

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS SESSION

FEBRUARY 11, 2019

SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

AND

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

“AN OPEN MEETING ADVANTAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF METHUEN”

RECORDED BY:
DEIDRE RUNGE, PUBLIC RECORDER

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
BUSINESS SESSION
FEBRUARY 11, 2019

This Business Session of the Methuen School Committee was held at Methuen High School, Media Center, and was posted for 6:30 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Jajuga called the Business Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed below.

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (P)
Susan M. Nicholson (P)
Nicholas DiZoglio (NP) (arrived @ 6:32)
Jana DiNatale (P)
Dennis D.J. Deeb (P)
Jana Zanni Pesce (P)
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (P)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert F. Vogler
Susan M. Nicholson
Nicholas DiZoglio
Dennis D.J. Deeb
Jana DiNatale
Jana Zanni Pesce
Mayor James P. Jajuga

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Brandi Kwong, Interim Superintendent of Schools
Lisa Golobski – Interim Assistant Superintendent
Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Jennicha Pierre, Student Representative
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder

MOTION: Member Vogler motioned to approve the agenda as presented
Member Deeb seconded the motion

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

1a Flag Salute

Hazel Marcinkowski, a fourth grade student at the Comprehensive Grammar School, led the Committee in Opening Exercises of this meeting.

2. PARTICIPATION BY OTHERS

a. SOAR Award (Fine Arts & Performing Arts)

Lexie Dowgiert was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The Fine Arts Department chose Lexie for this Award.

Nicole Hornedo was the recipient of the S.O.A.R. Award at this meeting. The Performing Arts Department chose Nicole for this Award.

b. Student Recognitions

1. New England School Development Council Award for Academic Growth & Student Leadership in Learning, George El Hachem and Morgan Zraket Recognitions
2. Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Certificate of Academic Excellence, Thomas Barry and Sara Fragione Recognitions
3. Presidential Service Award, Katie Vidic and Hannah DiNatale Recognitions

c. Public Participation

Deborah Mosley from the MEA and Grammar School Teachers gave the Committee Valentines with their wishes for the school district and upcoming budget on them.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. **MOTION:** Member Vogler motioned to approve the minutes of December 10, 2018
Member Nicholson seconded the motion
- DISCUSSION:** None
- VOTE:** 7-0-0 APPROVED

4. STAFF REPORTS

a. Superintendent's Monthly Report

Member DiZoglio – Mention the influx in residency / enrollments at the schools each month. He asked about the 30 new students at the CGS.

Interim Superintendent Kwong- That is where the 5th/6th grade Excel program is with support staff. In the lower school, the support staff go back and forth to the schools.

Member DiZoglio – This is something for the budget, adding staff.

Interim Superintendent Kwong – That is what the administrators and I have been gathering. I created a spread sheet that we have a running tally on what staff is in their buildings and what staff is needed. We are not putting a wish list together we are looking at all positions for the budget to help with class sizes. My goal is to use the spreadsheet to see what we need to request for the budget.

Member Nicholson – I reviewed the Kindergarten slideshow and I want to commend everyone that put this together. It was comprehensive and you made every attempt to help parents be prepared.

Interim Superintendent Kwong – I can check that but what I can say is having the Family Resource Center has been helpful.

Member Nicholson – Looking at the high school do you have any data on the 12 students that withdrew, did they move to other communities or did they dropout of high school?

Interim Superintendent Kwong – I can guarantee you they did not dropout of high school. The high school has a lot of move ins and move outs.

Member Pesce – I am not seeing a big difference in comparison. Why are there high class sizes if the same number comes in and goes out?

Interim Superintendent Kwong – It is the distribution of the numbers in grade levels.

Different aged students move out than the ones that move in.

Member Vogler – Will you tell us how many classes per grade level needed.

Interim Superintendent Kwong – The March Workshop will be where we present our staffing list for the budget.

Member DiNatale – Speaking about the number of students coming in and going out speaks really well to what we need.

