

Board of Directors – FSAS MINUTES

03/17/2022 Meeting

Approved 04/14/2022

Meeting date, time 03/17/2022 6:00 PM Meeting location: via Zoom

Meeting called by Sally Morris, Chair

Type of meeting Regular Meeting

Facilitator Sally Morris, Chair

Secretary Carolyn Beem,
secretary

Meeting called to order at 6:05 PM

Quorum of 5 present at start of meeting

Attendees:

- Sally Morris, Chair
- Joe Mattos, Vice Chair
- Carolyn Beem, Secretary
- Ben Kramer, Treasurer
- Susan Doughty, Board member
- Kimberly Allen, Board member (6:10 PM)

Also Present: Jacinda Cotton-Castro, Executive Director

Additional Attendees: Becky Ives, Mara Wiggin

Members of the community

AGENDA TOPICS

Public Comment: On whether to making indoors optional

Penny Collins (comments were submitted in advance): expressed strong support for making masks optional indoors. Need to keep focus on safety. Would like to adopt CDC recommendations.

Jennie and Nathan Raby: School has been a bastion of safety; we have seen a decrease in cases; Nathan: my preference is to continue with masks for a few more weeks - this is a big experiment and we do not know how this will play out. Appreciate the caution the school has demonstrated. Don't jump on the bandwagon but wait a few weeks longer. Jennie: Fully support extending the indoor mask mandate.

From zoom chat:

Amy Philips: In support of optional masking and continued situational discretion in response to testing.

Stacy Williams: I'd love to see masks become optional now that numbers are so low

Elisha Anderson: The board has always followed CDC and DOE GUIDELINES; Nothing else should matter. You are making personal opinions board guidelines. If a family feels they need to mask they have the ability to. Our kids are all over each other outside so there goes the whole argument on avoiding droplets. We are in the green. The school is 3 weeks 100% negative pooled testing- Cumberland and Androscoggin are GREEN

From Megan's iPhone to Everyone: There are more counties than just Cumberland and Androscoggin. Portland schools are still masking.

From Elisha Anderson: Portland is optional. And the majority of our students are in Cumberland and Androscoggin

From Amy Phillips: Just to remind everyone we do pull from 3 counties

From Penny Collins: Portland has gone to optional masking, We are like 90% Cumberland and Andro.

From Megan's iPhone: Maybe so but I'm located in Oxford County and my child counts I really think we need to listen to the medical professionals- and how school is going we have been negative!

From Elisha Anderson: Oxford is green

From Amy Phillips: I'm going to head out, but I cannot express enough how much it means the amount of effort and consideration that is going into the healthy and safety of our kiddos

Approval of February 17, 2022 Minutes:

Motion to approve: Ben

Second: Kim

Discussion: none

Approved: 6:0

Executive Director Report

In addition to the Executive Director's report, Jacinda walked through the process of addressing the pandemic for the last 2 years and expressed gratitude for the heroic efforts of all involved.

Highlights: Lottery - very successful; had some of the highest numbers - 22 on the waiting list for pre-k, almost as high for other classes. Will have the first violin concert this spring (mostly outside) for 52 young violinists(!); 25 students in private music

lessons; 8th Grade graduation scheduled; staff benefits package rolled out; rolled out 'infinite campus' data support system.

Informational

Committee Updates

Health Committee: Sally Morris and Susan Doughty (committee chair) presented information and recommendations for implementing new Covid protocols e.g., optional masking, and walked through a powerpoint presentation. Health COmmittee recommended continuing with indoor masking.

Board Discussion:

Ben - risk and balance has shifted, but that is no longer the deal breaker; we need to continue to be cautious; with Spring coming we need to be spending more time outdoors; let the parents and the kids decide whether to mask indoors. In full support of ending the indoor mask mandate.

Kim -We have children in the school that are not eligible to be vaccinated, and I wish more of our kids were vaccinated, which would make this an easier decision. That is a large part of the struggle - if more kids were vaccinated this would be a different conversation.

