

MATTAPOISETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Mattapoisett, Massachusetts

BY: HYBRID FORMAT

MEETING MINUTES
April 4, 2022

Regular meeting of the Mattapoisett School Committee was held on Monday – April 4, 2022, and called to order by Chairperson James Muse at 6:30pm.

Chairperson Muse stated the meeting is being conducted via hybrid format only for School Committee Members; and, the public has the ability to participate remotely through zoom as well with the link provided.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Muse, Chairperson – Remote; Carly Lavin, Vice-Chair – Remote; Tiffini Reedy – Remote; Carole Clifford – Remote; Karin Barrows – Remote

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools – In Person; Dr. Jannell Pearson-Campbell, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning – In Person; Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services – In Person; Rosemary Bowman, 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.

FY23 PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

Michael S. Nelson – Superintendent of Schools stated the following:

“Good evening everyone. Tonight our first order of business is the FY23 Budget Public Hearing for the Mattapoisett Elementary School District.

The budget development process started in late fall/early winter and required numerous meetings to strategize the financial direction of Center School and Old Hammondtown School moving forward.

Our school committee representatives (thank you for your participation Carly Lavin & Jim Muse) listened to our building administration share their vision for our schools moving into next year and collaborated with central office administrators, the town administrator, and FINCOM representation, to bring forth tonight’s FY23 budget proposal.

During the budget development process we assessed and considered the current financial climate, our immediate school programming needs, discussed what needs we may have in future years, and prioritized what we know about the educational needs of our students, families, and staff members, heading into the 2022-2023 school year.

As a result, Mr. Barber, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations, will present our FY23 budget proposal. We feel this budget represents not only a fiscally responsible proposal, but also a budget that allows us to continue to

service our students and families, meeting Mattapoissett Elementary School's educational expectations. I want to thank all those who have contributed to this process and Mr. Barber for his financial leadership throughout the process."

Mr. Barber extended a "thank you" to the Mattapoissett and district administrators, as well as the school committee members who spent numerous hours of their time in developing this proposal.

Note: Due to Internet connection issues, approximately five minutes in this portion of the meeting was lost.

The following highlighted information in bold print was provided from the hard copy of the FY23 Proposed Budget.

Mr. Barber noted the following specifications were used to generate the overall operating budget are:

- **To provide a zero based budgetary method**
- **To provide cost effective programming and staffing**
- **To forecast operational needs**
- **To achieve administrative and departmental based goals**
- **Continuation of all funds budget approach**

Mr. Barber noted there are three segments of the Superintendent's Proposed FY23 Budget:

- 1. It is made up of the cost directly for the Mattapoissett Schools**
- 2. The cost relating to the attendance of Bristol Aggie**
- 3. The financial offsets from various resources**

Video recording was resumed for the following information:

Mattapoissett School District
Superintendent's Proposed FY23 Budget
As of April 4, 2022

Department	Mattapoissett Elem Schools	Bristol County Agricultural	Total General Funds	Funding Offsets
Center School	\$ 3,056,769	\$	\$ 3,056,769	\$ 112,596
Old Hammondtown	\$ 2,304,882	\$	\$ 2,304,882	\$ 43,632
Bristol Aggie	\$	\$ 111,736	\$ 111,736	\$
Central Office	\$ 211,111	\$	\$ 211,111	\$
Facilities	\$ 717,955	\$	\$ 717,955	\$ 10,000
Student Services	\$ 542,809	\$	\$ 542,809	\$ 209,320
Technology	\$ 152,716	\$	\$ 152,716	\$ 15,000
Transportation	\$ 548,800	\$	\$ 548,800	\$
Total FY23 Budget	\$ 7,535,043	\$ 111,736	\$ 7,646,778	\$ 390,548
Total FY22 Budget	\$ 7,385,125	\$ 126,747	\$ 7,511,872	\$ 312,035
	\$ 149,917	\$ (15,011)	\$ 134,906	\$ 78,512
	102.03%	88.16%	101.80%	125.16%

Mr. Barber stated as we combine the totals of the general funds of the operating budget and add to it the funding offsets, you will be able to identify and recognize the total cost to operate the District. Graph below shows the proposed increase:

Superintendent's Proposed FY2023 Total Operations Budget	
❖ FY23 Proposed Budget:	\$ 8,037,560
❖ FY22 Budget:	\$ 7,823,908
❖ Increase:	\$ 213,418

Mr. Barber noted a question that is always asked: What alternative budgetary resources are available to reduce the assessment? Mr. Barber noted the following financial budgetary offsets assist with reducing the assessment.

