

MATTAPOISETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Mattapoisett, Massachusetts
December 7, 2020
BY: ZOOM LINK
and
IN-PERSON at 133 Marion Road, Mattapoisett MA

MEETING MINUTES
December 7, 2020

Regular meeting of the Mattapoisett School Committee was held on Monday – December 7, 2020 and called to order by Chairperson James Muse at 6:32pm.

MEMBERS PRESENT: James Muse, Chairperson (remote); Carly Lavin, Vice-Chair (in-person); Carole Clifford (remote); Shannon Finning (in-person); and Karin Barrows (in-person)

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael S. Nelson, Superintendent of Schools (in-person); all others by remote - Jannell Pearson-Campbell – Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning; Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services; Howard Barber – Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations; Rosemary Bowman, Principal – Mattapoisett Public Schools; Kevin Tavares, Associate Principal – Mattapoisett Public Schools; teachers; staff; parents; members of the press and public; and, Toni Bailey, Recording Secretary

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.

MEETING TO ORDER

Chairperson Muse announced Dr. Mendes and Dr. Reynolds from Wareham Pediatrics was invited to attend the meeting this evening and asked that Superintendent Nelson speak at this time.

Superintendent Michael Nelson stated the following:

During “re-organization” at the meeting held in September, a discussion was had around our appointed school physician. Mr. Nelson stated the school physician consults with our school nurses and the administration on any health basis or any other safety needs. Mr. Nelson stated this is a very important topic based off of the COVID-19 scenario that our school district is facing and there were conversations around having a consistent appointed school physician amongst our four school districts.

Mr. Nelson stated he was asked by the Mattapoisett School District to reach out to both Dr. Chesney, who has served the district for nearly 20 years, and to Wareham Pediatrics to see if they would be interested to come before the school committee to discuss their practice and answer any questions from the committee members.

Mr. Nelson stated he contact Dr. Chesney and recapped with him what was just explained here tonight, and Dr. Chesney stated if Wareham Pediatrics was interested in the appointment and was supported by the school committee, he would happily step aside as he understands the need to have a consistent physician.

Mr. Nelson stated he then reached out to Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Mendes of Wareham Pediatrics and asked them to attend the school committee meeting tonight to introduce themselves, talk about their background, and answer any questions from the school committee members.

Dr. Mendes stated the following:

Wareham Pediatrics has been the health consultants for the ORR School District, as well as the Marion and Rochester School Districts. They work closely with all of the nurses in these three districts, and when he was contacted by Mr. Nelson to see if they would be interested as the health consultant for the two schools in Mattapoisett, both he and Dr. Reynolds thought it all made great sense. Dr. Mendes stated they joined Dr. Conway in 1974 and when Dr. Conway retired two years ago, he and Dr. Reynolds became new owners of the practice. Dr. Mendes stated both he and Dr. Reynolds live in Marion, and they have 2 additional physicians in the office as well. Dr. Mendes stated at present, they have approximately 500 patients from the town of Mattapoisett and they would love to provide health services to the Mattapoisett School District and work closely with their school nurse as needed.

Chairperson Muse asked the committee members if they had any questions for Dr. Mendes or Dr. Reynolds, or any comments they would like to share – hearing none – the following motion was made:

MOTION:	by Carole Clifford to approve Wareham Pediatrics as the school physician for the 20-21 school year
SECONDED:	Karin Barrows
OPPOSED:	None
MOTION PASSED:	5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Carly Lavin - Yes; James Muse – Yes

Mr. Muse welcomed Dr. Mendes and Dr. Reynolds (Wareham Pediatrics) for joining the Mattapoisett School Committee as the school physician for the upcoming school year.

Mr. Nelson thanked both Dr. Mendes and Dr. Reynolds for attending the meeting and for taking over the fourth district in our school district on behalf of the Tri-town.

Mr. Nelson extended a public “thank-you” to Dr. Chesney, who served the Mattapoisett School District for nearly two decades, and stated Dr. Chesney was always there to support us no matter what the need was.

Mr. Muse stated at this time the meeting will begin with Open Comments, and instructed the committee members, administration, parents, members of the public and press how the Open Comments will be run. Mr. Muse expressed that he hopes everyone is able to share information for the good of the order and to better our school district, and hopes the conversation can be civil and respectful. Mr. Muse stated that per MGL for a public meeting the following is stated: *No person shall address a meeting of a public body without permission of the chair, and all persons shall, at the request of the chair be silent. No person shall disrupt the proceedings of a meeting of a public body.*

Mr. Muse stated the following rules will be followed:

1. Public Comment shall be for a period of 20 minutes and shall generally follow the opening of the meeting. The Committee reserves the right to rearrange its agenda to accommodate scheduled presenters.
2. Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify themselves by name and address and shall speak for no longer than 3 minutes. No citizen may speak more than once without permission of the Chair. All citizens shall speak to the full Committee through the Chair and shall not address individual members or administrators.
3. Individuals may address topics on the agenda, items specified for public comment, or items within the scope of responsibility of the School Committee. The Chair shall rule out of order any individual who fails to honor the guidelines or who addresses a matter inappropriate for public comment.

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

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

Mr. Muse explained he would open the meeting with the OPEN COMMENTS section and expressed the administration and school committee members would also have a chance to speak during the general section of the meeting.

OPEN COMMENTS:

Ashley Ulshoeffter: Lebaron Way

Ms. Ulshoeffter stated she would like to highlight one of the items that she sent to the committee members, state senators and our local representative regarding students with IEP’s. Ms. Ulshoeffter stated as hard as the teachers, faculty, caregivers and students are working, the current set-up for the IEP plan for these students is just not conducive enough for their learning. I don’t think we are doing enough for them. I think that everyone that has a hand plays a role for that group of students and more should be done for these students, and I feel they should be allowed to go to school full-time.

Mr. Muse stated that parents with students on IEP’s should contact the school Principal or the Director of Student Services regarding specific circumstances for children with IEP’s.

Amanda Desrosiers – Laura Lane

Ms. Desrosiers stated she wants to talk about children going back to school full-time. Ms. Desrosiers stated she has a unique position in that she is a childcare licenser and often when children are not in school they fall into programs that she licenses and oversees. Ms. Desrosiers stated she knows that DPH’s biggest consideration is maintaining stable cohorts of children, which is obviously done in school, but on their days, off and they are not in the care of their families, they are often in pods, exempt care learning or childcare. Ms. Desrosiers stated students are often in programs where there is a group of 26 students to 2 teachers, which is an additional 26-28 children and/or adults they are exposed to during the week. Ms. Desrosiers stated if they are in exempt learning care, there’s very little oversight into these programs because they are not licensed and if they are in a pod during the week, there is no oversight - they are not required to comply. Ms. Desrosiers stated the biggest consideration should be the children maintain a stable environment, but they are only in school 2 days a week and other days of the week they can be exposed to so many other children. Ms. Desrosiers stated these students can range between 5 to 14 years old and they can be from any school district – not just necessarily from our district. Ms. Desrosiers stated at this time, all licensing meetings are done virtually, so we only see a tiny little bit. Ms. Desrosiers stated students would have much more consistency if they were in school full-time and they would be getting more academics.