Interim Superintendent Kwong – There is an average of 700 new students year after year at different levels. Not one grade level is excluded. I have had 2 great meetings with

Representative Campbell and Moran and Representative Minacucci and Senator DiZoglio are coming up. We discussed the “Promise Act” and a 3’rd Bill “Tuckers Bill” that is for Gateway Cities. They know are needs and will keep us informed as these Bills talk about increase in funds needed for special ed. costs, Circuit Breaker, bussing....

b. School Resource Officers Monthly Update

None

5. OLD BUSINESS AND OTHER PENDING MATTERS

a. Motion: To add Unit B Representation on the Superintendent Search Committee or act in any other way relative thereto – as requested by Member Deeb

MOTION: Member Deeb motioned to approve the Unit B representative
Member Vogler seconded the motion

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

b. MASC Superintendent Search – Discussion and any other action relative thereto

Member Deeb – We need to select two community members to sit on the Superintendent Search Committee.

Member Pesce – Parents that applied and weren’t chosen as parents, were they placed in the bag for selection as a community member?

Ms. Runge – I spoke with Dorothy Presser from MASC and Member Deeb and it was decided a community member is different and should not be a parent since parents were already chosen.

The PTO’s and HS Council did refer names for each of the levels, lower, upper and high school.

Mayor Jajuga had two names pulled from the bag, David D.J. Beauregard and Marcia L. Burns-Mittler

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. New Nurse Procedure

Interim Superintendent Kwong updated the Committee on the process in Infinite Campus to help with the reporting to parents of visits to the nurse’s office in a timely manner.

Member DiNatale – Is this adding more work to staff.

Interim Superintendent Kwong - No

b. Program of Studies – Approval

Mr. Barden spoke of the changes to the Program of Studies. He explained there was no budget implications in these changes. One of the major changes is Social Studies which were per the State Curriculum.

Member DiZoglio – Is the State making us change the curriculum?

Mr. Roger Lenfest – Social Studies Dept. Chair – The State gives us options. We don't have the staffing to offer some of their options. Civics did not have enough students so we made that a core class now.

Dr. Golobski – We just received a grant that we are looking at bringing Civics down to the 8th grade.

Mr. Lenfest – Civics aligns with Frameworks.

Mr. DiZoglio – I would like this to be in the budget.

Member Deeb – I don't support this it came right out of Common Core.

Member DiNatale – I want students to learn the bare basics. They should take World History, U.S. History 1, U.S. History 2 or a U.S. History AP class and then maybe take U.S. government and Politics. Then maybe in their senior year take an elective

Dr. Golobski – AP U.S. History class pairs really well with AP English Language class they take in their Junior Year. By mapping it out like this you ensure they get a full year of World, a full year of U.S. and Government and Politics. The way this is designed there is some cross overs available in the second semester of Junior Year.

Member DiNatale asked can Dr. Golobski if she was confident that we have a competitive grasp on History curriculum that we should all be proud of?

Dr. Golobski – I am part of the Curriculum Director Network and I got access to a spreadsheet of what 25 neighboring communities are doing and are changing and they are a lot alike. D.E.S.E. agrees that it will be a several year process and first start with 8th grade. I believe Mr. Lenfest is moving in the right direction.

Member DiNatale – I agree, 7th and 8th grade are lacking, I want to see this and add the writing piece.

Member Nicholson – My question is regarding the ST math course and thank you for telling us it is a Title 1 funded program,. How will students be identified to take the ST math course?

Mr. Barden – It is based on 8th grade data. ST math works on building foundational skills. They are students that struggled in the past and are typically 9th and 10th grade students we want to see do good on the upcoming MCAS.

Member Nicholson – How many classes will you be offering.

Mr. Barden – Five. We currently offer that class right now and it pairs with supplemental A, B, and C.

Member Nicholson – What percentage of students from 8th grade will do this Biology class?

Mr. Barden – Sixty-six students are started this intervention class this year. It is our first time running it.

Member Nicholson – Has there been any time spent looking at how 8th grade curriculum and science to make sure we are not missing any gaps which leads to kids underperforming on the MCAS.

