

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting

November 19, 2020 7:00pm

Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/92988435655?pwd=U2FXWGx0ajY2cUZKRUFrZmFpWUI1dz09>

Meeting ID: 929 8843 5655

Password: 806367

Members Present: Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Emily Barron, Sarah Fox

Members Not Present: David Harris

Also: Dr. John J. Buckey-Superintendent
Nan Murphy-Assistant Superintendent
Michelle Cresta-Director of Finance
Greg Ceglarksi-Athletics Director

I. Initial Business and Public Involvement

1. Call to Order

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

2. Commendations

a. Principal Commendations-Glover School, Principal Ota

Principal Ota thanked the Glover teachers for their rich and motivating lesson plans noting that creating lesson plans to accommodate both hybrid and in-person learning was a challenge. He also thanked his staff for covering additional classes until vacant positions were filled. Principal Ota also shared that the PTO sponsored a new program for the 2nd graders called Zoning In and Checking Out. He shared that the program focused on the daily social emotional health of the students. It was explained that the students selected a colored emoji each morning to represent how they were feeling. It was further explained that activities from the toolbox would help students to learn how to process their feelings for that day. He thanked the PTO parents and his staff noting that he was certain “they could weather any storm.”

b. School Commendations

1. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents-Certificate of Academic Excellence

Dr. Buckey shared that the state Superintendent’s Association gives districts an opportunity to honor senior students each year. He introduced seniors Tess Keaney and Diana Gordon sharing a list of their accomplishments. Ms. Keaney and Ms. Gordon thanked the Superintendent for the recognition and shared that they would each plan on attending a four year college the next year and that the university was to be determined.

3. Student Representative-Dan Howells

- Mr. Howells shared that MHS Boosters was looking for fundraising help due to not being able to hold their annual scholarship drive or open the snack shed. To help out visit marbleheadboostes.org
- The Performing Arts Department is holding their annual holiday wreath fundraiser

- Spirit Week is taking place while working around social distancing guidelines and including the participation of both cohorts
4. Public Comment-none
Superintendent Buckey gave Mr. Howells a shout out on his Eagle Scout Project commending Mr. Howells on raising almost \$2,000.

II. Consent Agenda an Action Items

1. Minutes: 7/8/2020, 8/10/2020, 9/17/2020,10/29/2020, 11/5/2020
Ms. Gold noted that five sets of minutes were on the agenda for the evening as she further clarified that the minutes from 10/29/2020 were not included and would not be voted.

Ms. Gold explained that due to requesting to revisit the minutes from 9/17/2020 she would be asking for a motion to approve the minutes from only 7/8/2020, 8/10/2020 and 11/5/2020.

Ms. Taylor shared that she agreed with Ms. Gold's suggested motion.

Ms. Fox noted that she had not had an opportunity to revisit the 9/17 minutes and that some revisions were made by the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant. It was agreed that the minutes from 9/17 could be voted at the first December meeting.

Ms. Gold confirmed that the motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron.

Prior to voting Ms. Gold informed the community that committee member Mr. Harris was not in attendance that evening. She also inquired if requests for revisions should be noted to which Ms. Taylor mentioned sending a minor revision for 11/5/2020 to the Superintendent's Administrative Assistant. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Ms. Fox-yes
Ms. Barron-yes

The motion passed 4-0

III. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Buckey began his update with thanking Ms. Thomson for the idea to display student artwork via website and social media platforms throughout the district. He mentioned how wonderful it has been to see students submitting artwork honoring their teachers and why they were thankful for them.

Dr. Buckey also expressed his gratitude to community members and the PTO for organizing luncheons and gift deliveries to educators in an effort to show their appreciation for all that they do for their students.

Additionally, he shared a slideshow of photos displaying the many ways in which teachers have been recognized throughout the district and by the Administration on the Thankful Thursdays.

1. Hybrid Model Update

Superintendent Buckey shared that the amount of data that has been collected through listening sessions and surveys was plentiful and was being used to make informed decision regarding learning models throughout buildings and grade levels.

