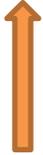


Our Mission is to prepare and support all students within a culture of excellence to do their best and to be their best, so that each can be a successful contributing citizen, able to adapt to change and to successfully respond to the future.

**REVISED: 6.0**  
Teacher Resignation



**RSU #16**  
Mechanic Falls \* Minot \* Poland  
the 9<sup>th</sup> Regular School Board Meeting  
for 2019 - 2020 was held  
Monday, April 13, 2020  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Remotely Via ZOOM**

Present: **Mary Martin, Steve Holbrook, Norm Davis, Mike Downing, Mike Lacasse, Laura Hemond, Melanie Harvey, Ed Rabasco, Scott Lessard, Travis Ritchie, James Crouse, Norm Beauparlant, Joe Parent**  
Absent: Chelsea Clavet, Lou Goulet  
Student Representative: **Lily Cote-Powell, Amy Fryda**

## MINUTES

### 1.0 CALL TO ORDER: Mary Martin, Chair

Pledge of Allegiance & Mission Statement

**Mary called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.**

Pursuant to subsection 403-A of 1 MRSA (Maine Revised Statutes Annotated), we will now confirm that each member of the Regional School Unit 16 School board can both hear and be heard. We will do this by calling the roll, members present are asked to say Yeah. We ask all other members to listen and report any audio difficulties when the roll call is complete.

Poland	Minot	Mechanic Falls	Student Rep
<b>Ed Rabasco Yes</b>	<b>James Crouse Yes</b>	<b>Chelsea Clavet - absent</b>	<b>Amy Fryda Yes</b>
<b>Joe Parent Yes</b>	<b>Laura Hemond Yes</b>	<b>Lou Goulet - absent</b>	<b>Lily Cote-Powell Yes</b>
<b>Melanie Harvey Yes</b>	<b>Mike Downing No</b>	<b>Mary Martin Yes</b>	
<b>Norm Beauparlant Yes</b>	<b>Mike Lacasse Yes</b>	<b>Scott Lessard Yes</b>	
<b>Norm Davis Yes</b>	<b>Steve Holbrook Yes</b>	<b>Travis Ritchie Yes</b>	

*Due to the change in the School Board meeting format, the School Board is asking members of the public who would like to attend and/or participate in the meeting, to complete the questions in the link below, so a ZOOM link and password can be sent to you. <https://forms.gle/akDrrPLEfpZ3HFNu8>*

We now would like to confirm that members of the public who are remotely attending the public proceeding are able to hear all members. All participants can send a message via the Zoom chat feature on the right of the screen. Recognizing that this is the board's first time conducting a meeting in this manner to help combat the spread of COVID-19, we ask the community and all members to proceed with patience and an understanding that the district staff and board members are doing the best they can in an unprecedented time. As a reminder to conduct an orderly meeting, all board members and community members must remain muted and wait to be recognized by the chair before speaking.

### FOR ALL VOTES

Pursuant to subsection 403-A of 1 MRSA, item D. –“All votes taken during the public proceeding are taken by roll call vote”. To the question before the board, I will call the roll, those in favor of passage are asked to say yea, those opposed say nay; members wishing to abstain may do so by stating abstain.

Poland	Minot	Mechanic Falls	Student Rep
Ed Rabasco	James Crouse	Chelsea Clavet	Amy Fryda
Joe Parent	Laura Hemond	Lou Goulet	Lily Cote-Powell
Melanie Harvey	Mike Downing	Mary Martin	
Norm Beauparlant	Mike Lacasse	Scott Lessard	
Norm Davis	Steve Holbrook	Travis Ritchie	

**2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (10 minutes)**

Mary Martin reminded members of public that Remote School Board Meeting Rules allow for two opportunities for public comments. First for comments that do not address the budget and second, public comments on the budget after the budget presentation and board discussion. During both opportunities, the policy guidelines must be followed. You will be called on by the Chair, identify yourself by name and address, no complaints or allegations against district employees are allowed. Anyone who doesn't follow guidelines will be stopped. A reminder that the zoom chat should not be used to make comments, only for audio difficulties and to raise hand.

Amy reviewed technical considerations for the meeting, including "raised hands" function.

There were no public comments on non-budget items.

