

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP/BUSINESS SESSION

OF

AUGUST 26, 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:
MARTHA SIROIS, PUBLIC RECORDER

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED MINUTES
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WORKSHOP/BUSINESS SESSION
August 26, 2019

Workshop/Business Session of the Methuen School Committee was held at Methuen High School, Media Center, and was posted for 6:00PM

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

ROLL CALL

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

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert F. Vogler
Susan M. Nicholson
Nicholas DiZoglio, Vice Chairperson
Jana DiNatale
Dennis D.J. Deeb, Secretary
Jana Zanni Pesce

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (NP)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Brandi L. Kwong, Superintendent of Schools
Eric S. McGee, Assistant Superintendent
Ian Gosselin, Business Administrator
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Vice Chairperson DiZoglio called this Workshop/Business Session to order at 6:00PM with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed above.

Acceptance of the Agenda

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to amend the agenda to include a parking update as item #1
Member Vogler seconded the motion to approve as amended

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

Flag Salute

Public Participation-

Bill Pare

1. Parking Update

Superintendent-She took the School Committee's input and made some changes. She handed out the form that was sent to students. Students have until September 20th to apply for a parking pass.

Member DiZoglio-He would like an update at the October 15th meeting.

2. School Nutrition Services Policy Discussion

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to table this discussion until the Food Service Director arrives

Member Deeb seconded the motion to table

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

3. Revise and Readopt Policy #JCAB-Access to Student Lockers-First Read

Superintendent-The school attorneys review the handbooks every year. These are School Committee Policies that need to be updated. Once these have had a second read they will insert them into the handbook and bring that before the Committee for approval. Once the handbooks are done they will send them out to the parents along with a letter to review the handbook and to let them know there are updates.

Member Vogler-Do they require that every student and parent sign off that they received the handbook.

Superintendent-They have the parents sign off every year. This year they will sign this week for the current handbook and once the updated handbook is given to them they will sign again.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to waive a second reading of all the policies before them tonight

Member Deeb seconded the motion

DISCUSSION:

Member Zanni Pesce-She has just returned from vacation and needs more time to review the policies.

Member DiNatale-She would like parents to be able to review the policies and get their input.

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (YES)

Susan M. Nicholson (NO)

Nicholas DiZoglio, Vice Chairperson (NO)

Jana DiNatale (NO)

Dennis D.J. Deeb, Secretary (NO)

Jana Zanni Pesce (NO)

Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (NP)

VOTE: 1-5-0 Motion Failed

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #JCAB-Access to Student Lockers-First Read
Member Deeb seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

REMOVE FROM TABLE #2

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to remove from the table School Nutrition Services Policy Discussion
Member Deeb seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

Superintendent-Danielle Collins, Food Service Director is here to talk about the School Nutrition policy and giving students a cheese sandwich.

Member DiNatale-They had suspended this policy towards the end of the school year. She would like to have changes to the policy so that students are not shamed because their parents are not paying their school lunch debt. What was the school lunch debt before this policy?

Ms. Collins-The negative meal debt was in excess of \$60,000.00. This year it was \$650.00

Member DiNatale-Why does the meal debt have to come out of the regular budget and not the Food Services budget?

Ms. Collins-It is a federal law. Once the department is made whole by the regular budget that information is uploaded to the State.

Member DiNatale-They want to be proactive and if they see a child has a debt the principal or Food Service follows up with the parent by an email or Infinite Campus. The second week they would make a personal call. The third week maybe they should follow up with a call to the Department of Family services because the student is not being provided a lunch. These are things she would like to talk about with a policy change. What bothers her is that the parent is not paying their tab and the child is being shamed for it.

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to temporarily amend the School Lunch Payment Policy to say that students who have a negative balance will be given a lunch and that cost will be added on to their student balance
Member Vogler seconded the motion to amend

DISCUSSION:

Member DiZoglio would like to amend the motion and have the words “emergency basis only” removed

Member DiNatale agreed to that amendment

Ms. Collins-School lunch debt is only for 1 year. It is not carried over year to year.

Mr. Gosselin-Past practice has been a student can go into debt 2 lunches before they would get a cheese sandwich. This gives them a few days to contact the parents and rectify the situation.

Ms. Collins-Their process is very respectful. They do not take any tray from any child ever. They communicate through the liaison at the school or directly with parents. Some of the things the Committee has heard are not happening here.

Member DiNatale-On the third day they are getting a cheese sandwich. To them as adults it may not be a big deal, but when you are 5, 6 or 7 that is a big deal and totally unacceptable. If they

have not reached the parent by day 2 maybe they should send the school resource officer out to talk to them. They need to determine what they will do to collect that debt.

