



**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES October 2, 2018**

<b>Meeting:</b>	School Committee
<b>Date:</b>	October 2, 2018
<b>Location:</b>	MERMHS Learning Commons
<b>Attendees:</b>	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Shannon Erdmann, Chairperson Rachel Fitzgibbon, Co-Chair Julie Riordan Ann Cameron Sarah Wolf Caroline Weld
<b>Absent:</b>	Ken Warnock
<b>Guests:</b>	Joanne Maino, Principal Middle School Patricia Puglisi, Principal High School
<b>Recorded by:</b>	Gail Hunter

**A. Call to Order** – Ms. Erdmann called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**B. Business Meeting Open Session**

- 1) **Public Comment** – Mike and Dorothy Athanas came before the Committee to express their concerns regarding the boys Varsity Lacrosse Coach:
  - Coaching – The Athanas’ feel that the coach does not regularly hold practices, cancels practices and allows students to miss practices during vacations (against vacation policy) and put two players into the game following vacation ahead of players who had practiced during vacation, he does not submit press releases to the *Gloucester Times*, he fails to film games and does not scout other teams in preparation for games.

- School Policy – after the Martha Vineyard’s weekend the bus returning to Manchester was late and the coach allowed players to return with other players parents without parental permission. The coach did not ride the bus home, he rode with his wife. (“It was noted, however, that the JV coach rode the bus home with the remaining team members.”) Additionally, following a game and poor behavior by one team member the coach had the team climb the school fence and run sprints around the dark field.
- These concerns have been shared with Principal Puglisi over a period of 2 years and the coach has been rehired without making improvements according to the couple. Mike and Dorothy wanted to share the information with the Committee hoping for a resolution.

Ms. Erdmann thanked the couple for sharing their concerns and stated the information will be reviewed. Ms. Cameron stated the message was received and thanked the parents for coming – as did Ms. Fitzgibbon.

2) **Chairman’s Report** – Ms. Erdmann does not have a specific report this evening.

**3) Consent Agenda**

- Acceptance of Warrants
- Minutes 9/18

*Ms. Riordan moved to approve the Consent Agenda, Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Fitzgibbon abstaining from approving the Minutes of 9/18/18, she was not in attendance at the meeting.*

**4) Sub-Committee Reports**

- Elementary Facilities/MSBC (Ms. Weld and Ms. Cameron)

Ms. Cameron updated the Committee by indicating we are two weeks away from the Essex Town Meeting and one week and six days away from the Manchester Town Meeting. Parent’s group continues to be active and doing a great job. Meetings with both the Manchester and Essex Chambers of Commerce have been scheduled, meeting with Merchant’s Group is scheduled in Essex and tables in front of post offices and Town dumps continue to be maned successfully getting the word out. Signs have gone up on the Pedestrian Bridge and in front of Town Hall in Manchester and the parent’s group have formalized as a Ballot Committee and registered in both Towns. Flyers are available, and a mailer will be going out next week.

- Finance Committee (Ms. Cameron and Ms. Erdmann)

Collaboration meetings have been scheduled and the first meeting is this Friday, 10/5/18.

- Policy Committee (Mr. Warnock and Ms. Fitzgibbon)

Policy Committee met and initiated discussions on policy revisions to school transportation reviewing the District policy past and future. Committee also reviewed the Financial Policy manual and the job description for the Administration Assistant.

- Negotiation Team (Ms. Wolf and Ms. Riordan)

Ms. Riordan indicated the team is meeting tomorrow and preparations are in place of a productive meeting.

## **5) Superintendent's Report**

Update and preview of what's to come – Dr. Riley is reviewing the MCAT scores and putting the scores into a report to help the Committee make sense of changes initiated last year. MCAT 2017-2018 is a whole new approach and needs to be reviewed as a new way of testing; scores are not comparable. There are new accountability standards and how the District measures to the new standards needs to be reviewed.

Ms. Cameron asked what is at stake for this year and what is the conversation statewide for testing and performance? Superintendent Beaudoin stated a full discussion on MCAT testing and results is scheduled for the Committee's meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Riley is working with regional Curriculum Director's to develop a presentation for School Committees. Ms. Weld asked to put MCAT for elementary schools in the Committee's parking lot for consideration at a future meeting.

Department of Education Commissioner will be in the District this coming Friday for a tour, meeting with teachers and lunch.

- 6) **New Business** – There was no new business this evening.

## **7) Continued Business**

### ➤ Transportation Public Discussion

Ms. Erdmann initiated the discussion by stating that the District Budget was extremely tight this year and as difficult as the decision was to drop the late bus the decision was made due to low ridership and the need for the District to save an additional \$30K. Starting this year and working with Principal Maino the bus for Essex was scheduled for Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 3:30 p.m. and Friday at 4:30 p.m. most late scheduled activities for the Middle School were shifted to Friday so participating students would be provided transportation.

