

**MARION SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Marion, Massachusetts**

**January 19, 2021**

**BY: VIRTUALLY - ZOOM LINK**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Regular meeting of the Marion School Committee was held on Tuesday - January 19, 2021 and called to order by Chairperson Michelle Smith at 6:32pm.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Smith, Chairperson; April Rios, Vice-Chair; Jody Dickerson; Mary Beauregard; and Nichole Daniel**

**OTHERS PRESENT: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools; Jannell Pearson-Campbell - Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning; Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services; Howard Barber - Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations; Marla Sirois, Principal, Sippican School; Sean Persico, Assistant Principal, Sippican School, teachers; staff; parents; members of the press and public; and, Toni Bailey, Recording Secretary**

**Chairperson, Michelle Smith, stated in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, the Agenda has been set, the meeting is being video-taped, and unless there are any emergencies that need to be added, the Agenda will be followed as outlined.**

**MEETING TO ORDER**

**I. Approval of Minutes:**

**A. Minutes**

**1. Regular Meeting Minutes - December 2, 2020**

**MOTION:** by Nichole Daniel to accept the meeting minutes of December 2, 2020 as written

**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson

**OPPOSED:** None

**MOTION PASSED - 5:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios - Yes; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Yes; Nichole Daniel - Yes**

**2. Executive Session Minutes - December 2, 2020 (will be approved during Executive Session)**

**3. Budget Sub-Committee Minutes - November 30, 2020**

**MOTION:** by Michelle Smith to accept the Budget Sub-Committee meeting minutes of November 30, 2020 as written

**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson

**OPPOSED:** None

**ABSTAINED:** April Rios  
Mary Beauregard  
Nichole Daniel

**MOTION PASSED - 2:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios - Abstained; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Abstained; Nichole Daniel - Abstained**

**Budget Sub-Committee Minutes - December 7, 2020**

**MOTION:** by Michelle Smith to accept the Budget Sub-Committee meeting minutes of December 7, 2020 as written

**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson

**OPPOSED:** None

**ABSTAINED:** April Rios  
Mary Beauregard  
Nichole Daniel

**MOTION PASSED - 2:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios - Abstained; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Abstained; Nichole Daniel - Abstained**

**Budget Sub-Committee Minutes - December 16, 2020**

**MOTION:** by Michelle Smith to accept the Budget Sub-Committee meeting minutes of December 16, 2020 as written

**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson

**OPPOSED:** None

**ABSTAINED:** April Rios  
Mary Beauregard  
Nichole Daniel

**MOTION PASSED - 2:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios -Abstained; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Abstained; Nichole Daniel - Abstained**

**Budget Sub-Committee Minutes - December 30, 2020**

**MOTION:** by Michelle Smith to accept the Budget Sub-Committee meeting minutes of December 30, 2020 as written

**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson

**OPPOSED:** None

**ABSTAINED:** April Rios  
Mary Beauregard  
Nichole Daniel

**MOTION PASSED - 2:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios - Abstained; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Abstained; Nichole Daniel - Abstained**

**IV. General**

**A. Reopening Update/K-2 Reopening Plan**

**Recommendation:**

**That the School Committee hear an update from administration.**

**Superintendent Michael Nelson asked Chairperson Smith that Principal Sirois be able to join him in presenting this agenda item this evening. Chairperson Smith responded, yes.**

**Mr. Nelson continued stating the following:**

*I appreciate the opportunity to address the school committee this evening regarding our current learning model or models – as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 situation.*

*First – I want to recognize the students, families, staff members, and teachers for continuing to answer the call each and every day to provide meaningful teaching and learning opportunities in both the hybrid and remote learning models that we have been operating since the start of school.*

*At our last school committee meeting, we discussed the results of a survey we issued to parents and guardians and agreed that in the future we wanted to discuss how to support our youngest learners moving forward. Tonight, we will have an initial conversation on how we could increase in-person learning opportunities for these students at the right time.*

*Many, if not all, aspects of the presentation were designed by the building administration, with the help and support of the association members, and in consultation with central office administration. I thank everyone for their work on this important topic.*

*When listening to the presentation it is critical to know that we would maintain all the current safety protocols and mitigation factors we currently have in place. For instance, at least six feet of spacing between individuals, minimizing mixing cohorts or classes, adhering to the latest guidance, such as transportation and situational control, etc.*

*With that being said, we continue to navigate the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic in our local communities. Like most towns and cities, we have seen an increase in cases in our local communities recently. We have continued to collaborate in an ongoing fashion with our local health department.*

*Regarding Sippican School at the close of school today - we currently have eight students and/or staff members in isolation due to testing positive and four individuals are awaiting test results based on showing possible symptoms of COVID-19. On a weekly basis, we continue to share our dashboard that includes key indicators and key data points related to the impact of COVID-19 on our buildings.*

*Our school nurse and town health officials have been incredible regarding their professional approach and management of COVID-19 safety protocols and situation management.*

*To the best of our knowledge and in consultation with our health officials in our town, we have not experienced in-school transmission of COVID-19.*

*At this point, I'd like to ask Principal Sirois to share her thoughts and a potential action plan to increase in-person learning opportunities for our youngest learners.*

**Marla Sirois, Principal of Sippican School, stated a presentation has been put together and most of the staff has seen the information in the presentation. Ms. Sirois extended a “thank you” to the staff for all of their input and a “thank you” to Nurse Meagan Morais, who has navigated all of this in a phenomenal way for us as a school community. Ms. Sirois feels that we can all move forward with whatever plan we put forward, knowing Nurse Meg is there to support us.**

**Ms. Sirois presented the plan as follows: Sippican School – (Full In-Person Pivot Plan: K, 1, 2)**

**Data Points to Consider:**

**Total number of hybrid students in grades K-2: 125 students (coming in a minimal of 2 days/week)**

**Total number of remote students in grades K-2: 26 (with Mrs. Horan and Ms. Medeiros)**

**Quarantine in grades K-2 since the start of school – approximately 30 (either they had COVID or were possibly exposed)**

**Ms. Sirois noted teachers have been able to provide hybrid-out work for students who are quarantined by making videos of primary instructional areas.**

**We have not had any K-2 students move from remote to hybrid**

**Kindergarten:**

**Currently has 32 students enrolled in three (3) Kindergarten classrooms in the Hybrid Model. We can bring the cohorts back with children staying with their present teachers.**

**First Grade:**

**Currently has 43 students enrolled in two (2) First Grade classrooms in the Hybrid Model. To bring the students back, we would need to move both of the classrooms.**

**Classroom 114 would go to the band room, and Classroom 112 would move to the library. Half of the library would need to be taken apart, making books accessible in different areas of the building.**

**Second Grade:**

**Currently has 50 students enrolled in three (3) Second Grade classrooms in the Hybrid Model. We would maintain three (3) sections but the classrooms would need to move. (rooms are not big enough to keep a six-foot distance)**

**Classroom 118 would move to room 107 (Title 1 room – across from VASE and near Project Grow); Classroom 121 would move to 123/122, which currently has a movable dividing wall; and Classroom 120 would move to 126/128, which also has a movable dividing wall.**

**Ms. Sirois stated she sees this happening within a 3 to 4-week period of time following the Phases/Timelines set forth:**

**Phase 1:**

- **Assess needs for space, moves, and tech/staffing needs**
- **Order supplemental tech (audio equipment for speakers and projectors)**

**Phase 2:**

- **Move downstairs science lab space and YMCA before/aftercare**

**Phase 3:**

- **Convert library**

**Phase 4:**

- **Prepare rooms with partitions for the move**

**Phase 5:**

- **Relocate Title 1 room**
- **Prepare band room**
- **Add desks to K classes**

**Phase 6:**

- **Move teacher/student materials to larger classroom spaces**
- **Remove tables in cafeteria**
- **Set up desks in cafeteria**

**Ms. Sirois stated she sees 2 options and it is important to look at and consider each of them.**

**Option 1: 5 days a week**

**Pros:**

- **Students would be in school every day**
- **Regular/predictable schedule**

**Cons:**

- **Limit ability to tape lessons for quarantined students and remote learning model**
- **Decrease to grade level collaboration between learning models**

**Option 2: 4 days a week**

**Pros:**

- **Teachers would have the ability to tape lessons for quarantined and remote learning students (approximately 60 students to date)**
- **Increase grade level collaboration between in-person/remote learning models**

**Cons:**

- **Students would be in school one less day (Grades 1 and 2 would still have increased SLT/state regulations)**

**Mr. Nelson noted if increased in-person learning is supported by the school committee, some of the important pieces to consider in terms of positioning ourselves to be able to increase in-person learning time, are the “phases” that Ms. Sirois mentioned.**

**Mr. Nelson stated a calendar would be made up based off of those phases – inventory the different materials that would need to be ordered (which we could support based off of our current budget and revenue streams) and work afterschool and weekends to move facility pieces to different areas of the building. Mr. Nelson stated once that is completed we would recommend students actually move to their new spaces on a certain date maintaining their hybrid learning model, which would allow us to utilize Responsive Classroom – transitioning into their new spaces, having students become familiar and comfortable in their new spaces; learn their new routines; and, work with their teachers and staff members. Mr. Nelson stated once that is all in place and with the support of the school committee, we could pivot into increased learning time.**

Mr. Nelson noted the transportation guidelines has not changed as we currently stand, and we currently can only have 24 to 25 students on one of our 77 passenger bus at this time. Mr. Nelson stated we looked at the current ridership (any student K-2) who is currently utilizing busing in terms of getting to school in the hybrid model, and we made the assumption those students would continue to need transportation if we were to increase days. Mr. Nelson stated we have mapped this out and believe we could meet the current ridership needs. Mr. Nelson stated we would have a first come, first serve transportation list, meaning if a family who is not currently utilizing transportation in the hybrid model and requests transportation and we have openings on the bus, we would move that student to one of our vehicles. Mr. Nelson noted there might be a possibility of establishing a wait list and if it comes to that point, he would bring that information back to the school committee to problem solve.

Mr. Nelson extended a “thank you” to Marla Sirois, Nicole Boussy, the Association and the support administrators who worked with them, in terms of creating this proposal. Mr. Nelson noted this is an initial conversation for Sippican’s school committee and we have not yet had an in-depth conversation of what this is going to look like. Mr. Nelson stated he is happy to have a conversation or discussion tonight in terms of hearing thoughts, concerns and how best to move forward from here.

Chairperson Michelle Smith also extended a “thank you” to Marla Sirois, Nicole Boussy and any of those who were a part of this planning. Ms. Smith stated she is very impressed with the Plan, and has been concerned about bringing students back, but in looking at the Plan, it gave her a little more ease.

Ms. Smith asked if there were any additional comments, concerns or questions from the school committee members.

**April Rios:**

**Question:** Will the classrooms that you are moving grades K-2 students to, impact grades 3 through 6 students? Are you moving any grades 3-6 classrooms to meet the needs of K-2?

Ms. Sirois responded no. Ms. Sirois stated the biggest internal move is the YMCA before and aftercare, which they utilize two (2) of the rooms, which we will be making into classrooms. Ms. Sirois stated we are moving the YMCA program to a different location in the building, which she has discussed with and walked through with the YMCA personnel, and they are able to continue their program in this new location.

Ms. Sirois stated the Title 1 room is a room that we do use, but the room in which we are moving them to will be able to still allow them to have small groups. Ms. Sirois noted much of our Title 1 is being done remotely.

Ms. Sirois stated the library was one of the rooms she was hoping to not utilize, but the children are not going to the library at this time. Ms. Sirois stated Mrs. Barrett and her team have done a phenomenal job with the mobile book carts and children can get any book they want out of the library – they send their request to Mrs. Barrett and she and her team magically make these book bags appear! Ms. Sirois stated they will have to relocate some of the books to different parts of the school to accommodate the classroom but the books will still be accessible for the students.

**April Rios:**

**Question: What about the band room – there are actually two rooms?**

**Ms. Sirois stated one room is the band room and the other room is the music room. Ms. Sirois stated Ms. Richard, the music teacher, utilizes a cart and goes to the students in their classrooms and the band room is across from the music room, and because Hannah Moore is doing her lessons remotely, she doesn't need that large space "yet".**

**Nichole Daniel:**

**Question: With Option 1 and Option 2, the remote learners are still only being taught two days a week – is that correct?**

**Ms. Sirois stated they are on a regular hybrid schedule like the rest of the hybrid students are.**

**Question: If the students go back to either 4 or 5 days a week, the students coming back are going to be moving at a much faster pace than the remote students, right?**

**Ms. Sirois stated she does not see it as a faster pace – we will need to look at our curriculum goals and see what things are going to be covered. Ms. Sirois stated there is a lot that doesn't happen with pre-teaching and re-teaching right now and we don't know until we get there what it will look like. Ms. Sirois stated in the beginning there is going to be a period of time to do their responsive classroom work; focus on learning with more than seven (7) students in the room; and, then teachers will know what skills the students need more work on.**

**Question: The goal of having the students return back to school 4 or 5 days a week isn't that you are going to progress the curriculum like you would on a regular school year, but to have additional days of extra practice?**

**Ms. Sirois stated we need to see where the students are when they come in. For example: we are doing a writing lesson and writing a small moment – we would not sit down and write a small moment and then the next day go in and write an autobiography – we would have more time to work with the students on their editing and revising like we would in a regular school year.**

**Ms. Daniel noted she is not opposed to either option/plan. Ms. Daniel's concern is how much planning together does the remote versus full return students need to have? Ms. Daniel stated she's not saying they do not need to have some – they absolutely do need to and there needs to be some cohesiveness, but our hope was that we would be bringing our youngest learners back to give them that big push they need to keep going and make the progress they need. Ms. Daniel stated not that every single one of our students doesn't need it.**

**Ms. Sirois stated bringing our youngest learners back would provide consistency for them and provide school routine. Ms. Sirois stated there are going to be transitions and they are still going to have specials, but the depth in which we are able to get in content with the students is going to be far greater.**

**April Rios:**

**Question:** In the presentation, it was stated currently we have had no K-2 students move from remote into hybrid. If we move forward with this Plan to bring the students back, are we making a “plan” for those families who decide they do not want to come back, whether it is four or five days – now they want to go from hybrid to remote – what is the “plan” to provide teachers the support they are going to need if their numbers increase?

**Ms. Sirois** stated she, as well as the remote teachers, have thought about this. Ms. Sirois stated currently Mrs. Horan teaches Kindergarten and Grade 1; Ms. Medeiros Grades 2 and 3; Ms. McKeon Grade 4; and Mrs. Lawrence Grades 5 and 6. Ms. Sirois stated we will have to look at how many children are in remote model and if there are certain grades that need just one teacher, we will make adjustments. Ms. Sirois stated the state recommends (for student learning models) making remote class sizes larger since they are on a screen – however, Ms. Sirois does not believe that is the best practice for Sippican and does not believe one group of students should have a smaller class size over another. Ms. Sirois stated we would absolutely have to look at it. Ms. Sirois stated at present the remote model looks as follows: Kindergarten- 7 students; Grade 1- 10 students; Grade 2- 9 students; and Grade 4- 11 students.

**Mr. Nelson** stated this has been a puzzle from the very beginning and bringing back students in either of the two options presented tonight could change the teaching models both in-person and remote learning. Mr. Nelson stated we would have to adjust as things materialize.

**Ms. Smith** asked Mr. Nelson what is he looking from the school committee tonight.

**Mr. Nelson** stated as school administrators, teachers and educators, we truly respect the different perspectives in our community in terms of what’s best for each family’s students. Mr. Nelson stated we understand as we navigate COVID-19 reality, each family has to make a decision as to what they think is best, not only for their children, but their family. Mr. Nelson stated we do take all of the feedback seriously and respect the different positions, in terms of how people feel about COVID-19.

**Mr. Nelson** stated when the school committee approved this plan in August, we talked about particular sub-groups that were a focus for us relating to additional learning time from the beginning namely - Pre-School (operating their standard model since the start of school); special education students who were identified as high needs (in more days per week); students with ELL needs; students facing homeless or foster care scenarios; and, the last sub-group we are talking about now is our youngest learners, which is exciting but is something we need to do very delicately and make sure we do it at the right time.

**Mr. Nelson** stated we are looking for a vote of support to move forward to position ourselves in the scenarios that Principal Sirois just mentioned in terms of securing the need of materials and moving the classrooms in a way that makes sense for the teachers and students. Mr. Nelson stated he has had an initial conversation with the Marion town nurse, informing her that this conversation would be taking place tonight, and depending on the outcome of tonight’s conversation, he would include the Board of Health and the school’s physicians of tonight’s decision.

**Mr. Nelson** noted that Principal Sirois stated she would need at least three (3) to four (4) weeks to put the Plan into motion, and he would meet with the Chairperson in two (2) to three (3) weeks and ask to schedule a meeting to update the committee, specifically on this topic, and again to get feedback from all the key stakeholders.

**Nichole Daniel:**

**Question: If this Plan is supported tonight, either returning back 4 or 5 days a week, are we looking at a timeline of rolling K-2 students back after February vacation?**

**Mr. Nelson stated if he has support to move forward to implement the action Plan that allows this committee to consider a pivot at their next school committee meeting, then he would work with Principal Sirois and other key players in terms of building an actual calendar of next steps such as:**

- **This is when we would order materials**
- **This is when we would start moving furniture**
- **This is when students would move to their new spaces**
- **Student's would be in hybrid model for this amount of time**
- **Committee will agree upon a date for a pivot time to take place**

**Mr. Nelson stated he would recommend to Principal Sirois to hold FAQ sessions via zoom for parents and guardians to ask questions, get their feedback and make sure they are part of the process as well.**

**Mary Beauregard:**

**Question: Do teachers feel comfortable with this Plan? Do they feel confident they can keep a larger amount of children in the classroom apart from one another – distance-wise?**

**Nicole Boussy stated the Marion Teacher's Association continues to be very grateful to the town's stakeholders, the administration and the families. Ms. Boussy stated with all of the support our teachers, related service providers, custodial staff, paraprofessionals, office support, we truly try to collaborate in a safe and meaningful way and in the best interest of our students.**

**Ms. Boussy stated there has been an incredible amount of time, patience and flexibility on the part of our educators as we continue to work with our administration in trying to find the best way to bring all of our students back to school. Ms. Boussy noted naturally there are concerns, there are questions, but believes through continued conversations with Principal Sirois and Mr. Nelson, we know what is best for the kids. Ms. Boussy stated with the sporadic schedule that we do see the students now, we want to be supportive of them, we want them to feel safe, and we want them to continue the kind of learning they deserve in this community.**

**Ms. Boussy noted to speak directly to Ms. Beauregard's question, I think with all of the above it requires a lot of trust and as President of the Association, I feel that trust with the current administration and support from the educators at Sippican School. Ms. Boussy stated we need to be respectful of the health and safety guidance that has been set by DESE so that not only the students and community feel safe, but also the parents and family members feel safe sending their children to school.**

**Ms. Boussy stated it's going to look different and we are not going back to where we once were a year and a half ago. Ms. Boussy reiterated that our educators are truly professional, gifted and creative and they will make it work so our earliest learners can continue to experience what they need to experience, particularly at the early levels.**

**April Rios:**

Ms. Rios stated she would like to continue seeing this topic on the Agenda for other grade levels at every single school committee meeting going forward. Ms. Rios stated she realizes everyone is not coming back to school at once, but she feels as though it is important and we need to be mindful for families as well as teachers, that these discussions are continuing.

Mr. Nelson stated since our meeting in August, item “A” (Re-opening Update) has been on the Agenda with the mindset of re-opening grades K-2, but would be happy to continue with this item on the Agenda for future meetings.

**Nichole Daniel:**

Ms. Daniel stated she loves the fact we are getting K-2 students back to school, and that it is definitely the most important, but she would also like to see this item be on the Agenda to continue having ongoing conversations regarding potentially looking at having back all of our students when it is safe to do so and when we can make it work.

**MOTION:** by Nichole Daniel to implement the Phase Action Plan to prepare to pivot Grades K-2 as presented.  
**SECONDED:** Jody Dickerson  
**OPPOSED:** None  
**MOTION PASSED –** 5:0

**Role Call:** Michelle Smith – Yes; April Rios – Yes; Jody Dickerson – Yes; Mary Beauregard– Yes; Nichole Daniel – Yes

## **B. Student Opportunity Act Approval**

### **Recommendation:**

That the School Committee review, discuss and approve the Student Opportunity Act.

Mr. Nelson stated the Student Opportunity Act, was a push in Massachusetts to increase public funding for school districts, and that it was in process last year before COVID-19 struck.

Mr. Nelson stated the Act required each district to create a 3-year evidenced-based plan for the Commissioner to review. The Department established a template to use, depending on how much money or funding a district was in line for. Mr. Nelson stated for districts like ourselves who were not seeing a huge increase per student, the Department pushed out a “short form” (2-3 pages) and they gave a lot of suggestions, in terms of evidenced-based approaches, to close academic gaps. Mr. Nelson stated the elementary principals were in charge of looking at a particular area of interest to them, create an Action Plan with what the Department of Education’s expectations were, to be able to monitor over three years.

Mr. Nelson stated when COVID-19 became a reality in March, the Student Opportunity Act was put on hold until early/late fall, at which time the Commissioner stated to school districts to submit to them a draft, with the support of the school committee as it currently stands. Mr. Nelson noted they do recognize as COVID-19 changes, they will provide a new opportunity for school districts to update these plans based off of the new gaps as we return to a new normal.

Mr. Nelson stated he has submitted a draft SOA to the Department of Education, but it requires a formal vote through the school committee tonight to make it an official submission.

Principal Sirois stated we looked at our MCAS data, which showed our economically disadvantaged students were not making adequate gains in the areas of literacy and we feel this gap for all students is early intervention. Ms. Sirois stated the target for our Student Opportunity Act funds is going to be around Wilson Foundations, training and implementation with fidelity.

Ms. Sirois stated we will begin Foundations with grades K-3, with a focus on Grades K-2, and we would be looking to use this program for “Tier 1” for all students and for “Tier 2” for intervention through our Title 1 program, as well as for all students who might need it.

Ms. Sirois stated during the first 10 days of school for the teachers at the beginning of this year they were trained for implementation of this program, with hope that they would be able to be “coached” by Wilson trainers in the near future once additional restrictions has been lifted from COVID-19.

Ms. Sirois stated Foundations provides the background knowledge necessary for students for phonics as well as students who may have been struggling with other disabilities such as dyslexia, and it would lay the groundwork for those students to go in to Wilson Reading. Ms. Sirois noted in order to engage families, we would provide the support work for the families for the at home piece.

Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Sirois for updating the school committee members again and for new members that joined us this year. Mr. Nelson noted in terms of the “ask” of the Department of Education, it sounds somewhat unfunded at this time in terms of the money that was originally promised to school districts, and we already know that we will be asked to revise and resubmit these plans.

**MOTION:** by April Rios to approve and accept the Student Opportunity Act as presented.  
**SECONDED:** Nichole Daniel  
**OPPOSED:** None  
**MOTION PASSED -** 5:0

**Role Call:** Michelle Smith – Yes; April Rios – Yes; Jody Dickerson – Yes; Mary Beauregard– Yes; Nichole Daniel – Yes

### **C. Structured Time on Learning Discussion**

#### **Recommendation:**

That the School Committee have a discussion regarding the new Structured Time on Learning Guidelines.

Mr. Nelson stated the Board of Educators approved what they call “Emergency Regulation” regarding Structured Time on Learning, specifically to address how to guide both hybrid and remote learning. Mr. Nelson stated based on how a district identified themselves, those would be the regulations you would need to adhere to as of January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Nelson stated each of our four school districts within the Tri-town reviewed their data in the new guidance, and revised their models to make sure they were meeting the Structured Learning Timeline guidelines as recently adopted.

Ms. Sirois explained that Student Learning Time is based on DESE’s requirements and feels this is an important summary to go through this evening. Ms. Sirois stated the guidelines can be found on the DESE website and she will send out a copy of this presentation (SLT at Sippican School 2020-2021) tomorrow to the parents/guardians.

Mr. Davidson, Director of Student Services, stated in the 1997/1998 school year, SLT regulations were established for students – at that time, for elementary students instructional learning time was 900 hours per year and for secondary aged students it was 990 hours per year. Mr. Davidson stated the Amendment came into place on December 15, 2020. Mr. Davidson stated the Department of Education has increased the learning time based on the predominant learning model we are teaching, which is the hybrid-learning model.

Ms. Sirois stated another part of the summary requirements is what DESE sees as acceptable synchronous learning. Ms. Sirois stated the following is accepted: Live on-line classes; Live streaming; and, Small group instruction, and noted that Sippican School utilizes all three of these instructions. Ms. Sirois stated the regulations set forth by DESE are legally binding, and if we did not comply by January 19<sup>th</sup>, we would be required to make up any structured learning time missed due to non-compliance, by the end of the school year.

Mr. Davidson noted the Department of Education is working closely with entities across the state and are seeing mental health challenges amongst our students. Mr. Davidson stated one of the forefronts of mental health is feelings of isolation and disconnect amongst students from their teachers and from their school community. Mr. Davidson stated part of DESE's rationale was to increase live instruction hours so there is more of a connection between students/staff.

Ms. Sirois stated DESE talks about the necessity of frequent connections and interactions with teachers and peers not only with academics but also the social interaction that happens generally on a daily basis. Ms. Sirois noted that conversations students have at the dinner table with their family are often conversations that teachers have with students and often this can get lost if we are doing asynchronous learning.

Mr. Davidson stated some of the key considerations the state recommends are daily interaction requirements in the hybrid model; so on the hybrid out days there is a mandatory connection between staff and students at home. Mr. Davidson noted the interaction might be instructional or non-instructional. Mr. Davidson stated in our district it is 35 hours of synchronous learning, because we are in the hybrid model.

Ms. Sirois noted the six shifts to be able to increase synchronous learning time:

1. Repurpose asynchronous learning time
2. Trade some planning time for learning time
3. Extend the length of certain classes based on student needs
4. Increase remote group size
5. Utilize simultaneous instruction (live streaming)
6. Assign new or existing staff members to lead additional synchronous learning periods
  - \* Assign student teachers
  - \* Pair in-field and out-of-field educators as co-teachers
  - \* Re-assign non-teaching staff
  - \* Bring back retired teachers
  - \* Hire bachelor's degree-holders as long-term substitutes

Mr. Davidson stated the Department of Education released multiple examples of increased learning time, for example:

The teacher begins the day with all students in a virtual classroom with the morning meeting, and attach an ELA lesson (where the teacher provides students with a project or hands-on learning activity to complete over a period of time). During this entire time period, the students do not need to remain on screen as they complete the ELA assignment, but the teacher remains live in the virtual meeting to provide students with support to complete the activity, and to check in with individuals or small groups of students. Following the allotted time, student's return to their computers share their completed work and ask any questions they may have regarding the assignment.

Ms. Sirois stated within that timeframe, teachers can hold small group meetings and would also have the opportunity to utilize breakout rooms to work cooperatively.

Ms. Sirois stated currently we have 20 hours of learning time over a 10-day period of time for our hybrid-in students (5 hours/day x 4 days). Note: Lunch and recess does not count.

Check-ins/small group/music lessons = 6 hours over a 10-day period of time totaling 26 hours.

Ms. Sirois stated in order to gain the additional 9 hours over a 10-day period of time, the following changes would look like:

- Times that were previously “check-ins” will now be Instructional Overviews, which will consist of pre-teaching OR review of previously taught skills
- Mask breaks will move to 10 minutes in duration
- Specialist teachers will provide 2 hours of live instruction on Monday afternoons (from 1-3) - these lessons will be added to Grades 1-6 on a rotating basis (and the remote students can absolutely join these lessons as well through Google)
- Classroom teachers will add 2.5 hours of instruction each Monday between the hours of 8:40 and 1:00.

Ms. Sirois walked through what instructional time might look like for students as follows:

- 20-30 minute Morning Meeting/calendar time
- 60 minute break out/small group Guided Math/Reading groups
- 60 minute literacy block (20 minute lesson, 20 minutes independent work, 20 minute share)
- 60 minute writing lesson (20 minute lesson, 20 minutes independent work, 20 minute share)
- 60 minute math block (20 minute lesson, 20 minutes independent work, 20 minute share)
- 60 minute content (science/social studies) area work (20 minute lesson, 20 minutes independent work, 20 minutes share)

Each grade level will choose the same format in order to provide consistency for students.

Chairperson Smith asked if there were any questions by the school committee members?

Nichole Daniel:

Question: This is additional learning time for Grades 1-6, however, as a parent of a Kindergarten student, what about additional learning time for Kindergarten students? (They are receiving zero additional instructional learning minutes.)

Ms. Sirois referred back to the “guidance” which stated:

1. We deliberately recommend an average across grades because we recognize that virtual instructional time for younger students must be developmentally appropriate. Using an average across grade levels, excluding Pre-K and K, allows flexibility for districts to set; and
2. Further detailed guidance and recommendations for effective practice and operating models, will be provided by DESE and the Department of Early Education & Care in the coming weeks.

Ms. Daniel stated as a Kindergarten teacher, she has had to teach both remote and hybrid models and noted the students have gotten more out of the direct instruction of a remote model. Ms. Daniel asked, if possible, could there be a more purposeful guided structure on Mondays - (i.e.: more of a structured check-in morning meeting/small group instruction)?

Ms. Sirois noted this is possible, but would like to wait for guidance so that we are not making changes again.

Ms. Daniel stated she does not think this is a “big” change – it is just a “structured” change.

Ms. Sirois stated she has parents who want their children in school every day; parents who don’t want their children to come back to school; and, parents who want their children to be able to talk to their friends during that time, etc. Ms. Sirois noted anything we do is going to make someone else not happy, and stated when she says that guidance is eminent, it makes the most sense for her to wait a couple of weeks to see if the guidance changes. Ms. Sirois stated if she doesn’t receive guidance in a couple of weeks, we could come back together to address this concern.

#### **D. FY22 Draft Budget**

##### **Recommendation:**

**That the School Committee review and discuss the FY22 Draft Budget**

Mr. Nelson stated we have held several initial Budget Sub-Committee meetings; talked about priorities and timelines and submitted a “Draft FY22” budget to the Town of Marion, knowing there is still so much more work to be done with the budget. Mr. Nelson stated the next step would be to get initial feedback from the town, and from there involve a representative from FinCom.

Ms. Smith stated the process has gone smoothly to date; she is happy with the Draft Budget that was submitted to the town; collaboration between parties have been good; and, they are waiting to hear feedback from the town at this point.

Mr. Dickerson stated the process has been good and noted a lot of detail and a lot of work has been put into this Draft Budget. Mr. Dickerson stated the Finance Committee has reached out to him and has requested that the draft information be forwarded to the FinCom representative, as we work forward to get this budget in on time.

Mr. Barber stated we are trying to be as transparent as possible with the impacts these types of funding are going to be approaching us as a school district. Mr. Barber noted there are still items pending and we are awaiting answers regarding additional funds (Chapter 70 and State Aid), so we are in a bit of a holding pattern. Mr. Barber stated until we can assure ourselves what the Governor’s proposed budgets are going to be and any additional offsets or resources we are going to be able to use, in essence to minimize as much of the impact to the town assessment.

Mr. Dickerson stated he has looked over a lot of budgets over the years, and this school budget is the most detailed budget from the school that he has seen in many years. Mr. Dickerson commends the entire team on the great job they have done.

#### **E. Student Handbook Revision Approval**

##### **Recommendation:**

**That the School Committee review and approve a revision to the student handbook.**

Mr. Nelson stated we have brought a lot of new technology to our school (iPads, chromebooks), and the committee approved a replacement fee schedule not too long ago. Mr. Nelson stated part of our policy is to put our families on notice in terms of the fee schedule and Principal Sirois has drafted a revision to the Student Handbook language. Mr. Nelson stated at this time Ms. Sirois is looking for approval of this new language so that it can be included in the handbook in order for Ms. Sirois to provide a copy of it to the parents.

Ms. Sirois stated the reason why she had to add a small piece is because the handbook did not have any language regarding “technology use”, and we needed to add what our expectations of the students would be, who are using these devices at home and in school.

**MOTION:** by Michelle Smith to approve the Student Handbook revision language as presented  
**SO MOVED:** Jody Dickerson  
**SECONDED:** Nichole Daniel  
**OPPOSED:** None  
**MOTION PASSED –** 5:0

**Role Call:** Michelle Smith – Yes; April Rios – Yes; Jody Dickerson – Yes; Mary Beauregard– Yes; Nichole Daniel – Yes

## V. New Business

### B. Business

#### 1. Financial Report

##### Recommendation:

That the School Committee hears a report from Mr. Barber.

Mr. Barber presented a memo as of January 11, 2021 indicating the Marion School District currently has \$383,220 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2021 Fiscal Year. Mr. Barber stated we are able to identify how our funds are currently encumbered and expended and out of the \$6,183,222 million-dollar budget appropriated to the District – 86.49% is directly assigned and is spent/encumbered to student instruction.

Mr. Barber stated we are approximately 50% through the school year, and over the course of the backside of the fiscal school year, we usually have costs relative to our facilities and operations as well as where we cannot encumber our substitute costs.

Mr. Barber stated in the packet is a copy of the Marion Special Revenue/Revolving Funds accounting, which lists the nine different revolving accounts: School Business Lease, Principal Gift Account, Student Activities/Anchor, Music, Lost Books, E-Rate, School Garden, Art and J. McCarthy Gift. Mr. Barber noted the following:

Beginning Balance:	\$71,896.85
Revenues:	\$10,250.00
Expenditures:	\$ 6,261.50
Encumbrance:	-0-
Balance:	\$75,885.35

Mr. Barber reported on the Food Service Director’s Report (By: Jill Henesey) as follows for Sippican School:

Mr. Barber stated Ms. Henesey has provided a monthly summary of the breakfast, lunch and remote counts for this fiscal year 20/21, as well as the breakfast and lunch counts for last fiscal year – 19/20. Mr. Barber stated the counts are lower this year and predominantly the reason for this is the fact that we only have 50% of the students in the school at a time. Mr. Barber stated the remote Grab-N-Go distribution day was moved to Tuesdays, due to Monday’s schedules (holidays).

