

BILLINGS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
Minutes of Special Meeting
March 20, 2020
UNOFFICIAL MINUTES
(Subject to review and revision by the board)

A special meeting of the Billings County School Board was called to order by President Joey Kessel at 10:10 a.m. MT, Friday, March 20, 2020, at DeMores School in Medora, North Dakota. Present on site were board member Eric Bock, District Principal Shae Peplinski, Business Manager Tammy Simnioniw, Maintenance Supervisor Pete Hegge, and Richard Volesky with BC Pioneer. Present via video or teleconference were board members Anita Adams, Joey Kessel, Kwirt Johnson and Julie Reis, and Assistant Principal Danielle O'Brien.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues regarding school closure due to coronavirus.

Peplinski and O'Brien presented plans and procedures for addressing how to provide education to students during mandated school closure. They identified families in the District without sufficient internet service. They explained how assignments would be distributed and completed work collected each week. Teachers will have contact availability times for students to obtain help remotely. Flash drives have been ordered whereby lessons and education videos can be saved and distributed to the students to use with their assigned school iPads. Kessel asked about plans to address mental health concerns. Simnioniw is providing information to staff through The Village EAP and Peplinski stated that the school counselor is preparing information for the students. Bock asked that guides be provided to parents on how to structure the day for students in completing assigned work. Kessel asked what measures were being taken for IEP students. Peplinski stated that West River Student Services was working on ways to provide online services individualized for each student. The board approved the education plan as presented.

The board discussed hourly staff wages during mandated school closure. The newly enacted HR 6201, Families First Coronavirus Response Act law was reviewed along with information sent out by NDSBA. Bock moved, Reis seconded, to enact utilization of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (HR 6201) starting Monday, March 23, 2020. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Bus contracts were discussed. A transportation committee consisting of Eric Bock and Julie Reis was established. Bock will meet with Gary Meduna and Pete Odermann and Reis will meet with Dennis O'Brien and Kathy Malkowski to discuss the bus contracts in light of the school closures. The two committee members will then meet to discuss how the conversations went and prepare a recommendation for the full board.

Teacher concerns regarding title changes for principals were provided to all the board members. Kessel stated that he reached out to NDSBA legal counsel regarding the Billings County Teachers' Association request to halt contract negotiations until a decision had been made regarding the title changes. Legal counsel advised that title change was a separate matter from negotiations and not a viable reason to halt negotiations nor a negotiable topic. Kessel stated that negotiations should continue as planned with the next scheduled date Wednesday, March 25, 2020, at 7:00 a.m. at DeMores School in Medora.

Bock, Peplinski, and O'Brien conducted an interview of an applicant for a teaching position in the Billings County School District. It was the committee's recommendation to hire Sarah Slauter for the position. Reis moved, Adams seconded, to accept the recommendation of the committee to hire Sarah Slauter for the upcoming school year. Roll call vote with all in favor.

A public strategic planning meeting was previously scheduled for April 14, 2020. Johnson moved, Reis seconded, to postpone this meeting indefinitely until the coronavirus restrictions are lifted. Roll call vote with all in favor.

Adams moved, Johnson seconded, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Joey Kessel, President

Tammy Simnioniw, Business Manager