

MEDFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
August 28, 2023 - 7:00 pm
Medfield High School Library Media Center

PRESENT: Timothy Knight - Chair
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 (via Zoom)

Reorganization of School Committee Roles

Dr. Jeffrey Marsden called the meeting to at 7:00 pm and asked for a motion to appoint the School Committee Chair

A motion was made by Ms. Kirkby, seconded by Mr. Brehm to appoint Mr. Timothy Knight as the School Committee Chair.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to appoint Ms. Michelle Kirkby as the School Committee Vice Chair.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Kirby, seconded by Mr. Brehm to appoint Ms. Simonini as the School Committee Financial Secretary.

The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Ms. Kikby, seconded by Mr. Knight to appoint Mr. Brehm as the School Committee Recording Secretary.

The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC INPUT

The chair opened to public input in person or via Zoom. There was no public comment at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Minutes
 - Regular Meeting 6/12/2023, 7/24/2023
 - Executive Session 6/21/2023, 7/27/2023
 - Workshop 6/21/2023

- Appointment of Superintendent to The Education Collaborative (TEC) and ACCEPT Boards for 2023 -2024
- Medfield High School Music Trip Approval to New Orleans in March 2024
- Donations

The following Consent Agenda items were highlighted prior to the School Committee vote:

- Mr. Knight informed the Committee that the Executive Session Minutes from 6/21/2023 and 7/27/2023 would be retained.
- Ryan Dexter and Anne Marie Trembly were in attendance to share the Medfield High School Music Trip information with the School Committee for their approval.
- Dr. Marsden informed the Committee of the two yearly appointments to the TEC and ACCEPT Board of Directors.
- Dr. Marsden highlighted the following donations:
 - \$1000.00 from the Medfield Music Association to the Medfield High School Gift Account for the auditorium sound system upgrade.
 - \$100,000.00 from the MCPE Anniversary Appeal Grants. Each school will receive \$20,000.00 to be deposited into their school gift accounts.
 - Art tables from the Ashland Public Schools were donated to us because they built a new school and no longer needed them.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Simonini to approve the Consent Agenda and the 6/21/2023 and 7/27/2023 Executive Session minutes would be retained.

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Medfield Public Schools Staffing Update – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden shared information about the annual school year kick-off that took place this morning. He explained that at the kick-off each building principal along with Student Services present and welcome their new staff to the entire faculty. The 2023-2023 Staffing Report was included in the School Committee meeting packet. This report provides the Committee with an update on new hires, changes of assignment, position title, and full-time equivalent. Dr. Marsden informed the Committee that there are a total of 27 positions listed and only a few of those positions are new. There are two new special education positions that were necessitated by student IEPs after the budget process. The majority of positions are either resignations, medical leave, or retirements. Dr. Marsden stated that hiring is competitive and many districts are jockeying for staff. This year the District has lost a couple of new hires due to the Town's current health insurance premiums and plan options. The Town Administrator and Selectboard are planning to look more closely at the health insurance options offered by the Town to see if some improvements can be made. There are still a few positions that need to be filled but Medfield is in better shape than most districts in regards to open positions. Mr. Brehm wanted to know if there were any waivers in place for teachers. Dr. Marsden explained that there was one teacher on a special education license waiver last year. He informed the Committee that the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE) has lifted the limitation on how many hours retired special education teachers can work.

2023-2024 Student Handbook Approvals – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

The student handbooks for the 2023-2024 school year were included in the School Committee meeting materials. Dr. Marsden explained that the only change was the addition of a safety protocols section as a result of the School Committee Workshop. This section will provide clarification for parents and is included in each of the five building handbooks.

The Committee briefly discussed the mobile phone policies and were in agreement that more feedback from administrators, teachers, and families is needed to understand the concerns in this area and how the Committee can support the District. Dr. Marsden suggested that he gather information on this topic over the next few weeks to establish a baseline data point to work from. Dr. Marsden will bring information back to the Committee at the October meeting.

Ms. Simonini noted that Addendum D (COVID -19) of the Elementary Handbook is outdated and should be removed.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Ms. Kirkby to approve the 2023-2024 student handbooks with the removal of Addendum D from the Elementary Handbook.

Medfield School Committee Goals and Process – presented by Mr. Timothy Knight and Ms. Michelle Kirkby

Mr. Knight informed the Committee that he would like to establish the School Committee Goals for this school year and align the goals with the Strategic Plan. He asked the Committee to submit their suggestions to him so that he could review and bring a draft to the September 14th meeting for discussion. Dr. Marsden explained that the focus area timelines for 2023 and 2024 would also be ready for the September meeting.

Ms. Kirkby shared that she would like the completion of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Policy Project and to have the policies uploaded to the MASC website as a School Committee goal for this school year.

Other items since posting on August 23, 2023

Ms. Kirkby brought to the attention of the Committee that there is a conflict on the School Committee meeting scheduled on January 11th due to a music concert at the Dale Street School. The Committee discussed possible alternative dates and landed on Monday, January 8th.

A motion was made by Mr. Brehm, seconded by Mr. Horne to reschedule the Thursday, January 11, 2024 meeting to Monday, January 8, 2024.

The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Medfield Public Schools Strategic Plan- Process Update/Letter Review – presented by Dr. Jeffrey Marsden

Dr. Marsden reported that all of the information required has been sent to Teaching, Learning and Alliance (TLA) who are now working with a graphic designer on the final strategic plan document which is expected to be completed by the end of September. A one page dashboard will be created to house all the information related to the strategic plan. The Core Values, Mission Statement and Vision Statement one page document will also be created and every classroom in the district will have one posted by mid-October. Dr. Marsden stated that TLA has been great to work with and the timetable is still on track for the end of September. Dr. Marsden asked for the Committee's feedback that was included in their meeting materials. Ms. Simonini noted that her last name was spelled incorrectly.

Mr. Knight explained that in the past the School Committee and Superintendent each had a strategic plan letter and the recommendation was that one letter was appropriate. He also explained that the letter would include graphics to highlight the Core Values, Vision and Mission statement. The Committee was in support of the letter and excited about the implementation of the dashboard.

Community Engagement and Communication – Mr. Timothy Knight and Ms. Michelle Kirkby

Ms. Kirkby will continue to spearhead getting information out via social media platforms. She asked committee members to send her information to be shared. Committee members will continue to attend PTO meetings. The Committee agreed to the following PTO assignments for the 2023-2024 school year:

High School - Leo Brehm

- Blake - Will Horne
- Dale Street- Kristin Simonini
- Wheelock - Tim Knight
- Memorial - Michelle Kirkby

The Committee also discussed the continuation of hosting informal conversations for the public. Last year these conversations were held both in person and remote with two committee members attending each. The plan is to continue in this format.

Ms. Simonini made a suggestion to utilize a newspaper to communicate School Committee information to the public. The Committee had a brief discussion about how this could be implemented in the future. Dr. Marsden reminded the committee that developing a communication plan is part of the strategic plan.

Medfield School Building Committee Update – Ms. Simonini, Ms. Kirkby, and Dr. Marsden

Dr. Marsden informed the committee that he sent an email to the School Building Committee (SBC) after his meeting with the Massachusetts School Building Association (MSBA) and Kristine Trierweiler and read the email to the Committee. The MSBA has just begun their "due diligence" period for the 62 SOIs that were submitted in April and wanted to hear what the town has been up to since the failed vote. Dr. Marsden and Ms. Trierweiler informed the MSBA about the Annual Town Meeting allocations, the establishment of a new SBC with monthly meetings, surveys, communication subcommittee, and the unanimous support of the Statement of Interest (SOI) from the Medfield School Committee, Medfield Select Board, and SBC and the MSBA declared these efforts to be "Impressive". Dr. Marsden informed

the Committee that when the Town was approved in 2017, the Dale Street School had been identified as the "Most Needy" school out of the 70+ SOIs submitted in that round. In addition, the MSBA reimbursement rate for 2023 is now 42.79%, up from 38.84% in 2017 but were cautioned that this number could fluctuate in the future. MSBA did not indicate where Medfield stood in the process and Dr. Marsden expects the decision to be made in November/December.

Ms. Simonini informed the Committee that the next SBC meeting is scheduled for September 11th and the SBC will have a booth at Medfield Day September 23rd. The SBC booth will give the public the opportunity to ask questions, get information on the new SBC, and learn about what is currently happening along with the next steps in the process. Ms. Simonini also stated that the SBC had Mike Weber review the original site site selections so those who were not involved in the project the first time were brought up to speed. The next step for the School Committee would be to review the size recommendations the Committee would like to put forth. Dr. Marsden informed the Committee that the SBC should be able to use a lot of the information from the previous feasibility study.

Dr. Marsden was able to visit the new elementary school in Ashland, MA. This school is a Grades 3, 4 and 5 configuration and is a good example on how to build an elementary school while school is in session. The new school was built adjacent to the old school, and once the new school was open the old one was taken down. Some of the features included a cafetorium, oversized gym, and geothermal which were features that were being discussed for the last project. Dr. Marsden shared that he was impressed with the geothermal and its ability to keep all of the building at an even 68 degrees. He suggested that a tour of this school would be a good field trip for the SBC. The Committee discussed holding a joint meeting with the SBC and Selectboard in late September or October. The next SBC meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 11, 2023.

Medfield Public Schools Policy Review Process Update – Mr. Timothy Knight

Mr. Knight updated the Committee on the pacing of the policy review with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). The goal is to have the project completed in nine to twelve months and to have the policies housed on the MASC website which will be done after the completion of the policy manual review project. Mr. Knight will reach out to Jim Hardy at MASC to get the process started for this school year.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Dr. Marsden thanked Ms. Kirkby and Mr. Knight for their attendance at the school kick-off. This year the weather conditions caused the event to be moved inside which the custodial staff took care of in quick fashion. The senior cruise is scheduled for this upcoming Thursday, August 31st, which is a great event that staff and students look forward to and kick-off senior year. Grades 1-12 will start on Wednesday, August 30th, and incoming kindergarten students will begin on the following Tuesday, September 5th.

The MASC Conference is scheduled for November 8th - 10th this year and Mr. Knight encouraged School Committee members to attend.

Ms. Simonini requested that an enrollment update be added as a future agenda item. Dr. Marsden informed the Committee that the schools will welcome 77 students from 55 new families who have

moved to Medfield. He explained that district enrollment is certified around October 1st and an enrollment update could be shared at the October meeting.


Next Meeting - September 14, 2023

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

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 pm.

EXHIBITS AND DOCUMENTS

- Meeting Narrative 8/28/23
- DRAFT 6/12/2023 School Committee Meeting Minutes
- DRAFT 6/21/2023 Workshop Minutes
- DRAFT 7/24/2023 School Committee Meeting Minutes
- Music Trip to New Orleans March 2024
- Donations 8/28/2023
- School Committee Staff Report 2023-2024
- Medfield High School Handbook 2023 -2024
- Blake Middle School Handbook 2023-2024
- Elementary Handbook 2023-2024
- Strategic Plan Letter
- SBC Email - MSBA Update
- School Committee Meeting Video:  School Committee (08-28-2023)

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Moores

Secretary

Minutes Approved by School Committee September 14, 2023