

**Center School Council Meeting Minutes  
June 17, 2020 – Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**Present:** Jane DeGrenier, Principal; John Galluzzo, Parent; Laura Louko, Parent; April Sheridan, Parent; Elizabeth Wilcox, Parent; Alicia DiBara, Teacher Representative; Jill Joy, Teacher Representative; Mark Lancaster, Teacher Representative; Lori McKenna, Teacher Representative; Russ Wilson, Assistant Principal, Ex-officio.

Principal DeGrenier called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

**Open Comment**

Ms. Joy stated that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade celebration held during the morning was well done and good for the kids. All agreed. Principal DeGrenier said that the yearbooks had not made it to the school in time for the celebration, but that would just serve to extend the event for families, and keep the positivity going.

Mr. Galluzzo stated that the pick-up of personal materials for the student had gone well, that his son was very happy with the chance to see his teacher again.

**Minutes**

Ms. Joy made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting of February 6, 2020. Mr. Lancaster seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

Ms. Wilcox made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting of June 3, 2020. Ms. Joy seconded the motion. Voted unanimously.

**Budget 2021**

Principal DeGrenier stated that the impact on Center School had been felt already, that 35 “pink” or “rip” slips had been delivered across the district and with more positions not being filled upon retirements, a total of 52-55 positions had been eliminated. She stated that she had shared the information on June 11, 2020, at a school staff meeting, and that it was a very emotional and confusing week for the staff. Four “long-term subs” were among the educators released, whose contracts would have been up at the end of June anyway. Cuts included first-year and second-year teachers, one third-year teacher and one 13-year physical education teacher. All specialist fields (phys. ed., music, art, etc.) were left with one teacher in a shared capacity between Center and Cedar Schools. Without any instruction on how school would take place in 2020-2021, it’s difficult to know how many specialists will be needed.

Ms. Louko asked whether or not SPED staff will be shared to meet all IEPs. Principal DeGrenier said that no, they would be prioritized, that some classroom instruction positions were eliminated to create more flexibility for SPED staff positions to remain. She also stated that recalls of teachers would be in order of priority; for example, reading specialists may be among the first to return as there is such a great need for their services.

Ms. Wilcox asked about class sizes. Principal DeGrenier stated there would be nine second grade classes with 22-23 students apiece; eight third grade classes of 21-22 students apiece; and eight fourth grade classes of 25-26 students apiece. She stated as well that there would be a heavy caseload of 504 plans and IEPs incoming with the new second grade class and that that’s the reason the ninth section was added to that class. Ms. Wilcox asked whether or not with the reduced specialist staffing students would

have specialists every other week or some similar schedule. Principal DeGrenier stated it was difficult to know, without guidance from the state at this point. For instance, will students travel to see specialists at all, or will the specialists go to classrooms? Ms. Louko asked that if more SPED teachers are needed to handle the increased caseload, would class sizes go up? Principal DeGrenier stated that it was hard to know, suggesting that if students attended school in staggered weeks, for instance, classes would only have 11-13 students present each week. Ms. Louko suggested that teachers who lived in town should attend town meeting. Ms. Joy and Mr. Lancaster stated that they intended to.

### **Re-entry Plan**

Principal DeGrenier stated that the commissioner had promised a message on June 15 regarding plans for the fall. As of June 17, there had been no such message. The school is planning on following four goals: making school socially safe for all; planning for a period of emotional and academic recovery; understanding what worked well during the distance learning period and holding onto it; and being prepared for a second shutdown.

Principal DeGrenier stated that there were several opportunities to stay informed in the coming months. A school committee meeting would follow the council meeting on Zoom, and the Advisory Council would meet that night as well. Town Meeting is scheduled for Star Land on June 29, 2020. Staff would be invited to join a weekly Zoom meeting on Wednesdays at 9 am to ask any questions on updates. Sunday evening emails would continue from the school to families.

Principal DeGrenier stated that State Aid announcements are typically released in July and affect the school budget. Rumors abound that there will be a 10% reduction, but it is still to be determined.

### **New Business**

Principal DeGrenier asked all participants whether or not they had any final thoughts for the year. Ms. Wilcox offered a thank you to the teachers for taking part in this process on top of what they already do. Ms. DiBara said that she was really thankful for the way the community pulled together for remote learning. Ms. McKenna said she looked forward to Friday, when all teachers would have a final Zoom call with their students. Ms. Joy said that she and Mr. Lancaster were not only teachers but residents, and she is a parent of a student; she urged everyone to stay informed and not make assumptions about the future of the school. Mr. Lancaster echoed her thoughts, urging all parents to let their voices be heard. Mr. Galluzzo stated that whatever the need may be in the future for remote learning, the school can count on the Hanover Historical Society for enrichment content. Ms. Sheridan thanked Mr. Galluzzo for his notetaking and minutes. Ms. Louko thanked the school for the video presented during the fourth grade celebration. Principal DeGrenier stated that she would keep the council informed about future developments, and would call a meeting if necessary, but in the meantime wished all a happy summer.

The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.