it is a response to the community asking for it. There is a large enough number of people in the community to get behind this, and they are looking to understand the position of the Board. Once the legal opinion is received, she would be okay with having the conversation and expressing the opinion of the Board. The process can be a slow walk, but she believes there is an expectation from the community to provide a response in terms of the Board position.

Chairman Haag agreed with the remarks of Vice Chairman Sarris; however, noted the importance of the language within the body of the Resolution. He is supportive of obtaining a legal opinion. He believes this to be a matter of socio-emotional learning and something that aligns with the curriculum.

Superintendent Corey remarked his efforts have been focused on the re-opening, but he did reach out to the Anti-Defamation League in Boston and they sent a proposal, which is more of what he would refer to as a document used to self-guide your district through a process. There is a firm having a representative in Manchester that has done this work for Yale University and a number of different organizations. He spoke at the Superintendents' conference, brought many points to the table. He reached out to him and requested a proposal, which has been provided.

The Resolution was not placed on the agenda as an action item as it is expected to be another issue that will generate a good deal of public input. He would like to ensure there is ample time for residents to be informed of the resolution and provide guidance.

Member Marsano commented this starts with racism but extends far beyond that and is applicable to so many things in life. The ability to be introspective and look outside of yourself will apply and allow growth for our children and their skillsets in life in a vast number of ways.

## **DELIBERATIONS**

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Authorizing the Board Chair to sign the Federal General Assurances

*A copy of the General Assurances was included as part of the [agenda](#) packet for this meeting.*

The documentation the Chairperson is required to sign acknowledges the Board is aware of acceptance/receipt of federal funding and the obligations associated with that acceptance, e.g., Title II (teacher professional development), Title IV (technology focus), and the IDEA Grant (special education). The obligations associated with acceptance are reviewed through the Business Office and then by the Auditor. Acknowledgement became a requirement several years ago when it became known that some boards were unaware of the receipt/acceptance of federal dollars and/or the obligations associated with acceptance.

**MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON TO REPRESENT THE SCHOOL BOARD, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT HAS CONSULTED WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, IN FURTHERANCE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD'S OBLIGATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE ENUMERATED IN RSA 189:1-A, AND PURSUANT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD'S OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL FUNDS THE DISTRICT WILL BE RECEIVING AND OF THE GENERAL ASSURANCES, REQUIREMENTS AND DEFINITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SAID FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND RSA 91-A:3, II (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Erin Sarris, Alison Marsano, Rebecca Howie, Karen Jew, Kenneth Haag 5  
Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

*The Board went into non-public session at 9:23 p.m.  
The Board came out of non-public session at 9:30 p.m.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ADJOURN  
SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO  
MOTION CARRIED  
5-0-0**

*The July 21, 2020 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 9:31 p.m.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_