

**Madison Public Schools  
Board of Education Regular Meeting  
October 03, 2017  
7:30 PM  
Town Campus Hammonasset Room**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order / Attendance**

The public meeting of the Madison Board of Education was called to order by Vice Chair Alison Keating at 7:32 p.m. Vice Chairman Keating led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Jessica Bowler; Galen Cawley; Alison Keating; Matt Keller; Seth Klaskin; Happy Marino; Katie Stein

Also present: Thomas Scarice, Superintendent of Schools; Gail Dahling-Hench, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; students; and community members.

**2. Action Item: To add Board Comments**

MOTION: by Stein seconded by Bowler to add Board Comments.

AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin; Marino; Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN:

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

**Seth Klaskin's Statement  
On the Status of School Facilities and the  
Possible Closure of Island Avenue School**

Madison is facing a difficult decision point that is necessary but fraught with emotion. Our school facilities require attention if we are to responsibly plan for our town's future and the education of our children. This town demands that our children receive the highest standard of education and not merely a mediocre education. In fact, many folks who move to this town cite the educational system as the primary selling point, even if they don't have children. An excellent school system is a key asset that keeps a town vibrant and keeps property values high. Our town leaders and our town electorate have traditionally supported that proposition.

Regarding leadership, I would respectfully point out that Board of Education members are volunteers who step up to lead despite the many sacrifices such leadership entails. We give up time with family and time spent pursuing our personal hobbies and interests in order to help steer the District and the town in a positive direction. We impose on our employers to accommodate occasional absences. We often face criticism and personal attacks, sometimes from people who lack perspective or feel entitled to become uncivil and at times downright mean. And we do this because we feel duty-bound to bring our skill sets to bear in support of the town we love and hold dear. The Board of Education has always

been a collegial board that puts the town and its children above petty political and parochial squabbles. While politics and parochialism are sometimes unavoidable, the Board has a long and proud history of subjugating the politics and parochial interests to the proper and primary focus: our children.

So, when the Board undertook, almost three years ago, to study the state of our facilities with a view toward the long-term success of our educational system, we did so in the hopes of truly finding the best path forward. While we are presently elected, we have a responsibility to serve as stewards of the District's future. In that spirit, we undertook a faithful and objective analysis of our facilities, employing objective and highly esteemed consultants to provide facts and figures for our consideration.

After careful consideration, and with the town's best interests in mind, we were left with the inescapable conclusion that we need to contract and consolidate our elementary building stock. So the next question became: How do we do that without certain segments of the population becoming upset at the impact our decisions will have on parochial sectors of the town? The obvious answer is that, if we must choose among our present elementary schools, and decide to close one of them, we cannot avoid the understandable concern of the families directly impacted by that decision. No matter what we chose to do, some sector of the population would feel slighted and would naturally oppose our plan.

Knowing this reinforced the Board's notion that it is our unenviable duty to utilize objective criteria to arrive at a plan that best serves the students, both present and future, the District, and the town, both now and for decades to come. By statute, the Board is required to make decisions based first and foremost on the best interests of the students. And based on our status as town citizens, we also consider town impacts and try to minimize adverse impacts while maximizing efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We pay taxes, too.

After an exhaustive study of our present facilities, the Board sought additional information from consultants, including a property valuation expert, tax impact and bonding consultants, and others, to see how we could most appropriately address our facilities. The plan that the Board ultimately settled on had one of the best facility utilization and planning scenarios, and simultaneously one of the most thoughtful and finance-conscious plans for the town's taxpayers, whether those taxpayers have children in the school district or not. That plan included the closure of Island Avenue School, which contrary to unfactual propaganda of late, is in the worst state of repair of the three elementary buildings, based on consultant analysis. It is also the oldest of the three elementary buildings and would require the most work to keep online over the coming decades.

Closing Island Avenue School has several fiscal impact advantages based on its location. Objective study concluded that selling the Island Avenue property as-is (without incurring demolition costs) would fetch almost \$3,000,000 on the real estate market, which could help offset the tax impact of a plan to construct and renovate other facilities. Selling the property will also result in almost \$100,000 in annual Grand List revenue, as well, which will dampen the tax impact of facilities capital projects. And the fiscal impact to the Grand List will benefit the town long after the facilities projects are completed and their bonding paid off. In evaluating the closure of our other elementary schools, the same fiscal benefits could not be achieved.