He highlighted important comments by teachers from a recent survey that had been returned sharing that the comments “told a story about feeling exhausted and frustrated with a desire to be heard and respected.” Superintendent Buckey explained that the results prompted a “tapping of the brakes” to allow school buildings to settle into hybrid models which he mentioned had been effective.

It was explained that a stop, start, continue model was being utilized to address what has not been working, what could work better and what to continue on with that has been successful. He displayed a slide informing the community of which areas included in the survey were of primary focus. The areas mentioned included:

- Academic growth
- The social emotional health of all students and staff
- The physical health and safety of students and staff
- The adequacy of teacher support
- Whether workload was appropriate
- Schedules were clearly defined

It was also mentioned that data would be analyzed over time to look at emerging trends to adjust to them accordingly.

Dr. Buckey confirmed that the district would continue to follow a 6ft social distancing model and that the schools did not have the capacity or funding to regularly test students and staff. He also stressed the importance of not traveling over Thanksgiving break so that the district could continue to provide in-person learning for as long as possible. He recommended that the district continue full in-person learning after the Thanksgiving break and that the community follow the Governor’s travel and quarantine orders for travel and family gatherings.

Dr. Buckey thanked the Village School, the Facilities Director and the Marblehead Police for the coordinated effort of an unexpected dismissal at the Village School recently.

Superintendent Buckey also mentioned that the collective bargaining process just began and that he would be working with the Town and the MEA moving forward. Town Administrator, Jason Silva would be invited to the first December meeting.

Dr. Buckey also informed the community that a finalist for the Director of Technology had been selected and visited the district earlier that day. It was mentioned that the candidate was favorably received and that they would join an upcoming meeting for an introduction once things were finalized.

The committee members took turns noting their concerns and requests for clarification regarding Dr. Buckey's update.

2. Live Streaming Device Update

A conversation regarding live streaming in the classrooms took place. Dr. Buckey shared that the high school currently had teachers using demo equipment and that no feedback had been shared yet. Dr. Buckey mentioned that he was not expecting a high number of teachers to have an interest in live streaming sharing that due to bandwidth concerns, the challenges of managing the equipment while teaching in-person and at home students and other vulnerabilities could make implementing equipment a challenge. Dr. Buckey mentioned that the district technology audit was still underway and that final results would be shared when available. Ms. Taylor requested that once the audit was complete that the district obtains the number of teachers interested in live streaming, how much equipment would be needed and an estimated cost.

3. Sports Update

Athletic Director, Greg Ceglarski provided a fall sports update and information about the plan for the start of the winter season. He shared that there was a great turnout for fall registration. He thanked Trainer Will DesJardins and Assistant Athletic Director Mark Tarmey for all of their coordination with daily health check-ins and the constant communication surrounding game times and changing venues that needed to go out to the community regularly. He shared that golf, soccer, field hockey and cross country all experienced competitive seasons that allowed the athletes to continue to practice and improve in their sports. Mr. Ceglarski reported that he and other districts would be meeting with the MIAA Board of Directors to discuss winter sports guidelines and a start date for the season which could be brought back to the committee for an update. It was noted that a December 14th start date could be agreed upon.

IV. Finance Organizational Support

1. Monthly Budget Update

Ms. Cresta provided a brief monthly budget update sharing that the district had expended 18.75% of the budget. She highlighted a change in expected revenue pertaining to Special Education Out of District tuition costs. Ms. Cresta informed the committee that the district would be receiving \$225K less than anticipated from the reimbursement expected from Circuit Breaker funds. She further explained that this was due to a change in the Student Opportunity Act submission date that had been pushed to FY22 which lowered the threshold for the funds that could be submitted to Circuit Breaker for reimbursement. It was noted that the district was in the process of expanding their special education programming to be able to better support the needs of certain students that had been placed out of district.

