

The Pocahontas County Board of Education met on Thursday, January 14, 2021, for a Special Board Meeting at the Board of Education Conference Room, Buckeye, WV, with the following members present:

Sue E. Hollandsworth, President

John Burns)
H. Samuel Gibson) Members
Jarrett McLaughlin*)
Morgan McComb)

*10:06 AM

Call to Order.

IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE COVID-19 SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES, AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, YOU MAY LISTEN TO THE BOE MEETING BY JOINING THE SCHEDULED ZOOM MEETING JANUARY 14, 2021, AT 10:00 AM. IN-PERSON PUBLIC ATTENDANCE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

(the audio link will also be provided on County Website at <http://pocahontas-k12.wvnet.edu/boe/>)

Audio link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84171545260?pwd=RTIkeWFuc1Qrc3Vab1pFNjhXbExZdz09>

Meeting ID: 841 7154 5260 Password: 2k492h

Open with the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW OF RE-ENTRY PLAN...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McComb, the Board entered a Review of Re-Entry Plan (action to be taken, if necessary) with possible recommendations and/or revisions.

Superintendent Beam welcomed those in attendance. Before opening the precarious Re-Entry topic, Mr. Beam shared that the Pocahontas County High School gymnasium will be used as a vaccination site for the citizens 70 and older to receive their first dosage of the COVID-19 vaccine on January 21, 2021. With the blessings of the Board, Mr. Beam recommended the Board Meetings be reopened to public attendance beginning January 26, 2021. Social distancing guidelines will be respected.

After meeting with the directors, principals, union representatives and additional county superintendents, Mr. Beam gathered valuable information. Though he would have preferred to allow schools to remain remote until the first round of vaccines had been offered, the State held firm on a separate agenda. The State Board refused the remote options, deeming school is the safest place for employees and students.

With the Governor's mandate, Mr. Beam believed we have two options—return to school all five days with an early out on Wednesdays off for deep-cleaning. Both Mr. Hall and Mrs. Doolittle have reassured Mr. Beam that the deep cleaning of schools and food meal distributions will continue as scheduled. Option two consists of blended learning with two days on, two days off, and one-day deep cleaning. That was not favored last fall. The Board deliberated all aspects and different angles of returning to some form of normalcy under face-to-face instruction and a 5-day routine.

On the motion of Mr. McComb, seconded by Mr. Mr. McLaughlin, the Board agreed for the Pocahontas County School system to return to school, January 19, 2021, to a 4 ½ day, face-to-face instructional week, following the Governor's mandate, at a 4-1 vote, with Mr. Gibson casting the only descending vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION...

On the motion of Mr. Gibson, the Board unanimously approved a call for Executive Session to discuss logistics of situation with legal representation, Attorney Jason Long, no action taken. The Board went into Executive Session at 10:56 AM, and at the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board unanimously agreed to return to the Agenda at 11:08 AM.

NEXT BOARD MEETING...

Next Board of Education Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 26, 2021, beginning at 6:00 PM at the Board of Education Conference Room, Buckeye, WV.

ADJOURN...

On motion of Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Mr. McComb, the Board unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.



Secretary



President