One of the rhetorical arguments posed by a vocal opponent of Island Avenue School's closure is that we should then consider selling the Surf Club and Salt Meadow Park if value for sale is a key consideration based on the location of the town asset. With respect, the fallacy in that argument is that a town beach can only exist on the shoreline and a salt meadow open space can only exist alongside a salt meadow. In other words, those assets are unique to their locations, while a school can be built anywhere in town. The rhetorical argument relies on an imperfect analogy.

Could other alternatives work? Sure. In fact, I proposed a plan that would have closed all three elementary buildings and constructed a single, centrally located K-2 or K-3 school. One of my points was that, with everybody's ox gored, people would have to shed their parochial interests in favor of a unified town vision that is equitable and relies on facts instead of emotions. That plan did not win the support of the Board at the time, and I wonder if it would not appear more attractive in retrospect, after a failed Referendum. But at any rate, the Board was ultimately faced with a Hobson's choice of closing Island Avenue School or proposing some half-measure plan that would not serve the town or our children well. The Board made a decision to leverage the fiscal benefits of closing Island Avenue School to adopt the best plan on the table for the town's future.

People can second-guess the Board's decision, and folks who would be directly impacted by the closure of Island Avenue School are understandably seeking deeper explanation now that the matter has come to a political head in the recent Referendum. The Board's explanation has been there all along, on the public record and through many public forums held over a two-year span leading up to the Referendum.

This town is like many others, in that citizens only become engaged at the last second, and express concerns that there was insufficient public notice of a plan. But notice and an opportunity to be heard are not at issue in this matter.

This town is also like many others in that a small, organized minority of vocal opponents can often tilt the balance against passage of a measure at town referendum, where only a small percentage of citizens exercise their right to vote. But it is often the case that the citizens experience an awakening and a buyer's remorse over the result. Then there is more process, and finally the passage of a plan. The superintendent and the Board members have received countless letters, emails and expressions of support since the Referendum results were posted. People are waking up and realizing what has transpired. Folks in town generally accept and understand that our facilities require attention, and I would bet a future Referendum would turn out a much larger crowd. I have lived in Madison for 22 years and one pattern is painfully clear: When it comes to facilities and town assets, we often require more than one Referendum to advance as a town. Then, once the improvement occurs, everybody is happy with the ultimate result.

I am naturally disappointed that this Referendum failed. I worked closely with Board colleagues for almost three years to ensure the future success of our District, and this result is a setback, to be sure. However, the result of the Referendum does not change the underlying facts. The state of our facilities, the decline in District enrollment, and the future of education in Madison demand a singular plan to guide the District through transition. I remain committed to pursuing that objective and I encourage my fellow Board members, now and future, to return to the drawing board and find a more inspiring plan to address the needs of the community.

I don't know whether it makes more sense to vote in favor of closing Island Avenue School now, or to allow the matter to weigh down the next Board to be empaneled next month. But what I do know, is that it is an inescapable fact that closing Island Avenue School needs to be a key component of any sensible plan moving forward. I know that this fact hurts many people, and for that I am truly sorry. I would venture to guess that the entire Board is truly sorry. Emotional attachments to town assets can cause catastrophic results to the tax base; a lesson we learned all too well from the town's inability to arrive at a suitable use for the Academy School property for well over a decade.

We need to act, and the responsible time to act is NOW, *before* we dally and dither away untold tax dollars propping up aging school facilities.

Even if you oppose the closure of this particular school, or that particular school, or even if you oppose a particular grade distribution because we have grown accustomed to the present model, surely we can

all agree that *something* needs to be done to address our facilities, and sooner than later. If we are open-minded to change, we can provide excellent facilities to match our excellent programs, provide modern security and air quality for our students and faculty, avoid the carrying and maintenance costs of propping up time-worn facilities, achieve substantial savings and environmental efficiencies using modern appliances, and save tax money over the long term, after the temporary bonding costs are paid off. This is the vision of the Board. It is expressly NOT the Board's desire to impose on people's memories of fond experiences at the elementary school they or their children attended. Ultimately, it is what goes on IN the school that matters, and not the building itself. We will all make new memories in new schools; schools that envelop our students in the knowledge that they are loved and their needs adequately and appropriately met.

I ask that citizens remain involved in the coming days, months and years. I ask that people maintain perspective and think broadly about what is best for the town as a whole. And I ask that neighbors keep our children, our *greatest* town assets, firmly in mind as we proceed through inevitable transition. And finally, I ask that we do so with civility and grace, to set a shining example of democracy at work for those very children to see.

Thank you.

Ms. Keating made the following statement:

Good evening everyone and thank you for coming. My name is Alison and I will be chairing the meeting this evening. Just to get through a few housekeeping things I just want to take a moment to explain the process. As you know this is a business meeting and we run it as such. We do follow and have always followed Roberts rules of order. You can Google that later but what you need to know for tonight is that that is the system that we have in place that allows us as board members to speak and be heard and it allows you was the public to speak and be heard. There are two points during this meeting that you were able to speak right now at public participation and then again later at audience response to information presented. Anybody who wants to speak they can they can stand up please state your name and your address for the record and fill out a blue form. Also everyone will have three minutes to speak. If you are making a statement we will listen to your statement. If you have any questions or concerns or anything like that we ask that you submit your questions and we will follow at a later time. Again that's part of our Roberts rules of order that we won't necessarily be addressing the questions tonight, especially if they need to be investigated. I just want to close by saying before we begin we are all here to listen to you. We know you want to be heard, we know you want to have a voice and that's why we are glad that you're here. Thank you for coming and let's begin.

### 3. School / Community Session - 7:30 p.m.

#### 3.1. Public Participation

Joan Walker 33 Stepping Stone Lane

First of all I would like to thank all of the Board of Education members and the administration for the hard work and dedication they have shown over the last 2 ½ years to analyze the current school facilities.

I would like to remind everyone in the audience that Board members are volunteers. They spend many hours doing Board work, talking to the public and sometimes getting a lot of grief in the process and don't get paid one red cent.

I would also like to remind the members of the BOE and the administration that the people that are in this room are a representation of many diverse viewpoints that want some say in the upcoming process.

That being said, I would respectively ask the Board of Education and administration to answer the following questions when presenting the plan on what is now going to happen next with our schools. I will make sure the Board gets a copy of the list.

- 1) What is the planning process for closing a school?
- 2) How much time is needed to do this effectively with as little impact as possible to the children of that school?
- 3) What are the pros and cons of announcing a close date for a school?
- 4) Can a close date be postponed if a new plan needs use of the school?
- 5) What are the renovation components that will be debated for the remaining schools?
- 6) What schools will be included in those renovation components?
- 7) What is the time-frame for completion of those renovations?
- 8) What is the funding source of those renovations?
- 9) Will the public have an opportunity to weigh in on the priorities?
  - If so, by what mechanisms?

Right now emotions are high and the Town is divided. I would ask the people of Madison to be an example. We may disagree with each other but we should do so with respect. We should strive to educate ourselves and others with facts, not scare tactics. We need to get back to the basics. We need to listen, ask questions, inform and debate in a thoughtful and enlightened way.

Chip Walz 57 Stone Road

I am a fourth generation Madisonite and have been to many meetings over the last few years. I am here today to ask the BOE to spend the next two weeks truly thinking about the process you undertook and how you should think about changing that process in light of last week's referendum.

The referendum failed for many reasons, but certainly because:

- It cost too much money
- It was a two-step process which made parents and tax payers nervous about outcomes
- It didn't address Polson in any meaningful way
- It closed Island Avenue

Going forward, I'd ask you to put everything back on the table prior to voting to limit potential solutions through voting to close a school, redistrict or move grade around.

I'd further ask that you put the horse back in front of the cart and develop a plan not by 'holding public forums' but rather by truly socializing the concepts through a listening tour with all the various constituents. Then using a complete and transparent process which gains town approval for a bonding financing repair program which is clear, well communicated and solves many of the infrastructure problems, as opposed to just one.

Once that financing plan is approved by the town then process to execute that fully vetted, socialized and financed plan.

Kristen Rosecrans Powers 67 Nathans Lane

I am concerned that by closing Island Avenue and transitioning those students to the two other elementary schools, the small, committee “feel” of the schools will be lost. Having been at a larger elementary school in Fairfield CT for 4 years – an affluent district with wonderful teachers, I see firsthand the direct impacts of a small school community if the students of Island are transitioned to the other schools. I fear those schools will lose some of the community feel and class sizes will increase.

Questions – What happens to all the teachers and staff at Island? Do they keep their jobs in the district? Is enrollment actually declining?

My research shows the projection as flat for the next 5 years.

Dan Lyons 64 Sylvan Road

It's the teachers and the programs not the building that are important. Pre-school even though not up to modern started it is one of the best. Parents don't want their children shipped to a school further away. Older schools can be just as secure as modern schools. Air quality doesn't appear to be an issue. If we focus on simpler things the schools do not need all of the latest technology. The District should go back to the drawing board and make modest improvements. What does the District need to get Island Avenue up to par. Mr. Lyons stated he would be willing to pay more for his children to be able to go to school closer to home and spending less time of the bus.

Lisa Lee 26 Meadowbrooks Road

Spoke regarding the safety concerns at Jeffery Elementary School. Driving in to the cul-de-sac at Jeffery there is no safety and it would take a lot to make those changes.

Noreen Kokoruda 85 Liberty Street

Thanked the Board for all of their work. Had been to at least 3 public forums and interacted with the Board. Go to the convocation and listen to the teachers and they is the real story. What is coming down the road with financing towns like Madison is very scary. The state gives \$150 per student and its costs \$15,000 a year to educate them. Something needs to be done with the decline in enrollment. The District needs to take a look at the future without State helping. The gift of what your children get is the teachers that they have and not the buildings they are in.

Barbara Davis 97 Stone Road

Ms. Davis agrees that the teachers are the most important aspect of a good education. Ms. Davis stated that she is concerned about the tension among various ideas and that the parents and tax payers are not quite ready yet to make the decision to Island Avenue. What would happen after the vote other than not having responsibility for Island Avenue? Ms. Davis does not think that there should be another school closed or on the market until Academy, which has been on the market since 2003/2004 gets sold. The District should not sell Island until the public knows what would happen after that.

Brian Keating 33 Dream Lake Drive

Mr. Keating stated that he appreciated the chance to speak tonight. Mr. Keating appreciates all of the work that the Superintendent and Board have done. There has been an excessive amount of transparency throughout this process and it has been apparent since day 1. Living in a small town it was wonderful to be able to engage in this process.

I know there has been a referendum and the town spoke. It is your hands the Board who were elected to make these decisions. It has been a tough but thoughtful road. Stay the course you have been ethical and transparent all along.

Joe Merschmann Madison Springs Drive

Thanked the Board on behalf of the town and the children. Leading up to the referendum he put his faith in the Board and still does and knows they have been knew deep in the issue for three years. He stated that it is too soon to close Island Avenue. We need to take a step back and see what the best path forward is. One idea is to close Island and sell it, close Jeffrey and demolish it and demolish Academy and building one new elementary school on that site on the heart of the Town. Also, put money into Ryerson for updates.

Jane Rapport East Wharf Road

Thank you for all of your consideration and hard work over the last 3 years. There was a referendum and the outcome was 2-1 with NO. To choose to close Island when the referendum was a no seems to me that the Board needs to consider what the town said. It is unclear if the District will be getting any funding from the State. This is a wakeup call and all things need to be considered. Ms. Rapport stated that she was sure the Board would come up with something great.

Alex King 10 Shorelands Drive

One concern is the view that the referendum didn't matter. It is a democratic process and something should be taken from that.

JoLynn Kennedy 120 Squires Road

After listening to some of the comments the referendum that was voted on last week was not a referendum to close Island the referendum as related to Ryerson. The closing of Island is a separate issue. The ballot Ms. Kennedy voted on did not mention Island Avenue.

Pam Greene 490 Warpas Road

Thanked the Board for all of their hard work. Ms. Greene noted that the schools should not be band aid that when walls are opened there is potential for more issues to arise.