Joe - this is a dilemma - it's right vs right; our policy makers should have had this same data as we are considering, so I have a hard time not to follow the guidelines of the Governor and policy leaders. For almost 2 years we have been following the guidelines from our leaders and should continue to do so. Parents should be exercising their choice and the option to mask or not. In support of ending the indoor mask mandate.

Susan - we need to look at the data and where it is coming from; pre-Delta the masks started coming off but when we looked to UK and Europe and the surge. We are now seeing a very infectious variant that is clearly surging. If we decide to take masks off it will be a very short time period before masks are back on.

Carolyn - in favor of making masks optional, with the proviso that the health committee continue to review the health data to make recommendations as appropriate. We should continue to rely on CDC and DOE guidelines as we have in the past.

Sally: Part of what we are struggling with is there is no deciding formula/matrix. Committee's reasoning - the community wide risk factor is what tipped the argument. The masks alone are not the problem. The data that is being reported is being reported faster than what is being adopted by government agencies. The kids have been wearing the masks for two years and have done well. There are two sides of the argument, but we are all in agreement in general on one point: We all want to get to "indoor masking optional". The question is when. And if metrix change we have to change our policy.

Becky: Pre k needs to be considered separately as the majority is ineligible for vaccination.

Policy needs to be updated regarding pooled testing

Motion to approve the adoption of CDC guidelines for optional indoor masking, once the Health Committee makes appropriate changes to the current COVID policy, to be effective March 28, 2022. This policy does not include the Pre-K class: Joe

Second: Ben

Discussion: How to make changes to policy and practices, if we need to reverse this policy in the future

Motion tied: 3:3, does not pass

Motion to approve continuing current COVID Policy until April 4, 2022. Board directs the Health Committee to draft policy recommendations to reflect discussed changes to COVID Health policy, including optional indoor masking by March 28. Board will reconvene on April 4 to consider approval and adoption of changes : Kim

Second: Joe:

Discussion: None

Motion passed : 6:0

Motion to revise current COVID policy to remove the daily Covid symptom checklist, effective March 18, 2022: Ben

Second: Carolyn

Discussion: need to consider how to re-implement if cases surge

Motion passed: 6:0

Committee reports

Personnel - tabled

Education -tabled Joe Mattos (chair) submitted report in advance

Governance- tabled (ongoing work on Board manual and policiies)

Calendar

Discussion regarding changes to current calendar - June 16 is last day of school (177 student days), With 175 student days last school day would be June 14 ; 173 days it would be June 10

Executive Director requests consideration of June 10, with June 14 and 15 as Professional Development days. Change requires DOE approval and notification to Commission.

8th Grade graduation is scheduled for June 15.

Board approves Executive Director to request from the DOE final school day be June 10, with 2 days following to be teacher PD days: Ben

Second: Susan

Discussion: What is the process and reasoning?

Motion passed: 6:0

Finance - Ben (Cair and Treasurer) provided an overview to support his submitted report. Great news is the benefit package has been updated! Next budget workshop is scheduled for April 9.

Motion to approve the February Treasurer's Report: Ben

Second: Carolyn

Discussion: None

Motion Approved: 6:0

Executive Session

Motion to enter Executive Session(s): 1 M.R.S.A.405.6.A to discuss employment of officials appointees or employees: 8:30 PM

Motion by: Carolyn

Seconded: Ben

Discussion: None

Motion passed: 6:0

Motion to exit Executive Session(s): 405.6.A : 8:46 PM

Motion by: Susan

Seconded by: Carolyn

Motion passed: 6:0

Motion to authorize the executive director to begin the process to hire a part time MSW as discussed in Executive Session: Susan

Seconded: Joe

Discussion: None

Motion passed: 6:0

Other Items/Closing

Meeting Evaluation: Board norms and protocols

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

Budget Workshop: April 9, 8:30am

Special meeting : April 4

Board retreat part 2: May 14

Regular Board meetings:

April 14, 2022 (adjusted for April break)

May 19, 2022

June 9/June 16

Motion to adjourn: Ben

Seconded: Susan

Passed: 6:0

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM
