

MEDFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
November 2, 2023 - 7:00 pm
Medfield High School Library Media Center

PRESENT: Michelle Kirkby - Vice Chair
Leo Brehm - Recording Secretary
Will Horne - Financial Secretary
Kristin Simonini - Member at Large

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Jeffrey Marsden - Superintendent of Schools
Michael LaFrancesca - Director of Finance and Operations
Andrea Moores - Secretary
Molly Chin - Student Representative

ABSENT: Timothy Knight - Chair

The Vice Chair opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. and took a Roll Call:

- Michelle Kirkby - present
- Leo Brehm - present
- Kristin Simonini - present
- Will Horne - present

PUBLIC INPUT

Chris McCue Potts, 7 Curve Street, stated the School Committees as employer of record for the Medfield Public Schools has the responsibility for the working conditions of teachers and all school staff. She recounted her experience from 14 years ago as a Dale Street Site Council member. She described a situation that occurred at a school assembly when an outside entertainer inappropriately spoke to a student during the event. She also shared her belief that the Principal at that time was upset by what happened and upset with themselves for not stopping the situation.

Ms. Potts told the Committee 5 years ago someone informed he that the Superintendent interrupted a first grade planning meeting and spoke inappropriately to the staff at that meeting. Ms. Potts said that this story was also confirmed to her by other people. Ms. Potts said at the time she spoke up about it because no one else had the courage to do so. She also stated that the principal at that meeting did not intervene. Ms. Potts wanted to know if the School Committee would take action when these situations occur because it is the responsibility of the School Committee to ensure that there is a climate of respectful working conditions.

Ms. Potts stated that these are not the only two incidents and has personally experienced things herself and has heard other stories. She informed the Committee that she was not going to sit by and be silent. She stated that couldn't believe it has taken her this long to address this with the Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes 10/12/2023
- Donations
 - \$1324.82 from Medfield Foundation Inc. to be deposited in the District Gift Account for upgrade to the Vietnam Memorial at Blake and Veterans' Field signage

- \$1000.00 from the Schoenfeld family to be deposited in the High School Gift Account for the HS Cheerleading program.
- \$2320.95 from the Blake PTO to be deposited to the Blake Gift Account for the 8th Grade Math Grant
- \$565.00 from the Blake PTO to be deposited to the Blake Gift Account for the 6th Grade Math Grant \$1000.00 from the Blake PTO to be deposited to the Blake Gift Account for the 8th Grade Spanish Grant
- \$1556.73 from the Blake PTO to be deposited to the Blake Gift Account for the Advisory Grant
- \$2594.42 from the Blake PTO to be deposited to the Blake Gift Account for the Library Classroom Grant
- \$1161.00 from the Wheelock PTO paid directly to Connolly Bus for bus transportation for the Plimoth Patuxet Museum field trip
- \$140.00 from the Wheelock Angel Fund to be deposited to the Wheelock Gift Account to assist with field trip expenses for families unable to contribute

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Principal School Opening Report - Elementary - presented by Mr. Steve Grenham, Ms. Holli Caulfield, and Ms. Missy Bilsborough.

Holli Caulfield, Steve Grenham, and Missy Bilsbrough presented the opening school year report for all three elementary schools.

Their joint update covered the following topics:

- Student Enrollment
- New Elementary Open House Format
- Illustrative Math Program
- English Language Arts with Kate Shade
- Student Support Webinar Series
- Faculty Professional Development
- Community Partnerships
 - MCPE
 - PTO
 - SEPAC

The elementary principals were accompanied by the following members of their Site Councils to share the roles of the site council and their initiatives for the 2023-2024 school year:

- Sarah Drew (Kindergarten Teacher) Memorial
- Joan Dion (Grade 2 teacher), Wheelock
- Emily Hutton, Dale Street Site Council Member

Mr. Horne inquired about how many attended the webinar and if there is ability to track who has watched the webinar after the fact. Mr. Grenham shared that 38 people attended the webinar and that they are unable to track how many people watched the webinar after it was live.

Ms. Simonini shared that she was pleased to see the elementary principals presenting together because it shows the consistency and partnerships being created across all the elementary schools.

Ms. Kirkby thanked the principals for their updates and stated that she appreciates the balance that comes across the elementary schools in relation to solid academic programming while ensuring that there is room for childhood magic and fun to be present throughout the school year. Many of these activities require volunteers and referenced the amount of volunteers, 180 to 200, it takes to make Rocky Woods happen. Ms. Kirkby publicly thanked the volunteers who helped make these programs happen and pointed out that parent volunteers are crucial to the success and continuation of these programs.

