

*Approved by School Committee:
April 4, 2022*

**SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 7, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT:

ASHLAND

Ed Burman
William Gainé

FRAMINGHAM

Michele Burns (Remote)
Linda Fobes (Remote)
Rick Gallagher
Sara Hamerla
Maria Martinez
AJ Mulvey (Remote)
Brandon Ward

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford
Barry Sims (Remote)

HOPKINTON

Ruth Knowles
Jaime Shepard

NATICK

Ruth Mori
Elizabeth Smith-Freedman

ALSO PRESENT:

Jonathan Evans, Superintendent-Director
Shannon Snow, Principal
Dolores Sharek, Director of Finance & Business Operations
Jack Keating, Treasurer
Karen Ward, Recording Secretary

Chairman Burman called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, we will be conducting this School Committee meeting in person with one or more members of the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School Committee participating remotely in accordance with the Attorney General's Regulations and Procedures.

All votes this evening will be taken as a roll call vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2022

Chairman Burman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 7, 2022. A request was made by a Committee member to include a summary of a statement made regarding the School Committee role in curriculum development.

MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2022 WITH THE REQUESTED STATEMENT ADDED TO THE MINUTES. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MR. GAINE ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Mask Policy (Appendix 2022-11)

Superintendent Evans provided a document with a recommendation to rescind our current Mask Policy. After discussion with legal counsel, he is recommending the Committee empower him to adjust our procedures as needed. He reported that it is important for Keefe Tech to be able to pivot if the need arises, without waiting for a public meeting. Any adjustments made would be based on regulations that apply to our district, and our public health data. We would continue to comply with federal, state and local orders that apply to our district. Superintendent Evans recommended that Keefe Tech go forward with optional masking starting Wednesday, March 9th. Superintendent Evans reported that masks will still be required in our Nurse's Office, and when members of our school community return after a COVID-19 infection, as indicated in our COVID-19 procedures. Another important part of our procedures going forward will be supporting any member of our school

community who wishes to continue wearing a mask. Assuming our School Committee approves this recommendation, we will provide a message to families and students on Tuesday with information on the mask change. Superintendent Evans said that throughout the pandemic, we have tried to take a thoughtful approach to our decision making. At this time, when there have been no in school COVID-19 infections for several weeks, he believes it is an appropriate time to join other districts in this step forward. We will continue to carefully monitor our status for the safety of our school community.

MR. GAINES MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER TO RESCIND THE MASK POLICY AND EMPOWER THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ADJUST PROCEDURES AS NEEDED. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

GUESTS AND VISITORS

We were joined by Mr. Tony Roselli, Roselli, Clark & Associates (Auditor)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- FY21 Audit Report

Mr. Roselli presented the FY21 School District Audit Report. Mr. Roselli reported that Mrs. Sharek and her team did a great job, with no audit material weaknesses. He reported cooperation from the Management and the Business Office staff for completion of the Audit. No findings were identified and the overall financial position of the District remains strong.

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Personnel Activity (Appendix 2022-12)

Superintendent Evans provided two advisory board applications for the Legal & Protective Services Program for review of the Committee.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD, TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD APPLICANTS. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- School Choice Decision (Appendix 2022-13)

Members received a memorandum regarding Superintendent Evans' recommendation not to participate in the School Choice Program for the 2022-2023 school year. Superintendent Evans explained that school choice would be a very unpopular decision with our member municipalities that are paying substantially more, considering we have a waitlist for in district students. There will be a public hearing on School Choice at the April meeting.

- Advisory Board Report (Appendix 2022-14)

Superintendent Evans provided a document summarizing items presented for funding at the General Advisory Committee Meeting held on February 3, 2022. Superintendent Evans reported that a link was provided to members if they chose to attend the remote meeting. He said this is a meeting where members could get an understanding of the needs of the different career and technical programs. Superintendent Evans said approximately one third of the recommendations are already in process through budgeted dollars or from Perkins funding. Superintendent Evans reported Superintendents had a call with the Commissioner of Education earlier today. He said there was some discussion that the state may have additional funds for equipment grants to help with some of these requests, which we will apply for should they become available. Superintendent Evans reported that although not all requests can be fulfilled, during the budget season, all of these requests are reviewed by the administrative team, and we consider the needs of the students and the programs every step of the way.

- Facility Update

Superintendent Evans reviewed some facility updates that are being researched. He said we are at the beginning phases of gathering information. Superintendent Evans said plans are in place to use ESSER funding to expand academic classroom space with a four classroom modular structure. Superintendent Evans reported plans to pursue the start of a new Chapter 74 HVAC Program in the 2022-2023 school year. He reported that the process of applying for a Massachusetts Skills Capital Grant is in the beginning stages. He said there are overlapping timeframes between program approval and grant applications, but he is confident we will do our best to take advantages of all funding avenues. Superintendent Evans reported that, as indicated in the 2021-2022 District Improvement Plan (DIP), ESSER Funding was used to conduct a major engineering review of the overall facility. This report is still in draft form, but there is an indication that, while the building has been well maintained for over 50 years, improvements and

expansion are indicated for future use. Superintendent Evans reported that the recent engineering report determined that the pool is at the end of its lifespan. Significant repairs would be needed to reopen after this year. The cost of this, excluding locker rooms, architect fees and project management would be well over \$5 million. Superintendent Evans reported that viability of such a project is part of a larger building consideration. There is a concern that the funding required to repair the pool would require that the whole building become ADA compliant by current standards. Superintendent Evans reported that it is the administrations intention to submit a Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). If approved into the MSBA Program, a significant amount of cost would be covered, but the remainder would be dependent on approval from our communities. Superintendent Evans said there is need for us to think strategically as we go forward. Superintendent Evans reported that many stakeholders, particularly faculty, will be asked for input.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET

Chairman Burman requested a motion to open the public hearing and discussion of the FY23 Budget.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO BEGIN THE PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY23 BUDGET. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Committee.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

- Vote FY23 Budget (Appendix 2022-15)

Superintendent Evans asked for a motion to approve the FY23 Budget for Keefe Regional Technical School in the amount of \$23,271,488 or a 6.22% increase over FY22.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO APPROVE THE FY23 BUDGET OF \$23,271,488, AN INCREASE OF 6.22% OVER FY22. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR.

HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Vote Determination of District Assessment FY23 (Appendix 2022-16)

Members received the Summary of Assessments for the five member municipalities for a total of \$14,638,942. Superintendent Evans reviewed the specific changes in enrollment and assessments between FY22 and FY23. Superintendent Evans provided a list of the actual assessments for each of our member municipalities for the approval of the Committee. Superintendent Evans reported that another vote on the Budget, with all the same numbers and information, will likely need to take place at the April meeting to include the utilization of our Excess and Deficiency (E&D) because our E&D is waiting to be certified. Superintendent Evans reported that he was very pleased that the significant increase in State Aid, because of increased enrollment, paired with an aggressive approach to offsetting assessments, led to a smaller overall assessment increase than expected.

MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER TO APPROVE THE DETERMINATION OF DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS FOR FY23 TOTALLING \$14,638,942. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report (Appendix 2022-17)

Members received the Non-Salary Expenditure Report along with some highlights. Mrs. Sharek reported that we have spent 56.2% of the FY22 Budget.

- Budget Transfer (Appendix 2022-18)

Mrs. Sharek requested authorization to transfer funds from areas of surplus to allow the District to meet financial obligations.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS,

MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

COMMUNICATION

- Superintendent Evans reported that the Department of Education's Special Education Determination under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was received. He applauded Mr. Dolan and the Special Education Team for earning 32 out of 32 possible points on the rubric, or 100%.

- Superintendent Evans informed the School Committee that our CTE Director, Anthony McIntosh, was recently chosen to be the next Superintendent of the Shawsheen Valley Technical School District.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

ADJOURNMENT

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

The next meeting is April 4, 2022
The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting – March 7, 2022

ACTION SHEET

- MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2022 WITH THE REQUESTED STATEMENT ADDED TO THE MINUTES. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; MR. GAINE ABSTAINED. THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
- MR. GAINE MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER TO RESCIND THE MASK POLICY AND EMPOWER THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ADJUST PROCEDURES AS NEEDED. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINE, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
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- SUPERINTENDENT EVANS ASKED FOR A MOTION TO APPROVE THE FY23 BUDGET FOR KEEFE REGIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL IN THE AMOUNT OF \$23,271,488 OR A 6.22% INCREASE OVER FY22. MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN TO APPROVE THE FY23 BUDGET OF \$23,271,488. MRS. BURNS, MRS. COMMERFORD, DR. HAMERLA, MRS. FOBES, MR. GAINES, MR. GALLAGHER, MRS. KNOWLES, MRS. MARTINEZ, MRS. MORI, MR. MULVEY, MRS. SHEPARD, MR. SIMS, MS. SMITH-FREEDMAN, MR. WARD, AND MR. BURMAN VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.
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