

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 6, 2022

A meeting of the School Committee was held at 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, October 6, 2022 at the Central Middle School Media Center with the following members present: David Maurer, Chair, M. Fiore, Jaime Wallace, Nicole Nial and Betty Chu Pryor. Also present was David Ljungberg, Superintendent and Kathy Martin, Assistant Superintendent.

Chair D. Maurer called the meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00 P.M.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Executive Session

ACTION: A motion was made M. Fiore and seconded by J. Wallace to enter into Executive Session per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3): To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call at 7:02 P.M.

The Committee returned to open session at 7:32 P.M.

C. Approval of Minutes

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by B. Pryor to approve the minutes of September 22, 2022. The motion was approved 5-0.

ACTION: A motion was made J. Wallace and seconded by B. Pryor to approve the Executive Session minutes of September 22, 2022 to remain confidential. The motion was approved 5-0.

D. Public Comment

None

E. Student Representatives

None

F. Financial

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Fiore to approve Warrant #2313 in the amount of \$729,704.32. The motion was approved 5-0.

G. Special Education Update – Anne Zernicke

Anne Zernicke, Director of Special Education, shared updates on the Special Education Department that included:

- Special education department office staff
- Special Education Department goals

- Make up of special education department and staff
- Accomplishments in 2021-2022 including summer programs
- Current updates –
 - Special education coordinators
 - Specialized classrooms and programming
- Update on IEP process
- Priorities for 2022-2023 school year

H. Athletics – David Pignone

David Pignone, Director of Athletics, requested approval of an 8th grade waiver for both gymnastics and girls' basketball due to low sign-up numbers.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Fiore to approve an 8th grade waiver for gymnastics. The motion was approved 5-0.

ACTION: A motion was made by N. Nial and seconded by M. Fiore to approve an 8th grade waiver for girls' basketball. The motion was approved 4-0-1 with J. Wallace abstaining.

D. Pignone also reported that he may need to return to the committee in the spring for approval of an 8th grade waiver for softball. There has also been discussion of turning the baseball field at Robin Hood into a softball field to be used by youth softball and baseball.

D. Pignone requested direction from the Committee regarding the school logo. The girls soccer team has purchased their own warm up suits and have designed their own logo that does include the school's official logo. Mr. Pignone felt that if the suits were worn at a game, they should include the official logo. In the absence of a policy and because the school does not supply warm up suits as part of the uniform, the School Committee felt there was nothing to enforce the use of the team logo when they are purchasing with their own money; noting that the suits must be respectful and in good taste.

I. English Language Learners - Enrollment

Assistant Superintendent K. Martin reported that our ELL numbers have increased by a third since last year. We currently have 104 students. Eighteen languages are represented with the majority being Portuguese, followed by Spanish. The increase of 22 students have put pressure on our current ELL staff that includes 6.4 FTE teachers plus a .6 coordinator – we will need to post for a part time ELL tutor to help with the increase of students. K. Martin also reported that we currently fall under the Title III Grant with the SEEM Collaborative and get a portion of the grant based on our numbers, but because our numbers have increased to over 100 we most likely will need to submit our own Title III Grant which would be a big increase of work for the administration.

J. Old Central School - Discussion

Superintendent D. Ljungberg brought to the Committee's attention a report he received from Director of Facilities, Brian McNeil. An assessment has been completed on the five chimneys and there is considerable damage and cracking of the infrastructure. The roof has just been replaced so and we want to avoid the chimney(s) collapsing onto the new roof; a decision needs to be made on how to address the disrepair – whether they should be restored or removed from the building. The cost to restore could run anywhere from \$650,000 to \$1,000,000. The

building falls under the purview of the School Department and the Historic Commission holds an interest in the building.

The Committee agreed that before making any decisions, they would like get more accurate cost estimates for the removal of the chimneys. They would also like to invite the Historic Commission to attend a future meeting.

K. MCAS Public Release

Superintendent Ljungberg reported that DESE released MCAS results last week and shared the accountability. There are a lot of changes due to COVID and it will take a while to dive into the data. District results can be found on the DESE website. Student reports were received today and will be mailed out next week.

L. Establishment of a Drama Program Revolving Account

Superintendent recommended approval of a Drama Program Revolving Account with funds being used towards expenses for the program.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Fiore to approve the establishment of a Drama Club Revolving Account. The motion was approved 5-0.

M. Policies

6-31 Observations of Special Education Programs

ACTION: A motion was made by M. Fiore and seconded by J. Wallace to waive the second reading of Policy 6-31. The motion was approved 5-0.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Fiore to adopt policy 6-31 Observations of Special Education Programs. The motion was approved 5-0.

Policy Manual Review

M. Fiore reported that most of our policies have not been reviewed since 2002 and summarized the service offered by MASC to review our policy manual and recommend updates. The cost would be \$3500 a year for 3 years. For an additional \$3500 a year they will continually update our policies and post on their website. The committee discussed the liability of being out of compliance and agreed to enroll in the three-year plan to update our policy book.

ACTION: A motion was made by J. Wallace and seconded by M. Fiore to approve enrolling in the three-year policy update service for a total of 10,500 over a three-year period. The committee discussed what budget line item this could come from. J. Wallace withdrew her motion and requested this be included in the FY24 budget under School Committee expenses or contracted services.

N. Committee Liaison Reports

M. Fiore reported that SEPAC met last week and a survey has been emailed to all parents/guardians of students who receive services.

O. School Building Committee

N. Nial reported that the Building Committee met on Monday, September 26. 100% of the drawings will be submitted to MSBA in December. At the Special Town Meeting in January the Building Committee will request additional funds to put back items that were cut from the project due to inflation. It is still hoped that funding may be coming back to projects like ours that were started and then were hit hard with project cuts.

N. Nial and D. Ljungberg will look at possible places for district offices tomorrow because when the current building is demolished, we will need at least a temporary place until we find something permanent.

P. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Ljungberg reported on the following:

- Enrollment numbers total 2287 which is an increase of 40 students from last year.
- Early release day tomorrow for professional development
- Schools and offices will be closed October 10 for the holiday
- We have hired a craftsperson who will begin employment October 11th.
- Heating systems have been rented for the High School gymnasium since only 1 in 4 of our current systems are operational.

Q. Discussion/Correspondence/New Items

D. Maurer reported that a reopening ceremony will be held at Duff Park on Friday, October 21st.

R. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION: A motion was made M. Fiore and seconded by J. Wallace to enter into Executive Session per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3): To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call at 9:32 P.M.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED
DAVID LJUNGBERG, SUPERINTENDENT**