



PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL OFFICE

27 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06786

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Plymouth Public Schools is to challenge, inspire, and prepare all students for success in an ever-changing and complex world.

PLYMOUTH BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING
TERRYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA
33 NORTH HARWINTON AVENUE
TERRYVILLE, CT 06786

IN PERSON MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC

MASKS ARE REQUIRED

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022

7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

Present: Mr. Seaman, Mrs. Kulesa, Mrs. Lucian, Mr. Showers, Ms. Fusco, Mr. Foote, Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani,
Mr. Perugino and Mr. Zbuska

Also Present: Mr. Falcone, Acting Superintendent

1. **Call to Order & Pledge to the Flag**

Mr. Seaman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The group joined in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion, all in favor, any opposed, any abstentions, motion carries.

3. **Superintendent's Update**

Updated information regarding Mask Mandate

- Officially ends on Monday, February 28th;
- Board can make decision to go mask optional unless directed by state agency that they need to return to mask mandate, masks being required in school and on school grounds;
- Students must still wear masks on school buses because the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's order has not changed. Up for discussion to change on or about March 18. Currently, it is still in place for masks on school buses;
- CIAC no longer will require masks at any indoor or outdoor practices or competitions.

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Survey

- Superintendent Survey Only to all of the school districts in Connecticut:

112 Schools responded to mask optional – 9.32%
9 Schools chose to still mandate masks – 7.26%
3 Schools chose other – 2.42%

- Faculty and Staff Survey:

154 staff chose masks optional – 76.24%
48 chose mask required – 23.76%

- Parent and Student Survey: (This survey is not valid parent survey, therefore, the results cannot be shared)

Reason: The district has 1,351 students, over 3,000 people voted

Some Facts: From January 30 – February 12, there were 32 confirmed cases of COVID in Plymouth. The positivity rate currently in Plymouth as of February 17 is 3.57%; Positivity rate in Connecticut is 3.51%; 261 people are currently hospitalized with COVID; and the vaccination rate for students and children between the ages of 5 – 11 is 17.58% and for students and children between 12 years of age and 17 is 50.17%.

4. Mask Mandates

- * Status of Masking Students and Staff in the Plymouth Public Schools

MOTION: To entertain a motion to make masks optional to all students, staff and visitors while in school or on school sponsored events as of Monday, February 28, 2022.

This motion will include the following conditions:

- * Mask breaks will no longer be provided;
- * Faculty, staff or the District will no longer be addressing or responsible for proper mask wearing or managing parents' requests for their children to wear masks;
- * Protective instrument covers and masks will no longer be required in Music classes and concerts.

It is our expectation that a student's masking decision will be respected and there will be no disruption in our schools. If a student's masking beliefs, opinions and actions negatively impact the learning environment, the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken by building administration. If students, faculty or staff test positive for COVID, they will not be required to wear a mask after they return to school, symptom free on day 6 – 10.

Motion Mr. Showers, second Mrs. Lucian, any discussion,

Mr. Perugino – Expressed his concern, should anything happen to a student, who is responsible? Is it the Town, this Board, or the school district? Anything COVID related, who is responsible? There are individuals that run to a lawyer the first thing when something happens. He indicated he does not want a lawsuit because of some child getting COVID because, Mr. Perugino said it was okay to go mask optional. He asked if there was anything from the State in writing that indicated we were not liable for that. Again, although he does not like the masks, he echoed he does not want to be responsible for some child getting sick or getting some other child sick and coming down to the Board and starting a lawsuit. He was just looking for clarification and as long as the Board is not responsible, he would go along with the motion. However, he did indicate he would be very comfortable if parents were to sign a waiver.

Mr. Seaman – Mr. Seaman explained the student or their parents would be responsible, since the State has turned the decision over to the Boards. If the District violated the State policy, example: We're not going to worry about masks, when there was a mandate, then we would be held liable.

Mr. Falcone – Added, Mr. Seaman is correct. The State has made the determination that we can go mask optional. Example, if we went against the State, for example: on buses, students need to wear masks. If we decided not to follow this, now you are all held personally liable for that decision. He shared that on Tuesday, he was on a meeting call and the same question was asked by a group of superintendents. The answer from the State was that we are not liable for that. Mr. Falcone indicated there was nothing in writing from the State. There is not much the State is currently putting in writing. However, on this call there were approximately 100+ superintendents and if we were going to be held liable, 112 schools would not have been making this decision.

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani – To Mr. Seaman – Is that the generic motion that other districts are using or is that a motion of how you want the mask policy or the new policy to read? Also, do you know why the colleges are not going mask optional but public schools are going mask optional? Just thinking of you are having a building full of adults and you are masked up why would you not keep children masked up?

Mr. Seaman – It is not a policy. It is a motion of what I think the Board would adapt. It is kind of what the other school districts are using. He does not know why colleges are not going mask optional.

Mr. Falcone – The motion is not word for word.

Mrs. Lucian – Comment – Students got sick with the masks on. So, I am in favor with the optional.

Mr. Foote – Expressed that he was concerned about the timing. He thinks another month would be a good thing to see how this are going.

A vote of Yes indicates you are in favor of the motion. A vote of No indicates you are not in favor of the motion. You may also abstain.

ROLL VOTE: Mr. Showers- Yes Ms. Fusco - Yes Mr. Foote – No

Mrs. Candrea-Florenciani - No Mr. Perugino - No Mr. Zbuska - Yes

Mrs. Lucian - Yes Mrs. Kulesa - Yes

Vote: Yes - 5 No – 3 Abstentions - 0 motion carries

5. **Public Comment** (limited to 3-minutes per speaker.

Kelly Clark, 12 Bernice Avenue, Terryville
Marla Stoddard 122 Wolcott Rd, Terryville

Both of these individuals thanked the Board for their decision to go mask optional.

Gerry Bourbonniere – 6 Fairmount Avenue, Terryville – As a member of the Parks and Recreation Commission, he was looking for clarification as they use the school for their basketball program on Saturdays. He was advised that on February 28, 2022 masks were optional. Therefore, the date he is inquiring about, March 5th, yes, masks will be optional.

Dan Gentile – 269 Mt. Tobe Road, Plymouth – First, he thanked the Board for the decision of masks optional. However, he is unclear as to masks or no masks on busses. It was indicated, yes, masks needed to be worn by students taking the bus, this was a Federal Mandate that has not been lifted yet. Both Mr. Seaman and Mr. Falcone indicated they would email Mr. Gentile the information they have on this matter.

6. **Executive Session** – Personnel Matter

MOTION: To enter into executive session at 7:22 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter: Memorandum of Understanding for consideration. Inviting Mr. Falcone, Acting Superintendent to attend executive session. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote, all in favor. Motion carries.

7. **Resume Regular Session**

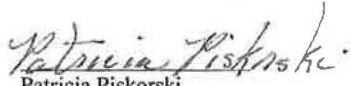
MOTION: To entertain a motion to resume regular session at 7:46 p.m. Motion Mr. Showers, second Mr. Foote all in favor, motion carries.

8. Possible Action From Executive Session

None Taken

9. Adjournment

MOTION: To entertain a motion to adjourn at 7:26 p.m. Motion Mr. Showers, second, Mr. Foote all in favor, motion carries.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Patricia Piskorski".

Patricia Piskorski
Recording Secretary
Plymouth Board of Education