

MARPLE NEWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Zoom

Minutes

Board: Mrs. Tracy Alberti, Mr. Matthew Bilker, President, Mrs. Kathryn Chandless, Mr. David Dezzi, Mrs. Barbara Harvey, Vice President, Mr. John McKenzie, Mr. Nicholas Reynolds, Mr. Nicholas Siano, Mrs. Desiree Tomasco

Solicitor: Mr. Mark Sereni, Esquire

Administration: Dr. Tina Kane, Dr. Connie Bompadre, Mr. Joe Driscoll, Mr. Jim Orwig, Mr. Jake Gallagher, Dr. Dorie Martin-Pitone, Dr. Heather Logue,

Press: 0

Audience: 154

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Bilker called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM

Advised the public that the Board met in executive session at 6:45 and had completed 3 committee meetings.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Stood on the Pledge of Allegiance from previous meeting

3. PRESENT

Mrs. Alberti, Mr. Bilker, Mrs. Chandless, Mr. Dezzi, Mrs. Harvey, Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Siano, Mrs. Tomasco

All members present

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Bilker asked for a motion to accept the agenda, as presented.

Motion was made by Mrs. Chandless, seconded by Mrs. Harvey

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Agenda Items Only)

There was none

6. WE ARE PROUD OF OUR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

I would like to congratulate the MNEA Teacher of the Year this year was awarded to our nine school nurses. Susan Benner, Caryl Sue Caldwell, Patricia Callow, June Cloran, Meghan Donohue, Diane Freeman, Marie Kozak, Fran Lake, Dawn Smitheman

7. COMMENDATIONS

There was none

8. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT

Ms. Fay and Mr. Tomasco gave the following report

- Winter Guard will start competing virtually
- Indoor percussion will start soon
- Jazz Band will start practice soon for completion
- Girls track and field practicing
- Boys track is getting ready for their meet with Springfield
- Girls Basketball 5 – 3
- Girls and Boys swim teams had a tremendous season
- Alex Pastris has had a great season diving
- Boys Basketball are 4 – 4, JV 7 – 2
- Wrestling finished 6 – 7

9. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Three requests to the CCHD have been made to consult with them regarding plans to return more students to in-person instruction. I am awaiting a response for our scheduled consultation time.

We have had great feedback from our parent survey since Friday afternoon.

- So far there has been 1,041 responses.
- To date 78.3% of parents shared they would send their child/children to school with 3 feet social distancing for 5 days a week of instruction. 21.7% shared they would not.
- This is very similar to the current cohort commitment of 75.6% in the hybrid group A/B and 19.5% in group C and both 4.9%.

The school principals will be sending families a survey to complete specific for each grade level. This will provide a much better idea for our administration to make plans when we are able to return more students with more frequency.

The CCHD gives the guidance toward planning for less than 6 feet. We are anticipated it in the near future.

10. SECRETARY'S MINUTES

There was none

11. OTHER REPORTS

There was none

12. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

12.01 Committee Report – Nicholas V. Siano, Chairperson

12.02 Policy

Mr. Siano asked for a motion to waive the first reading of, and to adopt on second reading, Policy No. 824 ACE-IT (Assisting Childhood Education through Increased Testing), as presented.

Motion was made by Mrs. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Chandless

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

12.03 Health and Safety

Mr. Siano asked for a motion to approve the District's Phased School Re-opening Health and Safety Plan, as amended.

Motion was made by Mrs. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Chandless

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

12.04 Administrative Trip

Mr. Siano asked for a motion to approve Dr. Constance Bompadre and Mr. Neil Evans to attend a virtual conference, Promoting Social Justice in School Discipline and Equity Policies, on the mornings of March 10, March 17, and March 24, 2021 at a cost of \$125.00 per person. Motion was made by Mrs. Chandless, seconded by Mrs. Harvey

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

12.05 Donation

Mr. Sanio asked for a motion to approve the painting of the Loomis Elementary School sign from blue and white to black and orange. This project is a gift from Loomis Fifth Grade Class of 2021. The Class of 2021 will pay for the paint, and the Marple Newtown Operations Department will select the paint and paint the sign for the students.

Motion was made by Mrs. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Chandless

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

12.06 Technology

Mr. Siano asked for a motion to approve the 2021-2022 lease of computers for the Marple Newtown High School at a cost of \$174,430.22 a year for a term of five years.

Motion was made by Mrs. Chandless, seconded by Mrs. Harvey

With no further discussion motion passed 9 – 0

13. HUMAN RESOURCES AND POLICY COMMITTEE

13.01 Committee Report – John P. McKenzie, Chairperson

There are no Human Resources Committee items for this agenda.

14. BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

14.01 Committee Report – Kathryn V. Chandless, Chairperson

There are no Budget and Finance Committee items for this agenda.

15. FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

15.01 Committee Report – Nicholas J. Reynolds, Sr., Chairperson

There are no Facilities and Transportation Committee items for this agenda.

16. DELAWARE COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT REPORT

Mrs. Harvey stated that she is glad to be on the Board of the IU and sell all the great work that is being done for our students.

17. LEGISLATIVE REPORT

There was none

18. BOARD PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

There was none

19. COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Several members of the community spoke with regard to PECO's request to build what may be called a City Gate or Reliability Station on the corner of Cedar Grove and Sproul Roads. The zoning laws don't normally allow this type of building, being so close to businesses and residential areas. Sometime in November PECO's request for a special exception was denied by the Zoning Board. Unfortunately, PECO has decided to sue the Marple Township Zoning Board because they really want that special exception. PECO has also gone to the Pennsylvania Public Facilities Commission for a Certificate of Convenience which is similar to Eminent Domain. The citizens here are going to try and help Marple Township with the court and increase public response and public pressure so that PECO cannot build on this sight. It was also stated that this area is very close to Freddy's, neighborhood, and Russell School. They wanted to make people aware of what is happening. Working with PTO's and house of Worship's. More information can be found on the Facebook page, Marple Safety Coalition. If you have any questions please contact me, again my name is Ted Uhlman, phone number 484-904-5377.

Mr. Bilker thanked those community members who spoke. He did want to make it clear that they were not invited by the School Board to speak, but wanted to thank them for attending and speaking about things that may affect the Marple Newtown School district and making the public aware of the situation.

Community member wanted to know if when the students go back to school what will be happening with lunches. She knows that the Board may not be prepared to answer that question but wanted to put the subject on the Board's radar.

Dr. Kane responded by saying that lunches would be the biggest obstacle and biggest challenge. The plan would depend on the building and the Principals plans would be slightly different. The use of some large group instruction rooms, some may stay in classrooms. Don't have specifics right now that is why the parent survey is so critical, so that the Principals know how many students are returning at this time so they can plan.

Community member wanted to thank the Board for approving the sign at Loomis.

Community member appreciates the conversation focusing on the number of students returning to the schools for 5 day learning. Also appreciates the offering of the testing, this works in the college setting giving you a fair amount of control of a safe return. Also, thank you for your thoughtful consideration of having the continuation of group "C". I think you have done a really great job and just wanted to thank you.

Community member wanted to thank everyone for all they are doing to get the students back in school. One question, and it does not need a response. I think it will be very hard to attend to the 20 students that may be in class and 2 students on Zoom. I appreciate all of those who want to stay in group "C", but believe full attention should be with the in school students. Is there a way to have one teacher per grade to attend to those students in group "C" and then a teacher can give their full attention to the students that are in the classroom?

Mr. Bilker responded saying that it is a worthwhile suggestion, just difficult to do because of the connection the students have made with their teachers this year. Talking with a lot of families that have students in group "C" agree that they want to have the same teacher that they started with. My kids like their teachers, they made a connection with them. Thank you for your comment and I understand. Our teachers have had a lot of challenges this year and that is one of them. Again, thank you for your comment.

Community member wanted to know if MN connected will still be available for next year.

Dr. Kane responded by saying that yes, for the fall MN Connect will be its own entity.

Mr. Bilker also responded saying that the classroom would be fully in school learning while MN Connect would be all virtual.

Community member wanted to know if the Board could share any plans for summer learning.

Dr. Kane responded saying that there will be a presentation once the parent survey is complete. We would like to host this ourselves and have already posted for staff. There would be 2 sessions, morning and afternoon. There would be assistance in Math, Reading, and Science.

Dr. Martin-Pitone also added that it would be 5 weeks, in the preliminary stages of planning. Not only would offer classes for any loss in learning, but also would offer enrichment class as well. Will hopefully have a presentation next month.

Community member wanted to know how long it would take to reopen the schools if and when that occurs.

Dr. Kane said 2 to 3 weeks after the decision is made to open the schools and hope that we have received the guidance to do so.

Community member wanted to know about the Assessments in March.

Dr. Martin-Pitone responded by saying that the assessments are just to see where our students are according to the guidelines and so that we can adjust our instruction accordingly. There may be some adjustments to the testing when the decision to go 5 days is made and have a plan for those students who will be staying fully virtual.

Community member wanted to know if the assessment will be shared, what a student may be doing compared to the school.

Dr. Martin-Pitone said that the assessments would not be shared publicly, but conversations would be had with the parents on an individual basis.

20. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Mrs. Tomascso commented on how user friendly the website is and how great it looks.

21. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business for the Board, Mr. Bilker adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Mr. Joseph Driscoll
Board Secretary