Mr. Barber reported on the Facilities Director’s Report prepared by Gene Jones, Director, as of January 2021 as follows:

- Covid-19 protocols strictly adhered to for HVAC, cleaning, sanitizing and traffic control
- Nightly sanitizing all our buses with static spray sanitizing equipment
- Deployed all DESE/CDD required Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Protective shields installed in all required areas

- Testing shields acquired and available on site
- Nurse and student service issued required additional safety PPE
- State conducted annual elevator safety test
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

Ms. Smith extended a huge “thank-you” to Ms. Henesey and her team stating they are doing a phenomenal job getting lunches out, preparing for all of the remote meals - and through this all, the team is kind, cheerful and smiling! Ms. Smith stated that families can still go on the website and sign-up for this service, and that it is for children ages 0 to 21.

Mr. Barber stated he would like to thank Mrs. Paula White (interim café Manager), who has been working extremely hard since after the holiday break. Mr. Barber is very grateful and appreciative of everything she is doing.

**a. Revolving Account Balances**

**Recommendation:**

That the School Committee hears a report from Mr. Barber

Please see “Financial Report” above.

**D. Personnel**

The following personnel changes took place since the last meeting on December 2, 2020

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position</b>	
Janet Reynolds	Head Cook	Retirement
Jessica DiNoia	Speech Language Pathologist	Resignation
Donna Blanchard	Asst. Head Cook	Resignation
Barbara Bandarra	Title I Paraprofessional	Retirement

**New Hires**

Isaiah Stewart	Title I Paraprofessional (LTS)	Effective Date: 12/16/2020
Grace Emmet	Art Teacher (LTS)	Effective Date: 12/14/2020

Mr. Nelson stated there has been a lot of challenges and changes in personnel this school year, and he commends not only the building administration but the teaching staff and staff members as well, in terms of figuring out creative ways to make sure the students are supported in the ways they need to be.

**VI. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT:**

Chairperson Smith stated as follows:

Ms. Smith extended a “thank you” to everyone for their continued hard work during this time and their collaboration in putting together a re-opening plan for students in Grades K-2, as well as continuing to be creative and working through the times and changes of DESE, and the long hours.

Ms. Smith thanked the administration, staff members and families for all of their hard work they are doing for our students and a “thank you” to the students who are rising above and keeping safe.

Ms. Smith also gave a “shout out” to Nicole Boussy and the MTA, noting they have held their first negotiation meeting and are excited to continue with this collaboration moving forward.

Ms. Smith concluded with thank you - and continue to be safe!

**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINSTRATOR’S REPORT:**

Dr. Jannell Pearson-Campbell - Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning - reported as follows:

*On January 11th, the Office of Teaching and Learning organized a district-wide professional development. Educators met either as district grade level or content*

*areas. Educators were able to choose between meeting face-to-face or via Zoom. The vision for this professional development allowed educators to collaborate with each other to support planning, examine common assessments, and implementation throughout the district as well as the importance of examining the learning standards that are being taught across the district in the various learning platforms especially in the Tri-town area. I would like to thank the educators for being zoom hosts, which provided the opportunity for educators to meet with each other. We had 10 or more meetings using the zoom platform at the same time while I was in the background ensuring everyone was able to participate in the various meetings.*

*We also had a keynote speaker, Mr. Bronke, who provided us with an engaging interactive professional development that focused on project-based learning. One of the key takeaways was firm and flexible and he provided educators with exemplars such as math and science.*

*As part of the professional development day, we had teacher leaders provide modules to build the capacity of skills using interactive learning such as peardeck, yoga in the classroom and using various interactive technology.*

*My office received feedback from the teachers and mentioned they had a choice and the opportunity to collaborate with one another and that they are beginning to plan for the 21/22 school year.*

*Dr. Pearson-Campbell extended a “thank you” to Kim Read, Administrative Assistant, for putting together all of the zoom meetings in order for this PD to take place.*

**Mr. Craig Davidson – Director of Student Services – reported as follows:**

*Kindergarten Report Card Distribution will be held on February 4 & 5 to align with grades 1-12. These dates reflect the delayed start of school of 10 days; on February 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 6:00pm, each of the elementary schools will have a Kindergarten Parent Information Session held by zoom, focusing on our on-line registration access for our students; March 1<sup>st</sup> is the required on-line registration deadline; and, in April, communication to parent(s)/guardian(s) will be held regarding the Kindergarten screening process.*

*Mr. Davidson noted the Pre-School Assessment (report card) is in its final state of completion, and will be the same format as the Kindergarten report card – (Priority Standards vertically aligned with Kindergarten); and Doreen Lopes will be attending the next school committee meeting reporting on the Early Childhood office/happenings.*

*Mr. Davidson provided the following dates for Pre-School Screenings and stated safety protocols have been established for in-person screenings.*

*January 27 at Sippican School*

*March 10 at Rochester Memorial*

*Mr. Davidson noted the Project Grow On-line Application opens on January 25, 2021 and the Blind Selections Process for FY22 will take place on February 26, 2021.*

*Playgroups – (Virtual)*

*Mr. Davidson stated 3 playgroups are currently being offered with 24 different families enrolled, and noted all of the playgroups are held virtually.*

*Mr. Davidson stated their website is continually being updated weekly and the next Tri-Town Early Childhood Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26 @ 6:30*

*Mr. Davidson concluded if you have any questions you can reach out to him or Doreen Lopes.*

At this time Superintendent Nelson offered his condolences to Gene Jones, Facilities Director of the Old Rochester Regional School District, who recently lost his beloved wife, Peggy - our thoughts and prayers go out to Gene and his family at this time.