Financial Budgetary Offsets	
Source	Amount
Title 1 Grant	\$ 3,500
IDEA Grant	\$ 96,096
State Grants	\$ 6,500
Circuit Breaker	\$159,320
Building Use	\$ 10,000
School Choice	\$ 70,000
ESSER Funds	\$ 45,132
Total Offsets	\$390,548

Mr. Barber stated these funds (offsets) are used to fund 6 paraprofessionals (3 fully funded and 3 partially funded); technology replacements/general school supplies, approximately \$35,000; school choice and private school tuition - \$25,000; therapy costs - \$25,000; collaborative tuitions (circuit breaker) - \$159,320; and utility costs (building use) - \$10,000.

Mr. Barber stated with the "Offsets" listed above, the FY2023 Proposed Superintendent's Budget is:

❖ FY23 Proposed Budget:	\$ 7,646,778
❖ FY22 Approved Budget:	\$ 7,511,872
❖ Increase:	\$ 134,906
❖ Net % Increase of:	1.80%

Mr. Barber stated the combination of Mattapoissett Schools and Bristol Aggie comes to \$134,906 or 1.8% total increase over the FY2022 town approved assessment.

Mr. Barber stated the Superintendent's "Priorities & Strategies", included in the proposed \$7,646,778 operating budget are:

- Utilized a zero based budgetary process
- Analyzed operational costs
- Reviewed mandated costs

Mr. Barber stated compensatory items that influenced the proposed budget are Union Based Contract Agreements; contract agreements and staffing reductions (either from cut positions or those newly absorbed by funding offsets).

Union Based Contract Agreements

- Teacher’s Union Agreement

Staffing Changes

- -1 FTE – Paraprofessional
- 1 Teaching staff position based on retirement (replacement position offset with ESSER)

Mr. Barber stated financial changes that are taking place (that have no component relative to staffing) are:

Student Services

- Reduction of \$98,400 for tuition based programs

Technology

- Increase of \$19,000 for equipment and software replacement costs

Facilities

- Increase of \$52,000 for utility costs
- Decrease of \$20,000 for maintenance of building

Transportation

- Increase of \$16,000 for regular education transportation costs

Mr. Barber stated based on enrollment needs, tuition based day and collaborative tuitions are reducing; we are continuing with our 1:1 technology updates (chrome books/iPads) - netting a \$32,500 increase in facilities costs between utilities and building maintenance projections; and, there is an increase in our regular ed transportation costs over our prior fiscal year.

Mr. Barber stated the Budget Recognitions document is directly from the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education “DESE”. Mr. Barber noted based on our required October 1 student enrollment submission, our student counts increased by 28. Mr. Barber stated the continued changes to Chapter 70 Foundation brings our Chapter 70 state aid up by \$129,016 (15.15% increase over last year):

Budget Recognitions

Chapter 70 – Foundation State Aid Proposed

- FY2023 projects \$980,381 – Governor’s Proposal
- or 15.15% State Aid increase
- Including proposed additional \$30 per student
- Net \$129,016 increase from FY2022

	FY22	FY23	Change	% Change
Enrollment	396	424	28	7.07%
Foundation Budget	\$4,252,682	\$4,913,934	\$661,252	15.55%
Required District Contribution	\$3,508,463	\$3,933,553	\$425,090	12.12%
Chapter 70 Aid	\$ 851,365	\$ 980,381	\$129,016	15.15%
Required net school spending	\$4,359,828	\$4,913,934	\$554,106	12.71%

Mr. Barber stated the portion of the budget that is built on the enrollment of Bristol Aggie High School (separate from Mattapoisett School’s building budget) is the tuition reduction of 1 student enrolled versus the increase of \$5,000 for contract transportation costs:

Bristol County Agricultural HS – “BCAHS”

Note: This is separate from Mattapoisett School’s Building Budget

- Decrease of \$20,000 for tuition based on enrollment reduction of 1 student
- Increase of \$5,000 for contracted transportation costs

Mr. Barber provided a comparison between the FY2023 and the FY2022 Budgets as follows:

Department	Fiscal Year 2023	Fiscal Year 2022	Department Changes	School Choice
Center School	\$ 3,056,769	\$ 2,932,365	\$ 124,404	\$ 10,000
Old Hammondtown	\$ 2,304,882	\$ 2,279,918	\$ 24,964	\$ 10,000
Bristol Aggie	\$ 111,736	\$ 126,747	\$ (15,011)	\$ -
Central Office	\$ 211,111	\$ 198,444	\$ 12,667	\$ -
Facilities	\$ 717,955	\$ 672,927	\$ 45,028	\$ -
Student Services	\$ 542,809	\$ 639,521	\$ (96,712)	\$ 50,000
Technology	\$ 152,716	\$ 129,150	\$ 23,566	\$ -
Transportation	\$ 548,800	\$ 532,800	\$ 16,000	\$ -
Total Assessed Budgets	\$ 7,646,778	\$ 7,511,872	\$ 134,906	\$ 70,000

Question(s)/Comment(s) by School Committee Members:

Tiffini Reedy:

When the ESSER Funds go away, where will the \$45,000 come from?

Mr. Barber stated we use ESSER funds as a one-time operational cost, knowing that it is not revenue that we will receive every year.

Tiffini Reedy:

So, the ESSER money isn’t related to any teaching positions, paraprofessional positions or administrative staff?

Mr. Barber stated the IDEA grant is almost guaranteed every year (we use those funds to fund three paraprofessional positions). The Title 1 Grant is guaranteed every year. Mr. Barber stated those Grants that we know of that are yearly funding – they are the ones we use for staffing.

Carly Lavin:

Earlier a comment was made that there was one teacher replacement, which ESSER funds were going to be used for. Could you string that statement earlier together with the answer that you just made to Ms. Reedy’s question?

Mr. Barber stated if we have a staffing position, or a position as a whole, that we are not going to guarantee that there are costs in the long hall, those are the respective positions that we include in those offsets.

Carly Lavin:

Could you speak to the enrollment data – explaining what year is used with the October 1 reporting – FY21 or FY20.

Mr. Barber stated the FY23 foundation budget comes from our enrollment submissions through our SIMS reporting on October 1st of our current fiscal year – which would be October 1, 2021 and that identifies the costs available for foundation budget FY23.

Carly Lavin:

Do we have any information regarding our upcoming Kindergarten enrollment for the October 1, 2022 reporting? Will that number be at 424 or higher?

Mrs. Bowman stated as of today, we have 50 families who have registered their children for Kindergarten. Mrs. Bowman noted this is a very strong number since it is only April and we know that we will continue to receive registrations through August. Mrs. Bowman stated they would have three classes of 18-20 students, based on the number that we know and what we anticipate. Mrs. Bowman noted with the anticipated enrollment numbers, we are at 449 students – 250 students at Center School and 199 at OHS. Mrs. Bowman stated when she predicts these numbers, she adds three students to each grade level for the anticipated average enrollment that occurs over the summer. Mrs. Bowman noted 449 students is a slight increase of students from this year.

Carole Clifford:

Ms. Clifford stated the article in the Wanderer was upsetting to her with the attitude of FINCOM and others questioning the transparency of this budget. Ms. Clifford stated what she is hearing tonight is pretty clear that we currently stand at \$22,000/pupil and everyone else is paying \$12,000. Ms. Clifford stated there is a lot of false information out there and she would like to know if there are other things happening behind the scenes that are trying to calm this down, so that we have a good town meeting in support of this budget.