Jennifer Ryan 102 Woodsvale Road

Thanked the Board and Superintendent Scarice. Shocked how lean the budget actually is. MPS continues to deliver amazing construction and connections. I don't see being on a bus for an extra 2 miles on a bus is going to impact achievement. I would ask moving forward when considering the options we look for the fewest amount of transitions for the fewest amount of students. Everyone is going to have to sacrifice no matter what the outcome is.

Christina Morris 39 White Cedar Drive

Island and Jeffrey are two miles apart. One concern is when construction is being done while students are in the building and the asbestos. Security concerns are also there with the old buildings.

Maureen Lewis 35 Buckhill Road

It felt like at these meetings sounded like it was being said let's keep Island open as well as the signs. The District is all about the teachers and how the schools are set up. Best thing for community and children as well as the hard work of the Board. Ms. Lewis stated that she has faith in the Board and the outcome they reach.

Marianne Naberhaus Smith 18 Chapman Avenue

Connecticut is in crisis and we need to be fiscally responsible now. The referendum was not passed. There needs to be a new plan. We need a plan that might include Island Avenue School. We need a plan that works for the state that Connecticut is in now. It should be a phased approach that works.

Jenny Spadaro 99 Garnet Park Road

It is 2017 and her 8 year old son cries every morning that it is too hot in class.

Resident of Summer Hill Road

Is a pediatric PT and would not do PT on the rugs at Ryerson because the rugs were disgusting. As well as only having fans for students with disabilities in room that are hot. Hopefully going forward we can look at the big picture.

Liam Bennett – Daniel Hand High School student

Board of Education meeting camera man

Liam is a senior at DHHS. Liam stated that he has been working with the Board for almost 2 years taping the meetings. He could not express how much the Board cares for the students of MPS. This makes him very happy as a student at MPS. Liam came from a school which was brand new and when he moved then went to Ryerson. Liam stated that he loves the schools and teachers but the school was disgusting with rusty/dirty fans and the rugs were dirty. He graduated from there in 2009 and can only imagine how much worse it is now. He was in and out of the nurses' office due to asthma due to the air quality of the school. When you vote don't think of things from your perspective but from those of your kids. Ask your kids what to vote not yourselves.

Scott Gamber 19 Middle Beach Road

While I was pleased with the results of the recent town referendum, I find myself writing to express my concern about the upcoming Board of Education vote to be held on October 17, 2017 to determine Island Avenue School ("IAS") should be closed or not. I am a somewhat befuddled at what appears to be a very hasty vote to close IAS after the decisive defeat of the September Referendum. As I reviewed the voting results, it was clear that the referendum was a very strong message that our Town should halt the plan to build two new schools, and not close the three existing elementary schools.

It seems reasonable that, based on the results of the referendum, a responsible plan would be to wait until the new Board of Education is elected in November and that group has the opportunity to carefully and thoughtfully review and study the current plan to deal with our elementary schools. Therefore, I believe the proper course at this time is for the outgoing Board to table the planned October 17 vote until the new Board has a chance to do perform their review.

Our wonderful state is currently in dire financial straits, and it would not be a good thing for our great town to fall into the same situation. We need to be sure to spend our residents' (i.e., our taxpayers') monies in a thoughtful and judicious way, and closing ISA does not appear to be the correct direction for the Board to move in at this point in time. The new Board will be able to formulate a forward looking plan that fulfills the broader educational needs of our town. While new bricks and mortar may look good, high quality teachers that can teach, motivate, and educate our children will provide much more help to our children for their future.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the meeting tomorrow evening, as I have a prior



commitment. However, I respectfully ask that you read my letter aloud at the meeting and also have it entered into the public record.

Thank you.

**4. Board of Education Student Representatives' Report**

Emily Baker and Ryan Tomicic (Emily Baker did not attend the meeting)

Ryan stated that sports are in full swing as well as the fall play. Everyone seems to be enjoying their classes. DHHS recently had a fire drill

**5. Superintendent's Report**

Thomas R. Scarice

**5.1. Curriculum Update**

**5.1.1. Brown Enrichment**

Carol Sullivan and Julie Phelps

Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Phelps reported on the following:

This year at Brown we have started a math enrichment program for students who have demonstrated through a unit pre-assessment that they would benefit from extension. Students participating in enrichment will start every math class with their regular math teacher and then, every other day, they will go to the extension teacher Amy Faitsch for the final 40 minutes of the math period. Extension units were written in the summer of 2017 by a team of ten teachers. Some of the units include: Math Magic, Geometry and Art, Exploravision Contest and The Game of Life.

