

**2021 Annual Report
South Middlesex Regional
Vocational Technical School
Committee
(Keefe Regional Technical School)**

This annual report is prepared by Superintendent /Director, Jonathan Evans, and composed on behalf of the members of the School Committee of the **South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District** and submitted after review and approval by the full Committee in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement among the City of Framingham and Towns of Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton and Natick.

This report reviews the major items with which the Committee was concerned during the year. It is a representative account of matters solely within the policy making authority of the Committee and also of matters which the Superintendent/Director brought before the Committee for information and consultation. For greater detail and discussion, the reader should read the extended minutes of Committee meetings and the attachments thereto which are available on the district website.

In addition to a public high school, the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District provides continuing education opportunities for adults through the Keefe at Night program as well as Summer Discover, a summer program for area youth.

The Committee reorganized on June 21, 2021 with officers elected unanimously to the following positions:

Chair: Edward Burman (Ashland)

Vice-Chair: Sarah Commerford
(Holliston)

Secretary: Elizabeth Smith-Freedman
(Natick)

Assistant Treasurer: Barry Sims
(Holliston)

Staff members working on behalf of the District and School Committee are Karen Ward, **Recording Secretary** and Jack Keating, **Treasurer**.

The balance of this report presents a summary of the discussions and actions of the Committee on a number of the important matters brought before the Committee for advice or action.

Community Engagement

While limited by the pandemic, staff and students of Keefe Regional Technical School participated in a number of community projects throughout the school district member municipalities. Examples of these activities include:

Electrical

Framingham Veterans Park – Install service and underground lighting.

Natick AMVEITS – Variety of electrical upgrades for facility.

Town of Ashland – Install service and all wiring at the Ashland Town Forest storage building.

Framingham Park & Recreation – Miscellaneous repairs including switches, time clocks, and installing lighting.

Horticulture

Natick Community Organic Farm -

Completed work on a weekly basis

Framingham Park & Recreation – Assistance with cleanups and maintenance projects.

After re-opening, the Keefe Regional Technical School swimming pool was

used by the Framingham Parks & Recreation Department, as well as all five municipalities' swim teams.

Administration

In 2021, Jonathan Evans completed his eighth year in the role of Superintendent Director, with 26 years of service to the district.

A majority of focus in 2021 continued to be response to the pandemic and plans for re-opening. These efforts required significant adjustments to the budget in order to meet the needs of our students during the pandemic.

The School Committee completed its periodic evaluation of the Superintendent using the DESE rubric, and found a rating of Proficient Approaching Exemplary for Standard I – Instructional Leadership, a rating of Proficient Approaching Exemplary for Standard II – Management and Operations, a rating of Proficient Approaching Exemplary for Standard III – Family and Community Engagement, a rating of Proficient Approaching Exemplary for Standard IV – Professional Culture. The Overall rating recommended by the Superintendent Evaluation Sub-Committee is Proficient Approaching Exemplary. The complete record of this evaluation is a public document that will be available at the South Middlesex Regional School District Superintendent's Office.

School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan for the 2021-2022 school year includes the following objectives: 1) Increase student awareness surrounding programs that are non-traditional by gender identity, 2) Expand our student response team to include a student intervention team, as

well as a broader support service team, 3) Implement strategic ways to build back some of the student involvement that was lost this past year, with a focus on celebrating student achievements, engagement in existing student activities, positive decision-making, and unity, 4) Begin a multi-year goal specific to enhancing cultural diversity, as seen through the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching practices. Year 1 represents a full audit the pre-existing curriculum, to assess the current status, specific to creating a culturally responsive curriculum for all students, as well as to develop a multi-year action plan to implement the goals.

The Professional Development Program consists of a series of workshops led by Dr. Kalise Wornum focused cultural proficiency. Goals of the Professional Development included: 1) Gaining a clear understanding of the definition and theory of cultural proficiency while learning practical classroom applications, 2) Learning proven strategies to counter the negative effects of micro-aggressions, modern forms of racism, and implicit bias, 3) Gaining an understanding of what it means to be a culturally proficient teacher, leader, supervisor, coach, etc., 4) Opportunity to raise questions and discuss challenges in real time.

The opening of school for teachers featured a motivational presentation by Richard Antoine White, Principal Tubist. Dr. White spoke to faculty and staffs about the power of overcoming, resilience, and determination.

In the second half of the school year, teachers will attend professional development on Secondary Traumatic Stress: Understanding the Impact on Professionals in Trauma-Exposed Workplaces, and with the NANProject,

a nonprofit that promotes mental health awareness and suicide prevention programs.

Handbook

With review by the School Council, updates to the Handbook were made.

A section on Cafeteria Services was updated to include free breakfast and lunch for all students, as well as differentiation between scheduled breakfast times for academic and vocational students. The number of credits needed by the end of Junior Year was updated to 36.25 suggested credits. The name of SADD was also updated.

The Budget Process

2021 continued to be a challenging year for all. The District adjusted the budget to meet the state guidelines pertaining to the pandemic issues that were faced. The District was able to utilize grant funding totaling \$310,321, through the CARES Act / Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER I) and the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CvRF) to purchase items such as personal protective equipment and the rental of tents for utilizing outdoor space for students and staff. The District was also able to purchase Chromebooks for students.

In 2021, the Superintendent continued the practice of communicating early in the budget process with the financial officers of the member municipalities to develop mutual awareness of both municipal budget constraints and the efforts of the Committee to manage the school efficiently and effectively while recognizing those limitations. The Committee continued to consider

reductions in the preliminary budget and the budget of \$21,909,422 as submitted to the member municipalities for FY22 was approved by all.

In December 2021, the Budget Sub-Committee members Ed Burman, Linda Fobes, Rick Gallagher, Jaime Shepard, Elizabeth Smith-Freedman and Barry Sims began the FY23 budget development process.

Auditor's Report

The annual audit by the independent accounting firm of Roselli, Clark & Associates is in the process of preparing the financial statements for committee review. It is expected that the audit report that calculates our energy project will meet the stipulated guarantee benchmarks for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Enrollment, Recruiting and Student Retention

Keefe Regional Technical School is a school of application. Maintaining a healthy enrollment of students for our day school operation is essential for our overall operational success. The Superintendent has indicated that he believes that the quality and rigor of our school programs and the safety and culture of our school environment will lead to our success in attracting students and their families to Keefe Regional Technical School. The Superintendent has emphasized that the administration, faculty and support staff must work together to ensure that Keefe Regional Technical School continues to be recognized by our community as a career and technical school of high quality.

In the fall of 2020, the District's recruitment efforts needed to pivot to virtual events in response to the pandemic. With the start of the 2021 - 2022 school year, we were able to host our 8th grade showcase days on campus, with one district participating in a virtual presentation. Our Career Night Open House was also back to being an in-person event and attracted an excellent turnout of prospective students and their families. We continue to appreciate the relationships we have with our sending communities and the opportunities we can provide for students to access career and technical education.

We are pleased to report the enrollment on October 1, 2021 was 846 students which reflects a significant increase in enrollment.

Buildings and Grounds

Keefe Regional Technical School has been occupied continuously since September 1973. The facility is used not only during the school day and year but also evenings, weekends, and during the summer months.

Facility upgrades that were completed in 2021 include installation of exterior keyless access control system, replacement/upgrade of auditorium stage lighting system, replacement/upgrade of telephone system, installation of a dust collection system in Metals Technology CTE area, replacement of oven units in student cafeteria kitchen, replacement/upgrade of building generator, ten year overhaul of Broad chiller AC unit, purchase of automated boiler control system for two building boilers, expansion of video surveillance system, replacement of fork truck and scissor lift platform unit, replacement of

carpeting in common areas, installation of perimeter privacy fence, replacement of boiler in greenhouse, reconfiguring various classrooms and common areas to accommodate increased student enrollment, plumbing and electrical upgrades, replacement of custodial equipment, and the purchase of two 14 passenger minibuses.

Student Achievement

Keefe Tech proudly hosted a Summer Acceleration Academy for grade 10 students this past August. Students voluntarily participated in a week-long session to address and remediate learning loss from COVID-19, specific to mathematics. We were very fortunate to have secured grant funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to develop this interactive and highly engaging event for students.

Additionally, Keefe Tech received notification from both DESE and College Board regarding student participation and results from ACCESS, MCAS, and AP exams, respectively. ACCESS scores support strong growth in language proficiency from our ESL students. A total of 25 students demonstrated English language proficiency and tested out of the ELS Program. Keefe Tech also hosted 76 AP exams, representative of six disciplines for students in grades 11 and 12. Student "mean scores" from the AP exams showed added growth in four of the six content areas as compared to the prior school year.

The Massachusetts SkillsUSA District Three Leadership and Skills Conference was held remotely on February 24, 2021. Keefe Tech students earned a total of 42 medals at the District Conference: 24 gold, 11 silver, and 7 bronze. Keefe Tech

sent 34 students to the Massachusetts SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference. One student earned a bronze medal in Automotive Service Technology at the event.

Four Horticulture and Landscape Management students qualified for the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) Conference based on their performance at the state level. All four students and their advisors traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana to compete in the 2021 National Conference Agricultural Sales event. The team earned a bronze medal in their category.

The Business Professional of America State Competition was held virtually and Keefe Tech took home 11 gold medals, 6 silver medals, and 9 bronze medals. A group of Keefe Tech students participated in the Virtual National Team Competition and placed third overall in the country.

General Advisory Board

The General Advisory Committee meeting for the 2020-2021 school year was held remotely on Thursday, March 18, 2021. All of the committee members were updated about Perkins purchases for the year, student competitions, cooperative education placements, and remote learning. Each department was allocated time to present budget and equipment requests as part of the meeting.

The General Advisory Committee meeting for the 2020-2021 school year was held remotely on Thursday, March 18, 2021. All of the committee members were updated about Perkins purchases for the year, student competitions, cooperative education placements, and remote learning. Each department was

allocated time to present budget and equipment requests as part of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Evans
Superintendent-Director

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ASHLAND

Edward Burman - Chairman
William N. Gaine, Jr.

FRAMINGHAM

Michele Burns
James Comeau
Linda Fobes
Sara Hamerla
Maria Martinez
A.J. Mulvey
Rick Gallagher
Brandon Ward

HOPKINTON

Ruth Knowles
Jaime Shepard

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford
Barry Sims

NATICK

Ruth Mori
Elizabeth Smith-Freedman