Ms. Desrosiers’ concern at this time for the children is we are not maintaining stability for them, and the risk of increased exposure because of the alternate environments they are in when they are not in school.

Mr. Muse stated unfortunately we are very aware of the many challenges this virus is causing with everybody and we are doing our best to have the most stable and best education for our students given the circumstances.

Juliet Xifaras – Lebaron Way

Ms. Xifaras stated she is the mother of twin boys in the first grade and is also a nurse. Ms. Xifaras stated she currently is not working very much as a nurse because she spends three days a week homeschooling her boys in the hybrid model. Ms. Xifaras stated she wanted to speak tonight about how she would like to support the push to get our earliest learners back in school five days a week. Ms. Xifaras stated we

have talked about this a lot already, and hopes the other first grade moms will speak up on this matter tonight.

Ms. Xifaras stated as an aside she wants to share, because she thinks it is important, that her family has been deeply impacted by COVID-19. Ms. Xifaras stated all four members of her family was tested positive for COVID-19, experienced the course of the illness, and her 7-year old, Thomas, had significant symptoms for seven days with two emergency room visits and subsequently had to go to Boston Children's and was hospitalized. Ms. Xifaras stated if Dr. Reynolds is still at this meeting, she wants to give him a "shout-out" because he was enormously helpful and she is glad to see that Wareham Pediatrics is going to be our school physician.

Ms. Xifaras stated even the stress and world wind of ups and downs that challenged our family, she still feels really strongly that our earliest learners should be in school five days a week. Ms. Xifaras stated she does not regret their decision as a family to choose the hybrid learning model, which at this time allows them to be in school two days a week, because she knows that school really is one of the safest places for our children. Ms. Xifaras stated schools are doing an excellent job with social distancing and with masks and she knows that her son did not get COVID-19 at school, and that her son did not create any close contacts at school either. Ms. Xifaras stated she wants to praise and thank the school leaders for doing such a great job.

Ms. Xifaras stated she wanted to share this tidbit because being someone who has experienced this at a more significant level, she still feels strongly that our children deserve to be in school five days a week and the benefits out way the consequences in her opinion. Ms. Xifaras asked again that the school committee prioritize our earliest learners, that they get to go back to school five days a week and hopes this option we are talking about will get more attention, and the parents can decide which level of risk they want to take. Ms. Xifaras stated she feels that our option of allowing children to be in school five days a week is really important.

Mr. Muse expressed to Ms. Xifaras that he is sorry and hopes and prays that no one else will suffer any further consequences of this hideous disease.

Allison Costa – Pocohontas Way

Ms. Costa stated she sent an email to Mr. Muse, the school committee members and Superintendent Nelson, requesting the school committee meet, at a minimum, bi-weekly. Ms. Costa stated this is very different times and it is crucial that the committee meet more often to address these issues and continue to work on them. Ms. Costa stated at every school committee meeting that she has attended, it has been stated we want to bring our youngest learners back to school, with certain protocols set in place that she mentioned in in her email. Ms. Costa stated she understands this is the holiday season but unfortunately we can't afford to take the holiday off and she does not want to see this meeting end tonight and the next time we meet to talk about this be after the New Year. Ms. Costa stated we need to continue on a bi-weekly basis and would like Mr. Muse to address this tonight.

Ms. Costa stated in her email, she asked about researching relating to bringing back our youngest learners and noted that Acushnet, Westport and Fairhaven have all returned their youngest learners, whether it be K-2 or K and 1 – they have figured it out! Ms. Costa asked when is the Mattapoisett School District going to figure it out? Ms. Costa stated she understands they have had to make sacrifices in those districts and she has talked to parents in those districts to figure out what their children have had to adapt to, whether it be not having specialties, having different teachers, whatever it may be. Ms. Costa stated as a parent, she is asking the school committee to do the research so she does not have to do this research and send it on to deaf ears.

Ms. Costa concluded that she is asking Mr. Muse and the school committee members to do the research on how we are going to bring back our youngest learners, and that she is looking forward to, in two weeks, hearing what the committee has found out in their research.

Mr. Muse stated the school committee meets regularly, and in addition to this meeting they have had several other meetings to generate solutions. Mr. Muse stated other towns have their own set of Metrix

that they work with to determine what they have to do, and we put together our own. Mr. Muse stated when the first Plan went out, it was recognized and every attempt is being made to modify that Plan as the circumstances change. Mr. Muse stated meetings are called as they deem necessary, and they are absolutely pursuing alternatives and will be discussing them as we go forward with this meeting tonight.

Tiffini Reedy – Riverbend Lane

Ms. Reedy stated her family moved to Mattapoisett from New Bedford last year because the school system is so remarkable and her daughter had a fantastic Kindergarten year with Ms. Zajac. Ms. Reedy stated currently she hosts a pod at her home and because of that, she has the honor of experiencing not only Courtney Aarsheim's first grade, but Mrs. Hughes and Mrs. Aguiar's as well. Ms. Reedy stated the amount of preparation and learning that these teachers are putting into their hybrid model is truly remarkable and the amount of time these teachers are putting aside on their own personal time to educate our children is incredible.

Ms. Reedy stated she is speaking tonight as a Nurse Practitioner with a dual specialty in both adult medicine and psychiatry across the lifespan, and her concern is for the social/emotional health of our youngest learners. Ms. Reedy stated on Friday alone, she received 55 calls between the time of 8am-2:30pm – both from current patients and parents requesting referral and admission into her program because their children are suffering. Ms. Reedy stated these children are suicidal, depressed, anxious and are not understanding why some schools are full-time, some schools are not, and they don't understand why their friends in private and parochial schools are able to attend class five days a week, and they are only one, two or three days in session.

Ms. Reedy stated the equity divide is growing by the day and reiterated what Allison stated – our neighbors in Acushnet and Fairhaven, and not far away in Westport are full-time for their youngest learners – they've figured it out.

Ms. Reedy stated there was an article in the New York Times recently stating New York City has returned their youngest learners to in-person, full-time learning – if New York City can figure it out – Mattapoisett can figure it out. Ms. Reedy stated if it's funding – then ask the parents – maybe we are willing to chip in. Ms. Reedy stated the amount of money she is paying a pod teacher is incredible and she would love to give that money to Courtney Aarsheim, or to another teacher – she would love to go to Center School and build outdoor classes – we will do what needs to be done. Ms. Reedy stated desperate mothers in particular will move mountains for their children, but the school committee is not being transparent, and we want transparency. Ms. Reedy stated if we can't get transparency, we want the school committee members who are unwilling to meet on a more regular basis to step down and let the mothers who are willing to move mountains for their children's education join the school committee, because we will get what needs to be done... done! Ms. Reedy stated we will get it done in a timely matter because nobody cares more about our children than we do.

Mr. Muse stated he appreciates Ms. Reedy's comments, they have been heard before, and they are taken to heart. Mr. Muse stated the entire school committee, the administration and the teachers understand her concerns and comments, and the school committee is doing their best to provide a fair and equitable opportunity that is safe for the children of the town.

