SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Madison Public Schools
Board of Education Regular Meeting
January 4, 2022
7:30 PM
Polson Library & Remote

MEETING MINUTES

Full documentation of these proceedings can be found through on demand video located in the Meetings/Minutes section of the district website

1. Call to Order / Attendance

The public meeting of the Madison Board of Education was called to order by Chair Seth Klaskin at 7:32 p.m. Mr. Klaskin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Seth Klaskin, Galen Cawley, Emily Rosenthal, Diane Infantine-Vyce, Steve Pynn, Maureen Lewis, Mary Ann Connelly, Jen Gordon, Cathy Miller.

Also present: Craig Cooke, Ph.D., Superintendent; Gail Dahling-Hench, Assistant Superintendent; Stacy Nobitz, Finance Director; Elizabeth Battaglia, Sped Director; Art Sickle, Director of Admin Services; Heather Dobson, Director of Human Resources; Bill McMinn, Facilities Director; Anthony R. Salutari, Jr., DHHS Principal; Brian Bodner, DHHS Assistant Principal; Melanie Whitcher; Assistant Principal; Kathryn Hart, Polson Principal; Martha Curran, Polson Assistant Principal; Becky Frost, Jeffrey Principal; Kelly Spooner, Ryerson Principal.

2. School / Community Session
2.1. Public Participation

Thirteen members of the public expressed their concerns about mask requirements, desk shields, quarantine guidelines and vaccinations. Comments can be heard in their entirety on the meeting recording posted on the district website.

3. Board of Education Student Representative Report
Isabelle Vagell and Lucy Fritzinger

Isabelle is attending the first ski team practice and is not in attendance this evening. Lucy provided the following report. In an effort to keep school open, Wellness Wednesday is currently paused and will be reviewed weekly. Chorus, orchestra and jazz all performed last week in front of an audience as opposed to the recordings of last year. People have been wearing their masks throughout the school and we've experienced a relatively seamless return after the holidays. Underclassmen will start the scheduling process for the 2022 school year within the next few weeks. School counselors will be meeting with us toward the end of the month to discuss the college application process. Some sporting events were cancelled due to COVID and efforts will be made to reschedule later in the season. UConn AP Physics exam is tomorrow and other UCONN courses are finishing up in the next few weeks.

Lucy expressed her appreciation for the efforts being made to keep students in school. Although masks can be a distraction, it is important to note they are helping to keep us in attendance.

4. Superintendent's Report
Craig A. Cooke, Ph.D.

Statement from Seth Klaskin, Board Chair
One of the primary responsibilities of a Board of Education under Connecticut law is to provide adequate facilities to support educational programming in town. The Madison Board of Education has long sought to balance community interests at large against the need to provide adequate facilities. Over time, Madison has utilized modular classroom construction to address population growth, while occasionally putting off needed maintenance in lean times, such as through the Great Recession. This give-and-take between educational facility needs and property tax pressures has taken a toll on our facilities over time. Delayed maintenance results in more expensive maintenance and so, over time, we find ourselves in need of expensive repairs, replacement, and upkeep of schools.

The Board took up facilities studies in earnest years ago. Years of study resulted in the recognition that many of our aging facilities are no longer ideal for modern educational use, both in the way education is delivered today, and in the deficiencies our buildings present as modern educational spaces. For example, older schools do not provide appropriate spaces for differentiated learning, where students are broken out according to whether they require additional assistance with a given unit of work, or whether they could use enrichment in an area where they excel. Several of our schools were (and still are) operating with inadequate air quality, with modular classrooms that are a decade or more past their useful life expectancy, or with honeycomb pod construction that was a cool experiment in the Seventies but is antithetical to modern education. Several lacked or lack adequate facilities to host music and art lessons in their own spaces, and teachers have been crammed on stages and in closets to run photocopies.

The Board contracted with professional consultants over a term of years to study the state of our physical facilities, the deficiencies and needs, and the opportunities for improvement. In recent years we have invested millions of dollars in Brown School to revitalize the building and grounds. In 2016 the Board undertook a project to gather input from the public in order to formulate a plan for construction and renovation of schools. The ultimate plan included demolishing Ryerson Elementary and replacing it with a new elementary school on the adjacent field, while renovating Jeffrey Elementary as new, and closing our oldest building, Island Avenue Elementary School. Significantly, that plan was ultimately defeated at referendum. Even more significantly, the plan for a new elementary school on the Ryerson campus was defeated soundly in Voting District 2 up north.

In the midst of persistent declining enrollment, the Board subsequently voted to decommission Island Avenue School. That move eliminated a substantial maintenance liability, reduced our operating budget by a basis of approximately $800,000, and freed up the property for development or other use. That property has since netted the town a half-million dollars each year in lease revenue, proving to be a fiscally sound move. Nevertheless, families in the southernmost elementary district in town lost their neighborhood school in the bargain. The subsequent redistricting adversely impacted Jeffrey Elementary families in the middle of town, as well, causing additional transition. The current plan restores equity under the circumstances.

Since the closure of Island Avenue, we have continued our studies, including the formalization of a Ten Year Facilities Maintenance Plan. The Ten Year Plan was developed by our Facilities Director, Bill McMinn, with the support of a reputable consultant, Colliers International, and is available online. The deep study revealed that our current building stock will require over $100 Million in repairs and maintenance over the next ten years. For perspective, it is important to note that, at the end of that decade, we would still be left to start the maintenance plan all over again, with buildings even ten years older. And those buildings would still be inadequate for modern educational needs.

It is important to understand what brought us to the current School Renewal Plan because the history addresses some of the concerns that citizens have raised. We tried to build a new elementary school adjacent to Ryerson and that plan was blocked at referendum, *largely by voters in the northern district*. While the plan sites a new elementary school adjacent to our central campus, the folks down south lost *their* neighborhood elementary school and Jeffrey Elementary is in dire need of expensive work or replacement. Brown School has good bones and has been recently refurbished itself, to the tune of millions of dollars. While our plan calls for a *new* elementary school at the Mungertown Janssen property, the Brown Elementary School will have superior facilities, including a huge gym, a beautiful auditorium with a stage, and dedicated art and music rooms.

An earlier plan called for the construction of a district-wide elementary school on the central campus but the Tri-Board commission heard the concerns of the northern residents and devised this equitable plan to keep a neighborhood school for our youngest learners at the Ryerson campus. The town can't afford *two new* elementary schools, but the current plan is a very thoughtful response to what the voters told us at Referendum in 2017. What's more, the town certainly can't afford the alternative, which is a $100 million plan that does not move the ball forward, at all, in terms of modern educational spaces.

I encourage folks to take in the upcoming presentation with the foregoing context in mind. The Board of Education and the Tri-Board commission have worked hard to develop an excellent plan that addresses the concerns of all stakeholders, not the least of which is the taxpayer. It is a strong plan that will improve education, improve green infrastructure and energy use, save the town untold money over time, and improve property values. To be sure, taxes will go up in order to accommodate the Plan for Renewal, but the increases will peak and then diminish over time, as the temporary bonding commitment is paid off. Taxes would need to go up on a more permanent basis to keep up with the $100M Maintenance Plan, which would be covered largely by annual budgetary dollars through the CIP process, instead of temporary low-interest bonds. The nonpartisan support of the Tri-Board commission over the past three years speaks volumes about the strength of this plan. The Board of Education commends this plan to you for your strongest consideration. Thank you.

Dr. Cooke gave a presentation on the School Renewal Plan, as well as the 2022-2023 Budget. The proposed budget reflects a 1.72% increase over the current year budget. Budget assumptions were shared. The Board will review and discuss the budget during upcoming budget workshop meetings.

Dr. Cooke provided an update regarding the new quarantine/testing guidance, noting on January 4 the district updated its policies on testing, quarantine and isolation to align with the policies of the Centers for Disease Control and the CT Department of Public Health.

5. Board Member Comments

Chair Klaskin provided the following: Mary Ann Connelly has been appointed the board's liaison to the Town Ad Hoc Cannabis Committee, which will be making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Emily Rosenthal has been appointed as the board's liaison to the Town Ad Hoc American Rescue Plan Act Funding Committee, which will be making recommendations to the Boards of Selectmen and Finance regarding the use of federal funds made available to the Town under the American Rescue Plan.

Comments can be heard in their entirety on the meeting recording posted on the district website.

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

Comments can be heard in their entirety on the meeting recording posted on the district website.

7. Board of Selectmen Liaison
Scott Murphy

Mr. Murphy not in attendance this evening.

8. Consent Agenda (Ref. Bylaw #9540.2 and #9540.8)

8.1. Line Item Transfers as of January 4, 2022
8.2. Budget Expenditures as of January 4, 2022

9. Action Item: Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

MOTION: By Rosenthal, seconded by Cawley to approve the Consent Agenda.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

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

10.1. Curriculum and Student Development
Members: Steve Pynn, Chair; Catherine Miller, Jen Gordon

Carol Sullivan, Stacey Daley & Heather Persson gave a presentation regarding Illustrative Math which was introduced into the district in 2020 in grade 6. The majority of teachers have embraced this program and PD continues (with CREC) to advance understanding and implementation.

Jen Maxwell and the elementary math team addressed the updates to the math guiding document, which was first developed 8 years ago. Designing backwards from the outcomes they want to see among students. Very much aligned to the Mission statements and Action Plan and Profile of a Graduate. From these discussions developed a recognition that the instruction needed to focus more on developing a deeper conceptual understanding of mathematics and mathematical reasoning. Significant shift in approach to mathematics instruction. Showing immediate improvements from previous years in problem solving on the part of students. Eight primary outcomes/goals that all students should leave MPS with. Considerable questioning and interest from committee members in the presentation.

The Media Literacy presentation will take place at a later date.

10.2. Facilities Committee
Members: Emily Rosenthal, Chair, Steven Pynn, Galen Cawley

Mr. McMinn provided an update regarding the front entries of Polson and Brown. JLY, a company who the district has worked with previously, was chosen for Brown and KHP, a company new to us who has experience with municipal and school work, was chosen for Polson. Mr. McMinn also provided an update regarding the Polson hallway as well as facilities in general. Steven Pynn made a motion thanking the custodial and maintenance staff for the extraordinary work they have done to keep the schools open, clean and safe.

Mr. McMinn addressed a question regarding air flow patterns with the use of desk shields in the elementary school classrooms, as small multiple plexiglass shields can change the pattern of air flow. Bill reported on the study done regarding air flow, HVAC and ventilations. They did significantly increase the amount of outside air, but don't believe it has a significant impact on air flow in the entire classroom. Did not specifically look at how it impacts an individual sitting at a desk.

Mr. McMinn asked that the Facilities Committee review the traffic study for the proposed new school location. The Committee will add a meeting to the calendar for this purpose on January 18th at 5pm.

10.3. Finance Committee
Members: Calen Cawley, Chair; Diane Infantine-Vyce, Emily Rosenthal

No report – the committee has not met. Next meeting scheduled for January 18, 2022.

10.4. Personnel Committee
Members: Maureen Lewis, Chair; Catherine Miller, Mary Ann Connelly

No report – the committee has not met.

10.5. Policy Committee
Members: Diane Infantine-Vyce, Chair; Maureen Lewis, Jen Gordon

No report – the committee has not met. Diane Infantine-Vyce provided a brief summary of the policies included on tonight's agenda for review and approval.

10.6. LEARN Liaison
Mary Ann Connelly

No report.

11. Action Item: Motion to approve the 2022-2023 Budget Assumptions - *TABLED TO THE JANUARY 11, 2022 BUDGET WORKSHOP*

MOTION: By _____, seconded by _____ to approve the 2022-2023 Budget Assumptions.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS:
ABSTAIN:
MOTION CARRIED:

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Gordon to table the motion to approve the 2022-2023 Budget Assumptions to the January 11, 2022 Budget Workshop.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

12. Action Item: Motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2021 Board of Education Meeting (Ref. Bylaw #9540.9)

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Miller to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2021 Board of Education meeting as amended Item #5 to read "Referendum date of February 15, 2022".
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

13. Action Item: Motion to approve the donation of $1,650.02 from Steady Photography to the Jeffrey School

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Lewis to approve the donation of $1,650.02 from Steady Photography to the Jeffrey School.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

14. Action Item: Motion to approve the donation of $1,449.93 from Steady Photography to the Ryerson School

MOTION: By Miller, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to approve the donation of $1,449.93 from Steady Photography to the Ryerson School.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

15. Action Item: Motion to waive the 1st and 2nd readings of the following policies:
Policies are recommended to have readings waived due to minor language adjustments due to statutory changes and sunset of a committee:

- #1361: Visitors to Schools
- #5110.4: Student Discipline
- #9450: Board Committees

MOTION: By Lewis, seconded by Infantine-Vyce to waive the 1st and 2nd readings of Policies #1361, Visitors

to Schools; #5110.4, Student Discipline; #9450, Board Committees.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

16. Action Item: Motion to approve the proposed amendments to the following policies:

- #1361: Visitors to Schools
- #5110.4: Student Discipline
- #9450: Board Committees

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Miller to approve the proposed amendments to the following Policies: #1361, Visitors to Schools; #5110.4, Student Discipline; #9450, Board Committees.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

17. Action Item: Motion to waive the 1st and 2nd readings of the following policies proposed for rescission:

- #3020.2: Fiscal Year
- #3150: Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students
- #3250: Materials/Service Fees, Charges
- #3526: Energy Conservation
- #3541.1 Student Transportation Services Contractor & Equipment
- #3541.2: Student Transportation Services – Drivers
- #4000: Concepts and Roles in Personnel
- #4030: Employee's Leave of Absence
- #4031: Professional Development Days: Teacher Requested
- #4031.1: Professional Development
- #4060: Evaluation/Supervision
- #4111: Recruitment/Selection
- #4112.1: Certification
- #4112.2: Health Examinations
- #4112.4: Orientation

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Gordon to waive the 1st and 2nd readings of the following policies proposed for rescission:

- #3020.2: Fiscal Year
- #3150: Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students
- #3250: Materials/Service Fees, Charges

- #3526: Energy Conservation
- #3541.1 Student Transportation Services Contractor & Equipment
- #3541.2: Student Transportation Services – Drivers
- #4000: Concepts and Roles in Personnel
- #4030: Employee's Leave of Absence
- #4031: Professional Development Days: Teacher Requested
- #4031.1: Professional Development
- #4060: Evaluation/Supervision
- #4111: Recruitment/Selection
- #4112.1: Certification
- #4112.2: Health Examinations
- #4112.4: Orientation

AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

18. Motion to approve rescission of the following policies:

- #3020.2: Fiscal Year
- #3150: Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students
- #3250: Materials/Service Fees, Charges
- #3526: Energy Conservation
- #3541.1: Student Transportation Services Contractor & Equipment
- #3541.2: Student Transportation Services – Drivers
- #4000: Concepts and Roles in Personnel
- #4030: Employee's Leave of Absence
- #4031: Professional Development Days: Teacher Requested
- #4031.1: Professional Development
- #4060: Evaluation/Supervision
- #4111: Recruitment/Selection
- #4112.1: Certification
- #4112.2: Health Examinations
- #4112.4: Orientation

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Gordon to approve rescission of the following policies:

- #3020.2: Fiscal Year
- #3150: Medical Reimbursement for Special Education Students
- #3250: Materials/Service Fees, Charges
- #3526: Energy Conservation
- #3541.1 Student Transportation Services Contractor & Equipment
- #3541.2: Student Transportation Services – Drivers
- #4000: Concepts and Roles in Personnel
- #4030: Employee's Leave of Absence

- #4031: Professional Development Days: Teacher Requested
- #4031.1: Professional Development
- #4060: Evaluation/Supervision
- #4111: Recruitment/Selection
- #4112.1: Certification
- #4112.2: Health Examinations
- #4112.4: Orientation

AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

19. Action Item: Motion to add the following from the January 4, 2022 Facilities Committee Meeting

MOTION: By Pynn, seconded by Rosenthal to add the following motion from the January 4, 2022 Facilities Committee Meeting.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

19.a. Motion from the Facilities Committee to take action to acknowledge and thank the Madison Public Schools custodial staff for all their extraordinary work to address the additional facilities needs of our schools during these pandemic times to keep our staff and students safe and healthy. Motion by Connelly, 2nd by Gordon, approved 9-0.

20. Future Agenda Items

21. Meetings/Dates of Importance – correction noted to February Policy Committee meeting (February 15, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.)

22. Adjournment

MOTION: By Infantine-Vyce, seconded by Gordon to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 p.m.
AYES: Cawley, Connelly, Gordon, Klaskin, Lewis, Infantine-Vyce, Miller, Pynn, Rosenthal
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None
MOTION CARRIED: 9-0

The Town of Madison does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and the meeting facilities are ADA accessible. Individuals who need assistance are invited to make their needs known by contacting Paula Carabetta at 203-245-5644 or by email at carabettap@madisonct.org at least five (5) business days prior to the meeting.