

STAUNTON CITY SCHOOL BOARD
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA
Called Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2021

The Staunton City School Board convened in the Rita S. Wilson Council Chambers of City Hall, 116 W. Beverley Street, Staunton on Monday, April 5, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., for a special called meeting with members in attendance as follows:

Kenneth Venable, Chair	Amy Wratchford, Vice-chair		
Robert Boyle	Natasha McCurdy	Christine Poulson	Ronald Ramsey
Dr. Garrett Smith, Superintendent/Deputy Clerk			
Brenda Lovekamp, Clerk			

The Chair called the meeting to order and called upon Dr. Smith to present.

Dr. Smith provided a brief introduction to the presentation and asked Stephanie Haskins, Executive Director of Instruction to provide the instructional update regarding transitioning to increased in-person learning.

Instructional Update

Stephanie Haskins reviewed the recently updated CDC guidance, which now permits students to sit 3-feet apart as long as masks are worn. She noted that CDC guidance has not changed for buses, eating or other unmasked situations, or when singing/exercising. She provided information regarding any potential schedule changes for this school year and the plans that are currently underway for the summer programs and the 2021-2022 school year.

Items for consideration of any potential schedule changes this school year were reviewed, including:

- the current hybrid/virtual learning calendar
- a draft of what the calendar could look like should the Board vote to move to a 4-day per week in-person learning schedule yet this school year
- the net gain of instructional time for students would be less than 2 days
- possible student and family impacts which could result from a schedule change at this time
- the potential of a classroom teacher change for approximately 368 elementary and middle school students as many of the SCS teachers are teaching both in-person and virtually
- the need for two additional workdays prior to the start of a new schedule change in order to reset the classroom settings and class sizes, prepare for food services, and adjust the arrival and dismissal processes.

The planning currently happening to prepare for the summer school programs was reviewed, including the following updated plans for summer school programs at the elementary, middle and high school levels, referred to as the SCS Student University:

- The elementary program, running from June 7 - July 2, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., will serve approximately 300 students, 5 days per week, with academics during the mornings and enrichment activities with YMCA during the afternoons each Monday through Thursday, and an additional full day of enrichment with the YMCA on Fridays.
- The middle school program, running from June 7 – July 1, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., will serve approximately 120 students, 4 days per week, with academics in the morning and extension camps in the afternoon.
- The high school program, running from June 7 – July 1, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., 4 days per week, will serve approximately 200 students and offer courses in both morning and afternoon sessions.
- Transportation, breakfast, lunch, and snacks will be provided at all levels of the summer programs.

The work currently underway in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year was reviewed, including:

- the goal to maximize in-person learning time
- the 2021-2022 draft calendar, which provides for 5-days per week of in-person instruction (draft calendar scheduled for School Board review and consideration at the April 12 School Board meeting)
- planning for a virtual option to be available by application for a limited number of students who have proven success in this model
- reviewing school start and end times for possible adjustments, particularly at the middle school
- reviewing childcare options for families
- planning for hot spots to remain with families where needed, no matter the mode of learning
- working on curriculum adjustments for full in-person pacing and alignment with new assessments.

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School Board Review and Consideration

Board members engaged in a time of discussion regarding the consideration of whether to move to a 4-day per week in-person instructional model this school year or to continue in the current hybrid model to complete the 2020-2021 school year. The discussion included:

- the impact a schedule change at this time of the school year might have on students and families
- the need to still maintain 6-feet physical distance at mealtimes
- the time needed to survey families and prepare for any changes
- concerns regarding a schedule change when end-of-year testing is taking place
- the preparation time needed, especially for those teachers currently teaching both in-person and virtually
- the potential for so many students to have to adjust to a teacher change at this point in the year
- the possibility of having to add extra bus runs in order to maintain the proper distancing on the buses
- the potential need for school class schedule adjustments to handle class changes, etc.
- the concern that the number of students in some classes, especially at the middle school, would make the proper distancing difficult.

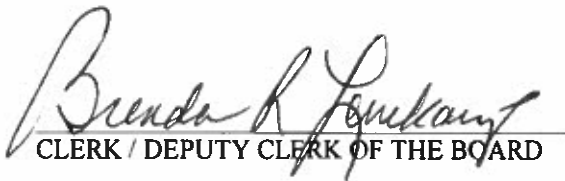
Amy Wratchford made a motion that the school division continue with the current hybrid instructional model through the end of the 2020-21 school year. The motion was seconded by Natasha McCurdy. The motion carried, according to the votes recorded below:

Votes: Christine Poulson–aye
Amy Wratchford–aye

Robert Boyle–absent
Natasha McCurdy–aye

Kenneth Venable–aye
Ron Ramsey–aye

Having reached the end of the published agenda, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 6:37 p.m.


CLERK / DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD


CHAIR / VICE-CHAIR OF THE BOARD