Chairperson Muse stated they followed the same procedure this year in terms of working through the budget with the Administration. Mr. Muse stated the first thing that has to happen with the budget is to determine the needs – the staff, principals and administration determines these needs. Mr. Muse noted Mrs. Bowman has done a remarkable job over the many years predicting what happens with our population and this is where our number comes from. Mr. Muse noted they have been extremely transparent again this year and have answered any questions that have come up, just as they have done for the past 10 years, since he has been on the Mattapoissett School Committee. Mr. Muse stated we have a reasonable budget to deliver the services that are needed for the students of this town.

Ms. Clifford noted many families move to the Town of Mattapoissett because of their fantastic school system, and she wonders if some of the elected officials don't get that a good education costs money – for the record, it is not money wasted and it is not a money pit.

Mr. Muse stated he agrees with Ms. Clifford and he personally agrees that it is the most important thing we do with our taxes - to educate our children.

Karin Barrows:

Ms. Barrows stated the notion that educating our students is a money pit is something she would like to denounce publically. Ms. Barrows stated a 1.8% increase is a responsible presentation for the upcoming school year. Ms. Barrows echoed Ms. Clifford stating people move to Mattapoissett because we are so well known for our education for our students.

Tiffini Reedy:

Ms. Reedy stated with the cost of inflation alone, it is remarkable that the budget has not increased more this upcoming year than what Mr. Barber presented. Ms. Reedy asked in the event the committee rejects the proposed budget, how do we go about that and what will be the next steps?

Mr. Muse explained the school committee votes on it first and then it is submitted to the town. Mr. Muse noted it would be part of the overall budget, which is then voted on by the community members at the Town Meeting.

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin agreed with both Ms. Clifford and Ms. Barrows, and further noted the misinformation and the headline grabbing the statistics that are referred to. Ms. Lavin stated on the DESE website there is a lot of information and a lot of financial data that is put out there and she thinks that is where a lot of information is deduced to simple bullet points and where the \$20,000/pupil came from. Ms. Lavin noted it is important to understand the numerator and the total financial cost that is used to calculate that is over nine million dollars. Ms. Lavin stated we all just sat through Mr. Barber's presentation and there was nothing there that got us to nine million dollars of educating our children. Ms. Lavin stated it is very important for all of us to understand and educate ourselves as to what goes into those numbers that are then used for quick headline grabbing statements – because the cost to educate our students is not \$20,000/per student. Ms. Lavin stated if we use the numbers that Mr. Barber just outlined and by the student population that Mrs. Bowman provided to us, it is much less.

Chairperson Muse asked at this time if there were any questions/comments by the public – there were none.

Superintendent Nelson extended a “thank you” to all of the committee members for their discussion, questions and statements and stated the following:

“We are very proud of the education that we offer our students in the elementary schools and our secondary schools, including the services in Marion and Rochester as well. I think the big point here is that there are ongoing conversations with our town stakeholders and I am confident that we can continue to talk out the different pieces of the budget process and ultimately get to a place that we are supporting our students, families and our staff members who are providing those services each and every day.

The budget that you see in front of you and the budget that was presented here tonight, overall, it represents an approximate 1.8% increase over last year with a 2% increase for Center School and Old Hammondtown School. We used a zero based budget mentality and I think that is really how we are able to look at what our needs are, account for some of the known costs and I believe based off of everything that we know now, this budget meets the programmatic needs of our students and is fiscally responsible.

I appreciate all of the feedback today and ultimately when we move into the general section of the Agenda, we will be looking for your approval of the budget as it was presented. The next steps would be certifying the budget and submitting it to the town for the warrant in the spring.

Again, I appreciate the contributions of Ms. Lavin and Mr. Muse throughout the process and all of your feedback and support here tonight. I am confident that we can work with all town stakeholders to get to a place that we need to be in FY23 for our students. Thank you.”

Public Budget Hearing: Closed at 7:07pm

I. Approval of Minutes:

1. A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Session

Recommendation:

That the School Committee review and approve the minutes of February 28, 2022

1. Regular Meeting Minutes – February 28, 2022

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of February 28, 2022, 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

Recommendation:

That the School Committee review and approve the Executive Session minutes of February 28, 2022 and March 22, 2022

Chairperson Muse stated these minutes would be approved during Executive Session.

IV. General

A. FY23 Budget Approval

Recommendation:

That the School Committee review for approval the FY23 Budget.

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to approve the proposed FY22/23 Operating Budget in the amount of \$7,646,778 for the Mattapoisett School District, inclusive of the Mattapoisett Elementary Schools of \$7,535,042 and Bristol County Agricultural High School of \$111,736, as presented

SECONDED: Karin Barrows

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

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

MOTION by Karin Barrows to approve the proposed Fiscal Year - June 30, 2023 allocation of School Choice funding in the amount of \$70,000 for the Mattapoisett School District 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

B. School Choice Discussion

Recommendation:

That the School Committee have a discussion regarding School Choice for the 2022-2023 school year.

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

“Each year, every school district or school committee must take action regarding whether or not they will be a “School Choice” district in the upcoming school year. Tonight, we are not looking for this school committee to make a decision, but instead have a general discussion regarding School Choice for the 2022-2023 school year. It should be noted that any current school choice students that our schools have already accepted have the right to remain enrolled no matter what decision is made regarding next year.

In May, we will hold the official school choice public hearing and the school committee will need to make a decision regarding their school choice status for the 22-23 school year.”

Chairperson Muse noted we do have students enrolled in the Mattapoisett School District who pay tuition. Mr. Muse stated he is personally in favor of it, not because of the financial impact, but because it brings another light to our schools for everyone to see by having students, who do not live in our town, but want to come to our schools. Mr. Muse stated it is a very good program and it has always been done to compliment the existing classrooms and classroom sizes.

There were no questions/comments by the school committee members. Mr. Muse noted at the next school committee meeting, there would be a vote on whether or not the Mattapoisett School District continues with the School Choice program.

Carole Clifford:

Ms. Clifford asked if at the next meeting we would have a discussion/answer as to whether or not we will have the space for School Choice students.

Mr. Muse responded yes and that is why we are waiting to vote on this matter at the next meeting, because we should have a better idea of our own student numbers.

C. Anti-Racism Sub-Committee Name Change

Recommendation:

That the School Committee have a discussion and take a vote about changing the name of the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee.

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

“Based on the recommendation of the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee it is recommended that tonight the school committee take official action to rename the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee to the Equity Sub-Committee.”

Mr. Craig Davidson stated the following:

“On October 5th of 2020, the Old Rochester Regional School District - MA Superintendency Union #55 held our first ever Anti-Racism Sub-Committee meeting. At that time, we started with school committee representatives, administrators and a few community stakeholders. Since that time, we have grown in numbers by recruiting students and staff from the buildings, working with our outside consultant - Christina Brown, and creating co-chair positions. During the last year and a half, we have had discussions about the vision of the subcommittee, heard from community stakeholders and members, ran student focus groups, and went through a potential subcommittee name change process with our Anti-Racism Sub-Committee. We are here tonight to share the

recommendation that came from that process under the guidance of our consultant and co-chairs, and discuss the next steps in the process. As a result from that process, the recommendation to our school committee is to change the current subcommittee name from the Anti-Racism Sub-Committee to the Equity Sub-Committee – celebrating and supporting inclusion, diversity and belonging.”

Superintendent Nelson noted this request is being brought before all four School Committees – Marion, Mattapoisett, Rochester and the District, for a vote.

Question(s)/Comment(s) by School Committee Members:

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin asked Carole Clifford to speak to this change, since she was the representative from the Mattapoisett School Committee.

