



Sutton School Committee

Sutton, Massachusetts 01590

The Sutton School Committee met remotely on MONDAY, August 31, 2020 via Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/92384979169?pwd=UCsxSUdzaDUrWWFqRDVhVWxxNENQdz09>
Meeting ID: 923 8497 9169; Passcode: 659861.

School Committee Members present at the meeting were Paul Brennan, Chair; Peter Tufts, Vice Chair; Bruce Edwards, Secretary; Kristen Feifert Clark; and Nathan Jerome.

Administrators present at the meeting were Theodore Friend, Superintendent; Nancy Konisky, Business Manager; Ted McCarthy, High School Principal; Gerry Goyette, Middle School Principal; Denise Harrison, Elementary School Principal; and Jessica Merriam, Simonian Center Principal.

Guests present at the meeting were Christina Tuomala, Athletic Director; Mike Whittier, President of Sutton Teachers Association; and Elaine Valk, President of Sutton Education Support Association.

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Mr. Brennan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and reviewed the script on conducting remote open meetings.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Forum (Join by Phone: 1-929-205-6099)

Erika Osborne, a parent, inquired how parents would be notified of the weekly meetings discussing the return to the hybrid model and how this information would be received. The Superintendent will report out at each School Committee meeting. The meetings are posted on the Town's website.

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda

Mr. Jerome moved, and Mr. Tufts seconded, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Jerome, Yes

Mr. Tufts, Yes

Mr. Edwards, Yes

Ms. Feifert Clark, Yes

Mr. Brennan, Yes

Carried 5 -0-0

Agenda Item 4 – COVID-19 Update

Updated health and safety documents were sent to staff and families. These documents are also posted on the schools' websites. Staff and student training in health and safety has been developed and scheduled. Staff received two days of training on Zoom and Google Classroom. Parents of students in preK through grade 5 will be offered training in Zoom and Google

Classroom. A meeting with High School and Middle School parents took place. Parent meetings for the Simionian Center and Elementary School are scheduled for tomorrow evening. Over the next two weeks, staff will be planning for both, hybrid and remote, models to prepare for the start of school. Superintendent Friend reviewed the survey results from parents regarding the learning model chosen for their child. Ms. Konisky is working with AA Transportation to plan student transportation. Attorney Long continues to negotiate with AA Transportation to come up with a resolution of the contract. There are a total of 12 STA members and 6 SESA members for which accommodations to work or a leave of absence must be made. A meeting with these members and the Union Presidents took place so that legal options could be reviewed. Overall, staffing is in good shape other than needing to fill two long term sub positions; one for Special Education and the other for Middle School Spanish. The grant received from the federal government that needs to be spent by December 30th will need to be updated. This grant was submitted for COVID supplies and staffing needs, including 10 long term subs, which would allow for flexibility during the fall. However, there are not a lot of people looking for these positions. Delivery date for staff laptops is the middle of September and Chromebooks is the end of October. For Opening Day, the staff reported directly to their buildings. PTO provided grab n go breakfast and we provided grab n go lunch. Once in their classrooms, they participated in Zoom trainings. It was very different than what a normal school day would look like. Staff is excited to get back to work and see their students. Most training with students will be done when the students are in school; however, the High School has conducted some training prior to their return. Middle School created a prerecorded Zoom meeting showing parents what the first day of school will look like.

Agenda Item 5 – Fall Sports

Superintendent Friend received numerous emails from parents and some very well written and thoughtful emails from student athletes outlining the benefits of sports in High School. After contemplating the impact of COVID-19 on our students, especially the High School students having only a few years left of school, and knowing that sports is a part of Sutton's culture, as well as its numerous benefits for students, Superintendent Friend made the recommendation to run the sports program following DESE and MIAA guidelines. All of the sports in the fall will be outside, which will minimize the spread of the virus. Christina Tuomala presented the modified athletic programming offered for the fall. A vote of the committee is not required because we are in a hybrid model and are able to authorize going to the proposed schedule beginning on September 18th.

Agenda Item 6 – Criteria to Return to Hybrid Model

Superintendent Friend shared the list of criteria that would be used as a metrics for students to return to the hybrid learning model with the School Committee, Administrative Team and Unions.

Basic data may be gathered such as:

- Were there any cases of COVID-19 during the first month?
- What is the rate of infection in the community?
- How many kids go home sick each day?
- How many letters are sent to families advising that a child went home sick?
- Attendance – Is there a drop in attendance because parents are nervous about sending their child after being advised of a sick child in their class?
- Survey responses of students, faculty and parents after the first two weeks of hybrid model

- Adjustments to DESE and DPH guidelines; for example, if testing improves and results are returned in quicker fashion – does this change our ability to go back to a hybrid model?
- When we do 2 week full remote – what does attendance look like under remote? Are students showing up every day?
- Survey responses of students, faculty and parents after the first two weeks of full remote
- How many families opted for full remote?
- What is the rate of virus in the communities around us?
- Did other districts have to switch to full remote sooner rather than later?
- Feedback from Superintendents of other communities
- Is there an increase of children experiencing emotional trauma as a result of being home or in a hybrid model?

The metrics will be discussed weekly at the administrative level and brought to the School Committee for discussion and updating. Feedback and/or suggestions from the School Committee and parents are welcome. Once we are in full remote and a decision is made to return to the hybrid model, the return date will probably be November 1st to allow parents time to make changes in their schedules. It may be possible for students in Kindergarten and grade 1 to be in-person by the first of the year if everything is going well because the classrooms in those grades are spacious enough to have 18 students socially distanced. Regarding social/emotional health for students, our adjustment counselors and guidance counselors continue to reach out to students and are meeting with them in the building as needed. Surveys can be a double-edged sword in that results may support students returning to hybrid or in-person, but it may not be safe to do so. The committee will look to the Superintendent and Administration on whether or not a return can be done safely. We are awaiting more guidance from the state on the requirement that students and staff receive a flu shot.

Agenda Item 7 – Second Reading of Policies

Policies ACAB, EBCFA, IHBHE and IBHE-E were reviewed. Suggested edits to Policy EBCFA/Face Coverings were presented. A definition of acceptable face masks should be included.

Agenda Item 8 – Adjournment to Executive Session

Adjournment to Executive Session will be moved as the last item on the agenda because there will not be ratification of the STA Agreement.

Agenda Item 9 – Ratify STA Agreement

This agenda item will not go forward.

Agenda Item 10 – New Business/Agenda Items/Action Items

A request was made that information from the High School that is placed on Facebook should also be sent out to parents and posted to the school's website as not everyone has a Facebook account.

Agenda Item 11 – Adjournment to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the STA Agreement and not reconvene in Open Session.

At 8:50 p.m., Mr. Jerome moved, and Ms. Feifert Clark seconded, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the STA Agreement and not reconvene in Open Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Jerome, Yes
Mr. Tufts, Yes
Mr. Edwards, Yes
Ms. Feifert Clark, Yes
Mr. Brennan, Yes
Carried 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Guillen
Recording Secretary

Documents:

Minutes (08-10-20, 08-13-20)

Executive Minutes (08-10-20)

Bill Schedules (08-13-20, 08-20-20, 08-27-20)

Athletic Update (2 slides)

Policies ACAB, EBCFA, IHBHE, IHBHE-E