Ms. Kirky asked Missy Bilsborough to elaborate on some of the advantages of the planned Memorial School Playground updates. Ms. Bilsborough explained that the updates will focus on student safety, accessibility for all students, and features that provide whole child experiences.

Ms. Kirkby also noted that the approach of adding areas to the playground gradually ensures that families who are currently at Memorial and participating in the fundraising efforts actually get to use some of the new features of the playground while still attending school at Memorial. She also shared that a lot of the new playground features/pieces will be movable in the event that the playground changes its location in the future.

Ms. Kirkby thanked Mr. Grenham and Dr. Marsden for their presentation of the education plan for the new elementary school at the School Building Committee (SBC) meeting on. She told Mr. Grenham that she is continually impressed on how he and his staff continually produce impressive results in a challenging environment. She wanted to know what would be the biggest game changer in the list of proposed enhancements for the new elementary school. Mr. Graham stated that space is the most important need for the new elementary school. Dr. Marsden pointed out that the current square footage of some classrooms at Dale Street is 700 square feet and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) recommends 900 square feet, and an extra 200 square feet in a classroom makes a big impact on teachers and students.

Medfield High School Student Activity - New Sub Account - Vote - Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

A request was made by MHS Principal Robert Parga to establish a new sub - account for the Medfield High School Med-Science Club which is a new club for Medfield High School Students would like to further pursue interests in anatomy (practice suturing, dissections, surgery), find medical volunteer opportunities, and learn about different medical careers.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to approve the New Medfield High School Med-Science Student Activity Sub-Account.

The motion passed unanimously.

Summer Facility Projects - presented by Mr. Michael LaFrancesca

Mr. LaFrancesca updated the Committee on the following summer 2023 facility projects:

- Memorial School:
 - New flooring in café
 - Two split units replaced
- Wheelock School:
 - New flooring outside the gym
 - Flooring in classroom 11
 - New carpet in the LMC & Main Office
 - Fire Curtin removed in cafe
- Dale Street School

- o Teacher Room Renovation (flooring, cabinets, new sink)
- o Fire Curtain Removed in gym
- o Ceiling tile and lighting replaced in three classrooms (rm. 11, 18, 20)
- o Flooring in the hallway of the modular units
- o Main stairway repair
- Blake Middle School
 - o HVAC work in rm. 206,315, and Special Education. Office
 - o New AC in rom 401 & 418
 - o New flooring in rm. 315 & 501
 - o New carpet in the Guidance Area
- High School
 - o New roof over the gymnasium
 - o New fire alarm system

Dr. Marsden noted that the renovation of the Dale Street Faculty Room was supported by the Dale Street PTO and the new auditorium seating and painting at the Blake Middle School was partially funded by MCPE. Dr. Marsden thanked both of these organizations for their support.

Mr. Horne asked for an update on the Solar Projects. Mr. LaFrancesca explained that the project that was scheduled for this summer has been held back because the state only allows one solar project per campus. The state views the high and middle school as one campus even though they are two separate entities. The Town is waiting and expects to receive approval from the state for two solar projects to happen at the same time at the middle and high school. Mr. LaFrancesca anticipates that once this approval is received the project at the high school will begin in May after the seniors have completed their year. Memorial and Blake are awaiting on the soil boring test results. Once those are in the project can proceed to the next phase.

Ms. Kirkby asked if there were any surprises and/or challenges related to the summer facility projects. Mr. LaFrancesca stated that there are always surprises and he builds a contingency in his budgeting in order to address any issues that may arise. The repair of the tennis courts had to be put in hold because the bids came in higher than expected. The roof project was a bit delayed due to the amount of rain this summer but the project was completed.

Other items since posting on October 30, 2023

Dr. Marsden noted that the 2023-2024 student enrollment was certified today and recommended adding it as an agenda item at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Medfield Public Schools Strategic Plan Update - presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden informed the Committee that the final version of the strategic plan was released to families on Monday, October 30th. He also provided a status update on the launch of the visual dashboard which he hoped will be done by the end of next week. Dr. Marsden has attended each school's faculty meeting over the last month to review all of the priorities in the plan. The classroom posters highlighting the priorities of the strategic plan will be available in a few weeks.