**5.1.2. Philosophy Courses and Grade 9 Global Studies**

Peter Nye

Mr. Nye presented the following:

Mr. Nye shared this (modified) quote from Joseph McKeen in 1802 to explain the approach to curriculum writing for high school social studies:

"It ought always to be remembered, that literary institutions are founded and endowed for the common good, and not for the private advantage of those who resort to them for education. It is not that they may be enabled to pass through life in an easy or reputable manner, but that their mental powers may be cultivated and improved for the benefit of society. Everyone who has been aided by a public institution to acquire an education, and to qualify themselves for usefulness, is under peculiar obligations to exert their talents for the public good."

Mr. Nye discussed how each unit touches on how the content and topics discussed are used to help students apply their learning in making positive contribution to their community. This applies to both Grade 9 Global Studies and Philosophy

### 5.1.3. Revision of Race, Literature and Culture

Kevin Siedlecki

Mr. Siedlecki presented the following:

Given the opportunity to create new electives, Josh Young took the lead with passion to include more non-dead-white-male authors.

In a town like Madison, in a cultural moment such as our own, when racial tensions are dominating the news, he felt it was important to offer an entire course in which students read works from cultural groups they were otherwise not exposed to.

When we started, the basic outline was from a college course Josh took, but we soon realized it would not work the same way in the high school schedule.

The course is so short that the title Black American Literature suggested something we couldn't deliver.

In just 60 days, with a short list of books, we did not feel we could accurately represent the African American contribution to literature. To do so in such a brief way would do a disservice to both our students and to African American Literature.

It took three years of work, being granted resources, release days, and an entire day with a consultant from Fairfield University, but today we have a course we are proud to offer our students.

For the 2017-2018 school year, we are offering three packed sections to a total of 72 students.

As a result, we had a better, more coherent course, and, considering the lenses, changed the name to Race, Literature and Culture, avoiding the problem of trying to make the course define a group, and more accurately describing what we were really doing: studying the social problem of race as it applied to 20th century and contemporary culture and the literature that represents it.

Still, we weren't quite satisfied. We were missing some unifying element, something that could tie the course together and increase our students' depth of analysis.

Understanding our trouble, Gail and Tom reached out to Dr. Yohuru Williams, and brought him in to work on the curriculum with us. That's the day it all finally came together.

Understanding our trouble, Gail and Tom reached out to Dr. Yohuru Williams, and brought him in to work on the curriculum with us. That's the day it all finally came together.

Dr. Williams introduced us to his theory, unpublished as of yet, of the six degrees of segregation. Google it; you won't find anything except "did you mean six degrees of separation?" We are really on the cutting edge here.

His theory is that since slavery, African Americans and other people of color have been segregated from white society in six distinct ways: housing, education, employment, voting, access to public space, and treatment in the justice system.

He argues that the segregation is no longer explicit, deliberate, or the fault of any one group, but it is still very present. And whether we agree or not with his theory or the prevalence of the six degrees in contemporary society, we had our unifying element.

I asked my current students what they are getting out of the course. Here are some of the highlights:

“Just learning about the six degrees of segregation has given me a completely new outlook on race”

“I enjoy this course because it gives me more insight into a very conflicted world, and how the conflict came to be”

“We have participated in countless discussions that really allow and embrace everyone’s different opinions.”

“So far I have gained a great understanding that in all of history it is harmful to look at anything through one perspective.”

“Every day I get a different point of view of a topic, and almost every day I have a new way of looking at issues.”

With the constant support of Gail, Tom, and the board, we spent three years developing a seed of an idea - an idea we felt important to bring to Madison’s mostly homogenous classrooms - into a well-developed course on the cutting edge of academia.

Students who go through this class will have a literary and social awareness exceeding what I had when I graduated from Hand 15 years ago.

