

MARION SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

December 2, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting Location:

This meeting was held remotely

Members Present: Michelle Smith, Chairperson, April Rios, Vice-Chairperson, Jody Dickerson (arrived at 6:42 p.m.), Mary Beauregard and Nichole Daniel.

Members Absent: NONE

Others Present: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools, Jannell Pearson-Campbell, Asst. Supt. of Teaching & Learning, Howard Barber, Asst. Supt. of Finance & Operations, Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services, Diana Russo, Administrative Asst. to the Supt., Marla Sirois, Principal, Sippican School, Sean Persico, Asst. Principal, Sippican School, teachers, parents and members of the press.

Meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chairperson Smith. Chairperson Smith reported that the following members were participating remotely: April Rios, Jody Dickerson, Mary Beauregard, Nichole Daniel, Jody Dickerson and herself Michelle Smith.

IV. General

A. Updated of Reopening Plan

Superintendent Nelson made the following statement:

Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to address the school committee tonight. I can't believe that we are in the first week of December already. It is my hope that all of our students, families, and staff had an enjoyable Thanksgiving break – even if that means it may have looked differently this year. As we look at our current hybrid learning model we continue to examine our enrollment and which learning models our students are selecting.

Presently –

****We have 326 hybrid students*

****We have 65 remote students*

****And 21 students who are being home schooled right now*

We continue to be impressed by our students' resolve and ongoing efforts to capitalize on their teaching and learning opportunities. Our staff members continue to be flexible problem solvers and engaging our students in learning opportunities – no matter the setting. Regarding COVID-19 and its impact on our school community: Overall, we have been pleased that we have not seen school transmission of the virus and believe our cases have been isolated in nature. Our district has released a weekly Dashboard that shares COVID-19 data with our stakeholders. To date, we have confirmed 29 cases system-wide, Sippican School has confirmed 8 cases total since September 16th. As of today, we have one individual in isolation and three students in quarantine – with some students awaiting test results. The Board of Health continues to be an excellent support for our schools to guide our safety work around COVID-19. Furthermore, we recently surveyed our parents and guardians to hear their perspectives thus far regarding the school year. Here are the results for Sippican School:

Mr. Nelson & Mr. Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services shared the survey results and the presentation (please see appendix A).

At this time there are no immediate changes to our learning models planned, but this information will be used as we continue to navigate these unprecedented times and as we look to create as many opportunities for students moving forward. Marla, could you please share your perspective on how the school is progressing?

Principal Sirois expressed that students, staff and parents are definitely in a groove and that she sees them embracing where we are and have found different ways to make the situation work, she gave an example of the children playing shadow tag instead of regular tag which is great to see, she expressed that the children are finding new ways to interact with each other. She expressed that the building is much quieter, she explained that there are no visitors coming into the building and that the specialists report to each classroom to work with the students, including having lunches in the classroom. She expressed that they try to go outside as much as possible, she asked that parents dress children appropriately so that they can participate in the outside activities. She expressed that there are a lot of projects still happening, she referred to the 6th grade and the 2nd grade projects that have been posted on Facebook recently. She expressed that school still looks like school to the students, she expressed that it's business as usual for them and she expressed again that they are in a good groove.

Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Sirois for her report and asked Chairperson Smith if she or any other school committee members had any questions.

Ms. Smith thanked everyone for their efforts in the report and for the survey results, she expressed its very helpful information for the school committee to move forward. She expressed that she knows of other school districts of looking at plans to bring back students, especially in the early grades, she expressed it certainly would be interesting to look at, she expressed interest in looking at what it would look like at Sippican and when would we start looking at something similar.

Mr. Nelson expressed that his plan has always been to bring back as many children as possible, while doing it safely, he expressed from the start the plan was fluid, and the plan was always to look for more opportunities and learning every day from our challenges. Mr. Nelson expressed that DESE and the Governor's Office continuously updates their guidance in terms of what they see local school districts having to consider. Mr. Nelson expressed that safety remains their number one priority, however they don't want to be complacent, and he expressed that him and his administrations is constantly talking internally about, what can we do to improve our existing models and what we can do to add additional programming. Mr. Nelson agreed that the early elementary grades were have always been a subgroup that we have been concerned with challenges of remote learning as well as literacy. Mr. Nelson expressed that his number one option would be to have all the students in full time, however we need to work within the parameters that we have, Mr. Nelson expressed that himself and Ms. Sirois are committed to looking at different options and involve the school committee and the association in those discussions as we start moving forward.

B. Technology Fee Schedule

Mr. Nelson stated there has been some new revenue streams, including grant funding and CARES funding, and we have been able to secure additional devices for school including iPads for our youngest learners and additional Chromebook for our upper elementary grades. Mr. Nelson stated the iPads and cases are in and it has been a priority for our tech team to get these devices ready to roll out. Mr. Nelson stated Mr. Barber will explain how we will be able to maintain these new devices.

Mr. Barber explained that all districts have had the opportunity to update many of the technology needs for instruction, such as chromebooks and ipads and now he feels that an update to the Student Handbook should be taken into consideration. Mr. Barber expressed that with the 1:1 initiative there has not been fees or costs charged to the students or families for this equipment that is being provided, however per policy JQ- Student Fees, Fines and Charges we can implement a fee or a charge schedule for damaged books, materials, supplies and equipment. Mr. Barber explained that

students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees, however they are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies and equipment.

Mr. Barber recommended the following replacement fees for damaged or replacement of equipment based on the research charges that are being incurred:

Chromebook: \$300, Chromebook screen: \$50, 45W Adapter with Power Cord: \$50, Keyboard: \$50, ipad complete unit: \$325, Apple USB lightning cable: \$25, Apple USB Power Adapter: \$25, Case: \$50.

Ms. Smith asked if there was an insurance policy to purchase that would be less expensive than having to pay for the replacement fees. She expressed that other local schools are offering that service. Mr. Barber expressed that there are three options, one being that you would not incur any fees and once the equipment is broken you just replace it at no cost, and taking out of the revolving fund, and Mr. Barber explained that because the school district offers a 1:1 initiative that would be hard to maintain. The other option is an annual fee, almost like a rental fee, and put those funds in a revolving account and as things come up you can go into that account to replace the equipment and the third option is the replacement fee. Mr. Barber expressed that unfortunately the insurance scenario might not work in all districts, Mr. Barber expressed that most of this equipment has already been distributed, therefore he felt it would be more reasonable to do a replacement fee at this point in time, which falls in line with what we already have in place for books and other equipment or materials, instead of having to go back now and ask everyone to pay for insurance. Ms. Smith is concerned about families that can't pay the fee if something happens to their chromebook or ipad. Mr. Barber expressed that it's important to hold our students accountable, however he would work with any family that would have any hardships. Ms. Rios expressed that she does understand the accountability factor for children, she also expressed that we are putting a lot of responsibilities on the back of families and we are expecting a lot from them. Ms. Rios expressed that she wishes there was another way to do this, she expressed that's a lot of responsibility to be put on kids. Ms. Smith expressed that it's an added stress to the parents as well. Ms. Rios expressed that she also understands the school's perspective however she wishes there was a different way we could go about this. Ms. Beauregard asked if there could be some kind of contingency plan for families who can't pay the fee. Mr. Nelson expressed that as Mr. Barber referenced we would be willing to work with families going through a hardship. Mr. Dickerson asked if this policy would be districtwide. Mr. Barber expressed that this proposal would be going to all school committees for approval. Mr. Dickerson asked when the policy would be effective. Mr. Barber expressed it would be effective the date of the school committee approval. Mr. Nelson expressed that the district did invest in very heavy duty protective cases to prevent accidents from happening. Ms. Daniel asked if the ipads would have screen protectors and cases or if the parents would have to purchase them. Mr. Barber expressed that protective cases and shields would be purchased for the ipads.

Motion to approve the technology fees as presented.

MOTION by Ms. Beauregard

MOTION Seconded by Mr. Dickerson

ROLL CALL: Smith: yes, Dickerson: yes, Daniel: yes, Beauregard: yes, and Rios: yes

C. School Committee Stipend Discussion

Ms. Smith expressed that this was discussed at the last meeting and she asked for more information, she expressed she would like to give the committee more time to review the information and asked that this be brought back at another time soon and possibly collect more data in the meantime. She expressed she would like to review this during budget season and also reach out to Town Administrators and discuss with them.

V. New Business

C. Business

1. Financial

Mr. Barber reported that as November 30, 2020 the Sippican Elementary School currently has \$608,725 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2021 Fiscal Year. Mr. Barber reported that per the report given to the school committee by Department, that the report recognizes that of the \$6,183,227 appropriated to the district, 83.71% is directly assigned and is spent or encumbered to student instruction.

Mr. Barber reported summaries on the following departments:

Food Service: Mr. Barber expressed that the breakfast and lunch counts have increased for the month of October, Mr. Barber expressed that he hopes the increase continues into November.

Ms. Smith acknowledged Ms. Henesey and her staff, she expressed that have been amazing, she expressed that since this pandemic started in March they have been tirelessly working to provide breakfast and lunch to our families. She expressed she's thankful for them and their hard work.

Facilities: Mr. Barber expressed that they continue to follow the COVID-19 protocols for cleaning, sanitizing and traffic control. Nightly sanitizing of all buses with static spray sanitizing equipment. Mr. Barber expressed that protective shields have been installed in all required areas and that testing shields are available on site as well.

D. Personnel

Mr. Nelson reviewed the following personnel changes with the School Committee.

The following new staff have been hired for the 2020-2021 school year

Name	Position
Gilbert Leonardo	Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds

Mr. Nelson expressed that Mr. Leonardo came highly recommended from ORR School District. Mr. Nelson expressed that from conversations he's had with Principal Sirois, he believes the transition is going well.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Smith thanked the Administration, Ms. Sirois and her team, the teachers and staff the parents and the students. Ms. Smith expressed that last year we opened up our school year with Dr. Brown and he talked about what's in your backpack and not knowing what someone is carrying in their backpack, she expressed that she would like to remind people "that it is still tough, the year is not done yet and 2020 has been hard for many families and many of our staff members and administration, we don't know what's in their backpack, so I remind everyone to continue to be kind to those around you". Ms. Smith recommended for those who are not familiar with Dr. Brown to google him and watch his videos/seminars.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT -

Michael Nelson:

Mr. Nelson reported that the commissioner has given districts local flexibility for the current year, so that if there are days when schools must close because of inclement weather or other emergency, districts may choose whether to treat those days as "snow days" to be made up later or provide all students with remote learning on those days in a manner that is consistent with the regulatory requirements Mr. Nelson reported that he brought this information to the Joint School Committee and the committee voted on November 19th to shift snow days to possible remote learning days for the current school year and gave the Superintendent the authority to make that decision. Mr. Nelson explained that the vote does have a caveat that if there were significant power outages in any of our three communities he would make a decision to call it a traditional snow day.

Jannell Pearson-Campbell:

Dr. Pearson-Campbell expressed that on November 3rd she along with Principal Sirois led a full day of Professional Development. Dr. Pearson-Campbell gave an overview of the November 3rd full day professional development.

On November 3rd, the Office of Teaching and Learning hosted a full day of district-wide professional development that focused on Social & Emotional Learning & Global Citizenship. The three areas we will explore are: Cultural Proficiency & Anti-Racism, Student/Teacher Relationships & Empathy and Global Awareness & Personal Responsibility, she expressed that the keynote speakers were **Mr. Mirko Chardin** who facilitated a webinar on ***Beyond Access***. Mirko Chardin is the Founding Head of School of the Putnam Avenue Upper School in Cambridge, MA. Mirko's work has involved all areas of school management and student support, his greatest experience and passion revolves around culturally connected teaching and learning, recruiting and retaining educators of color, restorative practice, and school culture. Mirko was a keynote speaker at the 2017 UDL Symposium. He is also a race, diversity, and cultural proficiency facilitator & leadership coach for the Aspire Institute at Boston University's New Wheelock College of Human Development and Education' as well as for the Center of Artistry and Scholarship. He is a principal mentor for the Perone-Sizer Creative Leadership Institute and is an active hip-hop artist, releasing the album "Unhealthy Societies". Mirko also presents both locally and nationally on issues of cultural proficiency, equity, and the use of personal narratives and is also the co-author with Dr. Katie Novak of the soon to be released "Social Justice in the Hands of Educators" and **Dr. Kalise Wornum** who facilitated a webinar on ***Cultural Proficiency & Equity***. In 2017 Kalise received her doctorate degree in Educational Leadership and Management. Kalise received her B.A. in Humanities with a concentration in interpersonal communications from Bradford College and a Master's degree in educational administration from The University of Vermont. Kalise has worked at numerous colleges /universities and K-12 districts which have given her a unique and in-depth understanding of the American educational system. As the Executive Director of Empowering Multicultural Initiatives with curriculum development and instructional responsibilities, she learned the importance of appropriate consistent professional development for teachers. This position also allowed her to work with and provide professional development to educators across the commonwealth and the New England area. Kalise next received her administration license after completing an ELI program through the Boston University/Education Collaborative program enabling her to better identify the perspectives of school leaders. Furthermore, she is currently the Senior Director of Educational Equity for the Public schools of Brookline and is frequently described as an incredibly energetic, informative, dynamic presenter. Her truly authentic entrance into this very complex and daunting conversation relaxes all and makes this seeming impenetrable topic extremely approachable. Dr. Pearson-Campbell also gave an overview of the in-house offerings, which were the following:

Dr. Jannell Pearson-Campbell, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, will facilitate a webinar on ***Teaching & Learning Pandemic Pedagogy***.

Mr. Philip Alessi, School Psychologist at the Old Rochester Regional High School & Junior High School, will facilitate 2 pre-recorded webinars: one on ***Executive Functioning*** and the other on ***Fostering Positive Relationships with Our Students***. Phil supports students' navigation in today's world of COVID-19 and remote learning.

She also expressed that educators had the opportunity to continue unpacking AIMSWEB benchmark data and or preparing to Pivot.

Dr. Pearson-Campbell reported that at the end of the day a survey was sent out to get feedback for the January full day professional development day.

Craig Davidson:

Mr. Davidson Reported that in the Student Services Department they have been working on sending home Individual Service Plans to families. Mr. Davidson explained that Individual Service Plans are plans for students who are receiving special education services. Mr. Davidson reported that his office has also been working on the Shaywitz dyslexia screener, which gives our staff the ability to universally screen, identify risk, progress monitor and report results in one seamless system and it's actually tied to our AIMSWeb benchmarking the we have been using districtwide K-3. Mr. Davidson expressed that the state should be releasing guidance by the end of the month on this initiative. Mr. Davidson reported that this program is evidence based, teacher friendly, quick rating skilled designed for grades K-3, and it's part of the Pearson Company.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-

Ms. Sirois reported on the following initiatives at Sippican School:

- She reported that Halloween was still celebrated at Sippican and that both teachers and students dressed up on Hybrid in days.
- She reported that LifeTouch worked with Sippican on providing socially distanced photos. Class pictures were done "70's style". Picture retakes were taken this week.
- She reported that she's been working with Calmer Choice again this year. She expressed that beginning in January we should start to provide teacher training and possible student and family workshops as well.
- She reported that at the October meeting the school committee accepted a donation of the new interactive system from the Marion Scholarship Committee and the new system was delivered this week and is currently being used in Kindergarten, she expressed her gratitude to the Marion Scholarship Committee for their generous donation.
- She thanked VASE, the Marion Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council for helping to fund virtual enrichment opportunities for Sippican's 2nd graders and 5th graders who attended sessions with Mr. Dave Ruch.
- She reported that Sippican is working with Project 351 a non-profit organization on a food and clothing drive.
- She reported that during the professional development day on November 3rd her teachers also worked on pivot plans if we were to need to move to fully remote learning.
- She thanked the Tri-Town Against Racism group for sharing information about the Crayon Project. This group provides FREE multicultural crayons to educators. She explained that the link has been shared with staff. She also reported that the Tri-Town Against Racism has donated books to the Sippican School Library.
- She reported that School Council is up and running. At our November meeting we began our work on our School Improvement Plan. She reported that the focus will be on Social/Emotional Learning, Global Citizenship, and 21st Century Learning. The meetings, presently, will be held through zoom the third Tuesday of the month.

For more information please refer to "MSC 10142020 Principal Report"

VIII. School Committee

B. Committee Reports

- 1. Budget Subcommittee** – Ms. Smith reported that the committee met on November 30th with Administration and were very impressed by Mr. Barber's presentation. Ms. Smith reported that they are meeting again on December 7th and December 10th. Ms. Smith expressed that they are trying to keep the timeline for the town submittal.
- 2. Building Committee** – NONE
- 3. ORR District School Committee**- Ms. Smith reported that the committee met in October and reviewed Reopening Update, Dual Enrollment Classes and how they were

weighted, Foreign Language Requirement, Revisions to the Student Handbooks, MCAS Resolution Letter was approved to send to the state.

4. **SMEC** - Ms. Smith reported that the meeting was rescheduled from November 30th to December 11th, therefore she will have something at the next meeting.

5. **Early Childhood Council** – Ms. Daniel was having technical difficulties therefore Mr. Davidson reported on her behalf. Mr. Davidson expressed that it was his first meeting as part of the Early Childhood Council, he expressed it was great to be a part of it, he reported that they had a great discussion about the resources that are out there in the community and what is being offered to our families. Mr. Davidson reported that Ms. Lopes has a link on the Preschool Website that shares all resources available to families. Mr. Davidson also reported that they had a discussion about upcoming screenings that will be coming up throughout the year. Ms. Daniel added through Ms. Smith that Ms. Lisa Fuller from the Rochester Library put together a list of activities that are happening in the area that can be found on the ORR Early Childhood Website and she also reported that the Rochester Library is fully open by appointment and that Stacy Gay spoke about the work that the Justice Resource Center is doing at preschools and daycare centers.

6. **READS**- Mr. Nelson reported that they had a virtual meeting on November 12th, Mr. Nelson reported that the Special Education Administrators went over their recent work, the School Business Administrator went over their recent FY20 audit, they updated Superintendents on Policy Updates; Tuition Fees Adjustments; in addition, Dr. Theresa Craig reported the hiring of new staff members based off the current program. Mr. Nelson reported that similar to ORR she also reported Superintendents on how they will manage snow days.

7. **Tri-Town Foundation** - NONE

8. **Policy Sub-Committee** – Ms. Beauregard reported that this committee will meet on December 14th.

9. **School Council** – Ms. Sirois reported during her principal's report.

10. **Anti-Racism Sub-Committee** – Ms. Beauregard reported that this committee met today, December 2nd, and reported that Central Office Administrators are meeting with outside consultants to review our policies as well as looking at our preschool school special education program, we also received a report about the two anti-racism speakers at the Professional Development Day, administrators are looking at two grant opportunities the "Hate Grant" and the "Social Emotional Grant" and if they receive those the funding will go towards training and a coach for the schools. She reported that the committee is splitting into two groups to try to get a little more done on specific topics. There was also a discussion about a possible name change, she expressed that some members expressed that the name anti-racism strikes a bad cord with some people and immediately turns them off. Our next meeting is December 22nd.

Ms. Smith reviewed the timeline, the next meeting will be January 13, 2021.

I. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes- Regular Session:

October 14, 2020

Motion to accept the October 14, 2020 minutes as presented

MOTION by Ms. Beauregard

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Daniel

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Smith; yes - Daniel; yes - Rios; yes – Dickerson; yes- Beauregard; yes)

(it should be noted that Mr. Dickerson abstained but later recalled being at this meeting and approved these minutes)

Mr. Nelson asked permission for Mr. Howard Barber to attend executive session. Ms. Smith approved the request.

OPEN COMMENTS: NONE

MOTION: by Ms. Daniel at 7:46 p.m. to enter executive session for the purpose of exception #3, to discuss union personnel and #7 to comply with comply with the provisions of any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

SECOND: by Mr. Dickerson

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Smith; yes - Daniel; yes - Rios; yes – Dickerson; yes- Beauregard; yes)

MOTION: by Ms. Daniel to go come out of Executive Session at 8:10 pm only to adjourn.

SECOND: by Mr. Dickerson

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Smith; yes - Daniel; yes - Rios; yes – Dickerson; yes- Beauregard; yes)

Motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

MOTION by Ms. Daniel

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Rios

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Smith; yes - Daniel; yes - Rios; yes – Dickerson; yes- Beauregard; yes)

Submitted by Diana Russo