**3.0 RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: (5 minutes)**

Congratulations February Optimist Student of the Month 8<sup>th</sup> grader Dominik Frechette, from Bruce Whittier Middle School. Congratulations March Optimist Student of the Month Stephen Tufts from Adult Education. Mary gave praise to the superintendent and assistant superintendent for their leadership through these challenging times. Mary also recognized staff members for feeding students and taking care of their needs. Thank you to Travis Ritchie for his 3D printing to make face masks for health care workers as shared in the newspaper.

**4.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:**

**5.0 PRESENTATION: (10 minutes)**

**6.0 CONSENT AGENDA INTRODUCTION: (5 minutes)**

- Approve 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting Minutes 3-9-20
- Approve Friends of RSU 16's Meeting Minutes - 3-13-20
- Approve New Teacher Hires: None
- Approve Teacher Resignation:
  - Kimberly Rand, Special Education Resource Room, Grades 4-6
- Notification of Support Staff New Hires:
  - Susan Weeks, Bus Driver
  - Robert Chaisson – Coach, Varsity Football
- Notification of Support Staff Resignations/Retirements:
  - Dave Snell, Bus Driver
  - Joan Dyer, Ed Tech - PCS
  - Ryan Bentley, Ed Tech - PRHS
- Sub Committees March Minutes – No meetings were held
  - Operations
  - Personnel & Finance
  - Educational Policy Committee:

Motion: by Joe Parent to accept consent agenda

Seconded: by Norm Beauparlant

Vote: Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

**7.0 ACCEPTANCE OF THE FINANCIAL SUMMARIES: None**

**8.0 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: (10 minutes)**

The current enrollment of Regional School Unit #16 as of March 5, 2020 is:

Minot Consolidated School (266), Elm Street School (274), Poland Community School (481), Bruce M. Whittier Middle School (257), and Poland Regional High School (477) for a grand total of (1,755) (-3 from the last report).

Our Monthly Town Managers Breakfast Meeting on April 1, 2020 was cancelled.

We do still have our Subcommittee meetings on April 27, 2020 (remotely).

I will be sending out a revised Budget Time Line after this evening's meeting and it will be posted on the district website.

The entire world has been placed upside down since the last time we met. We have asked our staff and teachers to do the impossible over the last month, by instantly shifting to remote learning, no contact, social distancing, wear a mask in public, clean every surface, wash your hands for 20 seconds and possibly do all of this for the remainder of the school year. I must say that I do not like this world very much with all these new overwhelming demands. Even though we have asked the impossible, I'm proud to say that RSU 16, as one, is making education happen in this very unprecedented time. I would like to thank every single RSU 16 employee for their dedication, selflessness, and love for your students and the caring for one another.

There were no questions from the board.

#### **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: (10 minutes)**

Amy Hediger shared the three phases of our remote learning education plan. Staff and students left school on March 13<sup>th</sup> expecting to return, but things moved really quickly. The response from staff and families was remarkable, as if we had already made plans. We have worked very hard to get to where we are today. Administrators are leading the buildings. The administrative team has been working together to phase in our educational plan. We have had three goals:

- The first has been to maintain sense of connectedness with all of the teachers and the students. This began on the very first Monday after we went out of school. Making sure students felt that the school was concerned about them was our priority.
- The second goal is to support our teachers who did not sign up for remote learning. Families are dealing with this crisis on a personal level, but teachers are mixing both sides of their lives. We are trying to find the right balance between school responsibilities and personal responsibilities.
- The third goal is to try to make sure students are engaged in education, and we are doing the best we can to make sure students are participating and engaging in daily learning activities.

These three goals are in all three phases of our remote learning plan:

- Phase 1 during the first week was to connect and communicate, making sure students were OK while we started building our online communities to prepare academic work. We felt we needed to take care of Maszlo (basics such as food and shelter) before Blooms (academic goals). We quickly transitioned to:
- Phase 2 that provided low stakes optional leaning for students, assuming that we would be back to school quickly. Today looks very different, given that our return to school is uncertain. We are slowly transitioning to:
- Phase 3, which will focus on sustaining this huge change for the remainder of the year.

Mary Martin congratulated staff on the learning plan. Amy directed folks to the "RSU 16 Learns" section of the district website.

#### **9.0 NEW BUSINESS:**

To consider DRAFT 2020-2021 School Budget to go forward to the Budget Informational Meeting

Mary Martin - Our process started back in February by creating a committee of school and community members. This group met on February 25<sup>th</sup> for a day to review all of the budget proposals and listen to high priority positions the administrative team was proposing. The group met again on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and approved a budget proposal to move forward to the board, which we are looking at tonight. We are still in the budget development phase and looking for feedback. We will have a public budget presentation for feedback and then another board meeting where the board will finalize the budget. There will be a two-part voting process, which the dates will need to be reconsidered given the governor's recommendations.

