

Swan River School District #4
1205 Swan Hwy
Bigfork, MT 59911

March 8, 2021

The Swan River School Board of Trustees met in regular session on Monday March 8, 2021 at 4:00 p.m. in the School Gymnasium. Luke Adamson, Board chair presided over the entire meeting.

TRUSTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Luke Adamson, Brooke Johnston, Dan Elwell, Sherianne Schow and Linda Stewart

TRUSTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Principal Marc Bunker, District Clerk Dee Johnson, Brant Estes, Natalie Corona, Chad Corona, Jen woll, Mayberry, Shawna Benson, Shawna Billington, Brady & Rhett, Peyton Benson, Corban Benson, Kennedy Garvin, Hayden Congdon, Chrystal Gibson, Brianne Fuzesy, Tricia Youngbull, Sherry Bradstreet, Steve Waddle, Hedges, Justin & Amber Trodick, Lori Elwell, Dylan Quinn, Marcia Ham, Kim Johnston, Brandy Vickrey, Heather Smith, Lily Smith, Christina Brevik, Stephanie Tinney, Ashley Lau, Dayra Schmidt, Kirk Johnston, Jesse Rogers, Ashley Rogers, Mackenzie Ries, Ilene Garvin, Pavlo Shokur and Justin Franz.

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m.

Luke Adamson went over the legal formal procedure on board meetings and the public comment procedure. Each person will be allowed 2 minutes to speak

Correspondence: None

Public participation on non-agenda items

ACTION ITEMS:

Approval of Consent Agenda

Claims and prior minutes

Motion to approve Consent Agenda

Motion : Dan Elwell

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Second: Sherianne Schow
Passed unanimously

PTO report: None

Teacher's Organization report: None

Playground committee: Playground committee met and Jason Morton came and checked out existing playground equipment and will write up his recommendations for the next committee meeting.

Principals report: 5 successes

Teacher formal evaluations are halfway done. Teachers doing great with quality education. K-5 all using rotating stations for student work
Maintain focus on fundamental purpose. Happy with keeping focus on students education rather than Covid, masks and politics.

Taking steps toward normalcy with all students eating in the lunchroom and opening up the playground without area restrictions.

Absences have increased but illness decreased. No outbreak of illnesses in classrooms. Could it be due to masks, washing frequently, cleaning of the building? Not sure but parents are doing a really good job of keeping kids home when they are not feeling well.

Girls Basketball season went well and we had a lot of thank you's from our families and families of other schools for allowing limited spectators at our home games

Challenges:

With 2 positive covid cases recently it has been a challenge with contact tracing, but there have been no transmission of cases.

There is somewhat of an uptick on behaviors and we are dealing with that. Additional training for trauma in the future

Suggest possibly starting a committee on behaviour

We have been receiving a lot of inquiries about new enrollments, some for now and some for the fall within district and out of district, could see a significant increase in our school.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

A: Consideration and adoption of resolution of permissive levies

A voted levy has not been asked for 14 years. A maximum levy of \$34,500 for the building reserve permissive levy was approved. No other increases in permissive levy funds are needed. Some projects for the permissive building reserve levy will include Roof, parking, flooring and playground
Dan Elwell made the motion to levy for the maximum amount of \$34,500

Second: Sherianne Schow

Passed unanimously

B: Consider Board committee's for finance and negotiations

Motion to have Brooke and Luke for the finance committee and Dan and Sherianne for the negotiation committee.

Motion: Dan Elwell

Second: Linda Stewart

Passed unanimously

C: Consideration on lifting masking requirements

Mr Bunker spoke on the current policies.

#3417 communicable diseases. See attached policy # 3417

The 1900 series on emergency procedures was previously adopted.

#1905 emergency measures (see policy) option #2 was selected at a previous board meeting.

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Public Comments on agenda item:

Tricia Young Bull: Stated that she had previously invited the county health dept to come speak. She stated that they were advised to not come.

Tricia feels if we can stick it out with wearing masks for 3 more months, it would be worth the sacrifice. She noted many in the audience are not wearing masks right now. Stated that the CDC has advice on how schools should act. With the Governor lifting the mask mandate, schools should be responsible to protect their school. Tricia feels many families will choose to remove students if masks are lifted and feels it will traumatize children who are afraid. Tricia implores to keep masks for 3 more months

Sherry bradstreet:

Sherry Stated that she For and against, personal choice to leave up to parents. Option to wear or not should be the person's choice.

Heather Smith

Thanked the board and Mr. Bunker for the survey that went out. Heather is not in favor of masks, but understands the teacher's concerns. Heather stated she is willing to fill in until teachers are vaccinated.

Chad Corona

Works for the Fire Dept in LA and has known people who were affected and died. Majority of covid patients had underlying ailments such as COPD, Asthma etc.. He personally transported 2 patients last week with Covid who were sent home. Covid is real and so is the flu. There has not been this extreme of a measure with flu's as covid. Chad stated he is against masks.