Ms. Weld stated the decision was not made in one meeting – it was made over several meetings starting in November of 2017. The Committee made the decision as the result of a thoughtful process deliberated over several months.

Ms. Bowling, Essex – Spoke on behalf of friends, one with a special need's child and two who work in retail and were not able to attend the School Committee meeting. Ms. Bowling indicated

that ridership may only impact 8-14 children, but the impact is likely on 20-25 families. Her concern is that families in Essex need to have equal access and the late bus provides that access. She believes the late bus issue does not affect privileged families it affects the families who feel marginalized and those who can least afford to overcome barriers like no late bus and additional school fees. She stated the issue is larger than the number of children who ride the bus although the number is relatively small it is important to provide more access not less.

Nicole Olivier Meehan, Essex – Is concerned that without the late bus children will find a way to get from Manchester to Essex and it will not be safe for children to walk or ride their bikes. She is fortunate enough to be able to pick up her children and is more than willing to help other parents who need rides for their children.

Peter Phippen, Essex – Is interested in other options for the children of Essex and asked why 3:30 p.m. and not 4:30 p.m.? The cost of moving the late bus to 4:30 p.m. was discussed. Mr. Urbas stated that the cost of providing supervision for children between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. was approximate \$14K based on 180 days of school. Assuming supervision is required for only 3 days a week the cost would drop to \$9K - \$10K – arrangements and scheduling for students waiting for the late bus would need to be made.

Melissa Whitten, Essex – The mother of 3 daughters who understand their after-school activities rely on them being able to ride home on the late bus. She is unable to leave her job to provide transportation for her daughters. She indicated that one of her daughters received a \$12K scholarship based in part on her participation in the Robotics Club. She went on to say that the late bus is for some kids who need it the most and may be going home to an empty house.

Amanda Kuhl, Essex – Indicated she thought if more parents understood the bus did not drop children at Essex Elementary School that ridership would go up. She believes families need to be informed so everyone has the same information.

James McKenna, Essex – Mr. McKenna lives on Turtle Back Rd. and is very concerned about children walking on Apple St. the bus comes down Turtle Back Rd. for the elementary aged children but middle and high school aged children need to walk to Apple St. to catch the bus. The bus company has raised a series of different reason for why the earlier bus cannot pick up on Turtle Back Road. School Committee and Administration will look into resolving this issue.

Kristin Bixby, Essex – Indicated the bus company has presented different reasons for the earlier bus not being able to pick up on Turtle Back Rd. but their reason are not accurate.

Emily Allen, Essex – Stated that it was frustrating that the School Committee stated she was heard; however, she did not feel she was being advocated for.

Ms. Weld thought it might be helpful for the parents to hear the Committee's deliberations and may understand they are heard and at times difficult decisions need to be made. Ms. Fitzgibbon an Essex parent stated her children have relied on the late bus and the Committee made a difficult decision over time to eliminate the late bus.

Ms. Bowling, Essex – indicated some in Essex had attempted to get funding for the late bus on the Town Warrant, however, they were too late because the Warrant was closed. She also stated she was worried that if the District kept alienating families they were not likely to vote for the school because they were not heard and felt they have disparate access.

Ms. Cameron indicated that Town and School budgets were separate, and it was important to keep the budgets separate.

Ms. Weld stated the Apple Street issue has to be resolved – it is a safety issue.

Superintendent Beaudoin summarized; if it is the will of the Committee we will have the discussion this evening. She went on to indicate there were some overlapping issues for the District and questions that need to be answered for instance: What is the District's policy on private roads and is it being followed equitably across the entire District? The District is working with the Towns regarding cross walk and side walk issues. What are the public safety issues around Turtle Back Road? And the broader issue of the budget – the late bus cut was the 4<sup>th</sup> largest cut the District took in its budget. It's a small number in the overall budget when you're advocating for services, however, it impacts the health of the budget and the cut needs to be reviewed. Superintendent Beaudoin thanked everyone for sharing their concerns.

➤ Middle School Improvement Plan – Principal Maino

Whole Child Middle School SIP Progress Report

Accomplishments

ME Block – Year One Successful

Clubs in School and After School

March Madness Spirit Week – 2<sup>nd</sup> year students love it

Field Trips – 8<sup>th</sup> graders participated in community service projects at 4 properties of Trustees of the Reservations

In School Assemblies – included Alastair Moock

School Dances – including a semi-formal fundraising dance

Fundraisers and Philanthropy

RULER Faculty and Staff

Student Achievement

Middle School Academy, IXL for Math – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, Adopted STEM Scopes Science Curriculum,

Continue Curriculum Work, Teachers 21 and

Continuation and Collaboration Training for Special Education

Climate Accomplishments

Sunshine Committee, ME Block, Clubs In School and After School, March Madness, School Dances and RULER

### Community Partnerships

School Council, PTO, Student Led Community Outreach and Fundraising Initiatives, Coffee with Principal and Continued to work with YMCA and Manchester Parks and Recreations

### Resource Accomplishments

Chromebooks and iPads (Spaulding Grant)  
IXL Subscription  
Math, Science and ELA

### Outlook

NELMS 2016 Continue focus on student centered learning and instructional process  
RULER – Introduce and Implement  
Project Adventure – connecting to RULER

### Curriculum

Math Pilot Research, English – Align to standards Writing and Science – Stem Scopes analyze year 1

### Areas of Concern YRBS

Social Emotional Support and Bullying Prevention will be addressed thru MARCC training  
RULER – with School Council

Ms. Cameron had a few questions – her first was regarding School Clubs and how are they going to work? Principal Maino indicated she is waiting for teachers to volunteer and anticipates setting the program up in 6-week blocks, students will sign up and clubs will be managed in an equitable format.

Ms. Cameron was also interested in Internet Access and asked Principal Maino if she had an idea of how many families do not have internet? Principal Maino is not aware of how many families are without internet access but she would be willing to survey to see if that could be determined.

Finally, Ms. Cameron asked how Instructional Rounds would work with special education and general education teachers. Principal Maino indicated that was really 2 conversations: the first is how to most efficiently use consult time with the special education expert and the general education teacher. Traditionally the general education teacher would point out that the child had failed to complete an assignment and the student needed help completing the assignment. True

collaboration would have the special education expert helping the general education teacher develop a specific lesson for the student based on a student-centered framework. Ms. Cameron indicated that would be a true pedagogical exchange, Principal Maino agreed.

Principal Maino discussed Instructional Rounds which will start in October – teachers will have a graph and guided chart to complete while on Rounds. In every Faculty Meeting throughout the year teacher’s information gathered during Instructional Rounds will be shared. Hopefully teacher’s take away will be to try new things and add new approaches to their classroom teaching.

Ms. Weld asked how Project Adventure was being funded? Principal Maino indicated the school had received a deep discount and the PTO helped fund transportation.

Amanda Kuhl, Essex – was interested in asking about enrichment opportunities in the Middle School. She is interested in seeing more structured and defined clubs in school that focus on academic enrichment. Ms. Kuhl indicated she was willing to volunteer to help with developing the clubs and suggested a Chess Club. Principal Maino is happy to have the help and will follow up with Ms. Kuhl.

Ms. Riordan asked if the late bus schedule as currently structured was addressing the needs of the Middle School students. Principal Maino indicated they were good with the current schedule.

Ms. Cameron asked if a program like the after-school program at Essex Elementary School run by the Y would be feasible for the Middle School? Would it be possible for the YMCA to come in and provide fee-based programming? If a family could not afford the program there is recourse for funding through the Y. This possibility is open to further discussion.

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated there are many variables to consider and it may not be wish to institute a fee-based program when some families are already feeling slighted because of the late bus issue. Ms. Bowling made a point and there are likely families throughout the District with needs for transportation – only half of Manchester families are within walking distance.

#### ➤ High School SIP Progress Report – Whole Child

##### FY 18 Accomplishments

##### Whole Child

- Implementation of SBIRT screening
- YRBS Survey Completed
- Implementation of Bridge Program
- Continuation of the Guidance Advisory Board (ongoing)
- Review of U Block – changed to earlier in the day

##### Student Achievement

- Professional development focused on implementation of student-centered learning
- Professional development focused on depth over breadth

- Continue curricular review in all departments
- Curriculum mapped in Aspen and becoming “living documents”
- Strong AP and MCAS scores

#### Climate

- RULER implementation – Faculty Charter
- Reflections from Teachers
- U block reflections
- Safety Committee Work
- Peer Mentors – Work with Freshman

#### Community Partnerships

- International week speakers
- Conference Networking – Mass Cue, NACAC, NCSS, Primary Source, AP Institutes, New England Bio Labs, AP Reading
- ASR Internships (11 internships)
- Gardner Project – One Sight
- Green Scholar Projects and Grants
- Cape Ann Chamber Business/Education Collaboration
- Facing History Seminars
- School Council – Handbook Progressive Discipline
- Partnership with Middle School
- SCORE Projects

#### Resources

- Re-allocation of sections to develop expanded Green Scholars program beginning with a sustainability class
- Re-allocation of staffing to Bridge and Academic Center
- Use of Spaulding Funds for Science Classes – 3 D printers, Claymation and Bio Tech Equipment
- Additional Staffing – Humanities/STEM

#### FY 19 Outlook

- Student Centered Learning
- Social Emotional Learning – RULER
- Curricular Review and Mapping
- NEASC Self Reflection Study (11/15 and 11/16)
- Continuation of Athletics Review
- A World of Difference Implementation

#### Areas of Concern

- Social emotional health of students
- Inclusivity, tolerance and empathy
- Development of a *Vision of a Graduate*
- Present budget restructure of High School to include Academic Behavioral Dean and Athletic Director

Ms. Cameron initiated the discussion by stating students engaging in “in-depth conversation” – she was seeing the results at home. Ms. Cameron gave it two thumbs up.