Kearney Klein – Upland Way

Mr. Klein stated he wants to challenge the school committee as to whose interests they are actually serving and stated the following: The CDC Director says the safest place for our children are to be in school and that is because the infection rate across all schools is actually less than 1%, in fact, it is less than .5%, in fact, it is 100 times less than .5%; and, the data is just becoming overwhelming and states that 43% of children actually have antibodies to block COVID-19. Mr. Klein stated the Governor is reinforcing this and Dr. Fauci is saying the data is pretty clear at this point.

Mr. Klein stated the only people that are disagreeing publically with this now are teachers' unions, and the committee needs to step in and represent the parents of this community. Mr. Klein stated child

anxiety is skyrocketing, depression is ramped and we are falling behind, as parents have to make a choice of paying the rent or teaching their kids how to read.

Mr. Klein stated the hospitalization rates are much higher for influenza than they are for COVID-19 and even in our town there has only been 30 cases since September 16th = 1.12% - the data just isn't there – Fairhaven has figured it out, Acushnet has figured it out and it is now time for you, Mr. Muse, to figure it out.

Mr. Klein stated the most authentic thing Mr. Muse has said in the three meetings he has attended on this topic is what Mr. Muse said 3 minutes 48 seconds ago “this is not a conversation”. Mr. Klein stated it hasn't been a conversation, it's been where parents have stated facts and Mr. Muse presents fluff and presents platitudes without data.

Mr. Muse interrupted Mr. Klein and stated if Mr. Klein wants to be personal with him, then he will not be able to continue to speak. Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Klein that he is welcomed to make his comments, but anything he thinks of Mr. Muse personally, is not germane to this conversation. Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Klein to keep his personal comments addressed to Mr. Muse to himself, and avoid being personal.

Mr. Klein stated he will address the committee and that Mr. Muse can interpret the committee's criticism as he will.

Mr. Klein continued and stated the teacher's kids in the school district are able to attend school four days a week, while their kids are not. Mr. Klein stated at the last Joint School Committee meeting there was a lot of discussion about how hard everyone is working, and Mr. Klein stated that we all recognize that, but we also have to get to a point where we can figure this out for our kids.

Mr. Klein stated we have to stop with the reasons why we can't do things – we understand budget constraints, we all do that, but we need to start thinking about and talking about what we can do. Mr. Klein stated there is nothing in this community that we can't do with everyone behind it, but it is not going to happen without a conversation that starts with... “What if”. Mr. Klein stated that conversation needs to start right now because it has not happened for the last several meetings and the confidence of the community in this committee and those who lead the administration is really waning and it is moving from frustration to anger.

Sara Jacobsen – Acushnet Road

Ms. Jacobsen stated she is a 6th grade teacher at Old Hammondtown School, is a parent of a child who attends Center School in grade 3, and is Co-President of the Mattapoisett Educator's Association.

Ms. Jacobsen stated that Acushnet was referred to repeatedly tonight and that as of yesterday, Acushnet Public School parents received communication that they would be returning to full remote learning because of COVID-19 and all seven first grade classroom in Acushnet are going to be remote until further notice, as well as several of their Kindergarten classrooms. Ms. Jacobsen stated we don't have a community around us who has a perfect answer.

Ms. Jacobsen stated Westport was also referred to tonight and that they have confirmed in-school transmission of COVID-19, and that it has been documented that someone has caught COVID-19 within their building. Ms. Jacobsen stated this is a very difficult proposal to go forward with. Ms. Jacobsen stated in Fairhaven they have moved their remote students into a virtual academy rather than use teachers.

Ms. Jacobsen stated we all have made difficult choices and one of the choices we made in Mattapoisett was to offer an extreme high level of quality to all of our remote learners with Mattapoisett teachers and she doesn't know if one option is better than the other. Ms. Jacobsen stated she does know that stating there is a community around us who has a great answer and that we have not looked into, is really unfair. Ms. Jacobsen stated in this entire solution, every community – not just every “school” community, but every individual now is making trade-offs - Do we trade a little bit of normalcy for more safety? Do we give up some safety for more normalcy? Do we forge up more normalcy and safety at a considerable fiscal cost? Ms. Jacobsen stated that is the elephant in the room, and we all know that with a blank check we

could do anything, but she is not aware of that blank check has been given. Ms. Jacobsen stated as we go forward, we need to decide what we do want to prioritize.

Ms. Jacobsen stated that if what you are saying is that we would like to be a little less safe, then it's very hard to move forward on that; and, to say we would like everybody to assume more close contacts to get more normalcy, would be very hard to get the kind of collaboration that we need.

Ms. Jacobsen stated our schools are staffed by teachers and what makes them (our schools) good places to learn are the teachers who are there. Ms. Jacobsen stated teachers do get COVID-19 and they get very sick from it. Ms. Jacobsen stated teachers are thrilled that COVID-19 does not drastically impact children – we can all sleep better knowing that, but these schools are not just staffed by the children, they are staffed by people who are adult members of our community and these are all considerations we need to look at and really balance all of them out.

Chairperson Muse read a letter from Frances Kearns – Fairview Drive

Dear fellow School Committee members and Administrators,

I am writing to you today as a Mattapoissett resident and parent of two elementary-aged students. I also write to you as a biomedical engineer with 18 years of pharmaceutical/medical device experience. I am currently employed full-time in a role working on the front lines of the global COVID-19 relief efforts providing critical medical equipment into the hands of doctors and nurses to treat patients in need.

First off, I wanted to thank you all for your service to the community. The role of the school committee member/ administrator is often an unrecognized, and thankless job. I know that each member of the committee cares deeply about the community and has given freely of their time and energy for this important work.

In advance of tonight's meeting, I did want to provide a perspective of a parent that chose the remote learning options for their family. We chose this option for several reasons - a dedicated teacher to support the learning of my children, the ability to ensure consistency in our learning schedule, high health/socio-economic risks within my family that would have a devastating impact if a member contracted this disease. I am so grateful for our remote learning teacher. She has the necessary technical expertise to assist the working with the tools and the equipment. We receive a clear schedule every day with the daily lesson plans, and we start and stop on time. Per our teacher, my children are excelling, and their assessment scores have significantly improved this year over last year. The remote model allows me to protect the health of my children and my family by providing us the opportunity to lower the total risks that we may incur during this pandemic. As I have mentioned at other school committee meetings, this pandemic has decimated communities of color with the Hispanic populations 4X as likely to contract the disease, and Black/African Americans 2X as likely to die from it compared to their white counterparts. As a LatinX Black woman, the remote option is of great value to me.

I am aware of a group of vocal parents that have expressed dissatisfaction with the current plan, and transparency of the plan, and I wanted to provide a counterpoint and separate myself from this messaging. At no time during the process did I feel the district was not being transparent and responsive regarding the plan. I caution against confusing lack of transparency with receiving answers to questions that we did not hope to hear.

