



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES June 4, 2019

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	June 4, 2019
Location:	MERMHS Library
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Shannon Erdmann, Chairperson Rachel Fitzgibbon, Co-Chairperson Ann Cameron Sarah Wolf Caroline Weld Ken Warnock Eric Bourke
Absent:	
Guests:	Dr. Julie Riley, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology and Dr. Darci Burns, Executive Director, Hill for Literacy
Recorded by:	Gail Hunter

A. Call to Order – Ms. Erdmann called the School Committee Business meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The Committee welcomed Mr. Bourke, newly elected School Committee member from Manchester-by-the-Sea with individual introductions, a recommendation Mr. Bourke participate in MSCA, Charting the Course Program and identified Ms. Fitzgibbon as his Committee mentor.

1) Public Comment – There was no public comment this evening.

- 2) **Reorganization** – Superintendent Beaudoin stated the School Committee reorganized at the first meeting following Town elections by appointing a new Chairperson and Co-Chairperson. Sub-Committee members are appointed at the annual School Committee retreat in August.

After brief discussion the Committee nominated Ms. Erdmann as Chair and Ms. Fitzgibbon as Co-Chair for the School Committee 2019-2020.

Ms. Weld moved to approve the nomination of Ms. Erdmann as Chair for a second term; Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Warnock moved to approve the nomination of Ms. Fitzgibbon as Co-Chair for a second term; Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3) **Student Report -- NA**

4) **Chairman's Report –**

Ms. Erdmann reported she and Ms. Fitzgibbon met with the District's representative from MASC on Friday, May 30, 2019 for a brief tutorial on the School Committee Chair's position. Ms. Erdmann is happy to report the Committee is performing correctly and efficiently.

The District's MASC Representative had two recommendations for the Committee:

1. She recommended the Committee develop a handbook. Examples have been forwarded and Ms. Fitzgibbon will take a first pass at the MERSD School Committee Handbook.
2. Define Goals for the Committee that align with the Committee's objectives and review goals quarterly to assure the Committee is on track.

Ms. Erdmann also reported she had recorded a 30 second spot with Cape Ann TV, Studio 1623 on "What You Need to Know about the School Committee." She believes it would be a good idea to record additional 30 second spots throughout the school year to keep the communities updated on the building project and what's going on in the District.

Ms. Cameron stated Studio 1623 had also highlighted regionalization and women in government in 30 second spots. Superintendent Beaudoin stated Principal Puglisi had recorded a spot about the High School and she would be recording a spot prior to the opening of School Year 2019-2020 as will other regional superintendents.

5) **Consent Agenda –**

- Acceptance of Warrants
- Minutes 5/21/2019
- Budget Transfers – will be presented at the meeting on June 18, 2019

Ms. Weld moved to accept the Consent Agenda; Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed with Ms. Erdmann and Mr. Bourke abstaining.

6) Sub-Committee Reports

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

Ms. Cameron updated the Committee on the recent School Building Committee meetings:

- The Building Committee approved the Second Early Bid Package – with an awareness that there may be increases in costs due to implementation of tariffs on products imported from Mexico. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated this was a single line item in a comprehensive budget that will likely impact furniture and technology.
- Add alternatives – a sub-committee has been appointed to review furniture, fixtures and equipment (FFE) to review and maintain possible alternatives to currently budgeted items. Ms. Weld stated this is an important exercise for the sub-committee to identify savings and assure the project remains within budget.
- Review sub-bids – a sub-committee has been appointed to review all sub-contractor bids.
- Superintendent Beaudoin has been given authorization to approve emergency expenditures up to \$50K. These would be time sensitive expenditures like weekend overtime. Approvals will be followed up in a timely process with the Committee.
- Conservation Commission is meeting this evening. It is hoped final approvals will be given to the construction project. The project is currently approved for work through July 15, 2019. Final approval of the total project is anticipated this evening.
- Planning Board meeting is scheduled for June 10, 2019. It is hoped all permits will be finalized.
- Groundbreaking Ceremony for the New Memorial School is scheduled for Monday, June 10, 2019 at 10:30 a.m. Town Boards, Committees and Commission have been invited along with District's State Representative and Senator. MSBA representatives will be on hand. Ceremonial stainless-steel shovels will be used for the event.
- Parent Meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2019 followed by a meeting of interested and concerned neighbors. The meeting will be recorded by Studio 1623.
- Ms. Weld mentioned the parents group interested in lighting the tennis courts; the group is working independently and funding lights for the tennis courts on their own. The District believes a 3:30 p.m. start time for practice is adequate for school related programs.

b) Finance Sub-Committee (Ms. Cameron and Ms. Erdmann) No Report

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

- Policy Amendments 2nd Read
 1. Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services
 2. Admission and Residency Policy

Superintendent Beaudoin stated there had been no changes since the Policy Amendments 1st Read on May 21, 2019. She indicated the updates were the result of the coordinated Program Review Educational Stability Report conducted by the Department of Education.

Mr. Warnock moved the Committee approve new language in JFABD, JFABF, and JFABE as related to Homeless Students, Children in Foster Care and Military Children bringing the District's Policy in compliance with state regulations. Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Warnock moved the Committee approve updates to the Admission and Residency Policy to be in full compliance with students who are in foster care or qualify under McKinney-Vento, students will be admitted in accordance with state regulations. Ms. Cameron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

d) Negotiation Team (Ms. Wolf) The Negotiation Team is in recess.

7) Continued Business

- K-8 Literacy Assessment Report – Dr. Julie Riley, Director of Curriculum and Instructional Technology and Dr. Darci Burns, Executive Director, Hill for Literacy

Presentation: Phase 1 – Needs Assessment

A collaborative partnership between Hill for Literacy and MERSD administrators and staff was established to provide a comprehensive in-depth analysis of the current status of literacy practices at the elementary and middle schools. The Hill has generated a district report based on data collected from the schools that includes recommendations for improving the literacy achievement of all students.

A literacy current state analysis was conducted using a variety of qualitative tools. Information was gathered through self-reporting mechanisms, through focus group interviews and through the Effective School-Wide Reading Program Survey.

The goal of Phase 1 was to identify, prioritize and recommend areas for literacy improvement that would have the most immediate and positive impact on teachers' skills and on the reading and writing skills of the students in MERSD. Results shared in the district report reflect the general trends in all of the schools.

Gathered Information:

The PET-R survey identifies key elements of an effective school-wide reading program. There are seven categories: goals and objectives, assessment, instructional practices, instructional time, differentiated instruction, administration and professional development. The key elements in the

survey provide an independent and objective standard to use for comparison purposes with practice in MERSD.

Overall, the category with the highest percentage of comments coded as strength is: Culture (64%) and Instructional Programs and Materials (53%). The remaining categories had more comments coded as needs than strength.

After the interviews were conducted, 59 Planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective School-Wide Reading Programs – revised Surveys were completed and analyzed. There are seven categories as follows: goals and objectives, assessment, instructional practices, instructional time, differentiated instruction, administration and professional development. There are 5 – 8 individual items with each of these seven major categories.

The planning and Evaluation Tool for Effective School-Wide Reading Programs was compared with the individual interview data across all categories. From the analysis of the data presented, a picture of MERSD literacy strengths and needs emerged.

Recommendations:

1. Goals/Objectives/Priorities: District administration continue to utilize a district leadership team with representatives from each school. School administrators form school-based leadership teams with representatives from each grade level and specialists.
2. Assessment: The district leadership team should use a framework, identify gaps in the framework and create a plan to build a comprehensive assessment framework using reliable and valid assessments. Once district-wide assessment tools are agreed and recorded on the framework, provide adequate training and a system for administering, scoring, interpreting and measuring the effectiveness of instruction on a regular basis. The district should organize the data from all assessments into one format that can be used to determine instructional decisions at least 5 times per year.
3. Instructional Programs/Materials: The district leadership team should allocate time to review the program survey results and map those programs into a program framework. The district should work to create a multi-tiered model for delivering instruction. The district should develop a clear plan for implementing tier 1 instruction and the aligned tier 2 and tier 3 instruction with fidelity.
4. Instructional/Preparation Time: Develop schedules that allow for common planning time and collaboration for teachers, specialists and special education teachers at each school. Edit or create a master schedule that has staggered academic blocks for small group and intervention instruction.
5. Differentiated Instruction/Grouping/Scheduling: Develop master schedule in each school that have staggered academic blocks for both small group and intervention blocks to maximize the use of people resources. Schools should consider cross-class groupings as a way to provide smaller group instruction within Tier 1 and the intervention block.
6. Administration/Organization/Communication: Utilize the district leadership team and school leadership teams to support district administration to establish and communicate

clear guidelines and expectation for instruction. Brainstorm ideas on how to maintain the support for the use of the library and technology across the district.

7. Professional Development: Develop a professional development plan to support the implementation of programs and assessments articulated on the district program and assessment frameworks. Utilize professional development time for regular education, reading specialists and special education to plan for instruction. Provide professional development in the science of reading and current evidence-based practices in assessment and instruction to endure a common, consistent teacher/administrator knowledge base across the district.

School Committee Discussion:

Ms. Wolf stated she had no questions had been at presentation today and thought the District will do well taking on this exciting project. Dr. Riley stated it was not easy unearthing the program, however she is comfortable with the outcome the District will be better for the review.

Ms. Fitzgibbon expressed her thanks for the information and indicated the District had a great team. Her question is how are the inconsistencies around naming tackled and how does the District build a common language? Dr. Burns responded this will clear up as the schools develop a common knowledge through building a District, school and grade program framework.

Ms. Fitzgibbon also asked about follow ups as the plan is implemented. Dr. Riley indicated the implementation would be a 3-5-year process and she and Dr. Burns will be happy to update the Board throughout the process. Dr. Burns pointed out there are some recommendations that are easy to fix. Ms. Wolf stated at the meeting earlier today that scheduling with “specials” often took precedence and determined when reading was taught.

Ms. Cameron stated she was also at the meeting today and thought one comment particularly relevant was to define what reading is for parents. Parents need to know what that means. Ms. Cameron was also interested in knowing the literacy block is expanded across content. She specifically asked about phonics and decoding?

Dr. Burns responded students need to be taught to decode it means reading words on the page. First you teach kids to hear sounds and introduce words that start with the consonants and vowels that blend together to form words. There is an order it is explicit. Students need to apply sounds to text in sentences and books.

Dr. Riley indicated two versions of reading becomes confusing for students. Dr. Burns indicated the District would define a reading model incorporating the science of reading. Reading instruction is a systemic explicit instruction in elementary schools. The District will first focus on Tier 1 instruction.

Ms. Cameron asked if the literacy plan would require additional resources? Dr. Riley replied she did not know yet. Ms. Cameron stated this is a big endeavor and there are other curriculum issues will Dr. Riley be able to handle all of the work? Dr. Riley stated we can, there is a plan we

now have the information to put the plan in place. The literacy program will be more consistent and robust.

Ms. Erdmann asked Dr. Burns if there was a District where Hill Literacy had successfully brought all the elements together? Dr. Burns replied Craver, MA was a District with a complex number of classes where the recommended program changes were implemented with success. Craver was recently recognized as the District with the most significant improvement in SAT scores.

She added MERSD is a District with a committed staff and assuming the District stays the course there will be success. Ms. Wolf indicated new curriculum training in the long run will result in savings for the District. Superintendent Beaudoin stated intervention investments at the Middle School were a significant cost to the District.

Dr. Riley indicated the District needs to work hard building infrastructure for what we know our students need to learn at the college. The students today need to handle the complex text of the material they will get at the college level.

- Summer Schedule

Retreat is schedule for August 6, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

8) Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Beaudoin stated it was graduation week and the kids are ready to go. She believes everything is on track and will fall into place for graduation as it does every year.

Baccalaureate is Thursday evening and is always a solemn event that showcases the kid's talents. Ms. Cameron stated the evening was about the class and the collective talents of the class. It's a time for parents to celebrate their children's accomplishments.

Ms. Cameron mentioned Awards Night which was held last week. A total of \$130K were awarded in scholarships. Including a School Committee Scholarship. Ms. Cameron recognized the support of the Manchester Essex Educational Foundation a forty-five-year-old foundation designed to help ease the burden of college costs by providing scholarships that support students' efforts to achieve a college education.

Superintendent Beaudoin mentioned Moving On ceremonies for Memorial and Essex Elementary Schools and the Middle School graduation and dance scheduled for June 13th at 6:00 p.m. All the events will include a slide show which depicts the develop of students through the years.

- End of Year Goals Update:

Professional Practices:

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the contract successfully negotiated with META utilizing interest based bargaining methodology was a major commitment of time and now that the contract is finalized, she does not understand where that time was in her schedule because the schedule has filled in leaving no free time. TA's forming a new collaborative unit is on hold with META at this time.

Student Learning:

Identify and utilize third-party professional organizations to review and evaluate financial, staffing, resources allocation of District programs, are all on schedule. K-8 Literacy Assessment was added mid-year and is on schedule. Report out findings for HS Special Education, NEASC Accreditation Report, CPR Report – Pending publication to DESE and Literacy Assessment Report are all completed. Revise District Improvement Plan to reflect recommendations in curriculum and professional development, current and into FY 20 and Planned for FY 20 are in process and on schedule. Prioritize and integrate findings into multi-year budget development, has been incorporated into summer planning. Implement recommendation from FY 18 reviews, in process and on schedule.

Support the implementation of curriculum and training to support District goal of providing a coordinated approach toward social emotional learning. Collaborate with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction on Phase 2 student roll-out of RULER. The District is collecting base line data, the District is in year 2 but this is year 1 for students. Identify, provide and promote parent education and information on the RULER initiative completed.

Unser recommendation of Director CIT partner with Yale to implement baseline data collection. MS presentation to North Shore Roundtable on implementing SEL programming. Further partnership with Middlesex Partnership for Youth in planning stages.

Reestablish the District Health and Wellness Committee will be carried forward as a priority goal for FY 20.

Establish a Task Force to review overnight school trips and travel policies. Task Force established and recommendation reviewed. Next steps: further research on like districts, policy review, financial analysis target date for completion November 2019.

Explore and Identify opportunities to expand cultural proficiency of students and staff is in process and behind schedule.

District Improvement:

Identify efficiencies to close anticipated budget gap and develop a budget that balances fiscal responsibility with the need to maintain a quality school system, both objectives were achieved.

Work collaboratively with Town Partners to build understanding about the cost of 21st Century Education – through Regional Roundtable and collaborative meetings is in process and on schedule.

Launch Clear Gov transparency tool to make budget more accessible. Local review of data has taken place. Need to resolve data errors and category assignments. Requests for back end support from company have been slow. Stalled during building project campaign and launch due to bandwidth. This goal is in process and behind schedule.

Redesign of annual budget document. This will be a two-year process. Initial changes will be part of the annual budget book in March 2020. This goal has not been addressed at this date.

Pass the Memorial building project and move forward into implementation phase, completed.

School Committee Questions:

Ms. Fitzgibbon asked if the Clear Gov subscription model had kicked in. Mr. Urbas indicated it is live there is basic and accurate information online tracking to state reporting. DESE defined details for public scrutiny and visibility for all Districts requiring more data at a microscopic level.

Mr. Warnock stated he has been asked about historic events impacting the District's budget. He suggested information around previous overrides be included in the revised budget document. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated redesign of the annual budget document will make the document more user friendly with background information highlighted in the introduction to the document.

9) School Committee Comment

Ms. Cameron mentioned that both Ms. Beckmann and Ms. O'Donnell have retired from Town Boards and she would like the School Committee to recognize their support and work on behalf of the District.

Ms. Cameron also asked where the District was with regard to SRO and Chapter 70 budget line items. Superintendent Beaudoin stated Chapter 70 funding will be known in July. SRO preliminary discussion followed. It was decided Superintendent Beaudoin will follow up with Georgetown re: their successful SRO staffing and further discussion will take place during the summer retreat.

B. Adjourn

Ms. Cameron moved to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Wolf seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

School Committee Future Meetings:

- June 18, 2019, meeting scheduled at 6:00 p.m. agenda TBA
- School Committee will not meet in July 2019
- Retreat is scheduled for August 6, 2019
- First Business Meeting of 2019-2020 is scheduled for August 20, 2019

- School Committee Meeting agendas will focus on School oriented teacher driven presentation: focusing on Diversity, Technology and Curriculum
- Additional area for 2019-2020 School Committee meetings will be budget. focusing on program cuts and reorganization
- ELA Task Force Presentation will take place during the School Committee summer retreat
- School Building questions and school building fatigue when construction is no longer new and becomes a distraction will be discussed throughout 2019 – 2020

Ms. Cameron moved to adjourn the School Committee Business Meeting; Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.