

**RECEIVED**

By Town Clerk's Office at 12:02 pm, Mar 12, 2020



TOWN OF BURLINGTON

*Meeting Posting*

*Emergency Meeting*

*Notice of Public Meeting – (As required by G.L. c. 30A, c §18-25)*

BOARD: School Committee

DATE: March 13, 2020

TIME: **5:00 p.m.**

PLACE: School Committee Room, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA

---

**AGENDA\***

1. Emergency Working Session Due to Public Health Conditions
2. Executive Session

\*Agenda subject to change

**RECEIVED**

*By Town Clerk's Office at 4:10 pm, May 27, 2020*

BURLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MARCH 13, 2020

Chair Martha Simon called this emergency special working meeting of the School Committee to order at 5:00 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mrs. Christine Monaco, Mr. Thomas F. Murphy, Jr., and Mrs. Kristin Russo. Superintendent Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Patrick Larkin, Business Manager Nichole Coscia, and Director of Operations Bob Cunha also present. Mr. Stephen Nelson absent.

Emergency Working  
Session Due To Public  
Health Conditions

Dr. Conti stated the coronavirus is an unprecedented event and a first pandemic for schools to experience. A meeting was held with a group of both school and town officials and it was decided to implement a two week closure until at least March 30. Susan Lumenello of the Board of Health has been very supportive and providing guidance. During this time, instruction will not continue; however a list of resources will be posted on the school website that students and families can access from home.

Town Administrator Paul Sagarino stated that the Council on Aging have closed programs and activities but are still open for seniors to obtain meals and medical transportation. He suggested that residents keep an eye on their elderly neighbors and to contact town hall if any irregularities are observed. The public library is open and staffed but is not open to the public. The Recreation department has suspended winter programs and delayed spring sign ups. Town Hall offices are open for business but residents are requested to call prior to going to town hall or to conduct business via email or the postal service as they are trying to limit foot traffic. The Town Clerk is researching the possibility of postponing the town election scheduled for April. Dr. Conti stated he'd spoken to Mrs. Warfield regarding the April 4 election and approved the use of the BHS gym to hold the election. The Superintendent noted that all school and town departments are working together and the emergency team is well prepared and he thanked Mr. Sagarino for his help and support.

Dr. Conti explained that all staff and parents have been notified of the closure of schools until at least March 30; if the closure is shorter or longer, everyone would be notified as the schools get direction regarding the re-opening of schools. He noted that the last day of school is currently Wednesday, June 24; DESE Commissioner Riley announced that school districts only have to hold 185 days of each district's regularly scheduled school calendar. He further explained that school employees will be on administrative leave and requested that all employees including hourly employees be paid as if school was in session. The Committee commented that paying employees during the emergency closure made sense. The following Administrators were in attendance and were also in support of paying all employees during the school closure: John Lyons, Nicole McDonald, David Rosenblatt, Joe Attubato, Cari Purchase, Barbara Conley, Deborah Clark, and Mary Houde.

Moved by Mrs. Monaco and seconded by Mrs. Russo that for the duration of the Burlington Public Schools school closing commencing on Friday, March 13, the School Committee authorizes that, subject to appropriation, regular wages will continue to be paid to employees, including those not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, and nonexempt employees; motion carried 3-0-1 Mr. Murphy abstained.

Assistant Superintendent Larkin remarked that a message will go out to families that receive free & reduced lunch explaining that a week's worth of lunches can be picked up at the Burlington Food Pantry on Tuesdays between 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. He announced that an emergency phone # is being set up for families to leave a message if needed: 781-238-4674 and Administrators will be checking messages

left at this number a few times per day. A google form is also being created for people to fill out with any questions and then a FAQ document will be created from the questions/answers submitted. In response to Mrs. Monaco, Mr. Larkin responded that he's not sure where the food for lunches is coming from but the Cafeteria Manager sent a large amount of leftover food that will not be utilized in the next couple weeks to the Food Pantry. Dr. Conti further explained that the Food Pantry will supply the food, they have reached out to the Greater Boston Food Bank to request additional food stuffs, and noted that the lunch revolving account deficit is going to increase with the school closure. Mr. Cunha commented from this point on all employee swipe cards are deactivated (except for Administrators, Police & Fire 24 hour cards). The buildings are being checked on via drive by basis.

Guidance Coordinator Joe Attubato announced that the SAT exam scheduled for this Saturday has been cancelled, Principal Sullivan has sent out further information to parents, and support services staff is reaching out to students who may have mental health issues. The scholarship deadline has been extended beyond April 1 and guidance secretaries will provide student transcripts as needed. In response to Mrs. Russo, Mr. Attubato said that AP Exams haven't been rescheduled, it's a national exam, and direction would need to come from the college board. The currently scheduled tentative MCAS makeup date of March 28 may be rescheduled. BHS spring sports have been postponed (the season was scheduled to begin March 30). Grades for the current quarter at the high school will be extended as needed.

Preschool Director Deborah Clark explained incoming student acceptance letters for next year were sent out today, her staff has been proactively planning, an email will be sent out to parents with 5 pages of activities, extra classroom cleaning has been ongoing, and parents/staff with concerns should email her. Mrs. Monaco thanked Ms. Clark and stated that parents will appreciate the resources sent to them.

Dr. Conti explained that if school is not in session and instruction is not being offered to typical student learners, then students who receive in district special education services are also on pause and will also not be provided instruction. Families will be contacted. Special Education Director Mary Houde stated that it's particularly challenging having a closure for special education students and teachers; school has a strong impact on students' lives. Special Education teachers are putting together some suggestions, meetings and evaluations will be rescheduled, and will then be resumed when we return from the school closure. Out-of-district students are being transported to their respective schools if they are open.

Nurse Leader Barbara Conley thanked district nurses for a phenomenal job and noted their professionalism and poise during the high volume of calls/office visits.

Principal Cari Purchase explained that the middle school trimester had closed on Wednesday, teachers have been asked to submit student grades, they hope to send parents grades electronically during the school closure and to provide students' report card upon the reopening of school. She further stated that a student email was sent out today encouraging kids to read, and resources for parents of special education students will be sent out soon.

Mr. Larkin commented that learning resources for students/parents will be posted on the school website on Monday.

The four elementary Principals thanked their staff for their incredible job rolling with this situation going forward, suggested that families/staff take a break from the news cycle as it makes kids anxious,



and expressed sadness that teachers and students are not together on a daily basis and that is hard on everyone. Elementary teachers will not be sending individual homework packets to students during the closure.

Dr. Conti summarized explaining: remote learning is not the same as a teacher with their students in their individual classrooms, there is no way to replicate classroom teaching with a remote curriculum, but the schools will try to provide resources and support going forward. He further explained that the high stakes 10<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS requirement to graduate has been given a waiver by the Federal government but State legislators will also have to approve it and schools are looking for flexibility in that testing window to be able to award diplomas to seniors. He will communicate with parents later this evening and regularly over the school closure. The School Committee expressed gratitude to Dr. Conti for his handling of the situation and also appreciates his close monitoring of the closure during this unpredictable time. Mr. Larkin informed the Committee of Dr. Conti's deep involvement with this pandemic as well as showing real leadership with the Middlesex League school districts.

EXECUTIVE SESSION No executive session held.

ADJOURNMENT Moved by Mrs. Monaco and seconded by Mr. Murphy at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Gilbert  
Recording Secretary

Date submitted: 5/12/20  
Date approved: 5/12/20