Ariel coker: Ariel's Dad had covid in January, and she understands the fear. She is against mask policies. People have been safe and respectful and feels it is time to drop the masks policy

Carrie Wyatt is also against mask policy. Stated that masks don't work. She is a former medic turned nurse. There has been no formal training for masks, especially for kids. Masks are more harmful for kids, constantly breathing in their own germs. Feels there is so much evidence that masks don't work. People are unrecognizable and have concerns about face hiding.

Against masks.

Stephanie Tinney works at the hospital as an occupational therapist. She just recently had covid. She is against wearing masks, and wondering about how it will work with areas such as the cafeteria, outside etc.. She is at the school periodically and notices that probably 50% are without masks most of the time and it should be a personal choice.

Pavlo Shokur is against masks for kids and adults, shouldn't have to hide their faces.

Naomi Mayberry

Her daughter is experiencing anxiety, if people are in fear it is your choice to stay home. Let families choose for themselves.

Kennady Garvin: Student body representative. Students are tired of the masks. Peers have suffered with this. They are dealing with infections on faces, anxiety, masks should be an option with no shame. FDA says that properly fitted n95 masks do not help and covid is not a risk to their age group.

Justin Trodick feels like it comes down to if you choose the option to not care for yourself. Feels there is social scarring, and to wear a mask if that is your choice but give them the choice.

Board comments

Dan Elwell: Thanked everyone for getting through the year so far. Since masks started there is a 6% death rate. In the beginning hospitals were overflowing with a shortage of ventilators which made sense. The survey was overwhelming to remove the masks from our school. Dan's mother is in the nursing home and residents were not allowed to leave rooms and she was the first person to get it. Within 10 days all of the residents got it. All but 2 rebounded. 1 was on hospice, and 1 on a feeding tube. 43 made it through. Dan is for removing masks, deep cleaning needs to be kept up. Shots are now available and those teachers with underlying conditions, we should accommodate them best we can. Kids already have issues with masks, they can't hear teachers, see teachers speak and glasses fog up. We need to try to get back to normal and feel the government should never have put this on school boards. Dan knows not everyone will be happy and we need to do the best we can do.

Linda Stewart: Linda is concerned that the important thing is to be able to stay in school and concerned for the health of the kids and teachers, Linda personally lost 2 people to covid and hope's to come to some compromise. Linda stated that she chooses to wear her mask and chooses to do it out of respect for those around her.

Sherianne Schow: Is a former educator and a parent. She has taken call after call talking with people who are in awe that we have in person schooling, and teachers who are willing to work in an unknown environment. Teachers put themselves in positions, because they care about kids.

Sherianne's husband is a doctor and chooses to wear a mask all day and has dealt with covid patients firsthand. The success of students and

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teachers makes her happy but worries about putting teachers and students at risk. She understands the need for students to see teachers and see them speak especially with younger grades and would like to give teachers a chance to get vaccinated. She feels we owe the teachers safety and to give them a window to get vaccinated before removing masks.

Brooke Johnston: Stated that although Dan is the only trustee who has kids at school presently, the survey overwhelmingly shows that parents want masks off. She has also taken calls about anxiety, nosebleeds etc.. She is in favor of removing masks and giving time for staff to be vaccinated. She encourages everyone to work on the immune system. Masks are making it hard, and kids need to be outside more if possible

Marc: Has different points of view. He fully expected to wear masks through the school year. Referring to our mission statement on the agenda that we are a learning environment. Mask enforcement negatively affects learning. Onsite education is better than remote learning for quality education. Mr. Bunker would like to remove masks, sooner than later, but is concerned about teachers given time to be vaccinated. Marc feels remote learning is not the best option and is opposed to remote learning versus being onsite and as normal as possible.

Marc recommends lifting masks asap and giving a timeline when teachers have a fair opportunity for vaccines. Recommends choosing a date to lift masks possibly after spring break.

Luke Adamson: Would like to see what is best for students and teachers, and if some need accommodations then we need to do our best to see that happens. Luke stated he doesn't like to wear masks but will if it helps others. Luke agrees to remove masks asap and hopefully get back to normal.

Motion made by Brooke Johnston to give a mask policy option to all staff at Swan River School to dictate the mask policy as they see fit in their realm of influence. This policy will take effect at the Beginning of the school day on March 9, 2021 and will continue until the end of the day on April 2nd 2021. If two staff members must work within the same immediate vicinity during this time and have opposing policies, a mask option will have precedent over a non mask option. After that time Swan River School Policy 1905 will be updated to a voluntary mask policy

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wherein all staff, students, and guests will have the freedom to choose for themselves if they want to wear a mask or not on school property. Social distancing will continue to be practiced when possible and applicable.

This will take effect on April 5, 2021

Second: Dan Elwell

Sherianne Schow abstained

Passed unanimously

Topics next agenda: Project list

Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:15 p.m.


Motion: Dan Elwell

Seconded: Sherianne Schow

Passed unanimously



Luke Adamson, Board Chair



Dee Johnson, District Clerk

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