#### **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

**Ms. Marla Sirois, Principal of Sippican School reported the following:**

**Ms. Sirois thanked Emily Richmond and ORCTV for their efforts in helping Sippican School put together "Christmas Wishes" from our students (you can view this on the ORCTV vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/492180002>); Ms. Sirois formally welcomed back Hannah Moore, stating instrumental lessons and band are going to be up and running - Grades 5 and 6 have started and next month Grade 4 will be able to join in; Ms. Sirois thanked publically The First Congregational Church of Marion, St. Gabriel's Church, the Marion Police Dept., the Bourne State Police and Sippican Staff (led by Nurse Meg, Shannon Ahern, Melissa Cieto and Erin Furfey) and their outpour in allowing us to help 18 families and 45 children in the Town of Marion in a very difficult year during the holidays; and, the Sippican School Council has met- we have completed the School Improvement Plan, and will be able to present it to the school committee next month.**

#### **VIII. School Committee**

##### **A. Committee Reports**

##### **1. Budget Sub-Committee:**

**Ms. Smith stated this item was discussed above.**

##### **2. Building Committee**

**Mr. Dickerson stated they have not met.**

##### **3. ORR District School Committee**

**Ms. Smith stated their next meeting is January 20, 2021.**

##### **4. SMEC**

**Ms. Smith stated their next meeting is January 20, 2021.**

##### **5. Early Childhood Council**

**Ms. Daniel stated they have not met.**

##### **6. READS**

**Mr. Nelson stated he attended a virtual meeting and the following was discussed:**

**Approved the most recent meeting minutes; heard an update from the Special Education administrators who belong to the Collaborative - we heard their work regarding their FY22 budget process; we reviewed the READS Annual report, which was distributed to the Chairs of our school committees; and, we updated two (2) policies regarding Behavioral Support and Confidentiality Regarding Student Records; the Executive Director made recommendations regarding current staffing in relation to retirements and current hires.**

**Mr. Nelson stated from an information standpoint, we reviewed the status of in-person learning; they are going through their Coordinated Program Review audit; they talked about COVID-19 testing; reviewed the Quarterly Report; heard program updates from their different schools; and, shared a list of staff resignation and retirements.**

##### **7. Tri-Town Education Foundation**

**Ms. Smith stated they have not met.**

## **8. Policy Sub Committee**

Mr. Nelson stated we reviewed four or five new policies as a first read (Diana Russo will be sharing some of the work that was done on the policies to the other members for their feedback on the initial read); and, we spoke about the “Public Comment” section on school committee agendas and how the different districts handle it.

## **9. School Council**

Ms. Sirois stated the School Improvement was completed and will be presented at the next school committee meeting.

## **10. Anti-Racism Sub-Committee**

Mr. Nelson stated there are two “sub-groups” within the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee - one group is looking at a survey design (we are looking for feedback from our students - specifically at the secondary level); and the second sub-group is developing a common language around vocabulary, but also some of the areas of interest and potential action plans within those areas.

Mr. Nelson stated we heard from a potential consultant who may actually start working with this sub-committee, focusing our work and helping us find our way in time of making this sub-group successful.

## **IX. Future Business**

### **A. Timeline**

The next meeting(s) of Committee will be held as follows:

Marion School Committee

February 24, 2021 @ 6:30pm

Via zoom

Joint School Committee

March 11, 2020 @ 6:30pm

Via zoom

Old Rochester Regional School Committee

January 20, 2021 @ 6:30pm

Via zoom

### **B. Future Agenda Items**

- School Improvement Plan (February)
- Re-opening Update - Continuation (February)
- Budget Public Hearing (April)
- Budget Approval (April)
- School Committee Goals - assess progress and set goals for following year (May)
- School Committee Reorganization (May/June - depending on election date)
- School Choice Public Hearing (May)
- Administrator Contracts (May)
- School Improvement Plan Approval (May/June)
- Approval of Leases (June)
- Approval of School Committee Goals for the following year (June)

## **X. Open Comments**

Chairperson, Michelle Smith, stated at this time the meeting will begin with Open Comments, and instructed the committee members, administration, parents, members of the public and press how the Open Comments will be run. Ms. Smith stated that per MGL for a public meeting the following is stated: No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body.

**Ms. Smith stated the following rules will be followed:**

**Public Comment shall be for a period of 20 minutes. The Committee reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.**

**Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themselves by name and address and shall speak for no longer than 3 minutes. No citizen may speak more than once without permission of the Chair. All citizens shall speak to the full Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators.**

**Individuals may address topics on the agenda, items specified for public comment, or items within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. The Chair shall rule out of order any individual who fails to honor the guidelines or who addresses a matter inappropriate for public comment.**

**Any Committee member may direct questions to the speaker through the Chair in order to clarify comments of the speaker.**

**Ms. Bailey will call their name, state their address, and each person will have 3 minutes to speak. Ms. Smith explained that when the speaker has one minute remaining, Ms. Bailey will hold up a "1-minute remaining" sign.**

**OPEN COMMENTS:**

**None**

**XI. Information Items**

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED AT THE MEETING**

**Marion School Committee Meeting Agenda - January 19, 2021**

**Regular Meeting Minutes of December 2, 2020**

**Budget Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes of November 30, 2020 and December 7, 16, 30, 2020**

**Student Opportunity Act**

**Structured Time on Learning Guidelines**

**Student Handbook Revision**

**Financial Report dated January, 2021**

**Food Service Director's Report - January, 2021**

**Facilities Director's Report - January, 2021**

**Principal's Report - January, 2021**

**READS Annual Report - December, 2020**

**Meeting of the Regular Marion School Committee meeting ended at 8:15pm**

**Chairperson Smith requested at 8:15pm a Motion to go in to Executive Session for the Purpose of #3 and #7 - to comply with the provisions of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.**

**MOTION: by Michelle Smith to go in to Executive Session for the Purpose of #3 and #7 - to return only to adjourn**

**SECONDED: April Rios**

**IN FAVOR: All**

**OPPOSED: None**

**MOTION PASSED - 5:0**

**Role Call: Michelle Smith - Yes; April Rios - Yes; Jody Dickerson - Yes; Mary Beauregard- Yes; Nichole Daniel - Yes**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Toni M. Bailey, Recording Secretary**