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to amend the School Lunch Payment Policy under notification of negative balance via backpack mail and telephone call.
Member DiNatale seconded amendment

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

Member Deeb-He would like some clarification on things he is hearing. Are students having their trays taken away and given a cheese sandwich?

Ms. Collins-No

Member Deeb-Does a student pay first or take the tray first?

Ms. Collins-Students go to the cashier first however the State wants that reversed for the reason that when a child arrives to the cashier with their tray the cashier can confirm there is nothing on the student's tray that they may be allergic to. They have a prompting feature that tells the cashier if the student has any allergies.

Member DiNatale-She would like this added as a first read on the next agenda and she will propose a policy.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to adopt as amended
Member DiNatale seconded the motion to amend

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

4. Revise and Readopt Policy #JCDAB-Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug use by Students Prohibited-First Read

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to amend the policy and strike Dean of Students out of the policy and strike out in 2.c the words if reasonably possible
Member DiNatale seconded the motion to amend
Member Vogler withdrew his motion.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to amend the policy and strike Dean of Students throughout the policy and strike out in 2.c and 2.d the words if reasonably possible
Member DiNatale seconded the motion to amend

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

Member Nicholson-The second paragraph mentions Vapor/E Cigarettes. She does not see a repeat of Vapor/E Cigarettes throughout the policy. She feels they need to be very clear and include this into the document as frequently as they are including alcohol and marijuana.

MOTION: Member Nicholson moved to amend the policy to include Vapor/E Cigarettes to be mentioned throughout the policy.
Member Vogler seconded the motion to amend

DISCUSSION: Friendly amendment by Member DiNatale-In the second paragraph there are a number of things listed. She suggests they change the language in the policy to reflect the language in the second paragraph.

Member Nicholson accepted the friendly amendment

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to approve Policy #JCDAB for first read
Member Nicholson seconded the motion to approve

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

Member DiZoglio-Has the administration looked into the vapor detectors?

Superintendent-They have purchased them and will be installing them in every student bathroom.

5. Revise and Readopt Policy #JICFB-Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan-First Read

MOTION: Member Deeb moved to table this discussion until the Food Service Director arrives

Member Nicholson seconded the motion to table

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

6. Revise and Readopt Policy #AD-Educational Philosophy-First Read

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #AD-Educational Philosophy-First Read

Member Nicholson seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

7. Revise and Readopt Policy #JCDA-Extracurricular Code of Conduct-First Read

Member Vogler-Do the coaches go over this with the athletes?

Superintendent-She will get them that answer.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to amend Policy #JCDA to add Vapor/E Cigarettes

Member Nicholson seconded the motion

Friendly amendment by Member DiNatale-the language should be consistent with the language in policy #JCDAB

Member Vogler accepted the Friendly amendment

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #JCDA- Extracurricular Code of Conduct-First Read

Member Deeb seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: NONE

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

8. Revise and Readopt Policy #ACAB-Harassment Policy-First Read

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #ACAB-Harassment Policy-First Read
Member Nicholson seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

9. Revise and Readopt Policy #JFABD-Homeless Enrollment Rights and Services Policy-First Read

Member Nicholson-She asked for the word youths to be corrected throughout the policy.
Member DiNatale-She would like clarification from the attorneys in terms of whether this as written is legally required. As written it does put them into a predicament and makes it difficult to enforce a residency policy in some circumstances.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #JFABD-Homeless Enrollment Rights and Services Policy-First Read
Member Nicholson seconded the motion to table

DISCUSSION: None

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (YES)
Susan M. Nicholson (YES)
Nicholas DiZoglio, Vice Chairperson (YES)
Jana DiNatale (NO)
Dennis D.J. Deeb, Secretary (YES)
Jana Zanni Pesce (YES)
Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (NP)

VOTE: 5-1-0 APPROVED

10. Revise and Readopt Policy #JKAA-Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures-First Read

Member Vogler-In the second paragraph are the procedures and appropriate responses included in the policy?

Superintendent-There are procedures in this but they also have procedures within the buildings and programs that may not be part of this but are part of their crisis intervention.

Member Nicholson-Are these procedures from the legal team, DESE or a combination of both?

Superintendent-The references are listed below, Mass General Law and DESE regulation 603.

Member Nicholson-Are they current?

Superintendent-Yes, they are current.

