

MATTAPOISETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
Mattapoisett, Massachusetts

BY: HYBRID FORMAT

MEETING MINUTES  
December 6, 2021

Regular meeting of the Mattapoisett School Committee was held on Monday – December 6, 2021, and called to order by Chairperson James Muse at 6:32pm.

Chairperson Muse stated the meeting is being conducted in a hybrid format – with committee members and administrators having the option to attend in person in the Superintendent’s Office Conference Room located at 135 Marion Road, Mattapoisett, MA 02739 or via zoom; and, the public has the ability to participate remotely through zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Muse, Chairperson - remote; Carly Lavin, Vice-Chair – in person; Tiffini Reedy – in person; Carole Clifford – in person; and Karin Barrows –remote.

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools – in person; Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services – in person; Howard Barber –Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations – in person; Rose Bowman, Principal, Mattapoisett Public Schools – in person; Kevin Tavares, Associate Principal – Mattapoisett Public Schools – in person; Toni Bailey, Recording Secretary – in person; teachers; staff; parents; members of the press and public-via zoom.

**MEETING TO ORDER:**

Chairperson, James Muse 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.

**XII. Executives Session**

Recommendation

That the School Committee enter into Executive Session for the purposes of exception #3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and exception #7, to comply with the provisions of any general or special law or federal.

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to go into Executive Session at 6:34pm for the Purpose of #3 and #7, and to return to the regular School Committee meeting as scheduled

SECONDED: Carly Lavin

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Roll Call: Carly Lavin – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; Carole Clifford – Yes; Tiffini Reedy – Yes; James Muse - Yes

Mattapoisett School Committee resumed the regular scheduled School Committee meeting at 6:42pm

## **SCHOOL COMMITTEE RECOGNITION**

Superintendent Michael Nelson stated the following:

*“This evening I have the distinct honor of announcing that Principal Rose Bowman has shared her intent and plans to retire at the end of this school year.*

*Principal Bowman began her career as a second grade teacher with the New Bedford Public Schools in 1971. In 1986, she became a pre-school teacher at the The Music Room in Mattapoissett. She then joined the Mattapoissett School District in 1990, serving as a kindergarten teacher from 1990-1993 and a kindergarten and reading recovery teacher from 1993-1998. She was the Principal of Old Hammondtown School from 1998-2008 and then assumed her role as Principal of Center School from 2008-2014, when she then agreed to lead both elementary schools since 2014.*

*Principal Bowman has been an extraordinary leader of our Mattapoissett Elementary Schools for the past 20-plus years, and has led with care and enthusiasm. She has always worked to build a positive learning environment in Mattapoissett’s elementary schools and in our community as a whole. She has supported our teachers, students and families in whatever way she could. She has been a wonderful role model for our district’s administrators and has always been willing to share her wisdom, advice and guidance.*

*She has made many valuable contributions to our district as an educator and Principal, and we appreciate her many years of unwavering service and commitment in providing the best education possible to our youngest students. She has been a staple in our school community and will be very much missed.*

*We wish Principal Bowman the very best in her well-deserved retirement. Until June 30<sup>th</sup> – I know Principal Bowman will continue to lead the Mattapoissett elementary schools and we look forward to celebrating her final year with her.*

*Thank you for everything Principal Bowman!”*

Principal Bowman stated the following:

*“It is a pleasure and a privilege to have had this position and I am so grateful to everyone who has supported me – the staff, the kids the families – it has been an extraordinary time. I loved teaching but being a Principal was a position that I loved the most. I leave with mixed emotions just because I am so thrilled to have been a part of this school district and I thank you very much for your kind words and for all of the support you have given to me. Thank you.”*

Superintendent Nelson noted that Principal Bowman shared an email with her staff earlier today of her intent; that he notified the Chairperson of the Mattapoissett School Committee of her notification today; we wanted to share the news tonight publically at the beginning of the school committee meeting; an email will be sent to the school committee at large in terms of Principal’s Bowman’s decision during this meeting; and, a press release will be forthcoming in the local newspapers.

### **I. Approval of Minutes:**

#### **A. Minutes**

#### **Recommendation:**

That the School Committee review and approve the minutes of October 26, 2021

1. Regular Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2021

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of October 26, 2021, as presented  
SECONDED: Carly Lavin  
OPPOSED: None  
MOTION PASSED – 5:0  
Roll Call: Carly Lavin - Yes; Carole Clifford -Yes; Karin Barrows - Yes; Tiffini Reedy – Yes; James Muse - Yes

## 2. Executive Session Minutes – October 26, 2021

### Recommendation:

That the School Committee review and approve the minutes of October 26, 2021

Mr. Muse stated these minutes were reviewed and approved during Executive Session

## **IV. General**

### A. MCAS Presentation

#### Recommendation:

That the School Committee hear an MCAS presentation

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

*“Principal Bowman and Associate Assistant Principal, Mr. Tavares will present the key results from the most recent MCAS data from 2021. The MCAS is not new to us, but we know the context and overall purpose of the MCAS was quite different last year. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education articulated the differences in MCAS administration and what the focus should be when analyzing and utilizing this data moving forward at the local level.*

*COVID-19 and the pandemic greatly impacted the student, staff and family experience in the 2020-2021 school year, leading to different learning models and many associated challenges. In addition, MCAS was shortened and modified compared to previous years and the testing locations varied depending on student need, meaning – remote vs. in-person.*

*We know it is important to address the MCAS scores and what they mean for our students and our schools – we know that MCAS is one of the many pieces of information to help inform the teaching and learning experiences of our students. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education correctly predicted that there would be statewide dips in scores compared to previous data sets. Here in the Tri-town we saw some of those instances, but overall we were extremely proud of the efforts of our school community. The majority of our scores was consistent or above the state averages – our faculty, families and most of all our students, should be commended on their efforts. We will use this set of data in conjunction with all available data points to inform instructional approaches and interventions for our students moving forward. Most importantly, we will continue to focus on the whole child – fostering a strong sense of belonging, social emotional wellness, and offering strong grade-appropriate instruction and learning opportunities for all students.”*

Principal Bowman stated this MCAS Data is the most comprehensive MCAS report that she has ever read. Mrs. Bowman noted it is very well done – Mr. Tavares has spent an extraordinary amount of time doing this, and it tells the story of what happens even in the most challenging of times – that the students work to the best of their ability; the teachers gave all the supports necessary to create the best environment; and, the collaboration between home and school. Mrs.

Bowman stated because of all of these things, we celebrate the message that Mr. Tavares will share.

Associate Principal, Kevin Tavares presented Center and Old Hammondtown Schools MCAS Data – Please see Attachment “A”.

Questions/Comments by School Committee Members:

Comment by James Muse – Chairperson:

Mr. Muse stated the presentation was very thorough and his basic “takeaway” from the presentation is that what has happened every year has continued to happen and that we use this test for purposes of improving the teaching in our schools. Mr. Muse noted this isn’t about testing for individual students, that it is about the school as a whole. Mr. Muse noted he is not a fan of large standardized tests but the fact we are able to use this information, use this data, dig into it, and make our schools even better - is greatly appreciated.

Comment(s) by Carole Clifford:

Ms. Clifford noted the test was so different this past year.

Mr. Tavares stated there was one session of each – instead of two.

Ms. Clifford asked if this would be used as a baseline of any kind?

Mr. Tavares noted the Department of Education uses a formula but that they used a different formula this year.

Ms. Clifford stated this past years’ testing was a “one out” to her.

Mr. Tavares noted they have received the schedule for next year and it will be going back to the two sections in each.

Ms. Clifford’s concern is what years would they use to compare the MCAS scores to?

Superintendent Nelson stated this is why the “Student Growth Percentile” is the most important takeaway because they did rework the formula – they tried to account for it as best they could so that we could at least track the growth as Mr. Tavares illustrated.

Ms. Clifford noted the school system did fine considering COVID-19 restrictions.

Ms. Clifford questioned if the goal would be to get the “Partially Meeting Expectations” scores to a little lower scale and get the “Exceeding” scores to a higher scale?

Mr. Tavares stated they will look at the students who missed it by a point or two and they will target those sub-groups.

**B. Approval of Donation**

Recommendation:

That the School Committee review and approve a donation of a book. Ms. Heather Burke, Marion resident and Chairperson of the Old Rochester Regional School Committee would like to donate a book entitled “*Monty and Rose, Nest at Montrose*” by Tamima Itani.

Superintendent Nelson read the description of the book that Heather Burke provided to him as follows:

“*Monty and Rose Nest at Montrose*, is a beautifully illustrated book that tells the real-life story of piping plovers staying the summer at Montrose Beach in Chicago, Illinois in 2019. The trials and tribulations the endangered birds face in protecting their nest and raising their young makes for a great story that teaches valuable lessons on ecology, migration, conservation, and other scientific

concepts. The author is a good friend of the Burke family and they are happy to share these books with the Tri-town elementary schools. Sincerely – the Burke Family”

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to accept the donation of the book entitled “Monty and Rose, Nest at Montrose” as presented with the understanding that a background check on the author of the book will be completed.

SECONDED: Carole Clifford

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Roll Call: Carly Lavin - Yes; Carole Clifford -Yes; Karin Barrows - Yes; Tiffini Reedy – Yes; James Muse - Yes

### C. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement

#### Recommendation:

That the School Committee review for approval a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and the Mattapoissett Educator’s Association.

Superintendent Michael Nelson stated the following:

*“This evening we are asking the school committee to approve a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and the Mattapoissett Educator’s Association regarding a second grade long term substitute position. Ms. Patricia Cooney has agreed to take on this responsibility while a regular 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher is on an extended leave and we thank her for her willingness to help out the students, families and Center School as a whole.*

*We have worked with the Mattapoissett Educator’s Association and our School Committee and I feel that we have an MOA that represents the agreements that we have made and I am asking for official approval tonight.”*

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between the School Committee and the Mattapoissett Educator’s Association as presented.

SECONDED: Carole Clifford

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Roll Call: Carly Lavin - Yes; Carole Clifford -Yes; Karin Barrows - Yes; Tiffini Reedy – Yes; James Muse - Yes

## V. New Business

### B. Business

#### 1. Financial Report

#### Recommendation:

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

Mr. Barber presented a memo as of November 18, 2021 indicating the Mattapoissett School District currently has \$646,279.00 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2022 Fiscal Year. Mr. Barber noted the attached Year to Date Budget Report by Department, indicates we are able to identify how our funds are encumbered and expended. This report recognizes that of the \$7,511.872 appropriated to the District, consisting of both the Mattapoissett School District and Bristol County Agricultural enrolled student operational costs, 82.79% of funding spent or encumbered are directly relating to student instruction.

Mr. Barber reported on the Food Service Director's Report (By: Jill Henesey) dated November 2021, as follows (for both Center School and Old Hammondtown School):

- Meal participation continues to remain strong
  - Breakfast participation is a struggle at OHS
- Nation-wide supply chain disruptions and price increases are having a significant impact on our program
  - Changes to posted menus may happen without notice. Please have patience and understanding. We will ensure that all students are provided a well-balanced, nutritious meal that meet the USDA nutrition standards
- Secured a secondary prime grocer vendor as a backup supplier to help reduce the impact of supply chain issues
- Cost of food and supplies are increasing significantly
- All café staff have completed the Civil Rights in School Nutrition and Allergy training
- Service and repairs to all ovens completed
- Submitted USDA/State Infrastructure Grant

Questions/Comments by School Committee Members:

Carly Lavin:

Regarding the breakfast participation for OHS –Ms. Lavin noted she is surprised to hear at OHS that participation is low since the students get dropped off from the bus right near the cafeteria – are the students just not going in the cafeteria?

Principal Bowman stated she believes the majority of the students just choose to eat breakfast at home but there are several children who eat there every day. Mrs. Bowman noted lunch is more popular and the cafeteria staff work diligently to prepare meals that the kids will enjoy.

Mr. Barber reported on the Facilities Director's Report (By: Gene Jones) dated November, 2021 as follows for -

Center School:

- Completed Capital Improvements walk-thru with Town officials
- Completed repair on two Roof Top Units (RTU's)
- Replaced Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) in circulator pump #1
- Conducting fall grounds clean up
- COVID-19 protocols set for HVAC, cleaning, sanitizing
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

Old Hammondtown School:

- HVAC Upgrade authorized by Town
- Replaced two sewer pumps and controller floats
- Completed several roof membrane repairs
- Completed Capital Improvements walk-thru with Town officials
- Conducting fall grounds clean up
- COVID-19 protocols set for HVAC, cleaning, sanitizing
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

**VI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:**

Mr. Muse stated he is going to limit his report to four words – “Thank you Rose Bowman!”

**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINSTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

*“Regarding COVID-19 protocols and mitigation factors, we continue to adhere to the most recent guidance issued by state agencies, while collaborating with our local Board of Health. The testing program continues to be instrumental in addressing COVID-19 scenarios in the moment to do our best to not only prevent transmission but also keep learning happening as best we can in-person. Additionally, the DESE masking mandate continues to be implemented in schools and we anticipate an update in early January regarding the mandate’s status. Lastly, with vaccination now an option for individuals who are five years old and up, our school nurses are collecting data on our schools’ vaccination rates.”*

Mr. Nelson extended a congratulations to the high school girl’s volleyball team on their first ever program State Championship – it was extremely exciting and such an accomplishment by the girls volleyball team!

Mr. Nelson noted in terms of “Teaching and Learning” - keep on your radar an upcoming IXL Parent Session on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm via zoom – this is a great opportunity for parents/guardians and family members who want to learn more about the IXL program and how it can be accessed at home with their students.

Mr. Craig Davidson – Director of Student Services reported the following:

- The Department of Education has started their on-sight audit and they have already conducted a few interviews today and will continue tomorrow – they will be reviewing special education files, visiting some of our schools and interviewing some of our staff. There will be a report from the DOE in the next few months and it will be shared with the School Committee at that time.
- The Department of Education has partnered with school districts regarding “*Building Equitable Support for Children with Disabilities*”. Our school district team is composed of Mrs. Bowman, Doreen Lopes, Community Providers, Teachers and myself.
- The next Early Childhood Council Meeting is scheduled to take place on January 19, 2022, at which time we will dive deeper into the Family Engagement Frameworks and plan for April’s “Week of the Young Child”.
- Pre-School Screening will take place on January 26<sup>th</sup> at Center School - open to all Tri-town families.
- Music Playgroups are being offered to all Tri-town families at Rochester Memorial in a hybrid model on Wednesdays/Fridays – outdoors/weather permitting or they will pivot to a zoom offering or music room offering
- Kindergarten Parent Information Night is scheduled to take place on February 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm – they are moving to on-line registration through PowerSchool – more information to follow.
- In collaboration with Buzzard’s Bay Coalition – they will be providing programming for young families of all ages – nature walks, story walks and outdoor activities will be offered

## **PRINCIPAL’S REPORT**

Mrs. Rose Bowman, Principal of Center School/Old Hammondtown School stated the following:

- Commends the students from the National Honor Society of the Old Rochester Regional High School with their extraordinary leadership in facilitating a children’s book collection project at the elementary schools. The donated books will be going to children who do not have access to books at home, kids in hospitals for a prolonged period of time, or placed in little free libraries in the area. Mrs. Bowman applauds the leadership demonstrated by the members of the National Honor Society.

- Report Cards will go home for children in grades 1-6 on Wednesday, December 8, 2021; Kindergarten Report Cards go out twice a year so their first report card will be going out in January, 2022, and the second one in June.
- The holiday concert, both chorus and band, will be presented differently this year – The two music teachers, Willow Dowling and Brent Alger have worked with Mr. Tavares to develop a schedule for students at both Center School and Old Hammondtown School by grade levels – socially distanced. A chorus performance for the Council on Aging will also take place outside near the flagpole.

Questions/Comments by School Committee Members:

Carly Lavin:

What is the ELA Curriculum we use for K-6?

Mrs. Bowman responded Foundations is utilized as part of the Wilson Program for all children Pre-K through Grade 2; Scott Foresman Reading Street Series -Kindergarten through Grade 3; ReadyGEN Reading - Grades 4 and 5; and, Grade 6 follows an ELA program that matches what is done in Grades 7 and 8. Mrs. Bowman stated writing is integrated into the reading – they go hand-in hand. In Grade 6 the writing is aligned with the novels they read. Mrs. Bowman noted they also have non-fiction writing in relationship with science and social studies in order to tap into all different styles of writing based on the curriculum the students are studying.

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin stated she knows that Foundations has a phonetic component to it – do the other programs also have phonetics tied into them?

Mrs. Bowman stated Reading Street does have phonics, but they have found the phonetic element in Foundations - the children understands it, remembers it and are able to implement it. Mrs. Bowman stated in bringing Foundations into Pre-K – teachers have noticed when Pre-K students enter Kindergarten, they have retained the phonetic piece of the Foundations program and have a better understanding of phonics going forward. Mrs. Bowman noted if Pre-K students are able to visualize something, then they are able to remember it.

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin asked if the students who did not have Foundations in the earlier years - will RTI teams be bringing Foundations to those students who missed it?

Mr. Tavares stated RTI is looking at individual students – it is not for groups of students or grade levels in particular. Mr. Tavares noted when they meet with RTI teams weekly, they are looking at individual students.

Carly Lavin:

Are you finding that students who did not participate in Foundations are missing that phonetic piece? Is that a pattern, or is that one-off handled in one-off situations?

Mr. Tavares stated it does come up and those students work with the Title 1 teacher or the Reading Interventionist to target those skills. Mr. Tavares stated RTI is teacher recommended.