Ms. Riordan asked about the improvement being seen in senior presentations. Principal Puglisi indicated that by no longer requiring a senior paper at the beginning of the year when seniors are busy with college and asking the students to put that content in their presentations at the end of the school year – resulted in student presentations being notably stronger than in previous years.

Ms. Riordan also asked about AP classes and the possibility of giving students the option of not taking exams. Principal Puglisi indicated that students who do not take the exam receive honors credit for the course. Principal Puglisi will survey other school to see how they are approaching this. She also thought this may be an area for School Council to investigate.

Ms. Wolf expressed her thanks and stated the back to school night was amazing. She asked how the moral was among teachers given the amount of work they have. Principal Puglisi indicated teachers did have a lot on their plates but once past NEASC self-study they will be ready to move on to RULER and Goal setting objectives.

Ms. Riordan stated she is excited to hear the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) is coming and working with the students. Ms. Cameron asked if there was a parent component to the ADL and Principal Puglisi replied yes, she believes it is scheduled for March 2019.

Ms. Erdmann asked about the change in schedule for U Block – Principal Puglisi asked the Student Council members she met with this week what they thought, they replied, “we’re used to it now.” It was a change in how the students think about the school day and there was an adjustment period, but it is working better for the students and teachers.

Ms. Wolf would like to see more arts electives and suggested jazz band and drama.

Ms. Erdmann asked about the SBRIT screening. Principal Puglisi stated there are 4 questions asked in the screening, it is a state-wide program and all students are screened. SBRIT is an evidence-based practice to identify, reduce and prevent problematic use, abuse and dependence on alcohol and illicit drugs.

➤ Essex Tech Board Appointment – Christopher Grant

Ms. Cameron stated that Chris Grant came from a great family and she knows as the District representative he will be a hard worker.

*Ms. Weld moved to appoint Christopher Grant to the Essex Tech Board, Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

**8) School Committee Comment –**

The Committee initiated discussion on the late bus with clarification of the current late bus schedule: the late bus leaves at 3:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, there is no late bus on Wednesday, the bus leaves at 4:30 p.m. on Friday with the assumption that students are engaged in an after-school activity until 4:30 p.m.

Ms. Riordan asked if the Committee should recommend keeping the current bus schedule or changing the schedule to 4:30 p.m. for all days? Mr. Urbas confirmed the estimated supervision cost for moving the bus to 4:30 p.m. is \$3K a day for the school year, assuming 3 days a week the cost would add \$9K to the budget.

Ms. Wolf indicated it is hard to know if kids are being supervised. Where are they from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.? It is hard to police what kids are doing during that 2-hour time frame.

The following issues were raised and discussed:

1. Adding supervision programming provided by an outside resource like the YMCA which is currently running programs in Essex.
2. Moving all late buses to 4:30 p.m. with supervision.
3. Parents sign their children up for the late bus to confirm ridership.
4. At this time, it is only an Essex issue but there are likely children in Manchester who also need transportation.
5. Ms. Weld is interested in seeing if ridership increases when parents understand the bus stops closer to their homes and not just at Essex Elementary School.
6. Add the 4:30 p.m. bus to the schedule eliminating the need for additional supervision the cost difference is \$3,500.
7. Ms. Weld suggested putting it all back and monitoring ridership while surveying fees and reviewing policy.
8. Superintendent Beaudoin addressed the budget issue and the need to understand the scope any decision made will have on the budget.
9. Consider a fee for service – in Manchester families within 1.5 miles of the schools pay for transportation.
10. Ms. Fitzgibbon strongly supports reviewing the policies and establishing data points.
11. Ms. Cameron indicated at this time it is only an Essex issue but that may change.
12. Ms. Cameron suggests a need for proactive conversations throughout the year to identify a solution that agrees with both communities.
13. Two late buses may not be sustainable for the number of students riding the bus.

The final 3 options:

- Keep what is currently on the schedule.
- Reinstate the 4:30 p.m. bus and review ridership
- Consider a fee for service.

*Ms. Cameron moved to **reinstate the 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. buses on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and to reinstate the 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. bus on Friday – through the end of the school year 2018-2019. Ridership will be monitored with daily attendance and counts. Usage will be continually revisited as FY 20 budget discussions progress. Ms. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.***

## **9) Adjourn**

*Ms. Weld moved to adjourn the School Committee Business meeting, Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*