

Board of Education  
July 23, 2020 – Special Meeting  
ZOOM Meeting

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Mary Tomasi, Suesen Hickey, Amy Domeika, Jessica Morozowich, Joanne Rose, Mitchell Koziol.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Vice Chair Chris McGlynn.

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:** Superintendent Jeffrey Burt, Principal Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara, Jack Jackter Intermediate School Principal Elise Butson, Director of Teaching and Learning Charles Hewes, Director of Pupil Services and Special Education Kathleen Perry, Director of Education Operations Mario Hurtado, Director of Human Resources Shannon Ramsby, Darren Smith Director of Digital Learning and Innovation, Chief Financial Officer Maggie Cosgrove.

## **1. MEETING OPENING**

### **1.1. Call to order.**

Chair Mary Tomasi called this Special Meeting to order at 4:04 pm with a roll call for attendance. A quorum was present.

## **2. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

An email was received from Chris Faulkner noting Center for Disease Control recommendations for the HVAC system asking if those steps have been considered or addressed.

## **3. PRIORITY DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM**

### **3.1. Adjustment of 2020-2021 School Year Calendar**

The Commissioner of Education waived the 180 day requirement to allow 177 days of instruction. The other three days will be for teacher training. Teachers will return August 26 and students on August 31, 2020.

**Motion by:** M. Koziol

to approve the proposed adjustment of the 2020-2021 school year calendar.

**Second by:** A. Domeika.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve by those present.

### **3.2. Presentation of 2020-2021 School Year Re-Opening Plan**

Superintendent Burt presented the highlights of the 2020-2021 School Year Re-Opening Plan stating that this is considered a draft as things change almost on a daily basis. This 30 page document will be sent to the State tomorrow and will be available to the public on the website.

The committee comprised of administrators, teachers, nurses, parents, and custodial staff. While the State provided guidelines, the schools are required to present their own plan. The committee started on this plan before guidelines came out and it includes all enacted suggestions.

There will be a review and an opportunity for the public to ask questions.

This plan is for Risk Mitigation and is not 100% risk free. It is meant to minimize the risk of spreading the virus while learning.

School clubs will be virtual or small groups.

Concerning sports, the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) guidelines will be available soon.

Outside groups using the school facilities still to be determined.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) requires schools to open at 100% participation. The schools will start with in person learning. Pre-K to Grade 8 will study in cohort groups, staying in one classroom. No lockers will be available, special classes will be in same classroom, physical education will be outside when possible, music will be limited and outside when possible.

Principal Peel said Bacon Academy will be following a semester model. Groups will be determined by last names. Group A will meet Monday and Tuesday, Group B will meet Thursday and Friday with distance learning on Wednesday allowing for cleaning.

The CSDE plan allows students to remain home for an indefinite period of time. This will be at home learning not home schooling.

Communication will involve weekly messages and regular surveys. There will be immediate communications with any changes. [COVID19@colchesterct.org](mailto:COVID19@colchesterct.org) is available for general questions.

Superintendent Burt is planning a video presentation to answer questions posed by the public. Questions may be submitted to [planquestions@colchesterct.org](mailto:planquestions@colchesterct.org)

Superintendent Burt emphasized that the Re-Opening Plan will be updated to the Board and the public when changes are made and answers to unknown questions become available.

Chair Tomasi opened the meeting to comments as several citizens were online.

Tamelyn Zuel asked if a child that stays home could return to school at a later date. Superintendent Burt stated a week's notice would be required for return. T. Zuel suggested additional support through Zoom so the at home student could be more engaged with the classroom.

Board member J. Rose asked about Pre-K. J. O'Meara stated they usually have 14-16 children in a class but at this time do not know how many will attend.

Erika Melmed asked if there was a plan for foreign language students. Principal Bennett stated that they are trying to match students for a cohort. E. Melmed then asked if staggered morning start times may be possible due to parents dropping off students at different schools. Superintendent Burt stated that things will remain flexible and may have to be reworked as situations arise.

Samantha Van Zilen asked if class size will be impacted. Superintendent Burt stated that it has been determined the existing class sizes for Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will remain the same. Classes are not being split.

No further comments were received.

**Motion by:** J. Morozowich

to vote in support of the 2020-2021 School Re-Opening draft plan to be sent to the State.

**Second by:** J. Rose.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve by those present.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Tomasi adjourned this Special Meeting at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade  
Recording Secretary