In addition, I know that it has also been anecdotally indicated that schools are not a source of COVID-19 spread, however that data on that topic is still forthcoming as there is not a standardized method for collecting and reporting this data. Some counties in the US such as St. Charles County MO has incorporated this data into their public health reporting. The data is quite telling as it does indicate a link between community cases and schools. (Source: <https://sccmo.org/2105/COVID-19?fbclid=IwAR1eHrgwH3VDn1Qlases2bGVHmd6ZuWaz2-H1j7T4QwW3eC9gLt-3bMPypE>)

As a member of the Biomedical Sciences Community driving this important research forward, I know that it will take some time to understand and research the full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also understand that we may have to make short-term decisions with incomplete and new data. I continue to hope that we are communicating all available data particularly as it related to school to community spread, to give families as much information as possible to consider the impacts of in-person schooling to their communities, and plan accordingly. If the data does not spur individuals to take personal

responsibility for their actions outside of the school, at least the district has provided all data possible to keep people informed.

In closing thank you again for the work that you have done. For my family, it has been vital to be able to utilize the options presented to us so we can remain safe.

Randy Allain – North Street

Mr. Allain stated he is a parent of a first grader, and wants to offer a counterpoint. Mr. Allain stated his family struggled to choose the hybrid model and they questioned whether or not it was going to be safe or not. Mr. Allain stated having seen it carried out, they feel good about the safety precautions that have been taken and feels safe and comfortable to a degree. Mr. Allain stated if there is a sudden shift to something that reduced any of the distancing or safety precautions, he would feel pretty forgotten as someone who appreciates the safety measures taken at this point.

Mr. Allain stated he would like to echo the idea that we all have a couple of things in common and one of those things is that we all want what's best for our kids. Mr. Allain stated he knows there are people with different views on re-opening, and they have their kids best interest in mind, however, we all have our kids best interest in mind.

Mr. Allain stated we are working on incomplete data and he agrees that school is a safer place than a lot of other places, however, if we went back full, in-person and don't do it safely with proper distancing, he believes that some of that community spread would find its way into the schools.

Mr. Allain stated whatever path we take moving forward, we need to make sure we don't back off of safety precautions, especially right now while we are watching this exponential spike in cases. Mr. Allain didn't want this meeting to go forward without noticing that "elephant" in the room.

Michael Kwoka – Pine Island Road

Mr. Kwoka stated it was interesting hearing the statement read, and as he listened to the alarm go off after two minutes and Mr. Muse continued on, it is just yet another example of "do as I say, not as I do here in this community".

Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka that if wants to be personal, he is the Chairman of this committee, the letter was sent to him and maybe it wasn't read as fast as the person who wrote it could have read it, who is also a school committee member in this district. Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka if he would like to speak, he can start over, but he needed to make his comments direct. Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka that he does not have to be personal – that does not help anything.

Mr. Kwoka stated thank you for allowing me to speak Mr. Muse, and he will try to follow the rules of two minutes. Mr. Kwoka stated to all the parents on this call, the reality is we have tried to appeal to everybody's senses about what is right for the kids, and that has fallen on deaf ears...it is obvious. Mr. Kwoka stated he thinks what we all need to realize is this is longing, and it starts in May of next year when two seats of this committee are up for re-election. Mr. Kwoka stated we need to think about that and it is time to make change. Mr. Kwoka stated we need to take a look at when is the teacher's contract up.

Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka that comments need to be limited to the items on the agenda and he should not be making political advertisements.

Mr. Kwoka continued and stated let's talk about some of the challenges and sacrifices being made. Mr. Kwoka stated he hears a lot of comments about the challenges and some of the sacrifices and he asks the parents – How many of you have had to make financial sacrifices since March of last year? How many of you have paid tutors or childcare? How many of you have foregone your meriting increases and have had bonuses impacted? How many of you have had to take furlough days? How many of you have been financially impacted by the COVID virus? Mr. Kwoka stated he thinks probably all of you.

Mr. Kwoka stated he wonders how many people inside the administration have lost a paycheck or who have had to feel any sort of strain. Mr. Kwoka stated life continues for them but not for us and he hears the fake empathy all the time how they understand what we are going through.

Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka that attacking the administration, teachers, committee members or others is not on the agenda. Mr. Muse stated to Mr. Kwoka if there is something that he can add to any item that is on the agenda, he welcomes it. Mr. Muse stated otherwise, he will ask Mr. Kwoka to terminate talking.

Mr. Kwoka stated to Mr. Muse that he said it best. Mr. Kwoka stated he thinks all of the parents heard it and he will wrap up his comments. Mr. Kwoka concluded saying, "We all know the reality that we are facing here as parents of this community."

Patrick Reedy – Riverbend Lane

Mr. Reedy stated he would like to give his time to his wife.

Mr. Muse stated we do not have sharing of time

Stephanie Clark – 28 Acushnet Road

Ms. Clark stated we have asked several times to have meetings and we continue to hear that things are happening, but yet we are subjected to the open meeting laws. Ms. Clark stated when we have "Open Comments" at the beginning of a meeting, it is very difficult to ask meaningful and thoughtful questions when we haven't heard what is being presented or what is possibly, hopefully, being voted on tonight, because we have not met since we received the In-person Plan and actual detail received on October 30th. Ms. Clark stated Governor Baker changed some of the guidelines on November 7 – we still had not met, and now it is December 7 and here we are. Ms. Clark stated we are asking to meet in a more open forum more than we do, so we can have these discussions, and it just continues to fall on deaf ears. Ms. Clark stated she wants to make this clear – "this is unacceptable" – Ms. Clark is asking the school committee to do what is right for the parents and constituents that they are here for – that is us!

Ms. Clark stated there are a lot of parents who have emailed the school committee and she knows the committee can't talk about it because it has to be talked about it in a meeting. Ms. Clark stated here we are at a meeting again, and here we are not making any decisions again. Ms. Clark stated she would like to think that by the end of this meeting we will actually come away with an actionable Plan that we have said at the last several meetings. Ms. Clark stated she is hoping for hope that this happens because she doesn't think in 2021 we are going to continue to have the schooling that we have moved to Mattapoissett for and it is incredibly disappointing and disheartening.

Ms. Clark stated she is a Bulldog Alumni, a daughter of a teacher that was in the New Bedford Public School system, and she is grateful and thankful of the school system we are in.

Ms. Clark stated it seems like no one is ever willing to make changes or compromises so we can get our earliest learners who cannot read, back to school. Ms. Clark stated nobody is saying we should take away remote learning, and she fully supports that based on people's needs. Ms. Clark stated what she is very tired about is that the school committee is not working for the constituents and they continue to say they are – but it is not happening.

Ms. Clark stated unless we come out with a final Plan at the end of this meeting where we can say (Example: January 1st we can go back to school), we might actually have faith that the committee is listening to us. Ms. Clark stated if we do not, we will take it to the next level. Ms. Clark stated if the school committee does not want to be here (hearing that from the committee when she went to the Joint Committee meeting a few weeks ago) – that nobody asks to be on a school committee during a pandemic – no one asks to be a part of a pandemic – but the committee is representing us during a pandemic.

Ms. Clark stated listen to the parents and listen to the data – don't pick just one data point and say that's it, that's the end of it, we can't do it. Ms. Clark asked, "How can we do it?"

Elizabeth Sherry – River Road

Ms. Sherry stated she is a parent of a preschooler and a first grader, selected remote learning this year and is grateful for that opportunity and incredibly grateful for the remote teachers her children have. Ms. Sherri stated they have had a wonderful experience, and knows it is not what everybody has chosen.