Interim Superintendent Kwong – We are well aware our 5th and 8th grade students did not do well in Science on the MCAS. A lot of work is being done on identifying the students that need the Biology help. We don't want to over intervention our students so we have to spread out the work. The Biology test for 9th grade is really late this year, June, so we get to work with them all the way through the year.

Member Nicholson – before we make a motion do we need to know a time-frame to get this approved?

Interim Superintendent Kwong – It is critical we start course recommendations February 25th. We are doing what we are asked to do and we need to align with the newly adopted Social

Studies Frameworks. These changes are not in our control. They did put a lot of time in to this selection of offerings.

MOTION: Member Deeb motioned to reject the changes
There was no second

MOTION: Member DiNatale Motioned to adopt the program of studies
Member Nicholson seconded the motion

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (Present)

Susan M. Nicholson (Y)

Nicholas DiZoglio (Y)

Jana DiNatale (Y)

Dennis D.J. Deeb (N)

Jana Zanni Pesce (Y)

Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (Y)

VOTE: 5-1-1 APPROVED

c. Staff Licensure Update

Interim Superintendent Kwong – I attached a copy of the letters that go out to staff.

Member Pesce – Is there a liability for having staff still work without proper licensure?

Interim Superintendent Kwong – We identify staff in a timely matter. We then allow them to apply for waivers but have to do it in a timely manner. We do this every two years. Colleen McCarthy and I are constantly in touch with the State.

Member Nicholson – The letter that would be sent to the teacher not certified. You ask the teacher to provide valid certification by June 1st or they would no longer be eligible to be employed. Does this mean the end of the school year or immediately this would happen

Interim Superintendent Kwong – Yes, that is a contractual date and if not waived they are released at the end of the year.

Interim Superintendent Kwong - Ms. McCarthy the H.R. Director has been putting all the teachers' licensure information into Infinite Campus. Next step is Mr. Lussier to build the automated letters where we will be notified months before they expire but sometimes you can't apply before a license expires. It is frowned upon by the State.

d. District-Wide Special Education Programs, Current Enrollment Numbers and Budget Implementation as requested by Member DiNatale

Member DiNatale thanked them for the information.

7. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

a. Expenditure Report – Monthly

1. Budget Transfer of Funds – Approval

Mr. Gosselin asked the Committee to approve moving \$200,000 from salaries to the long term sub line to cover some shortage due to teachers out on leaves leaving their money in salaries and paying for their substitutes in a different line.

MOTION: Member Nicholson motioned to approve the transfer
Member DiNatale seconded the motion

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (Y)

Susan M. Nicholson (Y)
Nicholas DiZoglio (Present)
Jana DiNatale (Y)
Dennis D.J. Deeb (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce (Y)
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (Y)
VOTE: 6-0-1 APPROVED (Nick DiZoglio voted present)

b. Revolving Funds Report – Monthly

None

c. Grants Report – Monthly

None

d. Student Activity Accounts – Monthly

None

e. Food Services – Monthly

None

8. NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER PERSONNEL MATTERS

a. Personnel Transactions

None

b. Notification of Vacancy Postings

None

d. Personnel Matters requiring Committee Action

None

9. BUSINESS FROM THE COMMITTEE

a. Residency Sub-Committee Update

None

b. Budget (FY'20) Sub-Committee Update

Mr. Gosselin told the Committee we are meeting on Wednesday and we will be going over staffing.

c. Other Business of the Committee

MOTION: Member DiNatale motioned to approve posting the school committee packet prior to the meeting
Member Pesce seconded the motion

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (N)
Susan M. Nicholson (N)
Nicholas DiZoglio (N)
Jana DiNatale (Y)
Dennis D.J. Deeb (Y)
Jana Zanni Pesce (Y)
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (N)

VOTE: 3-4-1 Motion Failed

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business to discuss at this Business Session, the Mayor entertained motion to go into Executive Session Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21(a)(2) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares. With business completed will adjourn from Executive Session for the evening at 9:03 pm.

MOTION: Member Nicholson motioned to adjourn the meeting and go into Executive Session

Member DiNatale seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 7-0-0 APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Deidre Runge, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools