

NEAH-KAH-NIE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 56

Regular Board Meeting 6:30 PM

August 9, 2021

Neah-Kah-Nie District Office Board Room

504 N. Third Ave.

Rockaway Beach, OR 97136

**PRESENT**

Board

Sandy Tyrer, Chairman  
Carol Mahoney, Vice Chair  
Michele Aeder  
Landon Myers  
Kari Fleisher (absent)  
Renaë Scalabrin  
Mike Wantland

District Office Staff  
Paul Erlebach, Superintendent  
Mark Sybouts, Business Manager  
Kathie Sellars, Administrative Assistant

Present

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Tyrer called the regular meeting of the Neah-Kah-Nie Board of Directors to order at 6:30 p.m. All present stood for the flag salute.

Call to Order

**APPROVE AGENDA**

**M-Mahoney/2<sup>nd</sup> Scalabrin to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

Approve Agenda

Motion to Approve

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Approve Minutes from July 12, 2021, Regular Board Meeting

Consent Agenda

**PERSONNEL**

*Hiring - Other Contracted Employee*

Denise Weiss as the Neah-Kah-Nie School District Nurse

*Hiring – Coach*

Matt Esselstrom as Neah-Kah-Nie High School Head Football Coach

James Billstine as Neah-Kah-Nie High School Cross Country Coach

**NON LICENSED PERSONNEL INFORMATION - Informational Only**

*Classified Hiring*

Taylor Winder as Neah-Kah-Nie Middle School Sp. Ed. IA

*Classified Resignations*

Sadie Huntley as Nehalem Elementary School Family Resource Coordinator

**M-Mahoney/2<sup>nd</sup> Wantland to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion to Approve

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Oral Communication

Public Input

Meagan Wismer read the letter that she sent to board members regarding the requirement for students to wear masks in school. She requested that the district develop a plan for students who cannot wear a mask. Ms. Wismer's letter is attached to these minutes.

Communications

Public Input

Jennifer Wetstein, (Tina Mayes, is her Facebook name) also spoke regarding masks and the damage she feels is occurring to our children by wearing masks while at school.

Lucas Landry, thanked the board for the mask requirement, he shared that it makes him feel comfortable sending his children to school.

Damian Laviolette asked about registering to address the Board. Mr. Laviolette asked if the Board has a plan in place for to make themselves available to the public. Ms. Tyrer stated that any member of the public could email board members. Mr. Laviolette asked if that communication would be entered into the public record. Mr. Erlebach stated that it would.

Staff Input

Staff Input, Angie Douma

Ms. Douma shared information about the enrichment programs that are currently taking place at the middle school. She stated that they currently have 43 students attending. Their priorities for the program are getting students active, outdoors and with their peers.

Written Communications  
Board and Administrator

**REPORTS**

Data Update on COVID-19 and Recommended Safety Protocols, Paul Erlebach

Mr. Erlebach read the letter from Tillamook County Health District recommending that school districts continue with the COVID safety protocols. Supporting ODE requirement that students and staff continue with mandatory face coverings.

Reports  
Data Update on  
COVID-19 and  
Recommended Safety  
Protocols

The daily case count for August 19, was 31. The Tillamook County vaccination rate is at 56 percent, the risk level is very high. The official breakthrough case number is nine percent, but Tillamook County Health Department thinks it is closer to 20 percent. He stated that the number one priority for the District is student and staff safety. Students and staff wore face protection last spring, hopefully we will do the same this fall if it will keep students in school every day, for the entire year. Mr. Erlebach referenced OAR 333-019-1015 that addresses the mask mandate, who it affects and the associated penalties.

Ms. Scalabrin stated that the information is important to have. When we went back to school in March we had a very successful transition and masks were a part of that. She asked about face shields for people who have medical disabilities or issues, there are accommodations that may be made. Mr. Erlebach stated that yes, accommodations can be made. Those accommodations can be found in the Resiliency Framework, which is found on the website. Mr. Erlebach stated that parents can contact Ms. Stacey Dills. Ms. Dills stated that parents could contact the students teacher as well.

Ms. Aeder stated that she heard that there are opportunities for mask breaks. Mr. Erlebach stated that there are.

Ms. Tyrer asked for a motion regarding the mask mandate.

Mr. Wantland asked if what we are going to vote on is whether masks must be worn throughout the school year. He wanted to address the concerns raised by the two women who spoke during public comment. He wanted to know what would happen if a student comes to school and does not wear a mask. Mr. Erlebach stated that he did not know of a situation where a student did not comply with a mask mandate. Further stated that if student did not comply they would be sent home. Mr. Wantland wanted to know if we could revisit this decision in a few weeks. Mr. Erlebach stated that we will do that. We have a fair amount of individuals in our community that are not happy. We could possibly lose many students.

Ms. Tyrer stated that we all have one vote and we all need to vote our conscience.

Mr. Myers agreed with Mr. Wantland. This is probably one of the biggest decisions the board has had to make in a long time. He is not in favor of masks; he feels it should be a choice, same with the vaccination. One thing we need to do is stop shaming those that disagree with the other side. He feels that there are strong feelings out there and he fears we will have a mass exodus from public schools. He asked that if this

motion passes he would like to see us do everything in our power to provide accommodations.

Ms. Mahoney stated that kids that are mandated to go to school. When we stay that kids have the option to wear a mask or not, we are saying kids have the option to come in and spread the virus. Safety is her first priority.

Ms. Aeder stated that in the spring she was given the opportunity to drive a school bus and she was surprised by the students who wore their masks on the bus all the way to school and all the way home. Students were grateful to be together. She feels that the body that is advising the district is listening to the science and we ought to pay attention to the recommendation.

Ms. Scalabrin appreciates the various perspectives, she wants to minimize our risk and have the most number of students in our schools learning and thriving. Ms. Scalabrin asked if the mask mandate is being reviewed by the State each month and that the board would have a chance to revisit the mask mandate in the future. Mr. Erlebach indicated that the state is reviewing the mask requirement regularly and the Board can do the same.

Ms. Tyrer stated that this is a big issue, and there is a lot of information out there, it has been a struggle, it is a moving target, but we want to keep our students and staff safe.

Motion to Approve

**M-Aeder/2<sup>nd</sup> Mahoney moved that the district follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Oregon Department of Education (ODE), Tillamook County Health Department (TCHD), guidelines and Governor Brown's order for students to wear facemasks while indoors. Yes-Tyrer, Mahoney, Aeder, Scalabrin; No – Myers, Wantland. Motion carried.**

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Unfinished Business

Summer Projects, Steve Baertlein

Mr. Baertlein provided the Board an update on the following:

- Replaced the roof on the wing of Nehalem Elementary School, we also made some upgrades to the downspouts and drainage.
- We will be replacing loose and broken blocks on the lower level of the Garibaldi Grade School retaining wall.
- The soffit on the middle school has rusted out and been replaced; painting will be complete in a couple of days.
- Mr. Sybouts has placed an ad for an engineering firm to submit a bid for HVAC systems throughout the district.

Nehalem Play Shelter Wall

The metal package arrived last week, that project will begin the end of this week.

Nehalem Elementary Under Stair Project

We have a contractor who will come in, drill holes and fill that area with expanding foam. This will happen within the next two weeks.

Nehalem Elementary and Garibaldi Grade School's Solar Project Update

Nehalem Elementary School solar panels will be placed on the roof, there is some equipment that needs to be wired into the system. The Garibaldi Grade School project is delayed because Garibaldi does not currently have a City Planner.

Neah-Kah-Nie High School Parking Project

Ready for paving, waiting on some catch basins. This project will add up to 30 parking spots.

### Neah-Kah-Nie High School Wood Shop Project

Currently we are in phase 1 of the upgrade, installing a garage door that will allow the students to move materials in and out without any problem.

### Neah-Kah-Nie High School Gym Floor

The floor has been repainted, the contractor did a very nice job. Mr. Baertlein requested that the contractor apply two extra finish coats. The District was only charged for product, and not for labor.

Mr. Erlebach mentioned that the HVAC system project will be a large project that the Board would need to be approve before the District could move forward .

### Mudd Nick Foundation Fund Raiser Banquet, Kathie Sellars

Ms. Sellars confirmed with the members who would like tickets for the event.

New Business

## **NEW BUSINESS**

None at this time

## **FISCAL**

### Payment of Bills

No board member raised an issue with the July check register. Mr. Sybouts stated that the check register reflects some annual expenditures.

Fiscal  
Payment of bills

### Fiscal Summary Sheet

Mr. Sybouts stated that it is a little early to see a whole lot about revenue. We will receive our first state timber payment later this month. He is waiting for student body fund updates from the schools and there will be some adjustments when some of the grants are finalized.

Fiscal Summary  
Sheet

## **SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS**

### Superintendent

Mr. Erlebach shared the following:

- The first day for students will be September 7.
- The dedication for NES and GGS Solar projects is to be determined.
- The dedication for the Student Health and Wellness Center is tentatively scheduled on October 4 at 4:30.
- The ODE textbook adoption schedule was emailed out to board members, along with the district google doc.
- He thanked classified and confidential staff for all the work that goes on behind the scenes to get ready for a school year.
- The Leadership team has been meeting to update the staff inservice agenda. Board members are invited to attend the welcome back activities on September 1 at 10:30 on the high school field rather than in the gym.
- He thanked classified and confidential staff who worked over the summer preparing for students and staff for return in August and September.
- He met with Rachel Lee, one of the representatives on the Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC) Community Advisory Committee, and the center's website designer and the logo designer to finalize the center's logo design. The advisory committee will make the final decision on the logo. The center will have a Youth Action Council that will assist with health center issues and concerns students may have.
- Denise Weiss was hired as the school district nurse. Hours for the nurse's position were increased due to the recommendation by the former district nurse, the Tillamook County Health Department and the school administrators. A large percentage of school administrator time has been dedicated to

Suggestion &  
Comments  
Superintendent

health related issues due to the pandemic for the last two years. Denise will work with students, families, and staff to ensure students are healthy.

- There is a waiting list of students interested in all day preschool at Nehalem and Garibaldi. Preschool teachers Katie Calhoun and Ruth Weston are busy preparing for the first day of preschool.
- Thank you to all who worked or will work in the summer enrichment and credit recovery activities.
- The Leadership team will work on the Continuity of Service Plan, due at the end of August. Every Oregon school district must submit a plan to ODE.
- The class picture project has been completed..

Board

#### Board

Ms. Mahoney stated that we need to discuss our superintendent transition plan by having a work session at our next meeting. There will be a work session before the next board meeting.

Ms. Aeder stated that the Equity Alliance Committee needs an updated calendar and the next meeting will be August 17, at 5:30

Mr. Wantland would like the board to develop a way that the community could come in person and speak to board members. He also addressed the mandate that kids do have to go to school, but what we are seeing is that they really do not have to go to school. Families are finding other options for educating their children. Mr. Wantland feels that we need to get ahead of that.

Ms. Tyrer stated that she was not trying to discourage public comment, but rather if there are several people who want to speak on the same issue to designate a spokesperson.

Mr. Myers suggested that a couple board members at a time hold a town hall. He feels that is a way that people can be heard. He would be willing to work with Mr. Wantland on that. He understands that due to public meeting rules the whole board cannot be in the same place at the same time, but he would be willing to work with Mr. Wantland on that. Discussion occurred.

Adjourn

#### **ADJOURN**

Hearing nothing more to come before the Board, Chairman Tyrer adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Next Meeting

#### **NEXT MEETING**

September 13, 2021

Hello-

I wanted to reach out to the Board of Directors for our school district and Representative Weber and ask for your support and guidance. I emailed our superintendent Paul hoping to get some clarity and start a conversation around the mask ruling and what the plan was for students that have issues with the masks. I think the response I received from Paul was lacking any consideration towards the needs of my child in regards to mask wearing. I asked Paul if there was a plan for children that can't not, do not or will not wear a mask to school and he made it clear their expectation is 7.5 hours in person with the mask rules. He did not give any options for those that are struggling with the masks. I understand he is still trying to navigate all this but my concern was the lack of compassion or even something as we will look at options a student that is struggling with anxiety and mask wearing during school.

My child suffers from anxiety, over the last year and a half we have done counseling, tried breathing techniques etc and she has had to start medication. Towards the end of the school year she had started to have physical triggers as well. She had made it clear to me that when she wears the mask she can not concentrate in school, she is focused on breathing and trying not to feel claustrophobic which then increases her anxiety. She was looking forward to going back to school and was hopefully since masks had not be around all summer it would continue. When I told her she would have to wear mask in school she broke down and said she can't and I could see all the joy disappear. We had some really good conversation around it and she really shared with me her thoughts, feelings, triggers etc. My job as her mother is to fight for her in a time when she has no voice. This age group already has so much emotionally and physically changing in them just due to their age and hormones, then having to deal with these mental struggles of the pandemic as well. We are asking a lot of our kids.

My hope is that as a board you will either make the decision to not force the mask rule or at least make it so students can continue education online. I do not want to pull my child out of our district but by Pauls response I am thinking that is my only option. I was disappointed in his lack of understanding, care and concern for my child. Paul made it clear the district is going to follow the Governor's orders which is purely political. It ignores the science and overlooks the damage to our children's mental health.

I ask you to meet, talk with or review districts like Culver, Crook and Sutherlin school districts who have shown leadership by making their own decisions as a district and will not be enforcing the mask rule for their students.

As a parent of a middle school student I ask that you fight back against the arbitrary mandate and insist on a return to local control. If the district is going to follow the mask order I ask as a tax paying citizen that they provide the option for online education.

Local families know it's best for our kids and our communities, if they want to wear a mask because that is best for their family then do but it should not be mandated. This must be a local decision please stand up for a community and for our kids.

Thank You

Meghan Wismer