Carole Clifford:

Ms. Clifford stated she spoke to Mr. Davidson at one point regarding the name being changed from the “Tri-Town Anti-Racism Committee”, but they also have representation on this subcommittee and they have all agreed to this name change to make it more inclusive and belonging. Ms. Clifford stated those words were also very important to them.

MOTION: by Karin Barrows to change the name of the “Anti-Racism Sub-Committee” to be called the “Equity Sub-Committee” as discussed.

SECOND: 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 reported the following:

The Mattapoisett School District currently has approximately \$379,963 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2022 Fiscal Year. Per the attached Year-to-Date Budget Report by Department, 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 Mattapoisett School District and Bristol County Agricultural High School.

Question(s)/Comment(s) by School Committee Members:

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin was under the impression as we approached the end of the fiscal year we would be evaluating whether or not there were any ESSER funds we could use (one-time funds) – is there any update on whether there is any funding available to us from COVID?

Mr. Barber stated we still have ESSER funds available and we are still going through the process with all grants to make sure we are accommodating as many resources as we can to allow us to

use for all of the offsets outlined in the proposed budget. Mr. Barber noted at this time he does not have all of the values yet, but as we get closer to the end of the year he will be able to provide numbers to the committee.

Mr. Barber reported the following:

Food Service Director's Report (By: Jill Henesey) dated March, 2022 as follows:

- Meal participation continues to remain strong
- 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
- Successfully completed our Board of Health Inspection in both schools
- Repairs to the garbage disposal at OHS have been completed

Mr. Barber reported the following:

Facilities Director's Report (By: Gene Jones) dated February 2022 as follows:

Center School:

- Contractor diagnosed several leaks and completed roof repairs on Barstow Street side
- Sent Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) for Boiler #2 for repair/reprogram
- Preparing grounds equipment for spring cleanup and operations
- Met with Town Capital Committee for school's needs
- COVID-19 protocols set for HVAC, cleaning, sanitizing
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

Old Hammondtown School:

- Replaced plow blade on grounds tractor
- Preparing grounds equipment for spring cleanup and operations
- Met with Town Capital Committee for school's needs
- COVID-19 protocols set for HVAC, cleaning, sanitizing
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

VI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

Chairperson Muse stated he greatly appreciated all of the comments that were made and the support the committee voiced for the education the administration and teachers work towards to give the elementary students in our district the best education. Mr. Muse stated this only occurs because of hard work and dedication from people on the committee and clearly the administration and the teachers/staff. Mr. Muse noted it has always been appreciated that the Town of Mattapoisett has always supported us financially. Mr. Muse noted he is optimistic the town will do that again this year.

Mr. Muse noted with the changing of the principals, he personally noted how fantastic it is that Mr. Tavares will be staying on to be the principal at Old Hammondtown School. Mr. Muse stated he has known Mr. Tavares for decades and before he was an assistant principal, he was a fantastic teacher at OHS and is loved by the student body. Mr. Muse stated it is fortunate that Mr. Tavares has agreed to stay on and help us transition from the great leadership we have had from Mrs. Bowman.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

“Currently, the position for principal at Center School is posted and closes in approximately one week. Right now we are in the window of accepting applications from interested candidates. Once the window for applying closes, we will move forward with screening the candidates and beginning the interview process. Our hiring process will follow the school committee’s adopted policy and we will provide opportunities for our families and staff members to meet finalists and provide input as well. This will also allow any finalist to learn about our school community before making a final decision. The hiring committee will involve school committee representation, staff members from our schools, administrators and parents. We will also try to find an opportunity to have student voice involved in the process as well.”

Dr. Jannell Pearson-Campbell, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Instruction provided a written report as follows:

- The Office of Teaching and Learning received approval from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the District’s ELL Audit Continuous Improvement Plan.
- Evidence is being added to the DESE Portal and in the next few days, parents and guardians will receive a language survey to support all families. When you look on our web page, you will see a translation page for parents who may need services in translating documents, etc.
- The Instructional Council Team sent out a Needs Assessment Google Survey to staff, students and parents/guardians for feedback to support the creation of the 2022-2023 Professional Development Plan. We are in the process of reviewing the data. The draft Professional Development Plan will be reviewed for approval at the Joint School Committee meeting later this month.

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

- Transition Meetings have taken place - 6th grade liaisons and related services providers from our elementary schools have met with our Junior High School staff to discuss the services that will be required during the 2022-23 school year.
- Community Talk Series – the Old Rochester Regional School District & Superintendency School Union #55, in partnership with Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative (SMEC), is excited to offer Part 4 of our "Community Talks" series.
- On Tuesday, April 12, 2022 - starting at 6:00p.m.- Dr. Jesse W. Jackson III will present ***"How to speak to your children about cultural sensitivity or racial incidents that may occur at school or in the community."*** Dr. Jackson has visited and trained staff at more than 1,400 schools throughout the United States, establishing a reputation as a difference-making and game-changer for the organizations he has worked with.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

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

- OHS is participating in the March Book Madness – Ms. Valliere and Mrs. Casi wanted to create a fun school-wide literacy project for the month of March. This is a great way to create excitement around reading, to expose students to diverse literature, to use picture books for social-emotional learning, and to teach and review literacy standards. They started with 16 books in the bracket and will narrow it down to just two books.

- The FORM Choral Concert took place on March 8th directed by Mrs. Dowling and on March 15th the FORM Instrumental Music Concert took place directed by Mr. Alger. The students were thrilled to be able to go to the high school and perform on these nights and they all did an exemplary job at each concert.
- Parent/Teacher conferences for Kindergarten – Grade 6 were held on March 24 and March 25 – parents had the choice to meet in person or via zoom.
- Selectman, Jodi Bauer - representing the Mattapoisett Tree Committee, announced two of our students – Paige Mailloux (Grade 5) and Willow Ruel (Grade 5) as winners of the Arbor Day Poster Contest. A special “thank you” was given to Greta Anderson our art teacher for coordinating this poster contest at OHS
- MCAS is taking place in April and May – Grades 3-8 will take two sessions of ELA during April and two sessions of math in May. Grade 5 will take two sessions of Science, Technology and Engineering (STE) in May
- On Friday, April 29 “Hi-Five-Friday” will take place. The Police Association will send police officers to school and as children leave the buses and come into school they will “hi-five” the students – this is in honor of the collaboration between the police department and school. Police Officers have also been coming in and having lunch with the students – it is a great way to build relationships.

VIII. School Committee

A. Committee Reports

1. ORR District School Committee

Mr. Muse reported as follows:

- Passed the FY23 Budget to be put forward
- Acknowledged the great results in sports (both individual and team) as well as results of the Debate Team/DECA Team – students and parents participated via zoom at the school committee meeting – students were very excited to get recognized publically and you could see how proud both the students and parents were.

2. SMEC

Ms. Reedy stated they met last week and reported the following:

- Discussed the Budget
- Approved a raise for SMEC employees
- Discussed acquiring another building to expand operations in the north end of New Bedford

3. READS

Mr. Nelson stated READS met and reported the following:

- Approved minutes after the meeting was called to order
- Heard updates from their Special Education Administrators
- Took action regarding the FY23 Budget
- Took a look at the READS Capital Plan work
- Adjusted the pay scale for substitutes
- Accepted the Executive Director’s recommendation regarding the approval of new staff that was given to us in our backup information
- Heard an update on the status of the current FY22 budget
- Heard an update on the status of their plan for their property at 101 East Grove Street
- Heard an update on COVID-19
- Talked about some of the Professional Development Plans in the spring

4. Early Childhood Council

Ms. Barrows stated they met on March 29 and reported the following:

- Reminder – this week is the “Week of the Young Child”
- Activities that you can find on the District’s website are:
 - Shares information/resources for families who may be looking for activities in the area for younger students
 - Readiness screenings will take place on June 1 and June 2 – invitations will be sent out to families who have uprisng Kindergarten students
- Kindergarten transition dates were discussed and registration will be on-line

5. MASC

Mr. Muse reported the following:

- A ballet was mailed out for postings available at MASC, as well as awards for Lifetime Achievement for School Committee Members that have been involved in MASC over the years
- A reminder that MASC is a great resource for School Committee Members on how things are suppose to operate

6. Mattapoisett Capital Needs Committee

Superintendent Nelson stated the following:

- Each year they submit a Capital Needs request – this has been done
- We are waiting to find out what requests will be posted on the warrant at the Town Meeting this spring

7. Tri-Town Education Foundation

Ms. Barrows stated they have not met but reminded the committee of the following:

- Applications are due April 15th – the Grant is for Creative and Educational Projects that our outside of the school budget
- Teachers are able to submit their applications independently and they also have the opportunity to collaborate with students

8. Policy Sub-Committee

Ms. Lavin stated they have not met

9. Budget Sub-Committee

Mr. Muse referred to the presentation provided by Mr. Barber

10. Clock Committee

Mr. Muse stated it is nice to have a historic building in the center of our town with the clock working!

11. Anti-Racism Committee

Ms. Clifford stated the main conversation was the consideration for the request for the name change.

IX. Future Business

A. Timeline

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

Mattapoissett School Committee

May 16, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Hybrid Format

Joint School Committee

April 28, 2022 @ 6:30pm

Zoom

B. Future Agenda Items

- 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

Chairperson Muse 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 – and the Open Comments will last a total of fifteen (15) minutes.

Comments:

Sara Jacobsen – 68 Acushnet Road, Mattapoissett

Ms. Jacobsen stated the following:

“I am a 6th grade teacher at Old Hammondtown; I am a member of the Mattapoissett Educator’s Association; I am a parent; and I am a taxpayer. I wasn’t able to comment during the budget portion discussion but as I was listening – we have obviously been following this very closely in the schools - from what I have heard here tonight, and from what we have been hearing from a lot of conversations, it really seems like there is a need in our whole town to reach some sort of consensus about what our schools are, what their function is, and what we want them to be.

It was a hard week when the article came out in our schools because our teacher, who work in the different schools, are hearing very different things, especially during COVID. We all remember those meetings when they were very heated. We have come a long way in being productive and being civil. So many people had these ideas of how complicated and how very many roles schools needed to be. We were working so hard to make sure they could stay open because all of these stakeholders were acknowledging how much our schools meant to these kids. That role has changed enormously over the past decade – this is no longer an institution that just sort of delivers knowledge and then closes up at 3:00pm. That is what we heard during a lot of the COVID discussions.

The reality is as the role of schools has grown; it doesn’t get cheaper, right? There just seems to be sort of a disconnect here between what we have asked schools to be and what we are willing to fund. I think that one of things that the teachers are looking for from the school committee and from the community is almost just to say – please decide. However we choose to look at this, is there a shared vision from this community? Tension between what we have asked and what we hear from the press what we are willing to fund, is pretty extreme and pretty demoralizing. I speak for all of the educators in Mattapoissett. We would really love to be part of that conversation and we would love to offer as much

clarity as possible about how complex our schools are and the work that we do – and then let the community evaluate it.

What here isn't worth it to you? What child shouldn't get speech therapy? Which nursing staff do we not want to have? Let's try to come together so that people understand the way that this institution has so drastically evolved - I think would go a long way in helping this become more clear and avoid some of the demoralizing print that we saw earlier. Thank you for your time."

XI. Information Items

LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED AT THE MEETING

- Mattapoisett School Committee Meeting Agenda – April 4, 2022
- Regular Session – Meeting Minutes – February 28, 2022
- Financial Report dated April 4, 2022
- Food Service Director Report dated March 2022
- Facilities Director Report – April 2022
- Principal's Report – April 4, 2022

XII. Executive Session

Recommendation

That the School Committee enter into Executive Session at 7:45pm 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 regulations.

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to go into Executive Session at 7:45pm for the Purpose of #3 and #7, and to return to the regular School Committee meeting as scheduled only to adjourn

SECONDED: Carole Clifford

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni M. Bailey, Recording Secretary