Whether they agree or disagree with Dr. Williams’ theory, they have developed and refined their ideas. Their opinions are now more thoughtful and supported. Their minds are open to new ideas, and they have practiced applying their own background and beliefs to new, challenging, controversial issues.

Pushing students’ thinking like that is the most important thing we can get out of humanities classes.

Superintendent Scarice stated that this was the Districts vision 5 ½ years ago and this is now the fruit of our labor. Not only the work that has been put together but how it is being delivered.

## **5.2. Other Matters**

Superintendent Scarice introduced Noreen Kokoruda. Ms. Kokoruda stated how great the last four speakers were regarding current courses.

Ms. Kokoruda stated that the budget passed and it was historic. Madison received a little more funding than they did last year also able to get bipartisan budget through. The budget may have been vetoed but it is still on the table.

Ms. Kokoruda stated that they are still on executive order to the budget being vetoed. 1/3 of the money for ECS is going to the school Districts with 85 Districts getting nothing. Ms. Kokoruda stated that MPS was prepared for this cut. Superintendent Scarice stated that was the reason the Board made cuts at DHHS because the Board knew these cuts were coming.

Ms. Kokoruda stated that they are waiting on special education funding.

Superintendent Scarice stated that the District has been pressured for a while to close a school until a decline in enrollment hits eighth grade which it now has. The District has had a serious sense of obligation from all 9 Board members. It is emotional and painful but this decision has been put off for four years. The Board had put together an option and was not passed by a 2-1 vote. To assume that closing a school was a hasty decision is not true. A lot of effort and thought went into this. A vote will take place on closing Island Avenue at the October 17<sup>th</sup> Board of Education meeting.

## 6. Board Members' Comments

Ms. Keating thanked everyone for all of the helpful information. Ms., Keating stated that the Board is thrilled that there is this much interest from different perspectives.

## 7. Board Committees / Liaison Updates (Ref. Bylaw #9450)

### 7.1. Planning Committee

Members: Jessica Bowler, Chair; Galen Cawley, Alison Keating

Ms. Bowler reported on the following that were discussed at the Planning Committee earlier today.

1 – Peter Nye came and reviewed the Philosophy Course and Grade 9 Social Studies and Kevin Siedlecki came and spoke about a revised LA class – Race, Literature and Culture as you heard about earlier in the meeting.

Philosophy -

Demonstrate the practical use of philosophy and educate them to contribute to society.

Grade 9 Social Studies –

Thematic approach

Foundational Course

Study history for the good of mankind and common good

Race, Literature & Culture –

Study race – social concept and implications along with the Six Degrees of Segregation (education, employment, housing, voting, access and encounters with police and justice system).

2 – Julie Phelps and Carol Sullivan came to discuss the Math Enrichment at Brown School for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders that you also heard about earlier this evening. We will

continue to monitor this program and review at the end of this school year - overall participation by grade and gender and by unit.

### 3 – Facilities –

Bill McMinn reviewed the Solar Roof project - we are committed to this long term project but we will not be doing anything further at this time.

Bill McMinn also reviewed used furniture we are looking to donate to Food For The Poor – I have handed out the furniture to be donated and we will be voting on this donation tonight – action item is already on the agenda.

### 4 - School Facilities Study Update –

As a Board we were of course disappointed by the outcome of the referendum last Tuesday but we were proud of the plan we put forward and the people of Madison spoke through their votes – that is how a Democracy works.

We were clear that we had a plan if the referendum failed and we will begin executing that plan over the coming weeks, months and years.

The plan so that it is clear will be the following –

- We will vote as a board to close Island Avenue School at our October 17, 2017 Board Meeting.
- We will redistrict our town for Jeffrey and Ryerson Schools as a result of the closure.
- We will work to finalize the re-configuration plan for Jeffrey, Ryerson, Brown and Polson to be implemented in fall 2019 or fall 2020 depending on renovations needed for these moves and the associated funding to complete them.
- We will develop in partnership with our consultants a 10-20 year plan to address the maintenance issues and other needed repairs at Jeffrey, Ryerson and Polson by June 2018.