Ms. Sherry stated as a parent, she wants to put her voice forward for remote learning and she has a lot of concerns about going back to school. Ms. Sherry stated what is not being considered is the teacher's safety. Ms. Sherry stated she continues to hear a lot about student safety and a lot about the concerns of our children and agrees that it is paramount. Ms. Sherry stated the reason teachers and teachers' unions are pushing back is the safety of our entire staff.

Ms. Sherry stated teachers and staff are being asked to take risks that they have never had in their job description, and to make individual daily health decisions for health of themselves and for their students that they should not have to be making.

Ms. Sherry stated she doesn't feel like she's hearing a lot of these considerations, and only a lot about the data points and that students aren't getting sick. Ms. Sherry stated that could be possible but she doesn't want to get pushed into a situation where we keep pushing and pushing and people start getting sick. Ms. Sherry stated that isn't the proper course either.

Ms. Sherry stated she is concerned about the compromises she is hearing – distancing (3 feet instead of six feet).

Ms. Sherry stated she knows the final decisions have not been made, but wanted to add her voice regarding the considerations of the teachers in our schools.

Mr. Muse stated we do our best to take into consideration all families, staff and teachers in the district.

Mr. Muse stated he appreciated all of the comments.

MEETING TO ORDER

I. Approval of Minutes:

A. Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes – October 22, 2020

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to accept the meeting minutes of October 22, 2020 as written

SECONDED: Carly Lavin

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; James Muse – Yes

Regular Meeting Minutes – October 26, 2020

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to accept the meeting minutes of October 26, 2020 as written

SECONDED: Carly Lavin

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; James Muse – Yes

Executive Session Meeting Minutes of – October 26, 2020

MOTION: by Carly Lavin to accept the Executive Session meeting minutes of October 26, 2020 as written

SECONDED: Carole Clifford

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; James Muse – Yes

IV. General

A. Update on Reopening Plan/Survey Results

Superintendent Nelson, made a request to Chairperson Muse, that Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services, and Rose Bowman, Principal, assist in the re-opening update. Chairperson Muse granted this request.

Mr. Nelson stated the following:

Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to address the school committee tonight in regard to our re-opening update. I can't believe that we are in the first week of December already, and 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 383 hybrid students, 26 remote learning students, and 12 students who are being home-schooled by their parents/guardians right now – three from Center School and nine at Old Hammondtown.

Finding substitutes continues to be a difficult challenge this school year – ranging from five to seven substitutes available.

We continue to be impressed by our students' resilience 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 what learning setting they are in. Our parents and guardians continue to do whatever they need to do for their students.

With regard to COVID-19 and its impact on our school community, our district has been releasing a weekly "Dashboard" that shares COVID-19 data and key indicators with our school stakeholders. To date, we have had 38 confirmed, positive COVID-19 cases system-wide in the Tri-town schools. Since September 16, Center School has had 7 confirmed cases; Old Hammondtown School has had 3 confirmed cases. As of today, we have 3 individuals at Center School who are in quarantine, and eight at Old Hammondtown School awaiting test results after displaying COVID-19 symptoms, and the Board of Health continues to be an excellent support for our schools in terms of guiding our safety and helping our decision makings around any COVID-19 scenarios.

Furthermore, we recently surveyed our parents/guardians to hear their perspective thus far regarding the school year and the different learning models. We view this as an important first step in looking at ways to improve our model in moving forward during the school year.

Mr. Craig Davidson, Director of Student Services, stated they received 1,240 responses district-wide. There were 168 parent/guardian responses for Center School and 88 parent/guardian responses from Old Hammondtown School.

Recap:

March 13, 2020:

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education closed schools statewide

August 5, 2020:

Old Rochester Regional Superintendency Union #55 – released "Back-to-School Plan 20-21" with all three models that was presented to all of the school committees

September 16, 2020:

Marion, Mattapoisett, Rochester and ORR return to schools in our Hybrid and Remote Learning Models

November 20, 2020:

Back to School Feedback Survey to Parents/Guardians went live

December 7, 2020:

Sharing results with School Committee members, community members, public and press

CENTER SCHOOL – 168 RESPONSES

Survey Responses by Grade:

Project Grow:	2.4% - 4 responses
Kindergarten:	25%% - 42 responses
Grade 1:	23.8% - 40 responses
Grade 2:	28.6% - 48 responses
Grade 3:	20.2% - 34 responses

Question:

The overall communication from school to home is adequate regarding learning expectations and school updates?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 46; Agree: 60; Neutral: 27; Disagree: 13; Strongly Disagree: 9

Question:

Synchronous and live instruction on Mondays and hybrid-out school days are?

Response:

Very Helpful: 16; Helpful: 41; Adequate: 30; Somewhat Helpful: 45; Not Helpful: 22

Question:

My child enjoys hybrid-in school days?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 107; Agree: 29; Neutral: 4; Disagree: 2; Strongly Disagree: 5

Question:

On hybrid-out school days, my child has enough connection throughout the day with teachers?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 22; Agree: 47; Neutral: 36; Disagree: 22; Strongly Disagree: 19

Question:

During my child's hybrid-out school days, the workload is?

Response:

Adequate: 66.4%; Too Little: 28.8; Too Much: 4.8%

Question:

My child is enjoying the current remote learning model?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 3; Agree: 5; Neutral: 0; Disagree: 1; Strongly Disagree: 1

Question:

During my child's remote learning school day, the workload is?

Response:

Adequate: 8; Too Little: 1; Too Much: 1

Question:

My child has an appropriate amount of instruction during their school day?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 3; Agree: 5; Neutral: 0; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 2

Question:

My child has enough interaction with their teacher during their school day?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 4; Agree: 4; Neutral: 0; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 2

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would prefer my child's school bypassing February vacation and replacing the week with four remote learning school days?

Response:

54.5% - No, I'm in favor of keeping the school calendar as is

45.5% - Yes, I'm in favor of adjusting the school calendar and doing away with February vacation

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be most comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities with a classroom set-up of?

Response:

55.2% - At least 3 feet of social distance between all individuals (i.e. students and staff)

44.8% - At least 6 feet of social distance between all individuals (i.e. students and staff)

We are currently at the 6 feet model

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities even if it leads to a change in their current homeroom/classroom teachers?

Response:

26.6% - No; 22.7% - Undecided; 50.6% - Yes

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities even if it leads to using communal spaces such as gyms, auditoriums, and cafeterias as classrooms?

Response:

11.7% - No; small% - Undecided; 82.5% - Yes

Question:

At this time, based on the current transportation guidance from the Department of Education, we are unable to guarantee transportation if we were to increase in-person learning opportunities. Do you have the ability to transport your student to and from school on their current cohort's hybrid-out learning school days?

Response:

12.3% - No; 87.7% - Yes

OLD HAMMONTOWN SCHOOL – 88 RESPONSES

Survey Responses by Grade:

Grade 4: 31.8% - 28 responses

Grade 5: 34.1% - 30 responses

Grade 6: 34.1% - 30 responses

Question:

The overall communication from school to home is adequate regarding learning expectations and school updates?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 20; Agree: 39; Neutral: 15; Disagree: 4; Strongly Disagree: 1

Question:

Synchronous and live instruction on Mondays and hybrid-out school days are?

