

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

May 18, 2021 at 8:15 AM

Remote meeting via Zoom**1. Call to Order**

Chair Kerry Ni called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She stated that the meeting was being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Attendees were advised that the meeting and all communications during the meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. Any participant who wished to record the meeting was asked to notify the chair at the start of the in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording. Chair Ni advised that Josh Ross would be recording the meeting for the Hingham Anchor.

Members Present: Kerry Ni, Carlos A.F. DaSilva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Jennifer Benham

Central Office Present: Superintendent Paul Austin, Ph.D. and Assistant Superintendent James LaBillois, Ed.D.

Visitors Present: No sign in as this was a remote meeting.

2. Chair Ni noted that this is an emergency meeting for the sole purpose of reviewing the mask policy in light of the Governor's new guidance given on May 17, 2021.

Dr. Austin stated that the issue to discuss today is regarding mask wearing by students outdoors, and that the recommendation is that the Committee review and amend their policy, which at this time requires students to wear masks outdoors. Dr. Austin also stated that more guidance from DESE is expected and other issues brought up by the Governor's new guidance will be discussed with the HEA.

The Committee discussed the Governor's new guidance allowing for the removal of masks during outdoor activities. The Committee noted that the current policy is to require masks outdoors, and discussed amending the policy.

Questions and comments from the community included:

- A request that teachers and administrators take into consideration that some students will want to continue wearing their masks, and to reinforce conduct expectations to avoid student conflicts
- A comment suggesting that reconsideration be given to Senior Class activities in light of the new guidelines
- A question as to what the end of the COVID restrictions mean regarding next school year
- A question as to how the Committee's the decision relates to athletics

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was Voted to suspend the portion of the face mask policy that requires students to wear face masks while outdoors on school grounds unless on a mask break, eating or drinking or maintaining ten feet of social distance, and in accordance with the guidance issued on May 17, 2021 that the School Committee revise its policy to allow students to not wear a face mask outdoors while engaged in recess, physical education, youth sports, and outdoor learning environments, and that all other aspects of the face mask policy shall remain in effect.

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jennifer Benham - aye
Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos A.F. DaSilva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

3. On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Carlos A.F. DaSilva,
It was
Voted: To Adjourn at 8:39 AM

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jennifer Benham - aye
Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos A.F. DaSilva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

Respectfully Submitted By:
Libby Lewiecki