Ms. Cresta shared that the district had projected a total cost of \$1.9mill in COVID related costs through the month of December. She noted that \$986,346k had already been spent. It was explained that additional Town funds could be made available if needed. It was also mentioned that a small grant in the amount of \$91k could be used beyond December 31st for COVID related expenditures if needed.

Ms. Cresta informed the committee that there would be a reduction in contracted cleaning services coming in the next week. She explained that the adjustment would help prolong the length of time the contracted workers could be in district while not compromising the current cleaning guidelines.

2. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the schedule of bills totaling \$739,568.95. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Taylor-yes

Ms. Fox-yes

Ms. Barron-yes

The motion passed 4-0.

V. School Committee Communications and/or Discussion Items

1. Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) Testing Resolution

Discussion

Ms. Gold explained that information regarding a resolution for MCAS testing had come across her MASC listserv and Ms. Taylor confirmed that it had been approved at a recent MASC delegate meeting. A conversation about the importance of the need for MCAS testing took place. Ms. Barron confirmed that although the test would not be used in the 2020-2021 school year for accountability or district ranking that the test could be helpful with collecting data to understand what students have learned.

Assistant Superintendent Nan Murphy explained that the district did not currently have a warehouse that centralized testing data and that MCAS supported centralizing ELA, Math, Writing and Science data. She further explained that the data would be important for measuring academic standards by district and grade so that results could be evaluated to adjust lesson plans and create curriculum models for the next year.

Although no formal vote was taken, it was decided that the resolution would be revisited at a December meeting so that committee members could take the time to further discuss their questions and concerns with Ms. Murphy and Dr. Buckey.

2. Homeschooling Policies IHBG & IHBG-R Homeschooling Discussion

Ms. Gold explained that she would be asking the committee for a vote to approve the suggested changes Assistant Superintendent Nan Murphy was recommending to the homeschooling policies. Ms. Gold confirmed with Ms. Fox that the adjustments were suggested to address procedural changes and not to edit the policies. Ms. Gold elaborated explaining that the changes were specific to the way in how Ms. Murphy and parents would work together to adequately provide homeschooling services to students noting that it would be important to confirm the program and assessments that would be used.

When asked about what safety nets would be in place to ensure success, Ms. Murphy shared that a portfolio following DESE guidelines would provide evidence of measured growth.

It was noted that the reference to the word CHINS should be updated and replaced with current information and that information about a plan for a mid-year and end of the year check in should also be added.

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve policies IHBG and IHBG-R on homeschooling with the adjustments noted in the discussion. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Taylor-yes

Ms. Fox-yes

Ms. Barron-yes

The motion passed 4-0.

3. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates

Policy

- Met last Tuesday
- Community member Dr. Benedetto shared her research on busing policies in other districts and will work with Ms. Cresta to evaluate the needs of the district and estimated associated costs involved with providing additional busing
- Ms. Judith Crocker with Safe Routes to School will complete walking audits to share the availability of safe walking routes around town.
- Policies from the I and F sections will be looked at for the next policy meeting

Budget

- Ms. Taylor noted that Ms. Cresta had already updated the community
- Members of the community were called upon to assist with grant writing

Facilities

- Met last Monday and will meet on second Monday of the month at 1:30pm
- Ms. Cresta will get bids out as soon as possible so a plan can be developed for budget season as the numbers for the capital ask need to be in by mid-January.
- A plan to develop a facilities manual was discussed along with the increased demand on the HVAC system due to the airing out of buildings and the need for replacing HVAC motors in the future.

SEPAC

- Will be holding monthly conference series and the first one was kicked off last Tuesday about the IEP process which was well presented.

4. Building Project Update

Ms. Fox shared that the brick was being put on the building and that pricing for landscaping quotes had been coming in. She also shared that a committee is working on a mosaic display for the front of the building.

Ms. Barron mentioned that it would be good to share photos of the progress at an upcoming meeting.

VI. Closing Business

1. New Business-none
2. Correspondence-none
3. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:07pm

*Respectfully Submitted
Sarah Fox, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee*

Approved December 17, 2020