Response:

Very Helpful: 13; Helpful: 20; Adequate: 20; Somewhat Helpful: 20; Not Helpful: 7

Question:

My child enjoys hybrid-in school days?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 54; Agree: 14; Neutral: 5; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 2

Question:

On hybrid-out school days, my child has enough connection throughout the day with teachers?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 11; Agree: 36; Neutral: 10; Disagree: 9; Strongly Disagree: 8

Question:

During my child's hybrid-out school days, the workload is?

Response:

Adequate: 60.0%; Too Little: 26,7; Too Much: 13.3%

Question:

My child is enjoying the current remote learning model?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 3; Agree: 5; Neutral: 0; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 0

Question:

During my child's remote learning school day, the workload is?

Response:

Adequate: 8; Too Little: 0; Too Much: 0

Question:

My child has an appropriate amount of instruction during their school day?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 2; Agree: 6; Neutral: 0; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 0

Question:

My child has enough interaction with their teacher during their school day?

Response:

Strongly Agree: 3; Agree: 4; Neutral: 1; Disagree: 0; Strongly Disagree: 0

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would prefer my child's school bypassing February vacation and replacing the week with four remote learning school days?

Response:

57.7% - No, I'm in favor of keeping the school calendar as is

42.3% - Yes, I'm in favor of adjusting the school calendar and doing away with February vacation

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be most comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities with a classroom set-up of?

Response:

47.4% - At least 3 feet of social distance between all individuals (i.e. students and staff)

52.6% - At least 6 feet of social distance between all individuals (i.e. students and staff)

We are currently at the 6 feet model

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities even if it leads to a change in their current homeroom/classroom teachers?

Response:

35.9% - No; 21.8% - Undecided; 42.3% - Yes

Question:

Based on the current COVID-19 metrics and trends of the Tri-town, I would be comfortable with my child returning to increased, in-person learning opportunities even if it leads to using communal spaces such as gyms, auditoriums, and cafeterias as classrooms?

Response:

10.3% - No; 11.5% - Undecided; 78.2% - Yes

Question:

At this time, based on the current transportation guidance from the Department of Education, we are unable to guarantee transportation if we were to increase in-person learning opportunities. Do you have the ability to transport your student to and from school on their current cohort's hybrid-out learning school days?

Response:

16.7% - No; 83.3% - Yes

QUESTIONS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Vice-Chairperson - Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin thanked Mr. Davidson for creating the survey and compiling the results. Ms. Lavin asked Mr. Davidson, in his opinion, how much confidence do we put in this data.

Mr. Davidson thanked Mr. Coellner, Principal of the Jr. High School for his assistance in "scrubbing" the data, so as to make it as accurate as possible.

Mr. Davidson stated we had a lot more response from Center School than Old Hammondtown School on the original data that came in. Mr. Davidson stated part of the process for going through the data was going through emails and based on the emails and responses across the board, there were people who responded more than once. Mr. Davidson stated one family responded nine times to the survey and they only have two students in the district.

Mr. Davidson stated our process was to see the emails that matched the responses and take what grade the student(s) was in and the family that responded, then checked it against PowerSchool to make sure they didn't have more responses than children in the district. Mr. Davidson stated we back tracked from there and was able to narrow it down and stated he believes the data presented tonight is 100% accurate to represent the community at large to the survey, making sure the number of responses matched the number of students.

Shannon Finning:

Ms. Finning thanked Mr. Davidson again for conducting the survey and for providing a detailed report. Ms. Finning stated based upon her review of this information and hearing Mr. Davidson's commentary, what stands out to her in terms of take-a ways is the school committee needs to keep in mind as we consider how we form and implement a plan for in-person learning, is that transportation should not be a driving issue or a concern for us as far as making a decision.

Ms. Finning stated families are open to use communal spaces, and for the majority (not all) of families, a change in teachers, in and of itself, would not necessarily prohibit families from being comfortable moving forward.

Ms. Finning stated she wants to make sure this jives with Mr. Davidson's review having reviewed both the data shared tonight, along with some of the comments from families, making sure there isn't something she is missing. Ms. Finning stated her hope tonight is to use this information to discuss and vote on an Addendum to the Plan presented to us on October 30th.

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin stated there are differences amongst grade levels in terms of their responses to some of the major take-away points that Dr. Finning mentioned, specifically around teacher preference/possibly move a teacher.

Mr. Davidson stated he can break down the data per grade level that the response came in. For example, the February vacation data can be broken down by each grade level and what the total response is. Mr. Davidson stated when we go through the survey questions making decisions going forward, we can do it all based on grade levels.

Mr. Davidson stated part of the reason we asked for emails was to be able to follow-up with families on questions – transportation questions, grade level switching, communal spaces, etc.

Mr. Nelson stated these questions were important to the Joint Management Committee members as well, and stated in using email we can then reach out to families and get concrete answers, in terms of who is willing to do what. Mr. Nelson stated we heard loud and clear, and believes it, that we have many families that are willing to move mountains to make this work.

Mr. Nelson stated this data was such an important first step for us to be able to share with the committee what our priority would be moving forward and be able to reach out to specific grade levels and get feedback.

Karin Barrows:

With these responses, are we able to identify how many students without transportation if we were to return to a full-time model?

Mr. Nelson stated with the transportation guidelines in place now, this will not work. Mr. Nelson stated the next step is to reach out to specific grade level parents/guardians and have them commit one way or another, in order for us to assign any current openings on buses, so we know what type of waiting list we may have.

Carole Clifford:

If in the meantime or afterwards a parent/guardian changes their mind, is it not our responsibility to provide transportation then?

Mr. Nelson stated he reached out to the Department of Education with that scenario in anticipation of this meeting and the response was similar to when a parent/guardian requests a remote learning change, it doesn't necessarily have to happen overnight, but it would have to happen within a reasonable amount of time.

Mr. Nelson stated if we notice there is a family not utilizing transportation, we would reach out and be proactive and facilitate a conversation, and if parents indicate they can provide transportation and they

change their mind (if it scales one way or another), we may have to come to the school committee and have another conversation.

Shannon Finning:

Does DESE's guidance still hold that it is only transportation for all kindergarteners, and for grades 1 and higher it's for more than a mile from school?

Mr. Nelson stated we are a district that has picked up children no matter where they are located and if the school committee wanted to consider any changes, they could adopt a change that allowed or disallowed transportation for students who lived within two miles of the school.

Carly Lavin:

Would this two-mile radius be by each building -we have two elementary buildings?

Mr. Nelson stated the first thing we would do, depending on any action, would be to reach out to recipients from this survey – based off this information, it looks extremely promising. Mr. Nelson stated if there was a barrier after reaching out to parents, he would update the school committee. Mr. Nelson stated every situation is different and it is not always just clean cut.

Mr. Davidson shared additional information from the survey, specifically regarding transportation, that the Kindergarten response was 34 to 5 (meaning 34 families would be able to transport their child, and 5 would not be able to). Mr. Davidson stated the survey showed, including all grade levels, 135/19 (meaning 135 families would be able to transport their child(ren), and 19 would not be able to).

Mr. Nelson stated we worded our questions very specifically for the hybrid out days because there may be a situation where we could provide transportation to a family on certain days and not on other days, in terms of trying to maximize opportunities for all students.

Mr. Nelson stated this was a very important step for us and we will be using this information to navigate these unprecedented times and to create as many opportunities for students moving forward. Mr. Nelson stated he wants to be very clear, although we want all of our students back to school full-time, we will prioritize our youngest learners.

Mr. Nelson asked Principal Bowman to share her perspective on how school is progressing in terms of day to day operations.

Principal Bowman would like to commend all of the staff, students and families for dealing with this challenging situation. Mrs. Bowman stated our students are very dedicated, optimistic and hardworking. Mrs. Bowman stated throughout the times, whether hybrid-in or hybrid-out, the collaboration amongst the teachers to provide grade level opportunities has been strong. Mrs. Bowman commends this collaboration between home and school throughout these weeks of hybrid and remote learning.

Mr. Nelson stated our administration and teachers have been focusing our planning efforts on how to increase in-person learning opportunities for our youngest learners – for example: we have had conversations, including the Teachers' Association, in ways to bring back our lower elementary grade levels, such as Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2, and we continue to work on the final details of this Plan.

Mr. Nelson stated the survey data was an important first step to build off of, and we will look for more opportunities to offer in-person learning.

Mr. Nelson stated recently at the Marion and Rochester school committee meetings, he has shared this same message that we will look to bring back our youngest learners.

Mr. Nelson stated Principal Bowman and Associate Principal, Mr. Tavares, will present a Plan to the school committee tonight, with options to return our lower grade levels to in-person learning.

B: Review of Complaint

Chairperson Muse stated a Complaint was received that was made to the Attorney General, regarding a violation on the "Open Meeting" law, made by Stephanie Clark. Mr. Muse stated this Complaint was received and he immediately shared it with the entire school committee. Mr. Muse stated as required, we are making this a public announcement of the Complaint being made that we did not satisfy all of the requirements of the "Open Meeting" law. Mr. Muse stated a response will be made within 14 days, in writing, as is mandated by law.

Mr. Muse stated the Complaint has requested the Chairman of the committee ensure that clickable zoom links are provided to the public within at least a 14-hours' notice of any regularly scheduled meeting especially when the Chairman will not allow the public to participate in-person in a safe, responsible and socially distance way. Mr. Muse noted it is not necessary a violation of the committee.

Mr. Muse stated Ms. Clark would like the Chairperson to acknowledge at the next meeting there was an investigation. Mr. Muse stated he is announcing to the public tonight of the Complaint, and as far as Ms. Clark stating there was an investigation, that is not necessarily exact, but there was a Complaint and we will be responding to it within 14 days.

Shannon Finning:

We received this on November 16th - When is the 14-day clock?

Mr. Muse stated it is 14 business days and today would be the 13th business day of the clock – meaning, after announcing in public tonight that we received a Complaint, and the reason(s) set forth in the Complaint, a written response is due within 14 business days from today, and we will respond to the Complaint in writing.

Mr. Muse stated after review and within 14 days of the public body, which is tonight, we must respond in writing and send the Complaint with a response and description to the respondent, and at the same time the body must send to the Attorney General a copy of the Complaint and response.

C. Technology Replacement Fees

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 schools including iPads for our youngest learners and additional chromebooks 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 be presenting a replacement fee schedule, which has been presented already to both the Marion and Rochester School Committees and have been accepted.

Mr. Barber stated the District has had the opportunity to update many of the technology needs for instruction, such as chromebooks and iPads, and at that time, we feel that an update to the Student Handbook should be taken into consideration. Mr. Barber stated with the 1:1 initiatives, there has not been fees or costs charged to the students or families for this equipment that is now being provided.

Mr. Barber referenced:

File: JQ-STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES:

Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment. Students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees. However, indigent students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies and equipment.

Mr. Barber stated he would like to recommend the following proposed replacement fees for damaged or replacement of equipment, based on the researched charges that are being incurred:

Chromebook – Complete Unit Replacement	\$ 300.00
Chromebook Screen	\$ 50.00
45W Adapter w/Power Cord (USB-C Connection)	\$ 50.00
Keyboard	\$ 50.00
iPad – Complete Unit	\$ 325.00
Apple usb-c to lightning cable	\$ 25.00
Apple usb power adapter (block)	\$ 25.00
Case	\$ 50.00

Shannon Finning:

How will fees be assessed for students and what will the process be for attempting to collect fees?

Mr. Barber stated these are minimal fees, just replacement costs, and we are utilizing our technology team to process the repairs. Mr. Barber stated as far as screens go, we did remove screens from our older units, and have been using those presently if a unit needs the repair, however, those resources are becoming limited.

Mr. Barber stated they received quotes from various vendors on replacement costs and those costs came back high. Mr. Barber stated when an item is damaged, the technology team from that particular school reaches out to the parent/guardian or he himself reaches out to the parent.

Mr. Barber stated checks are made out to the Old Rochester Regional School District and the funds are placed in a revolving account specific to this technology equipment, so that we can use those funds solely for the purpose of replacing technology units, and these payments have been coming through the technology department.

Mr. Nelson stated if there is a hardship to a family or extenuating circumstances, we will be more than willing to sit down with that family as we always do and work reasonably with the family.

Carly Lavin:

Is this a policy for this school year only?

Mr. Nelson stated the reason we included the policy is, although it doesn't require school committee approval, it requires that we issue our fee schedule in writing and in order for us to have it placed in the student handbook, the handbook requires approval by the school committee. Mr. Nelson stated this is full transparency and we felt it was important to include the school committee and it would be in place until change.

Mr. Nelson stated we have these new devices and the biggest piece is we need to find a way to reasonably maintain them now.

MOTION: by Karin Barrows to accept the Technology Replacement Fees as presented.
SECONDED: Carly Lavin
OPPOSED: None
MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; James Muse – Yes

C. Joint Labor Management Committee Report

Mr. Nelson stated the Joint Labor Management Committee has met ongoing since the beginning of the year to discuss the re-opening process, to address any issues and to look for ways to improve our programming. Principal Bowman and Associate Principal Tavares will present a proposal to the school

committee to consider our increasing in-person learning opportunities for our youngest learners as mentioned earlier tonight. Mr. Nelson stated this proposal aligns with our priority areas that was outlined in our Back-to-School Plan and our Addendum and includes providing as many opportunities to our youngest learners, complex learners – such as high needs and special education students, ELL students, foster care students, etc.

Mrs. Bowman stated tonight I would like to present to you the work the Joint Labor Management Committee has done to address the opening of school for our youngest learners and the concern about literacy for our children who were in Kindergarten and 1st Grade in the spring, and presently in Grades 1 and 2. Mrs. Bowman stated the first option we would like to present to the school committee focuses on our children who are presently in Grades 1 and 2.

Mrs. Bowman stated Grade 1 could return full-time, six feet social distancing, by utilizing three of the large rooms at Center School: the Music Room, the Library and the Art Room.

