



Mt. Greylock Regional School District

Transition Committee Open Session Minutes

Date: September 20, 2018

Start: 6:00 PM

Adjourn: 10:38 PM

Location:

MGRS Meeting Room A109

1781 Cold Spring Road Williamstown, MA 01267

In Attendance:

Committee Members:	Also Present:
J. Bergeron R. DiLego S. Miller D. Caplinger C. Dodig C. Greene A. Terranova <u>Absent:</u>	Kimberley Grady, Superintendent Chris Desjardins, TMS Joelle Brookner, Principal WES Martha Wiley, Principal LES Irene Ryan, Dir of Pupil Services

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Item	Comments	Motion	Second	Vote
Meeting Called to Order	Open Session called to Order by J. Bergeron at 6:00 PM			
Public Comment	<p>Eleven individuals addressed the school committee during the public comment period.</p> <p>Comment I: Jodi Szcapaniak-Locke, Lanesborough, Spoke to LES Updates. Jodi spoke to the state of affairs at LES and how Mrs. Wiley has worked to begin the school year amidst on unwelcoming atmosphere at LES.</p> <p>Comment II: Marty Walter: Marty Walter spoke as the VP of MGEA, teacher at MGRS, and resident of Williamstown. Mr. Walter spoke on the subject of collective bargaining. His statement spoke to the work action that is currently in progress by the unions of MGRSD.</p> <p>Comment III: Jackie Vinnette, Music Teacher at LES. Spoke to staffing updates and LES Updates. Ms. Vinnette stated that the instructional time for music at LES has been cut in order to assist in covering for a librarian due to the retirement of LES's librarian last year who has not been replaced. Instrumental lessons have been reduced to 20 minutes once per week. WES is currently 30 minutes. Ms. Vinnette stated that this will negatively impact the program at MGRS in the future.</p> <p>Comment IV: Janice Loux: Janice is a labor negotiator in the hotel industry. She is also a parent of two students within MGRSD. Janice stated that the</p>			



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MGRSD signed collective bargaining agreements that promised a raise to staff. She believes that agreement should be honored in order to move forward with the new agreement for the newly regionalized District. Janice read from the FAQ that was distributed during the regionalization process.

Comment V: Christina Conry, Lanesborough parent of elementary and high school student. Ms. Conry spoke to some of the items that the students are missing out on due to the job action that is currently taking place. She urged the committee to find a solution quickly in order to align the opportunities of current students to match the experience of students who have already passed through each of the schools.

Comment VI: Michelle Johnson, Lanesborough, spoke to concerns regarding the direction that LES is taking. Ms. Johnson spoke to programming at LES and stated that the current student enrollment at LES will not support full time specialist teachers at LES. Ms. Johnson spoke to the committee and committee attendees regarding the budget process that was completed for FY19 and asked that everyone in attendance this evening continue to use the school committee meetings to voice their opinion through committee meetings – the proper channel.

Comment VII: Marsha Vinnette, Teacher at LES: Ms. Vinnette stated that she feels we are in trouble. She feels that there is a lack of transparency and communication within the administration and feels that more colleagues will be lost due to a fear to speak out due to a fear of retaliation. Ms. Vinnette spoke to the specialists positions at LES and spoke in favor of specialist positions and how they benefit a student body. Ms. Vinette asked for action to open up the line of communication and fix the problems within our District.

Comment VIII: Foster Goodrich: grew up in Williamstown, currently living in Pownal, VT. Mr. Goodrich encouraged everyone to take into consideration the value of the teachers and after-school programs. Mr. Goodrich urged everyone to come together to find common ground for the good of the children and the communities.

Comment IX: Arthur Malconium: Mr. Malconium spoke to budgets, and strife in different countries and stated that the one thing you should never cut down on is on educational costs for children.

Comment X: Clare Sheehy: Senior at MGRS. Claire spoke to the effects of the job action on the students.

Comment XI: Peggy Kearn: resident of Williamstown, parent of a 4th grader at WES. Ms. Kearn spoke in support of the teachers and the effects of the job action. She stated that the parents are willing to stand for whatever sacrifices they need to make in order to ensure that faculty and staff at all schools get



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	<p>what they deserve within the collective bargaining agreements. Ms. Kearn spoke to the recent passage of a multi-million dollar police station in town while the teachers are currently nickel and diming their way through negotiations.</p>			
<p>Approval of Minutes</p>	<p>August 29, 2018: Motion to accept. Discussion: None</p>	<p>S. Miller</p>	<p>A. Terranova</p>	<p>7-0-0</p>
<p>Circulate Warrants</p>	<p>Warrants were circulated for approval.</p>			
<p>Principal & Pupil Services Updates</p>	<p>LES: Martha Wiley provided updates on the opening of school at Lanesborough Elementary. The first PTO meeting occurred this week. Mrs. Wiley gave a brief update on new staffing. Mrs. Wiley gave an update on school council membership. The election will have both paper and electronic ballot.</p> <p>MGRS: K. Grady introduced Avery Powers, Student Representative from MGRS. Avery Powers is Secretary of MGRS Student Council. Ms. Powers stated that the student council has done everything that they can to plan for the year and plan fundraisers and activities for the year. Ms. Powers gave a statement regarding how the job action has impacted students.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">K. Grady gave an update on staffing at MGRS for the new school year. Classes have been relatively smooth considering the scheduling changes that have accompanied the opening of the new building and an extremely large seventh grade class. K. Grady provided some accolades to start the year off. K. Grady also provided some specific scheduling updates and the process for an action “punch-list” that relates to the new building as teachers and staff acclimate to the new building and some level of construction continues to take place. K. Grady reviewed the current MGRS school council. All parents terms are up and Mrs. MacDonald is looking to have an electronic ballot to find replacements.</p> <p>WES: Joelle Brookner first spoke as a mom to state that her student at MGRS is loving the new building. Mrs. Brookner stated that WES played host to MGRS staff over the summer. 22 new students at WES this year. The Grade K class has 61 students. New staff: David Vickery, Linda Chesney, Tamara Lewis, Eileen Zajack, Traci Lavigne, Molly Whaley, Rachel Dunn. WES held its annual Watermelon Welcome and Mrs. Brookner gave updates on that event. School began on 9/6 with our traditional bagpiper. Students began the year with enthusiasm. WES is continuing with Words are Wonderful through the week of October 15th. WES is looking for one parent member to fill a two-year term on their school council.</p> <p>Summer Programming Update & Special Education Updates: I. Ryan gave an update on the summer programming and credit recovery programming that took place at each elementary school over the summer. K. Grady reviewed</p>			



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	<p>projected caseloads and special education information in the meeting packet. I. Ryan reviewed additional information regarding the special education programming and updates for the 2018-2019 school year. The Parent Advisory Council will now be one council for the new Region. K. Grady stated that the first meeting will be an organizational meeting. The Advisory Council has the ability to have subcommittees.</p>			
<p>Hosting Habitat for Humanity / June 2019</p>	<p>K. Grady introduced Andy Hogeland to speak on behalf of this agenda item. Andy is from Northern Berkshire Habitat for Humanity. Habitat will have a building project in Williamstown ready in the Spring/Summer 2019. There will also be six units in Pittsfield. Northern Berkshire Habitat is asking for approval to MGRS to host 170 people for seven nights in June. S. Miller asked about references and criminal background checks. The request is to allow 170 people to sleep in the gym and use the cafeteria for food prep and showers. C. Greene asked about policy and the process for approving/voting on this agenda item. J. Bergeron referenced policy KF. K. Grady spoke to having a food services person on site during this time because of the kitchen being brand new / and the training that would be required to prepare food on the MGRS kitchen. C. Greene asked about legal review regarding release of liability etcetera. The Habitat group needs to know if they have a go-ahead to use MGRS by October 1st, 2018.</p> <p>MOTION: C. Greene moved to authorize the Superintendent to commit to and finalize the Habitat for Humanity facilities use request for June 2019 conditional upon legal review and adequate liability insurance coverage.</p>	<p>C. Greene</p>	<p>S. Miller</p>	<p>7-0-0</p>



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	<p>Seconded by Miller: Discussion: D. Caplinger asked if Northern Berkshire Habitat had worked with this company previously. Mr. Hogleand stated that Northern Berkshire had not but many of the previous projects done by this organization are Habitat projects. MGRS students and community members are welcome to participate. There is an lower-end age limit in order for individuals to use power tools. The project will be on the corner of Cole and Maple streets and will consist of two 3-bedroom single family houses. The Pittsfield project is a six-unit building. VOTE 7-0-0. MOTION Passes Unanimously.</p>			
<p>Business Manager Updates</p>	<p>Student Activity Accounts: MOTION: That the Mount Greylock Regional School District Transition Committee create a Williamstown Elementary Student Activity account in accordance with MGL Chapter 66 of the Special Acts of 1996. Miller/Caplinger. Discussion: K. Grady addressed a question from A. Terranova regarding why WES has not had student activity accounts previously. K. Grady stated that previously funds from WES have all flowed through revolving accounts at the Town. R. DiLego asked if a full list of student activity accounts within the District will be approved by the school committee at a future meeting. K. Grady stated that this will occur once FY18 is fully closed out as part of an FY19 Budget Update. VOTE: 7-0-0. Motion passes unanimously.</p>	<p>MOTION I Miller MOTION II Terranova</p>	<p>Caplinger DiLego</p>	<p>7-0-0 7-0-0</p>



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	<p>Bonding of Principals Discussion: MOTION: That MGRSD Transition committee adopt section 47 of MGL chapter 71 as amended by Chapter 66 of the Special Acts of 1996. A. Terranova/ R. DiLego. Discussion: The committee discussed the bonding process for the two elementary school principals. VOTE: 7-0-0. MOTION Passes Unanimously.</p> <p>FY18 Budget Wrap-Up: C. Desjardins gave an update on the close-out process of FY18 both at the regional level and the close out with each Town. Grants have been zeroed out and closed. All revolving accounts with the exception of lunch have been reconciled. \$7500 have been held back from school choice funds until final reconciliations can take place – there have been minor bookkeeping differences that the business office has been working through between the region and the Towns. C. Desjardins stated that this is a very tricky reconciliation process and he thanked the Town Accountants for their assistance through this process.</p> <p>FY19 Budget Update: . FY19 Budget Update: There is not much activity to report as we are only three weeks into the school year. The update provided gives a listing of the regions accounts and the activity that has been processed to date. The committee requested that budget reports be sent out as a separate attachment rather than within the committee packet. Also, the committee has requested if</p>			
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	there is a way the budget reports could be presented in a smaller number of lines.			
Superintendent Report	<p>K. Grady gave an update on total grants for FY18 and total amount received for FY19 to date. K. Grady reviewed the draft student/parent handbooks for each school. Superintendent Grady would like to send each handbook to legal counsel for review prior to distributing to families and students within the District. The final handbooks will be reviewed by school councils to be finalized. The building principals will be updating and the committee can give feedback to the principals as edits are made. Staffing/FTE Updates: K. Grady stated that no programming has been eliminated at Lanesborough Elementary School. K. Grady spoke to the scheduling changes to the music programming at LES. The library role will continue but is evolving to match the chrome book initiative as we work to become a 1:1 chrome book school. When the Media Specialist position was posted, we had two applicants that were not aligned to the vision of the media specialist role. K. Grady reviewed current vacancies at LES. K. Grady thanked the Principals and the Director of Pupil Services for their work and collaboration in aligning Pre-K-12 curriculum. C. Dodig asked about the Rural Schools Grant. K. Grady stated that we were notified recently that we did receive money from the Rural Schools Grant and reviewed what those funds would be used for.</p> <p>LES & WES Summer Maintenance Update: K. Grady reviewed summer maintenance updates from WES & LES. Some big ticket items will need to be discussed during the October meeting. Some equipment which was unsafe has been removed from the LES playground. MGRS custodians spent some time at LES throughout the summer. Berkshire County House of Correction performed community service over the summer (painting main street). K. Grady reviewed the needs for new windows / window repair at LES with the new Lanesborough Town Manager, Kelli Robbins. K. Grady reviewed the need to air condition the server room at LES. At WES, MGRS custodians helped out over the summer. Playground equipment has been repaired over the summer. Some feedback was received during the annual Certificate of Inspection process. Overall, we are in good shape.</p>			
Additional Subcommittee Liaisons	Capital Gift / Phase II Update: This committee met earlier in the week with Lindsey Von Holtz. Ms. Von Holtz will assist in providing data on participation on how the outside facilities at MGRS are utilized and how they might be	R. DiLego	C. Dodig	7-0-0



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	<p>improved to meet the needs of the students more effectively going forward. Discussion regarding reaching out to community members and student representative to attend the next meeting and to provide them with a recap of the first meeting.</p> <p>School Funds LES/MG/WES (LIFE, SEE, WESE): Discussion regarding how these funds are operating and how they should continue to operate. D. Caplinger volunteers to be the liaison for WESE. S. Miller will volunteer to serve on the SEE Fund. The committee will reach out to the LIFE fund.</p> <p>MOTION: to place S. Miller as the SEE Fund liaison and Dan Caplinger as liaison to WESE. R DiLego / Dodig 7-0-0. (Dodig exits room).</p>			
<p>Finance Subcommittee</p>	<p>Annual Tuition Rate K-6, 7-12: K. Grady reviewed that annually the school committee is to set a tuition rate for the Region. MOTION: Move to accept an annual tuition rate of \$12,477 for grades k-6 and 14,477 per student for grades 7-12. Miller/Terranova. VOTE 6-0-0.</p> <p>School Building Committee: (C. Dodig enters)</p>	<p>Miller</p>	<p>Terranova</p>	<p>6-0-0</p>
<p>Auditorium/Full Building Timeline Update:</p>	<p>Occupancy timeline for the auditorium has been pushed back. The committee will review this agenda item more in depth at a future meeting in October. The Superintendent reported that the MGRS Principal has worked to secure and plan for fall events that will be effected. The ribbon cutting has been pushed back as well and has not been re-scheduled publicly at this time. It is tentatively scheduled for some time in mid-November.</p>			
<p>Berkshire County Education Task Force</p>	<p>The task force's next meeting will be on Saturday, 9/22. At that meeting they will prepare a presentation for the MASC Division VI Legislative Forum which</p>			



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	will take place at Lee Middle/High School on 10/1. Discussion regarding the MASC/MASS Joint Conference in November in Hyannis. C. Greene will be attending as the Division VI Chair. R. DiLego also plans to attend. A. Terranova is considering attending as well. Discussion: Regarding the vision of the task force and if they still envision one District for the county.			
Pittsfield School Committee	Pittsfield School Committee requested for partnership re; State Budget Advocacy: J. Bergeron reviewed the letters that we received from the PPS School Committee and gave information on the subjects outlined in the letter. Discussion: The committee discussed the resolutions listed in the letter, deficits in the Foundation Budget and the entire budgeting process. D. Caplinger asked if C. Greene had any idea if C. Greene had any feedback on this in her role with MASC. C. Green spoke to that question and moved to endorse the resolutions outlined in the letter from Pittsfield Public School Committee. SECONDED by S. Miller. Discussion regarding adding resolutions for Rural School Funding and Chapter 71 Transportation Aide. VOTE: 7-0-0.			
Announcements / Upcoming Events of Interest	Lynn Lyons will speak at MGRS on 10/25 6:30. She will speak on Anxiety and Depression			
Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair within 48 Hours of Meeting	None			
Upcoming Meetings	Thursday, October 11, 2018 at 6 PM. MOTION by R. DiLego, SECONDED by D. Caplinger to revise the start time of all meetings on the 18-19 Master Calendar to begin at 6:00 PM. VOTE: 4-1-2. MOTION PASSES.			
Move to Executive Session	Move to go into Executive Session with intent to return to Open Session per MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the school committee and the Chair so declares. Unanimous Roll Call Vote. Executive Session Entered at 9PM. The committee returned to Open Session at 10:28PM.	DiLego	Greene	7-0-0



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<p>Negotiating Subcommittee Updates / Communications</p>	<p>C. Dodig read a statement on behalf of the Negotiations Subcommittee. In the statement, Dodig spoke to the value the committee places on the staff within the District. He complimented the members of the Unions that have come to the table to negotiate. C. Dodig stated that all contracts needed to be re-negotiated based on the regionalization that took effect on July 1. Due to the regionalization, the former contracts are no longer valid. C. Dodig stated the negotiations committee has offered a salary increase that on average would increase teacher wages by approximately 2.89%. C. Dodig explained further regarding the actions that the negotiations subcommittee has taken to reach an overall settlement on a new contract. C. Dodig stated that if it is the position of the negotiating staff members to make all proposals made available to the public, the committee is willing to do so. A full copy of the statement was submitted to the District office to become part of the public record.</p>			
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>MOTION to adjourn at 10:38 PM</p>	<p>Greene</p>	<p>DiLego</p>	<p>7-0-0</p>

Respectfully Submitted,
 Jonathan Nopper
 Mount Greylock Minutes Recorder