

**OLD ROCHESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
November 19, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
Marion – Mattapoisett – Rochester, Massachusetts
REGULAR MINUTES
MEETING HELD REMOTELY THROUGH ZOOM**

Members Present: Cary Humphrey, Chairperson, Heather Burke, Vice-Chairperson, Tina Rood, Joseph Pires, Margaret McSweeney, Michelle Smith, Frances Kearns, James Muse, Suzanne Tseki.

Members Absent: Tina Rood

Others Present: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools, Diana Russo, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Michael Devoll, Principal, ORR High School, Silas Coellner, Principal, ORR Jr. High School

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairperson Humphrey.

V. General

A. MCAS Resolution

Mr. Nelson expressed that at the last school committee meeting on October 21st the school committee had a discussion about MCAS during the 2020-2021 school year in light of COVID-19. Mr. Nelson expressed that as of today the administration is being told that MCAS is to plan for the continuation of the MCAS in this particular school year, he expressed that the high school has already started planning for exams later in the winter as well as in the spring. Mr. Nelson expressed that with that comes different opinions in terms of whether it's appropriate based on the priority of teaching and learning as well as the impact that COVID-19 has had on our schools, students, teachers and parents. Mr. Nelson expressed that Ms. Rood and Ms. Burke wanted to discuss a possible position from the ORR School Committee and I know the ORPEA has collaborated with them.

Ms. Burke explained that the MCAS Resolution was discussed at the last meeting and given all the issues that are happening with COVID both with logistics with getting people in and out of schools, anxiety levels and learning gaps it seemed as though the committee shared my personal feelings that this is not the right time to be administering MCAS. Ms. Burke expressed that administering the MCAS this school year would be useless and would take away take from teaching and learning which is already so limited. Ms. Burke explained that she drafted the letter and Ms. Rood also collaborated on it, she expressed that Dr. Colin Everett, President of ORPE endorsed the letter and received approval from the Educators Association. Ms. Burke explained that the next step would be to have it officially approved by the ORR School Committee and then it would be sent to our government representatives.

Ms. McSweeney fully endorsed the letter and asked how the principals felt, she expressed it was important to know how they and their staff felt about MCAS during this school year.

Mr. Devoll expressed that during a normal year yes MCAS certainly has its' positive sides, however this year is different. Mr. Devoll expressed that he has read the letter, he shared some resources that I came across from my association and affiliations and I feel comfortable that it represents the high school stance.

Mr. Coellner agreed with Mr. Devoll and expressed that one of the things he's most concerned about

is the social emotional piece for both students and staff. He expressed with the face to face time being so reduced it's just more precious and MCAS is a very time consuming endeavor and agrees with the letter and he feels it captures the thoughts of his staff.

Motion to approve the MCAS Resolution as presented

MOTION by Ms. Tseki

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Smith

ROLL CALL

8:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeny; yes, Smith; yes, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki)

Ms. Burke thanked Ms. Russo for her work on the letter. Mr. Humphrey expressed gratitude to Ms. Russo and also to Ms. Burke and Ms. Rood for their work on the letter.

OPEN COMMENTS:

Ms. Burke expressed that she appreciates all the hard work all the administrators are doing, and she's knows that there is a lot on everyone's plate right now, however she did get a little concerned this week that we started putting out budget numbers in terms of capital planning and the school committee had not seen them, she expressed a 10 year capital plan was shared with the Marion Finance Committee and she felt the process was a little different than before, she expressed she just wanted to touch base and see when some of these sub-committee meetings would be scheduled, such as budget and facilities.

Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Burke for her comment and expressed that at the Joint School Committee meeting at 6:30 Mr. Barber would address the committee. Mr. Nelson expressed that in the School Committee drive there was a timeline for the FY22 budget. Mr. Nelson also reported that Mr. Barber will report on the FY20 closing status, the FY21 current status.

Humphrey reviewed future timeline and stated the next meeting is scheduled for December 9th at 6:30 p.m. and the next Joint School Committee is scheduled for today at 6:30.

Motion to adjourn at 6:15 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Smith

MOTION Seconded by Mr. Muse

9:0 (Humphrey; yes, Burke; yes, Rood; yes, Pires; yes, McSweeny; yes, Smith; yes, Kearns; yes, Muse; yes, Tseki)

Submitted by Diana Russo