Ken Healey - We have a budget that is coming forth and many have expressed concerns about the budget. Procedure requires that the budget will go before the board and then after hearing comments from the public, the board makes a final decision. We are asking for \$24.8 million, which is up \$1.7 million from last year. We received an additional \$1.1 million from state subsidy, and we have received assurances from the state that this money is still going to be given to us. Negotiations with two of three employee associations have been finalized. A new state law requires us to get the starting teacher salary to \$40,000 over the next 3 years. This year teacher salaries are up 5%, which will help get them closer to the regional average. A 5% increase was also negotiated for staff. Other employees, not represented by associations, will get 3%, unless their job is equivalent to one that is under a contract (i.e. Administrative Assistant). Three new positions are in the budget: Dean of Students at MCS, a Kindergarten Ed Tech at ESS, and an additional World Language teacher at PRHS.

Cost centers were shared in terms of how much each center is budgeting for. In Regular Instruction, the increase is mostly salaries. Special Education increases are due to our out-of-district placements, as well as salaries for teachers and

support staff. Other Instruction increases cover academics and athletics. Support Staff budget changes are due mostly to health benefit changes. System Administration Superintendent salary line is up because Amy Hediger, as Assistant Superintendent, had her salary moved out of Student and Staff Support. School administration increase due to salary increases for school administrators. Transportation increases are due to protentional increases in salary, health benefits, and fuel. Facilities increase due to salaries. Debt Service has a small reduction to pay for the middle school addition. Adult Education (\$70,000) and Capital Improvements (\$200,000) are not in this document and must be voted on in separate articles by law. When we review the Revenue document, these two amounts are reflected in the total proposed budget. I know these are difficult times, and it changes our thinking about the budget. We still have obligations to educate our children and pay our staff what they deserve. We continue to spend less than other districts our size, \$2.9 million less than the state average. We aren't keeping up with salaries, and we need to try to recruit and retain good people.

Stacie Field - Reviewed the revenue page. Starting with local revenue, the required local amount of 8.28 mils this year is down for next year to 8.18 mils. However, our town valuations went up, so this explains why we have an increase even though mils went down. The bond on the middle school addition is prorated based on the district's cost-sharing formula. Additional local money, above and beyond EPS, is also based on the cost sharing formula. Total local revenue needed for this budget is \$11,207,080 million. We have included the increase in state revenue, as well as increases in state agency client funds and national board certification stipends. Other revenues we have included are the three tuition students and interest income (which will drop substantially due to the economy). We will be using a large amount of our fund balance. We are allowed to carry 3%, but by using more we will be bringing the fund balance to 1.9%. The overall budget we are proposing is \$24,163,772 million, a 7.6% increase from last year. This document provides each town's proposed increase and percentages, which includes Adult Education and CIP. The additional tax impact in each town based on a \$100,000 home are: \$62.69 increase in Poland; \$18.42 increase in Mechanic Falls; and \$61.61 increase in Minot.

Ken Healey - Added that as of March 13<sup>th</sup>, this year's budget is frozen for all non-essential expenditures to try to realize some savings. Additionally, the DOE just came out with the idea of creating a reserve account, which might allow us to use some of our savings next year pending board and voter approval. Our intent is to save as much as possible.

#### **School Board Discussion of 2020-2021 DRAFT School Budget**

Steve Holbrook - Clarifying that with the additional funds from the state, we are asking for \$1.7 million increase?

Stacie Field - Said yes, \$1.7 million is the total increase.

Travis Ritchie - Asked for more detail in Student and Staff Support Article 5, and why there is a big decrease.

Ken Healey - In the technology line, we are trying to streamline techs for our support staff by buying more cost-effective devices.

Amy Hediger - The big decrease in Instructional Support reflects Amy's shift of salary to the System Administration cost center. Some of the money is being used to create a part-time technology integration coach and part time tech support positions because we have not been able to fill a fulltime tech support position for two years.

Stacie Field - States that the ESS guidance change is the result of change in personnel.

Norm Beuparlant - Looking at the entire budget that was originally proposed and now, is the benefits line only health insurance?

Stacie Field - No, it also includes social security and dental insurance. The only benefit line that is separate is Maine State Retirement.

Norm Beuparlant - Is the Maine State Retirement line new to this process?