Medfield School Building Committee Update - presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden, Ms. Michelle Kirkby and Ms. Kristin Simonini

Ms. Kirkby informed the Committee that the November 14th joint meeting with the SBC, School Committee, and Select Board is actually not a joint meeting. The November 14th meeting will be Select Board meeting, the SBC will be presenting an update to the Select Board and School Committee will attend the meeting. There will be an opportunity to have some joint committee meetings scheduled in the future. Ms. Kirkby stated her belief that this is important to the success of the project for the governing public bodies who publicly support this project have the opportunity to flush out questions and comments in order to all be on the same page. Ms. Kirkby informed the Committee that the meeting begins at 6:00 pm and they anticipate that the SBC agenda item will begin around 7:00 pm. Ms. Kirkby and Dr. Marsden have met to discuss the history of grade configuration and the history of the previous School Committee's path to support a 4-5 grade configuration.

Ms. Simonini shared that Dr. Marsden and Mr. Grenham's educational plan presentation given to the SBC at the November 1st meeting was very helpful. She also noted that the School Committee voted to accept a 4-5 Grade configuration for the new elementary school on August 27, 2020 and that there have been no revisions to that configuration.

Community Engagement and Communication Update - presented by Ms. Michelle Kirkby

Ms. Kirkby informed the Committee that the first informal conversation scheduled for December 4, 2023 at 7:00 pm will be virtual. A Google Feedback Form will be published after November 16th so that people can pre-register to attend and submit their questions to the School Committee in advance of the conversation.

Ms. Kirkby also noted that it has been one year since the School Committee has been on social media and currently have over 1000 followers across all three social media platforms.

Ms. Simonini shared her personal experience of participating in the middle school parent teacher conferences. She acknowledged that she was skeptical at first but was pleasantly surprised and the time allotted per conference was sufficient. Ms. Simonini also shared that she attended the Mattress Fundraiser and did purchase a new mattress.

Dr. Marsden shared that the high school had 994 conferences and expected that the middle school exceeded that but did not have the exact number for the middle school yet.

Medfield Public School Policy Review - presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

The following policies are being presented for a 2nd reading and vote. Dr. Marsden asked the Committee to vote to approve them as presented.

- ADF - Wellness Policy
- IMGGA - Service Animal Policy

Ms. Kirkby stated that she and Mr. Knight would like to add one small change to the Wellness Policy which was to add the words and the School Committee to the evaluation paragraph which is the last sentence of the document located on the last page of the document.

- Current Language on Draft
 - The Wellness Policy is evaluated by the Health Advisory Committee every three years and findings are disseminated to the Superintendent for approval.

- New Suggested Amended Language:
 - The Wellness Policy is evaluated by the Health Advisory Committee every three years and findings are disseminated to the Superintendent and the School Committee for approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to approve the Policy ADF - Wellness Policy to add School Committee after Superintendent under the evaluation line.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to approve Policy IMGA - Service Animal Policy.

The motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Mr. Horne shared his experience at the Halloween party as a 4th grade room parent.

Student Representative, Molly Chin, reported that things are going well at the High School. She also shared that quarter one is ending which will take a weight off of the seniors once colleges receive their first quarter transcripts.

Ms. Simonini asked Molly if she had accessed the support offered to high school in regards to the college application process and if that support was helpful to her. Molly shared that she worked with her guidance counselors and utilized the writing center during flex periods to work on college essays.

Dr. Marsden shared with the Committee that on Tuesday, October 31, the District participated in additional safety training as requested by teachers with the Medfield and Massachusetts State Police. Dr. Marsden thanked both departments for their partnership to provide important training to the District.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- District Fees
- Superintendent Goals
- Student Enrollment
- School Start Times

A motion was made by Ms. Simonini, seconded by Mr. Brehm to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Next Meetings:

- Policy Subcommittee - November 3, 2023 at 9:30 am
- Regular Meeting - November 16, 2023 at 7:00 pm

EXHIBITS AND DOCUMENTS

- 11/2/2023 Meeting Narrative
- Draft 10/12/2023 School Committee Meeting Minutes
- Donations 11/2/2023
- MHS New Student Activity Sub- Account

- Summer Facility Projects 2023
- DRAFT Policy ADF - Wellness Policy - 2nd Reading 11/2/2023
- DRAFT Policy IMGA - Service Animals in Schools - 2nd Reading 11/2/2023
- School Committee Meeting Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLuO9RSbXhQ>

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Moores
Secretary

Minutes Approved by School Committee: November 16, 2023