

Grand Isle Supervisory Union
Alburgh School District
School Board **Emergency Meeting**
Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.
Location: Alburgh Community Education Center

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Agenda

Call to Order

1. Call to Order (M. Savage)
2. Citizens and/or Staff to be Heard

Board Business.

3. Upcoming school year COVID safety protocols (social distancing) (M. Savage)(Discussion, possible Action)

Closure

4. Adjourn

Note: Executive Session: If discussion warrants and the Board so votes, some items may be discussed in Executive Session pursuant to VSA 1 §313(a)

***Discussion Items** - Issues the Board needs to discuss and deliberate, but upon which no action is taken at this meeting.*

***Action Items** - Issues that require the Board to make a decision by vote, may have been discussed over several meetings prior to this point.*

***Consent Items** - Routine matters that need no discussion by the Board, but require Board approval. They are grouped together as a single agenda item. Background materials are provided in the Board packet to be reviewed ahead of the meeting. If there are no concerns, they are approved with a single vote. Any member can request the Board remove an item to be discussed and voted on separately. This frees up time at meetings.*

***Information Items [Incidental Information]** - Matters the Board needs to know about, but for which no Board action is needed. The information flow is one way, from presenter to the Board. Questions for clarification are entertained as time allows.*

8-24-2021 Alburgh Emergency Meeting Superintendent Report

On Friday, August 20, 2021 Principal Hemingway and I talked about the Alburgh Board's Decision to make its own COVID 19 Masking and Social Distancing requirements which were more restrictive than the current Vermont Department of Health and Vermont Agency of Education Guidelines.. Principal Heminway expressed some concern about the ability of the ACEC to meet the Boards Social Distancing requirements. Principal Hemingway and I discussed that I would go to the school on Monday afternoon and we would look at each space together and make a plan.

I communicated the board's decision with the Alburgh Faculty and Staff via an email on Friday, August 20, 2021.

I arrived at ACEC on Monday at approximately 12:15 p.m.. Principal Hemingway and I looked at every room in the school. In many of the rooms, desks were already set up spaced three feet apart. Principal Hemingway and I discussed if it was possible to space desks/children three feet apart in rooms where that configuration was not already in place. We often had that conversation with the teacher who was assigned to that room. The only room where we determined that it was not possible to space students' desks three feet apart was the Art Room. We talked with the Art Teacher and determined that classes which were able to be spaced three feet could meet and do art in the art room. In art classes where it was not possible to meet the three foot spacing, Art would need to happen in the classroom.

While desks were able to be spaced three feet apart it was also apparent that if a student had to move from their desk, they would not be able to maintain three feet of space. Many teachers shared they were concerned that a strict adherence to a three foot distancing requirement was not in the best interest of the students social, emotional, or mental health. Furthermore there was a feeling expressed asking how it was equitable that students, faculty and staff at ACEC were being held to a different standard than the students, faculty and staff in the other two districts. Teachers expressed much frustration with the need to reset their rooms after they had come in on their own time.

I explained to teachers that based on the recent AOE Memo it was within a School Board's authority to set the School District's COVID 19 protocols. My belief was that the other three boards would likely delegate that authority to the superintendent however the Alburgh board was choosing to exercise the authority to make COVID 19 Decisions itself.

While I was touring the school, I became aware of an email from Board Chair Savage indicating "The Alburgh School Board will be having an emergency meeting tomorrow at 4:00 to discuss the social distancing requirement. Possible board action. Please prepare an agenda or let me know if you can't and we will prepare one. Thank you." This email was sent at 12:03 p.m. Upon returning to the office from ACEC, I immediately sent Board Chair Savage a copy of a potential draft of the Agenda he requested with the note "Here is a draft of the Agenda you requested. Please let me know if you would like changes. Also I'm at the office if you would like to hear

about what Beth and determined today regarding the ability to meet the spacing the board set as well as the reaction of the staff.” The warning was posted at approximately 3:10 p.m.

At the last meeting, I offered a draft of the policy to authorize the superintendent to make COVID 19 decisions. I have included a copy of that delegation policy at the end of this report. Furthermore I offer the following resolution the South Hero Board made to empower the superintendent to respond to COVID-19: *“To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of how decisions will be made in response to the ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic, the Board resolves to continue to empower the Superintendent to be responsible for the health and safety of students and staff. To that end, the Superintendent is authorized by the Board to make decisions on behalf of the District, informed by and in accordance with state and federal guidance and mandates, on all measures and protocols necessary to keep students and staff safe while maintaining an effective learning environment. Further, the Superintendent is encouraged to collaborate with regional school districts on establishing consistent measures across the region while keeping the South Hero School District's best interest in mind. The Superintendent will continue to keep the Board informed on these matters.”*

The board does have the authority to retain COVID 19 Decision making. If the board decides to continue to retain this authority it want to consider the most up to date [Contract Tracing Information](#). There are also [new recommendations regarding Music](#) the board may decide to consider.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC Policy Proposal

Purpose

It is the policy of the Grand Isle Supervisory Union & its member districts to comply with the Guidance of the Vermont Agency of Education and Department of Health in relation to the safety practices to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Delegation of Authority to Superintendent

Due to rapidly changing conditions and guidance during the pandemic, the Grand Isle Supervisory Union & its member districts hereby delegates authority to its Superintendent to make decisions regarding the operation of schools, including but not limited to the instructional modes that will be provided during the 2021-2022 school year.

Implementation and Communication

The Superintendent shall implement guidance, practices, and procedures and shall report to the school board (“Board”) at least monthly on the status of such implementation.

A. Implementation shall be consistent with existing District policies, including the Non-Discrimination Policy, the Harassment, Hazing and Bullying Policy, confidentiality of student records and other relevant policies.

B. The Superintendent is authorized to temporarily suspend provisions of the Board's policies and/or whole policies (limited to those policies which are not required by law), as determined by the Superintendent in the Superintendent's sole judgment, if such suspension is necessary to implement the DOH and AOE Guidance. In the event that the Superintendent suspends provisions of Board policies, in whole or in part, the superintendent shall provide prompt notice to the Board of that action.

C. Access to the District's grounds and buildings may be limited as directed by the Superintendent.

D. The superintendent is authorized to close any school in the District without further action by the Board. Such closure shall continue until such time as the superintendent or the Board, in consultation with appropriate health and government authorities, deems it in the best interests of the District and its students to open schools.

E. The superintendent is authorized, based upon the needs of the District and guidance from health and/or government agencies, to direct staff assignments during District closure for in person instruction, including but not limited to employees who must report to work, employees who may be reassigned, and employees whose services are not needed.

F. Implementation of the DOH and AOE Guidance shall comply with labor master agreements, established District employment practices for the State of Emergency and any applicable federal, state, and local law.

Duration of Policy

This policy shall be in effect for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year.