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Framingham Public Schools
Robert A. Tremblay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Adam Freudberg, Chair • Tiffanie Maskell, Vice Chair • Priscila Sousa, Clerk
Jessica Barnhill • Karen Dempsey • Geoffrey Epstein
Beverly Hugo • William LaBarge • Scott Wadland
Yvonne M. Spicer, Mayor
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: April 13, 2020 at 9:15 p.m.

LOCATION: Remote

MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Adam Freudberg

PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill
Geoffrey Epstein
Adam Freudberg
Beverly Hugo
William LaBarge
Tiffanie Maskell
Priscila Sousa
Scott Wadland
Mayor Yvonne Spicer

ABSENT: Karen Dempsey

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent
Joanna Hastry, Executive Assistant for the School Committee

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:20 p.m. He noted that this meeting was being held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20, and announced who is in attendance. He said that the meeting is being broadcast live and recorded on Zoom,

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but there were technical difficulties getting it on Facebook Live; a recording will be made available as soon as possible on the School Committee and City website. He noted information on how to participate in public comment through emails sent before and during the meeting and through Zoom.

Public Comment

Mr. Freudberg summarized an email received from Susan, who is a parent of a middle schooler and elementary school student, who said that she appreciates the district taking the time to survey, and she voted to skip April vacation as she would like to keep the momentum of remote learning, but also suggested giving staff a break on meetings in order to evaluate how things are going.

Vote on Revisions to the 2019-2020 School Year Calendar and April's Spring Break Due to COVID-19

Dr. Tremblay said that the change to the 2019-2020 calendar requires a vote as it was previously voted on by the School Committee. He said that the change they are requesting to make is to cancel April Vacation from April 21-24th, with that Monday still off as it is a state holiday, and that would then change the last day of school from June 24th to June 18th. He said it was a difficult decision to make with having to think about items such as if disrupting learning could be detrimental, if school does reopen having face to face time for longer in June, and which would be more beneficial among other factors. He said that they reached out to stakeholders and shared the results separated by family, staff, and students who had the choice of choosing to change, to not change, and no preference; 80 percent of family responses, 81.7 percent of staff responses, and 71.2 percent of students responses, were in favor of the change. He added that there were over 6,000 responses. He said that there were two snow days and three days of school closure due to COVID-19 that were taken prior to the Commissioner making the decision that those days do not have to be made up. He said that with those in mind, with changing April Vacation to remote learning days, and going to the 181st day of school it would change the last day to June 18th. He said schools are still scheduled to reopen on May 4th, although this could change, and at this time have not heard anything further from the Commissioner or the state. Ms. Maskell said she thinks teachers should guide this as they are doing the work and appreciates their input, but added that if it was certain schools would reopen she would rather have more face to face learning at the end of the school year. Ms. Hugo said that the average of all the results were 77.33 percent in favor of this change, and the district and students are just getting into the routine, which would make it easier for teaching in April than at the end of June.

Motion: To support the Superintendent's recommendation of cancelling April Vacation, and for the last day of school to be June 18, 2020.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill

Discussion: Ms. Barnhill said that there is a lot of uncertainty if schools would even get face to face time at the end of June, and thinks that students need connection and routine during this time, and do not want to lose any traction with this remote learning plan. Ms Sousa said that the Teaching and Learning subcommittee met earlier and discussion was on how to motivate our high school students to continue participation, and the many opportunities for students to catch up on and improve their grades, so any additional time is precious to give them. The

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Chair offered more time for public comment. No additional public comment. Dr. Tremblay acknowledged all the hard work staff have been doing.

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous 8-0-0

(Yes: Hugo, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Additional Public Comment

Mr. Freudberg summarized a public comment online that came in from Jennifer who said she is appreciative of the great effort to put these plans in place, but is wondering why we can't advance the curriculum, especially in the high school, and said that other districts are.

Dr. Tremblay said that this conversation would change if it is decided that schools are out for a longer time. He said that the Commissioner's original guidance was to only provide resources, it then shifted from resources to move towards a remote learning program which the District has done. He said that one challenge is the need to see where all students are once we return to school, and if students who have more access go forward and those without access do not, it would create a disparity. He said that the district is in the mindset of deepening knowledge, and focusing on making sure every family has a device available to them.

The Chair said that the next meeting is on Wednesday, April 15th.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge

Seconded: Ms. Sousa

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous (8-0-0)

(Yes: Hugo, Wadland, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge)

Meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Memo from Superintendent Regarding Calendar Revisions

Public Comment Email from Susan