Stacie Field - It's about 4 years old in terms of the budget process.

#### **Public Participation in the 2020-2021 DRAFT School Budget**

Aaron Ouellette, Mechanic Falls - He recognizes that we are very early in the economic storm and no one can predict what the long-term economic problems will be. He expressed fear that the budget will be a burden. He asks the board to look hard at new positions to make the budget more bare bones. He doesn't want to reduce teacher salaries. The three towns need a break and we need to make things easier for the towns. He fully supports adding to the budget once things are better.

Terri Arsenault, Mechanic Falls - agrees with Aaron. Question - when she spoke with Stacie earlier in the process, she heard that salaries in the System Administration cost center would be getting 5% across the board. Is that true?

Ken - Some will get 3% and some will get 5% because the position aligns with support staff.

Ken - Proposed revised timeline for budget: June 2<sup>nd</sup> public presentation, June 8<sup>th</sup> school board meeting to approve final budget, June 24<sup>th</sup> district budget meeting, July 14<sup>th</sup> budget referendum vote.

Motion: by Ed Rabasco to approve budget as presented for purposes of sending it to the public informational meeting

Seconded: by Joe Parent

Motion carries, 10 board members voted Yes with roll call vote and 2 voted No

Ken Healey verified weighted vote outcome -734 yes, 107 no

To approve resignation - Rick Benoit, Principal

5/6/2020 2:18 PM

Mary Martin thanked Rick for his service and wished him well.

Ken Healey thanked Rick for his quality leadership to the district and to PCS, and wished him well as he moves to GNG Middle School.

Motion: by Norm Beuparlant to accept with regret Rick Benoit's resignation

Seconded: by Norm Davis

Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

To approve 2020-2021 School Calendar

Ken shared that the calendar made sense 2 months ago when it was first proposed, but now moves the June workshop day to August to give teachers and principals time to plan for the return to school. He recommends approving the calendar.

LRTC will submit a regional calendar to the state once we submit our approved calendar.

Motion: by Norm Beuparlant to approve calendar as presented

Seconded: by Mike Lacasse

**Discussion:**

Laura Hemond - can you explain the difference between teacher workshop and teacher compensation day?

Ken Healey - teacher compensation day is in exchange for student-led conferences that take place during extra hours at night and after school.

Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

To appoint teachers to a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year probationary contract and annual contracts

Ken - Teachers have gone through a rigorous process through administrators, and these are quality people we would like to retain.

Motion: by Ed Rabasco to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year probationary contract and annual contracts

Seconded: by Joe Parent

Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

To approve Graduation Requirement Waivers for the Class of 2020 due to the COVID-19 Virus

Cari - Proposes adjusting graduation requirements for the class of 2020. The request is to reduce English to 3.5 credits, reduce

social studies to 3 credits and waive Comparative Government and Economics, reduce Math 4 expectations to semester 1 only, waive co-curricular requirement, waive Senior Celebration, reduce 24 credits to 20, as long as all required academics are met.

Motion: by Joe Parent to approve Graduation Requirement Waivers for the Class of 2020 due to the COVID-19 Virus

Seconded: by Norm Beuparlant

Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

**10.0 OLD BUSINESS:**

**11.0 POLICIES:**

**12.0 REPORTS TO THE SCHOOL BOARD:**

Student Representatives: (5 minutes)

Amy Fryda and Lily Cote-Powell - Amy is reaching out to friends and other students, and has been trying to go outside, but her motivation is down. She knows that teachers and administrators are working hard, but the cancellation of everything has made it hard to do school work. Lily shared that she and other seniors have been surveying the class about ideas for graduation.

Report of the School Board Chair: (5 minutes)

- Superintendent Evaluation Committee March Minutes  
Mary Martin - this committee hasn't had any more of these meetings, but you do have minutes. Next steps, Ken will do a self- reflection, and on May 8<sup>th</sup> a survey regarding Ken's performance will go out to board members, the administrative team and central office staff. School board members are expected to sign theirs. The committee will then meet with Ken in June and the full board will discuss his evaluation with him at the June 8<sup>th</sup> board meeting in executive session.
- Attendance
- LRP/Board Governance

**13.0 ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:**

None

**14.0 COMMUNICATIONS:**

**15.0 HANDOUTS:**

**16.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**17.0 REMINDERS:**

**18.0 ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion: by Joe Parent to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

Seconded: by Travis Ritchie

Motion carries, all board members voted Yes with roll call vote

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth J. Healey