The Planning Committee reviewed the draft Board of Education Actions and timeline.

### 7.2. Personnel Committee

Members: John Dean, Chair, Alison Keating, Happy Marino

No report was given.

### 7.3. Policy Committee

Members: Katie Stein Chair; Seth Klaskin, Matt Keller

Ms. Stein stated that the following policies should be voted on and waved of second and thirds readings

#### 7.3.1. Policy #6070.1 - Curriculum Development (Second Reading)

- 7.3.2. Policy #6070.2 - Curriculum (Second Reading)
- 7.3.3. Policy #5113 - Student Attendance (Second Reading)
- 7.3.4. Policy #4030.5 - Family and Medical Leave (Second Reading)
- 7.3.5. Policy #3542.4 - Lunch Charging (Second Reading)

**7.4. Finance Committee**

Members: Alison Keating, Chair; Jessica Bowler, Happy Marino

No report was given.

**7.5. LEARN Liaison**

Katie Stein

Ms. Stein stated the following:

LEARN held their first meeting of the year last Thursday. There was an overview of the beginning of the school year presented by LEARN's associate Executive Director Kate Ericson. Dr. Howley reported on LEARN's continued efforts to advocate for education funding. She also reported that her recent meeting with the Commissioner of Education produced no additional information of funding and/or expectation of such until the state budget is accepted.

**8. Audience Response to Information Presented (Ref. Bylaw #9540.10)**

**9. Consent Agenda (Ref. Bylaw #9540.2 and #9540.8)**

- 9.1. Bills Payable: \$706,907.92 2017-2018 Budget
- 9.2. Line Transfers: \$958,821.50
- 9.3. Budget Expenditure as of September 28, 2017
- 9.4. Donation: \$1,964.00 from Island Avenue Elementary School PTO to Island Avenue Elementary School for field trips for grades K, 1 & 4.

MOTION: by Bowler seconded by Marino to approve the Consent Agenda.

AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin; Marino; Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN:

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Atty. Klaskin thanked Island Avenue Elementary School PTO for their generous donation.

**10. Action Item: Minutes of the September 19, 2017 Board of Education Meeting  
(Ref. Bylaw #9540.9)**

MOTION: by Marino seconded by Stein to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2017 Board of Education Meeting.

AYES: Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin; Marino; Stein

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Bowler

MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

**11. Action Item: To approve Food for the Poor (see attached)**

MOTION: by Klaskin seconded by Cawley to approve Food for the Poor

AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin; Marino; Stein

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

**12. Action Item: To waive second and third readings of the following policies.**

Policy #6070.1 - Curriculum Development

Policy #6070.2 - Curriculum

Policy #5113 - Student Attendance

Policy #4030.5 - Family and Medical Leave

Policy #3542.4 - Lunch Charging

MOTION: by Policy to wave second and third readings of the following policies.

Policy #6070.1 - Curriculum Development

Policy #6070.2 - Curriculum

Policy #5113 - Student Attendance

Policy #4030.5 - Family and Medical Leave

Policy #3542.4 - Lunch Charging

AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin; Marino; Stein

NAYS: None

MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

**13. Action Item: To approve the following policies.**

Policy #6070.1 - Curriculum Development

Policy #6070.2 - Curriculum

Policy #5113 - Student Attendance

Policy #4030.5 - Family and Medical Leave

Policy #3542.4 - Lunch Charging

MOTION: by Keller seconded by Klaskin to approve the following policies.

Policy #6070.1 - Curriculum Development

Policy #6070.2 - Curriculum

Policy #5113 - Student Attendance  
Policy #4030.5 - Family and Medical Leave  
Policy #3542.4 - Lunch Charging  
AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin;  
Marino; Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN:  
MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

**14. Old Business**

No old business was discussed.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

No future items were discussed.

**16. Meetings / Dates of Importance (see attached)**  
October/November 2017 Calendars

**17. Adjournment**

MOTION: by Keller seconded by Bowler to  
adjourn the meeting at 10:43 p.m.  
AYES: Bowler; Cawley; Keating; Keller; Klaskin;  
Marino; Stein  
NAYS: None  
ABSTAIN:  
MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

Approved at the 10/17/17 BOE Meeting  
LF