

**Farmington River Regional School District**  
**Otis/Sandisfield**  
**555 Main Road, Otis MA 01253**  
**School Committee Meeting #414**  
**Monday, March 7, 2021, 7:00PM**  
**via ZOOM**

**Members Present:** Carol Lombardo, Carl Nett, Arlene Tolopko, Jennifer Hibbins, Deb Fogel, Roger Kohler, and Jess Drenga. Thomas Nadolny and Eric Jesner

**Community Participation:** Meaghan Martin (First Grade Teacher at Farmington River and parent) is for rescinding the face covering policy, since it is known that young students need to see facial expressions when learning how to read and pronounce letters and words.

Lisa LaGrant spoke about the face covering policy, which she hopes will continue, given the possibility of bullying along with health concerns.

Linda Curtiss asked about measures that will be taken by the school if the face coverings are optional? How will the students be kept safe, and if there is a spike or rise in COVID will the mandates be put back into place? Tom answered stating that social distancing of three feet will still be in place along with the usual handwashing and cleaning of the school, and stated if there is another breakout, we will revisit the policy. The school will follow CDC guidelines.

Jennifer Heath-Thomas would like the School Committee to wait longer before lifting the policy.

1. **Vote to approve minutes #413.** Arlene Tolopko motioned to approve minutes #413, seconded by Jess Drenga. The vote was 5-2. Carl Nett, Jess Drenga, Carol Lombardo, Arlene Tolopko, and Deb Fogel voted yes. Roger Kohler and Jennifer Hibbins voted no due to the minutes being too vague.
2. **Principal/Superintendent update.** Tom Nadolny explained the changes in the CDC guidelines on masking. Tom plans to follow the guidelines. Discussions about summer school have begun. Lee Middle and High School's superintendent was in touch with Tom about increasing our students' tuition. Tom will follow up with the Superintendent of Lee about the increase. PTA cash calendars are out. MCAS dates are booked. The Commissioner of Education denied Tom's request concerning COVID relief days. Tom can offer three additional remote days. Assignments will be sent home with students to complete within three weeks. This will make up three of the five days missed days. The Personal Advisory Committee meetings have been an asset by keeping the lines of communication between staff and Tom open. COVID home testing was discussed.

3. **Discuss and vote on the Face Covering Policy.** Roger Kohler motioned to rescind the Face Covering Policy. Jess Drenga seconded the motion. Five members voted yes (Jess Drenga, Roger Kohler, Deb Fogel, Arlene Tolopko, Carl Nett). One member voted no (Jennifer Hibbins) and one abstained (Carol Lombardo). The majority passed, rescinding the Face Covering Policy.
4. **Discuss and vote on the Teachers' request for more sick time due to COVID.** Tom discussed requested additional sick time for teachers until the end of this school year. The School Committee decided to vote in April for the teachers to form a bank of sick time. Until the next meeting, the Committee voted to approve Tom's discretion to give sick pay to teachers who are out of time. Granted sick time will be for COVID related issues only. Carol Lombardo motioned the vote, Deb Fogel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously approved.
5. **Financial updates.** Eric Jesner discussed the budget for FY23. Included in the budget was the increase of tuition to Lee. The School Committee voted on the approval of FY23 budget. Carl Nett made a motion to approve the FY23 budget as presented. The total budget amount being \$4,742,702. The town assessment for Otis is \$2,218,272, and \$1,483,340 from Sandisfield. Jess Drenga seconded the motion. The FY23 Budget was unanimously approved by all members.
6. **Adjournment.** Arlene Tolopko motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:27P.M. Deb Fogel seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of adjourning the meeting at 8:27 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa DellaGiustina  
Secretary of the School Committee

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