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to Revise and Readopt Policy #JKAA-Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures-First Read
Member Nicholson seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

11. FY'20 School Committee Calendar-Approval

MOTION: Member Vogler moved to approve the FY'20 School Committee Calendar
Member DiNatale seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

VOTE: 6-0-0 APPROVED

12. CAFO Roll Update

Superintendent-The new CAFO, Maggie Duprey, will be coming to the September 9th meeting. Every other Friday she will be meeting Maggie. The meeting they had last Friday was specifically to speak about the CAFOs roll in negotiations. There are still 3 groups that have not settled. Secretaries, administrators and the nurses.

13. FY'20 Class Size Update

Superintendent-She reviewed the class size handout with the Committee.

Member Deeb-This is a significant improvement from the past. He is concerned that the core subjects still have 28 students. Overall he is very happy with the improvements that have been made.

Member DiNatale-She feels the language classes are too large. At the high school if a student is taking a sport or marching band then maybe they could get a waiver to not take a PE class and take a different class. It may help with the numbers.

Superintendent-She would have to include Mr. Barden in these conversations. It is not that easy to give a student a waiver for a sport. The DESE expects students to take a PE every year.

Member Zanni Pesce-She is concerned with the Spanish class size. She would like to see other languages offered and thinks it is important that they start at the elementary level. With the number at 30 in the Spanish class and that being the cut off number she is concerned that students did not get in because the number was at the cut off.

Superintendent-Every student that made the criteria for that class is in that class. Any students that did not make it into the class did not meet the criteria.

14. FY'19 AP Score Summary

Superintendent reviewed the AP Scores.

Member Vogler-The improvements that were made are commendable. He would like a grade spread in each course and the correlation on 1, 2, and 3.

Member Deeb-Looking at these numbers there is a lot to be pleased with. What percentage of students that take the AP class do not take the qualifying exam?

Superintendent-She will get those numbers for him.

Member DiNatale-She would like to see a grid of the student scores on the AP test and their grades from the course. Last time they looked at this the students were all getting an A in the course but receiving 0-4 on the AP exam. How are they helping the students that are failing the AP course? The night they receive the information she would also like a discussion. She is impressed with the scores and she does not want to overlook that.

15. Summer Work/Facilities Update

Superintendent reviewed her memo

Member DiZoglio-How long is the interim time period for the interim supervising principal and the lower school principal at the CGS? Are they still interviewing for those positions?

Superintendent-They are in those roles for this school year.

Member DiZoglio-He commends Bruce Stella and his team for what they accomplished this summer. Is there an additional money coming from the State this year?

Superintendent-No. They have not seen any additional funding. They are still waiting to hear about Circuit Breaker, which they will not know about until the end of September.

Member DiZoglio-Have they heard anything about the Medicaid money?

Superintendent-She has had conversations with the CAFO and she is aware of it.

Member DiZoglio-He would like an update for the next meeting.

Member DiNatale-She didn't sign the warrant yet because she sees some significant fees for painting the parking lot lines. She thought the project was going to be done with City funds.

Mr. Gosselin-The cost of paving the parking lot was split with the city and school. They were aware that they would have to pay for the line painting.

Member DiNatale-Was it a planned expense?

Mr. Gosselin-Yes. They usually have someone come to the schools every year and do some painting so it is a yearly expense.

16. Superintendent Entry Plan and Timeline-Update/Discuss

Superintendent-She gave the update on her plan. She had meetings with parents during the month of August. She has also met with PTOs and will be meeting with them quarterly. Her administration team has also looked at this and given their input.

17. Methuen Cafeteria Association A Ratification-Approval

Superintendent-There is an error in the Opine. In the middle of the Opine it references the custodians but the top references the Cafeteria Association.

Member DiNatale-Did the CAFO review this contract?

Superintendent-No she did not. She will have her review this and bring it back to the Committee.

MOTION: Member DiNatale moved to table Methuen Cafeteria Association A and B Ratification-Approval
Member Nicholson seconded the motion

DISCUSSION: None

ROLL CALL

Robert F. Vogler (P)

Susan M. Nicholson (YES)

Nicholas DiZoglio, Vice Chairperson (YES)

Jana DiNatale (YES)

Dennis D.J. Deeb, Secretary (YES)

Jana Zanni Pesce (YES)

Mayor James P. Jajuga, Chairperson (NP)

VOTE: 5-0-1 APPROVED

18. Methuen Cafeteria Association B Ratification-Approval

See above motion to table

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss at this Workshop/Business Session, Vice Chairperson DiZoglio entertained a motion to adjourn the Workshop/Business Session for the evening at 7:47PM

MOTION:

Member Vogler motioned to adjourn the End of Year Meeting/Workshop session at 7:47PM

Member DiZoglio seconded the motion

DISCUSSION:

None

VOTE:

6-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

**Respectfully submitted,
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools**