

*Approved by School Committee:
March 6, 2023*

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

February 6, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

ASHLAND

Ed Burman

FRAMINGHAM

Michele Burns

Linda Fobes

Rick Gallagher

Sara Hamerla

Brandon Ward

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford

Barry Sims

HOPKINTON

Jaime Shepard

NATICK

Ruth Mori

ALSO PRESENT:

Jonathan Evans, Superintendent-Director

Shannon Snow, Principal

Dolores Sharek, Director of Finance & Business Operations

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.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2023

Chairman Burman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 9, 2023.

MRS. COMMERFORD MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. BURNS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 9, 2023. EIGHT MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; TWO MEMBERS ABSTAINED. THE MOTION PASSED.

GUESTS AND VISITORS

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Superintendent Evaluation Sub-Committee Update

Mrs. Commerford, Chair of the Superintendent Evaluation Sub-Committee, informed Committee members that the sub-committee met this evening just prior to the full committee meeting. She reported sub-committee members received a mid-year review of the Superintendent's evaluation process. Chairperson Commerford reported that each member of the sub-committee will be reviewing the Standards binder and the District Improvement Plan binder. Once reviewed by all sub-committee members, binders will be made available to any member of the full Committee who wishes to review them. The sub-committee will reconvene in the spring and they will make a recommendation to the full Committee for the Superintendent's evaluation rating at either the May or June meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Superintendent Evans reminded Committee members that at the next meeting we will be having the Public Hearing on our Budget. He reminded members how important it is to attend this meeting, and if there is any conflict, he asks that you inform him as soon as possible. Superintendent Evans also invited Committee members, after the meeting, to join him for a tour of the new HVAC/R program space.

- CTE Selection (Appendix 2023-10)

Superintendent Evans reported this is a very exciting time for both students and staff. The Committee received a document showing what the enrollment is in each career and technical program. Students are given their first choice as long as there is room in the program. If the program is at full capacity, students are placed on a wait list and placed in their second choice program. Superintendent Evans said there is real interest in the building and construction trades, validating the decision to add HVAC/R to our program offerings. Superintendent Evans said we will work with students and make every effort to get students where they would like to be. Superintendent Evans reported that substantially less students are on a waiting list for a CTE program when compared to the prior year. Superintendent Evans said for the shops that are under capacity, there are always encouragement and opportunities to visit sister schools that may have a robust program to see examples of what can be implemented here to increase enrollment in their programs.

- Personnel Activity (Appendix 2023-11)

Superintendent Evans provided an Application for the Health Careers Advisory Board for review of the Committee. MRS. FOBES MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. GALLAGHER, TO APPROVE THE ADVISORY BOARD APPLICANT. TEN MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Municipal Meeting Update

Superintendent Evans reported that after the January meeting, where the Committee voted to approve the establishment of a Capital Stabilization Account, we now need a vote of our five member communities in order to create this account. Superintendent Evans reported that he sent out a letter to inform our five communities of this request to add to the spring town warrants and to inform the Mayor and City Council. He reported that he got some feedback, and has been invited present at the Framingham Finance Committee Meeting on February 16th. Superintendent Evans reported that he is essentially asking to have an account with a zero balance in FY24 and will plan to fund the account during the FY25 Budget season, in order to have funds for our aging building, and in order to potentially have some funds available as we apply to get into the pipeline for an MSBA project. Superintendent Evans reported that he will update the Committee when he has dates for future presentations with our Communities in the near future.

- Westborough Membership in ACCEPT Collaborative (Appendix 2023-12)

Superintendent Evans provided Committee members with a letter from ACCEPT Education Collaborative with a request from the Westborough Public School to be allowed to become part of the ACCEPT Education Collaborative. In order for this to happen all the school committees whose district are part of ACCEPT Education Collaborative need to take a vote as to if they are in favor of this request. MR. BURMAN MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. FOBES, TO APPROVE AN AMENDMENT TO THE ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE AGREEMENT TO ALLOW THE WESTOBROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ACCEPT EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE. TEN MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

- Budget Adjustment FY24/Budget Update (Appendix 2023-13)

Superintendent Evans provided Committee members with a document showing some changes/reductions he would like made to the FY24 Preliminary Budget. Superintendent Evans said he believes that one of the positions that was added in the Preliminary Budget can be eliminated. This is the position of an elective teacher. He believes we will be able to cover this position with current staff. Superintendent Evans said this would reduce the Preliminary Budget by \$65,000. Superintendent Evans reported that because of the process that we need to follow in order to request and fund a Stabilization Account, he is requesting that for the FY24 Budget season we request the establishment of the Capital Stabilization Account and have a zero balance. He is requesting the \$350,000 that was originally in the FY24 Preliminary Budget for the Capital Stabilization Account, be adjusted to increase the Extraordinary Maintenance Account by \$150,000 in the FY24 Preliminary Budget, in order to have funds for our aging building. He reported that starting in the FY25 Budget season, he will request funding for the Capital Stabilization Account. He said this change is being made because of the process we need to go through in order to get the approval of our five communities for the Capital Stabilization Account through towns/city approval, which will not happen before the Public Hearing on our Budget, therefore we would not be able to fund the Capital Stabilization Account in our FY24 Budget, but would be able to protect our aging building by increasing the Extraordinary Maintenance Account. He said historically, the municipal meetings start after the Final Budget gets approval from the Committee, and then we start presenting to our member communities. Superintendent Evans said there is still work to be done to target areas where reductions may be able to be made, but it's possible we have made as

many adjustments as possible. He said he will bring all this information to the March meeting for your review and approval. MR. SIMS MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MR. BURMAN TO ADJUST THE FY24 PRELIMINARY BUDGET TO \$24,159,019, AN INCREASE OF \$887,531, OR A 3.81% INCREASE OVER FY23. TEN MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

- Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report (Appendix 2023-14)

Members received the Non-Salary Financial Expenditure Report along with some highlights. Mrs. Sharek reported that we are on target, currently spending nearly half of the budget. Mrs. Sharek reported she continues to review accounts nearing or exceeding budget balances and have been discussing these items with department heads. Mrs. Sharek reported the FY22 Audit is nearly complete and expect a presentation will take place next month.

- Budget Transfer (Appendix 2023-15)

Mrs. Sharek requested authorization to transfer funds from areas of surplus to allow the District to purchase science lab stools for the science lab tables that have already been purchased.

MR. GALLAGHER MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERTFORD TO APPROVE THE BUDGET TRANSFER. TEN MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

COMMUNICATION

There was no Communication

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business

NEW BUSINESS

- Superintendent Evans reported there are two items that he would like to update. He reported the hoisting situation has changed in the sense that now schools across the State are being shut down, including agricultural schools. He said he has received accolades for being a good partner with our sister schools and for advocating for our students. Superintendent Evans reported that for at least this year, until we see what happens with this issue, Keefe Tech is paying for these students to receive DOT

Physicals with a physician hired by the district as well as paying that cost of \$110 per student, as well helping them complete their application for their apprentice license and taking a test on regulations at a cost of \$75 per student. There are approximately 20 students, we will need to adjust for about a \$2,000 expense for this process. Superintendent Evans said he spoke with Representative Lewis, who is sponsoring legislation. Superintendent Evans said this has been a very frustrating process, but we are trying everything we can to fix this issue.

Superintendent Evans updated the Committee on the Modular Building Project. He said the architect has submitted plans for a permit, and that hopefully we will be going forward in the very near future.

Lastly, Superintendent Evans reported that several members asked for his thoughts on the recent article regarding vocational school admissions. Superintendent Evans reported that, while MetroWest Daily news recently reported on this issue, this statewide issue is not particularly relevant to Keefe Technical School. At Keefe Technical School we enjoy an extremely positive relationship with our sending school districts and have wonderful access to perspective students. When reviewing demographic information such as percentage of students receiving special education services, qualifying for free and reduced meals and English language learners, we see that our school has more than the aggregate of our member communities. We will continue to monitor statewide updates regarding admissions policies and practices, but we do not see a need for any adjustment for our school at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Burman asked for a motion to adjourn.

MR. SIMS MADE A MOTION SECONDED BY MRS. COMMERFORD TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. TEN MEMBERS VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION; THE VOTE IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUS.

The next meeting is March 6, 2023
The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Committee Meeting – February 6, 2022

ACTION SHEET

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