

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

A meeting of the School Committee was held at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday, September 7, 2023 at the Central Middle School Media Center with the following members present: Melanie Fiore, Chair, Betty Pryor, Vice Chair, Jaime Wallace, Nicole Nial and Megan Samborski. Also present was David Ljungberg, Superintendent and Kathy Martin, Assistant Superintendent.

Chair M. Fiore called the meeting of the School Committee to order at 6:30 P.M. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. Approval of Items by Consensus

Chair M. Fiore tabled the minutes of August 17, 2023.

ACTION: A motion was made by B. Pryor and seconded by M. Samborski to approve Warrant #2408 in the amount of \$222,761.93. The motion was approved 4-0-1 with N. Nial abstaining.

B. Consideration for Items Withdrawn from Consensus

None

C. Public Comment

None

D. Overnight Field Trips

Principal Bryan Lombardi requested approval of the annual field trip to New York City. The bus will leave the High School on March 22, 2024 at 5:00 a.m. and return back to the High School at approximately 11:30 P.M. The tour will include a walking tour of lower Manhattan and Wall Street, the 911 Museum, Memorial pools, One World Observatory and Times Square.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by N. Nial to approve the day trip to New York City. The motion was approved 5-0.

Principal Lombardi also requested approval of the annual sophomore field trip to Washington D.C. This trip runs from April 13 through April 17, 2024 and has a full schedule that includes tours of the U.S. Capital, Supreme Court, White House, several war memorials, Spy Museum, Holocaust Museum and Arlington National Cemetery.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by N. Nial to approve the overnight field trip to Washington D.C. The motion was approved 5-0.

E. School Calendar – Proposal to Move Graduation Date

Principal Lombardi requested changing the Class of 2024 Graduation Commencement from Friday, June 7 to Friday, May 31. Moving graduation back one week would allow for graduation

and senior activities to occur without competing activities, including Grade 10 Bio MCAS, Grades 9-11 Finals and Grade 8 Step-Up Day.

ACTION: A motion was made by N. Nial and seconded by J. Wallace to move the graduation date to May 31, 2024. The motion was approved 5-0.

F. Boys and Girls Club Summer STEP-UP Program Report and Meal Site Report

Adam Rodgers and John Brinkman from the Boys and Girls Club were present at the meeting to report on the summer Step-Up Program. This program had 140 students who participated and mimics a full school day and prepares students entering preschool, kindergarten and Grade 1. This year the program was only about 40% funded but they are working with the state delegation to return the program to full funding.

Adam Rodgers reported that the summer food program took place at South School and Hall Memorial Pool and served over 5,000 meals over the course of 25 days.

G. Consideration/Approval of Central Middle School Handbook

Principal Tom Sallee and Vice Principal Nikki Clark requested approval of the Central Middle School Handbook. There were no major changes, mainly it was formatting, updating personnel and updating calendar dates. The committee discussed the changes to cheating/plagiarism, tardiness, homework, suspension and vacations.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by B. Pryor to approve the Central Middle School Handbook. The motion was approved 5-0.

H. Bear Hill Golf Club - Acknowledgement

J. Wallace read a letter from Athletic Director David Pignone acknowledging the contribution from Bear Hill Golf Club. For the past 15 years, Bear Hill has allowed our golf team to use the golf course for all of its home matches and for the past 7 years they have allowed the Middlesex League to host an all-star golf event at their facility. With the construction project and the loss of our tennis courts, Bear Hill has offered their courts for the entire spring for our tennis teams to practice Monday through Friday for the months of April and May. The Athletic Department, Golf Team and Tennis Team would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the Bear Hill Golf Club.

I. District Offices - Discussion

N. Nial gave an update on the District Offices stating that they are still trying to figure it out. The Select Board has entered into a Purchase and Sale agreement with the Arnold House but this would need to be approved at Town Meeting and if it goes through, the use of the building would be up to the Town. The RFPs for office space expire Sunday, September 10 so we would need to respond or request an extension. The cost for a 3-year lease is just over 200,000 a year. There are no other options as our buildings are at capacity and if we were to break the lease with SEEM Collaborative at the old Central School, we would lose the \$400,000 a year and would have to invest money to bring the building up to code.

After discussion, the Committee requested we ask for an extension of the RFP and inquire about a one-year lease.

J. Sponsor Policies 4-2, 5-5, 5-6 – Discussion

The Committee reviewed their advertising/sponsor policies after a question came up during a School Building Committee regarding the use of sponsors on scoreboards and signage to help defray potential costs. The Policy Subcommittee will review the current policies and also look at current MASC samples.

K. ESSER III Grant – Amendment for Consideration

Superintendent Ljungberg requested approval of an amendment to the ESSER III Grant allocation of funds as follows:

- Subsidize the increases in salary expenses for the Director of Preschool (half year salary), ESP floater and Reading teacher (\$121,948.50)
- Half the cost of the WestEd PreK-22 Programmatic Review (\$20,000)
- Demographic study (\$15,000)

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Samborski to approve the allocation of ESSER III Grand funds. The motion was approved 5-0.

L. Committee Liaison/Subcommittee Reports

- M. Fiore reported that the Policy Subcommittee will meet September 11th
- M. Samborski reported that the SBCEF fall grant period is now open. Applications are due November 1 and are available on their website.
- J. Wallace reported that the first meeting of SEPAC will take place on Monday, September 18.
- N. Nial reminded members to submit the Superintendent Evaluation to her by the end of the month. The public evaluation will take place in October.

M. School Building Committee

N. Nial reported that the Building Committee will have a booth at Town Day, journals have been purchased for the time capsule and residents are welcome to sign them, the Committee approved \$175,000 for Perkins and Will to do the branding for the new building, the amphitheater has moved forward with the larger 160 seat capacity. The next meeting of the Building Committee is scheduled for Monday, September 11th.

N. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Ljungberg reported on the following:

- School opening
- Enrollment update
- High School will have early release again tomorrow due to the high temperatures and the building is not air conditioned; South School will have early release tomorrow due to high temperatures and HVAC issues
- New Sparty III bus
- Hiring update and vacancies
- Back to School nights
- WestEd Programmatic Review update
- High School is at 84% meeting or exceeding academic achievement based on numbers from MCAS, student growth and achievement, graduation rates and AP participation

Assistant Superintendent K. Martin reported that she attended two elementary programs – Robin Hood Rocks and the presentation of books to all kindergarten students at Colonial Park.

This program was sponsored by Stoneham Ford and organized by Craig Celli. All kindergarten students will be receiving a book.

O. Discussion/Correspondence/New Items

M. Samborski reported that September is Suicide Prevention month and there will be an event this Sunday on the common. September is also Recovery month.

J. Wallace requested an update on residency requirements for all 5th and 9th graders and asked that an email be targeted to these parents.

P. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by B. Pryor to adjourn at 8:24 P.M. The motion was approved 5-0.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
DAVID LJUNGBERG, SUPERINTENDENT**