

MINUTES
LAMOTTE SCHOOL DISTRICT 43
BOARD OF TRUSTEES EMERGENCY MEETING
January 10, 2022 2:00 p.m.

The emergency meeting of the Board of Trustees, LaMotte School District #43 was held electronically on January 10, 2022.

Per Policy 1400: “Emergency Meetings-In the event of an emergency involving possible personal injury or property damage, the Board may meet immediately and take official action without prior notification.

Special Meetings-... except that the 48-hour notice is waived in an unforeseen emergency as stated in 20-3-322(5), MCA...”

Chair Knoff started the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

Trustees Present: Birgen Knoff, Katie Ivester

Staff Present: LeeAnn Burke-Superintendent, Sue Becker-District Clerk/Business Manager, Michelle Clark-Administrative Assistant, Liz Spyke-Teacher

Public Present: Approximately 12

Pledge of Allegiance

Presiding Trustees Explanation of Procedures

The LaMotte Board of Trustees welcomes public comment on issues and concerns. Members of the community are given an opportunity to make brief comments to the board on any matter not included in the agenda. Comments on agenda items will be accepted when that item comes up during the meeting. Interested persons may also submit views in written form to the Clerk prior to the meeting, and those comments will be brought to the attention of the Board during the meeting. Birgen explained zoom meeting procedures and etiquette on comments. Time at 4 minutes and 1 comment on agenda item.

Public Input on Non-Agenda Items

None.

Agenda Action/Discussion Items

1. Safe Return to School Plan 2021-2022

a. Face coverings

Board Discussion: Chair Knoff explained that an emergency meeting can be called by the Board Chair. She felt it was important to call an emergency meeting based on the number of COVID cases in the school. She spoke with the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) and they agreed she had cause to call an emergency meeting. The intent of this meeting is to have a discussion and hear public comment only. A special meeting will be called for Wednesday, January 12, 2022 to consider action on the masking protocol. Chair Knoff shared a presentation on the current COVID statistics in Gallatin County. The

Board made the decision to not base the masking protocol on the County statistics but she wanted to show the steep increase in cases from the last meeting to now. Based on the Superintendent's masking recommendation and the Board's intent of keeping students in school, Chair Knoff called this emergency meeting to discuss. Superintendent Burke presented the school case/quarantine/isolation statistics. The District was approved for a grant to implement COVID testing which includes funding to hire an individual to do the testing. Trustee Ivester stated that the Board had said if there were drastic changes, they would convene to discuss the mask protocol. She teaches percentages and said this is a drastic change. She does not want to close the school but fears we are going in that direction. The goal is to educate the students in the classroom. Superintendent Burke reiterated that the staff is in favor of a mask mandate because: 1) they want students in the classroom; 2) low numbers of available substitutes; and 3) they feel following the Gallatin City County Health Department (GCCHD) guidelines offers the best level of protection. Chair Knoff considers the COVID transmission rate a dire situation right now. She is optimistic the cases will go down but at the current level, she wants to prevent staff and student sickness.

Public Comment:

- Brian Preiss
- Rose Quinn
- Jen Duneman
- Erika Malo
- Chair Knoff read emails/letters from:
 - Brian Halvorsen
 - Leah and John Nusse
 - Jennifer Jones

Further Board Discussion: Trustee Ivester would like to consider bringing back the Crisis Response Team which would then meet to discuss and make COVID related recommendations to the Superintendent/Board. Chair Knoff feels it is important to bring metrics into the mask decision rather than having a "squishy" decision. She would like to discuss criteria that make the Board immune to lawsuits. She made it clear there will be a vote at the special meeting. If the mask mandate is reinstated, the isolation and quarantine procedures of 5 days isolation + 5 days mask will be clear. Superintendent Burke noted that the GCCHD guidelines are overwhelmingly hard to keep track of with masks optional.

Adjournment

Adjourned 3:13 pm

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, January 12, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Wednesday, January 26, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.



Birgen Knoff, Board Chair



Sue Becker, District Clerk/Business Manager