**VIII. School Committee**

**A. Committee Reports**

**1. ORR District School Committee**

Mr. Muse reported as follows:

- It has been exciting for the high school and Jr. high school to have some sense of normalcy and the after school programs and the sports have been a big uplift for everyone

- All three towns have passed the new District Agreement which will give us a better ability to plan, organize and fund the district

## 2. SMEC

Ms. Reedy reported as follows:

- A meeting was held on November 30, 2021
- They reviewed and approved the budget

## 3. READS

Mr. Nelson reported as follows:

- A meeting was held on November 18, 2021
- Heard about the FY21 close-out
- Talked about the current state of the FY22 budget
- Heard updates from the Special Ed Administrators

## 4. Early Childhood Council

Ms. Barrows stated the following:

- The next meeting is scheduled to take place on January 19, 2022 in a hybrid format

## 5. MASC

Mr. Muse reported as follows:

- The annual convention was held – he was not able to attend
- Mr. Muse noted MASC is a regular, solid resource for any of the school committee members to reach out to have a better understanding of how school districts across the state operate

## 6. Mattapoisett Capital Needs Committee

Ms. Clifford reported as follows:

- There was a “walk-through” in each of the schools – she did not make it
- Mr. Barber stated noted points of interest was identified for making recommendations for filing in order to meet the deadline for submission on the capital projects within the next couple of weeks

## 7. Tri-Town Education Foundation

Ms. Barrows reported the following:

- Meeting was held on November 9, 2021
- Discussed revising the Grant Application for the upcoming 2022-2023 Fiscal Year
- Agreed to examine and revise their printed materials (Grant Application/Brochure/Award Criteria) to align with the District Goals to become more inclusive and gender non-specific so they become more respectful of the diverse community they serve

## 8. Policy Sub-Committee

Ms. Lavin reported the following:

- Meeting was held on November 9, 2021
- Discussed an Advertising Policy – to see if local businesses can advertise on school property
- Discussed the policy around “Public Comment” – re-affirmed DESE’s recommendation (Note: Ms. Russo put a link on the web page so that the public can now find the actual policy regarding “Public Comment”.)

- The Policy Committee discussed at length how they can make sure that gender terms and other components on their different policies ensure inclusivity

#### 9. Budget Sub-Committee

Mr. Muse stated their first meeting is scheduled to take place later this week.

#### 10. Clock Committee

Mrs. Bowman stated the time is as accurate as can be everyday!

#### 11. Anti-Racism Committee

Ms. Clifford did not attend the meeting – Mr. Davidson reported as follows:

- Meeting was held on November 3, 2021
- Talked about the plan for the school year and how they are going to incorporate more student voices from the High School and Jr. High School
- Cultural Proficiency Teams will begin meeting in the upcoming month and there will be two Cultural Proficiency meetings in between each Anti-Racism Sub-Committee meeting
- Discussed partnership with Teacher's 21

### **IX. Future Business**

#### A. Timeline

Mattapoissett School Committee will be held on Monday, January 13, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Joint School Committee is scheduled for January 20, 2022 @ 6:30pm

#### B. Future Agenda Items

- Initial Budget Review (January)
- School Lunch Statement (January/May)
- Approval of Chairperson's Annual Report (February)
- Interim report on School Committee progress toward goals (February)
- Budget Approval (public hearings) (February)
- School Committee Reorganization (May/June – depending on election date)
- School Choice Public Hearing (May)
- Administrator Contract (May)
- Approval of new School Council goals (June)

### **X. Open Comments**

Superintendent Nelson stated at this time for anyone who is participating via zoom, if you would like to make an "Open Comment", add your name and address to the chat, we will acknowledge that we have a request, and with the Chairperson's permission, anyone with a public comment can speak up to three (3) minutes – there were no "Open Comments".

### **XI. Information Items**

#### LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED AT THE MEETING

- Mattapoissett School Committee Meeting Agenda – December 6, 2021
- Regular Session – Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2021
- MCAS Presentation
- Financial Report dated November, 2021
- Food Service Director Report dated November, 2021
- Facilities Director Report – November, 2021
- Principal's Report – December 6, 2021

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to adjourn the meeting at 7:38pm.

SECONDED: Carole Clifford

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Roll Call: Carly Lavin - Yes; - Carole Clifford -Yes; Karin Barrows - Yes; Tiffini Reedy – Yes;  
James Muse - Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni M. Bailey, Recording Secretary

Attachments:

“A” – Center and Old Hammondtown Schools MCAS Presentation