

Mount Greylock Regional School District School Committee

Location: Zoom Remote Meeting

Date: Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021 Time: 6 pm

Special Open and Executive Session Agenda

- I. Call to order
- II. MISSION: At Mount Greylock Regional School District, our mission is to create a community of learners working together in a safe and challenging learning environment that encourages restorative based processes, respect, inclusive diversity, courtesy, integrity, and responsibility through high expectations and cooperation resulting in life-long learning and personal growth.
- III. Anti-Racism Resolution: Recommitment Statement from the School Committee
- IV. Motion to move into Executive Session with intent to return to Open Session pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (MGEA) as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares
- V. Discussion and approval of MOA with MGEA VOTE
- VI. Other business not anticipated by the Chair within 48 hours of meeting VII. Motion to adjourn

Present: Christina Conry, Carrie Greene, Michelle Johnson, Jose Constantine, Julia Bowen, Curtis Effenbein, Steve Miller

Also present: Jason McCandless, Joe Bergeron

Start time: 6pm

- I. Call to order
Called to order at 6pm
- II. MISSION: At Mount Greylock Regional School District, our mission is to create a community of learners working together in a safe and challenging learning environment that encourages restorative based processes, respect, inclusive diversity, courtesy, integrity, and responsibility through high expectations and cooperation resulting in life-long learning and personal growth.
- III. Anti-Racism Resolution: Recommitment Statement from the School Committee

Discussion of racist incident at MtG, refer to school committee statement from October 2020, current incident under investigation by law enforcement and cannot comment. Words

not enough, diversity/equity/inclusion core going forward, will review policies going forward.

Discussion from committee unanimously supports the statement.

Statement read by chair at meeting:

As was reported to our school community and the School Committee, on January 21 a racist act was committed by an individual during a high school class. Over the course of the past week, we have fielded questions about the “hows” and the “whos.” Understandably, many people in our community want answers. People want to know how this could happen and who did it. What we can say is that this specific incident is now in the hands of law enforcement, and we cannot comment on the ongoing investigation.

While we understand this answer is disappointing to some, we caution that it is easy to hold on to details of a situation and lose sight of the critical bigger picture, in this case, the reality that the January 21 act is symptomatic of a broader and deeper problem, the problem of systemic racism that is pervasive in our country and our community. In some ways, we live and work in an idyllic area, but we are not immune.

We are not immune to the kind of hate that was perpetrated against our Mount Greylock student and we must not be complacent in its face. Not only was this a personal hateful attack against an individual student, but it was also an assault on our entire community. Ibram X. Kendi writes, “The only way to undo racism is to constantly identify it and describe it—and then dismantle it.” The Mount Greylock Regional School Committee condemns in the strongest terms this act of racism, and we want to make clear that as a community we will not tolerate it.

We condemn not just the act itself, but any attempt to dismiss it or diminish the reality that acts like these have horrible far-reaching impacts and are symptoms of a long history and practice of oppression and injustice

We have got to do better. Words are not enough. Dr. McCandless has spoken recently of the District’s commitment -- operationally, financially, and from a strategic planning perspective -- to make the work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging a core thread of everything we do at Mount Greylock. In the coming weeks, the School Committee will review all applicable policies to make doubly sure that we are taking every policy step possible. We must also ensure that every future policy decision and budget approval we make as a School Committee should have at its core the question - how is this decision contributing to a culture of equity and belonging?

As a community, we have hard, deep, long-term work to do. Our students are talking. We have seen deeply passionate statements from our Student Council, Greylock Multicultural Student Union, and Peer Team also condemning this act. Once again, young people lead the

way, and we vow to join with them in a unified commitment to the work of accountability, antiracism, and a collective good.

Comment from Carrie about do we want to reaffirm the statement from October as we have many new committee members. Read by Jose.

October 2020 Statement

MOUNT GREYLOCK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE ANTI-RACISM RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS, as schools have the responsibility to equip students with their civil right of obtaining a free and appropriate public education, it is the responsibility of each school to ensure we create a welcoming community for ALL students; and WHEREAS, it is the responsibility that every district provide to all district staff, including School Committee members annual professional development on diversity, equity and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, every district will commit to recruiting and retaining a diverse and culturally responsive teaching workforce; and

WHEREAS, every district will examine their policies for institutional and systemic racialized practices and implement change with sustainable policies that are evidence based; and

WHEREAS, every district will incorporate into their curriculum the history of racial oppression and works by black authors and works from diverse perspectives; and

WHEREAS, we as school district leaders can no longer remain silent to the issues of racism and hate that continue to plague our public and private institutions;

RESOLVED: that Mount Greylock Regional School District and all the school districts in the Commonwealth must guarantee that racist practices are eradicated, and diversity, equity and inclusion is embedded and practiced for our students, families, faculty and staff.

We must ensure our own school culture and that of every district in the Commonwealth is anti-racist, that acknowledges that all lives cannot matter until black lives matter.

Superintendent: Starts with hurt individual and family. Hurt extends to classroom, then school, then community. In touch with many all over Berkshire county. This doesn't define our entire community but this level of hate and disrespect is sadly a part of every community, grateful to the community for stepping in and stepping up that this will not define us, we will learn from this, we will do better, we will support.

Moved by Steve, seconded by Julia, passes unanimously.

- IV. Motion to move into Executive Session with intent to return to Open Session pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (MGEA) as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares

Moved by Steve, seconded by Carrie:

Christina Conry AYE, Carrie Greene AYE, Michelle Johnson AYE, Jose Constantine AYE, Julia Bowen AYE, Curtis Elfenbein AYE, Steve Miller AYE.

Passes unanimously at 6:16pm.

- V. Discussion and approval of MOA with MGEA VOTE

Return to open session at 6:52

Julia moves, Steve seconds, supporting the MOA with MGEA.

Statement read by the chair:

This is an agreement that reflects months of the two parties working together to understand the detailed and sometimes unpredictable challenges that we face and how to best approach them in the coming months.

In legal terms it is simpler, while in human terms it is more complex.

It places more emphasis on local context and relies less on state-provided metrics.

It is what we need in order to navigate COVID together across our schools and within our community.

If you tear away the legal terminology, the agreement boils down to this:

1. We are forming a committee that consists of 6 members: 3 from the school committee and administration and 3 from the union. The committee will identify and

include 2 medical and public health advisors in its conversations.

2. The committee will meet at least weekly and review the public health situation as it relates to COVID and our school district. Any decisions that it makes will be by a majority vote, and it will make every effort to make sure its decisions are timely and give the school community time to adjust to shifts between in-person and remote learning.

3. There is a simplified metric that guides the district in the absence of a majority decision by the committee to override it. That metric is this:

- * If either town is “red” per the state’s color-coding metrics on a given Thursday, the district will move to remote learning effective the following Monday.

- * If both towns are “yellow” or better for 2 consecutive Thursdays while the district is in remote learning, the district will move to hybrid learning effective the following Monday.

- * The committee has the ability to override that metric with a majority vote.

The agreement comes into effect at the end of next week. Following the agreement, the earliest that we could return to hybrid learning is Monday, February 8th, but it’s entirely possible that we could remain in remote due to COVID numbers this week, next week, and the decisions of the committee. Families and staff need to be prepared for both possibilities and we will provide as much preparation and advance notice as possible.

We are grateful to all involved in getting to this new point in our work to provide the best education we can to our children in the midst of a pandemic

Committee thanks administration and teachers for all their work.

Motion passes unanimously!

Agreement will be on the website tonight under district info / documents.

Copy of the agreement is pasted at the end of these minutes.

VI. Other business not anticipated by the Chair within 48 hours of meeting VII. Motion to adjourn

None.

Motion to adjourn by Michelle, seconded by Steve, passes unanimously at 6:58pm.

Minutes by Steven Miller, Secretary

Approved 2.11.21

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BY AND BETWEEN
THE MOUNT GREYLOCK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND THE
MOUNT GREYLOCK EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

This Memorandum of Agreement (hereinafter the "MOA") is being entered into by and between the Mount Greylock Regional School Committee ("Committee") and the Mount Greylock Education Association ("Association").

1. The Committee and Association entered into a Memorandum of Agreement which outlined changes in working conditions related to the re-opening plan which was executed, respectively, on September 18, 2020 and September 17, 2020.
2. Subsequently the parties met and negotiated over changes to the Memorandum of Agreement described in Item #1 above, and mutually agree that the following shall supersede the former Section C. (Metrics) in its entirety:

C. METRICS/JLMC

- i. The parties agree to the following metrics and procedures to determine if the schools should remain in the current phase, advance to the next phase, or go back to the previous phase of reopening the schools.
- ii. The parties agree to form a Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) for Health & Safety which will be made up of three (3) members from the administration/school committee and three (3) members from the MGEA. These members are all voting members.
- iii. There will be two (2) members of the medical community assigned to the JLMC as non-voting, permanent consultants. These members will be chosen by mutual agreement of the parties. These members will be excluded from being present during and participating in voting deliberations and the actual vote(s).
- iv. Unless extraordinary circumstances occur, the determinative metrics will be governed by the weekly color-coding community metrics as reported in the Commonwealth's Weekly Covid-19 Report as follows:
 - a. If either of Lanesborough or Williamstown are reported as "red," this will move the district to remote.
 - b. The district shall remain in remote until both towns are reported for two consecutive weeks as "yellow," "green," or "grey."
 - c. Transitions will take effect on the Monday following the release of metrics by the Commonwealth.
 - d. All phase changes, transitions, and associated timing of the above can only be overridden (in either direction) by a 2/3 vote of the voting members of the JLMC.
- v. Meetings will be held with a frequency of at least weekly. Any decisions will be made with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members of the JLMC.

- vi. Factors that the JLMC will consider in making determinations are:
 - a. Consultation with the local board of health representatives.
 - b. Consultation with Mt. Greylock Regional School District School Nurses.
 - c. Evidence of a cluster of Covid-19 cases within a school (students and/or faculty)
 - d. Evidence of a cluster(s) outside of the schools
 - e. The positivity rate in Lanesborough, Williamstown, Berkshire County, Rensselaer (NY) County, and Bennington (VT) County.
 - f. Other data points as agreed upon by both negotiating parties.
 - v. The determinative metrics and JLMC decisions described above will take effect as of the February 4, 2021 release of metrics by the Commonwealth.
3. This MOA shall be in effect for the 2020-2021 school year only. This MOA shall not be considered as a past practice, or in any way binding or precedent setting for any future same or similar situation.
 4. All provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and Memorandum of Agreement described in Item #1 above between the Committee and the Association shall remain in full force and effect unless explicitly addressed in this MOA.

MOUNT GREYLOCK REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

By _____ Date Signed _____
 Chairperson

MOUNT GREYLOCK EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

By _____ Date Signed _____
 President