Mrs. Bowman stated at Old Hammondtown School, the large rooms that would be utilized are: the Instrumental Room, the General Music Room and the Library. Mrs. Bowman stated by utilizing these large rooms, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students would be able to return back to school five days a week, continue with six feet social distancing, and they would remain with their present classroom teacher and classmates.

Option 1: Grade 1 Full Return - 49 students (45 Hybrid/4 Remote)

Facilities Impact: Mrs. Bowman stated Grade 1 students would return back to Center School, utilizing the additional three large rooms: Mrs. Aguiar - Library – 15 Students; Mrs. Aarsheim - Art Room- 14 Students; and Mrs. Hughes - Music Room - 16 Students. Mrs. Bowman stated any additional new students/remote transfer students would be placed with Mrs. Hughes, since this is the largest room.

Staffing Impact: two classes would eat lunch in the cafeteria, one class would eat in the classroom, and one additional paraprofessional would need to be hired to supervise lunch in that classroom.

Associated Costs: a portable sink/hand sanitizing station for the Music Room; a portable white board, document camera, and projector for each the Music Room and Library; and, an FM System would be purchased for use in each of the three large rooms that are going to be used as classrooms.

Mrs. Bowman stated clearly parents at Center School, in their response on the survey, would fully support transporting their children to/from school if it meant they are able to be in school five days a week. Mrs. Bowman stated we would closely work with the Superintendent, Mr. Davidson and Mr. Barber to coordinate all of this with the criteria that the Superintendent has mentioned before that there is already a seat on the bus for hybrid-in days. Mrs. Bowman stated when Mr. Davidson talks about being able to access parents, you can see as we formulate and implement the Plan, if it is voted on by the school committee, we want to make sure that every child's needs are addressed as far as transportation is concerned.

Impact on School Community - Transportation considerations – number of students on each bus; number of students who will be transported to school in the morning and picked up at the end of the school day; number of students who will be transported to and from school by their family.

Option 1 Continued: Grade 2 Full Return at Old Hammondtown School

Facilities Impact: Grade 2 Full Return - 64 Students (56 Hybrid/8 Remote)

Mrs. Barry-18 Hybrid/4 Remote-OHS Instrumental Music Room; Ms. Renna-19 Hybrid/1 Remote-OHS General Music Room; Mrs. Williams-19 Hybrid/3 Remote – OHS Library

Staffing Impact: Special Education teacher and Specialists' schedule would be changed to meet the needs of the Grade 2 Cohort; Two (2) classes would eat lunch in the cafeteria – One (1) class would eat lunch in

the classroom; Paraprofessional would be hired to provide classroom support to special education students and supervise lunch served in the classroom.

Associated Costs: some book cases in the library would need to be removed to accommodate student desks; portable sink/sanitizing station would need to be placed in the library; FM systems for each of the large classrooms; portable white board, document camera and projector

Impact on School Community: the Instrumental Music teacher would use a classroom; the General Music teacher will be at Center School for Trimester II; the Librarian would continue to have access to the books in the library – the Library specialist time with students will take place in the classroom/use of a portable cart; Grade 2 classroom furniture and teacher supplies and materials will be moved from Center School to OHS

Mrs. Bowman stated at OHS, there will be access to the gym to accommodate students in different grades levels with food allergies, and she would be able to accommodate those students in the gym for lunch/snack times.

Mrs. Bowman stated the highest number of remote children are in Grade 2, but with the classroom set-up we developed, and children whose family would like to be in school five days a week they would be able to be placed in their original Cohort.

Mrs. Bowman stated when we look at literacy and we are concerned about our youngest learners, we know that the children who were in Kindergarten and Grade 1 last year lost several months of reading and writing learning and these two grades are the optimum to return. Mrs. Bowman stated education is important for all children and she is responsible for all Pre-K to Grade 6, but literacy is critical and you cannot move forward without being a fluent, comprehensive reader.

Option 2: K-2 Full Return

Facilities Impact: Kindergarten Full Return – 49 Students (48 Hybrid/1 Remote)

Mrs. Julian – 18 Hybrid/0 Remote – Center School Gym; Mrs. Sylvia – 15 Hybrid/0 Remote – Change to: 10 students in a classroom; Ms. Zajac – 16 Hybrid/1 Remote – Change to: 10 students in a classroom; New Kindergarten Teacher – 10 students who have been moved from the original Kindergarten classes

Staffing Impact: a Remote teacher would be assigned as a Kindergarten teacher and the remote Students (16 students total in Grades K through 3, would be taught by 1.0 Reading teacher and .6 Math teacher

Associated Costs: an additional Paraprofessional would be hired to support the Kindergarten class in the gym and supervise one class during lunch

Impact on School Community: One remote teacher would be transferred to a full-time Kindergarten teaching position; some Kindergarten students would have a different classroom teacher than they have presently; and Physical Education classes would be held outside – weather permitting, and in classroom PE when weather does not permit outside space

Mrs. Bowman stated one of our Kindergarten classes would utilize the gymnasium and would have the largest class. Mrs. Bowman stated restrooms are located closely to the gym for easy access and we would need to have one additional Paraprofessional in that class. Mrs. Bowman stated all of the other Kindergarten classes have bathrooms in their space.

Mrs. Bowman stated all of the proposed decisions we have brought forward, maintain the present staff, with the exception of additional technology materials and the support of two additional Paraprofessionals (one in each of the schools).

Mrs. Bowman stated the reason for the decrease in students in the Kindergarten classes to 10 students, is because the cubbies in the classrooms take up a lot of space, and to keep children socially distanced at 6 feet apart, we can only have 10 students in the original Kindergarten classes.

Mrs. Bowman stated the remote teacher that is being moved to teach Kindergarten, is a certified Kindergarten teacher and the remote program that parents would continue to utilize would be taught by the 1.0 Reading teacher and the .6 Math teacher.

Mrs. Bowman stated we have been very lucky with the weather to date and having PE outside, but she will be looking at using the cafeteria space for PE classes before lunches are served.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin thanked the Joint Labor Management Committee for an open dialogue and stated she is a parent of a first grader and recused herself from the conversation and took the recommendations from Mrs. Bowman and Mr. Tavares.

Ms. Lavin stated it seems like there are no implications to other student population at Center School, but as we move Grade 2 over to OHS, and move the instrumental/band to a classroom, what does that do to the classrooms on either side?

Mrs. Bowman stated this room is next to our CARES room (for children with fragile health, waiting for parent pick-up), and if there was a child in the CARES room, she would caution the instrumental teacher to be respectful of that person not feeling well. Mrs. Bowman stated the way this room is situated, it is the best location – it's opposite the art room – however, all specialists are going into the classrooms for their lessons.

Ms. Lavin – As far as Option 2, bringing in the 4th section of Kindergarten, we would have an impact to the remote option (one of the key personnel who has been there will be shifted) and in doing that, we also would need to cease the reading intervention program?

Mrs. Bowman stated yes. Mrs. Bowman stated two of the Reading teachers have worked with the math person on the remote learning, and there is a couple of factors here. Mrs. Bowman stated she is not certain how many of our children that are in remote learning may choose to return into the classroom. Mrs. Bowman stated she and Mr. Tavares received emails from parents who have been debating this, and she believes parents are waiting to see if we were going to develop a full-day program. Mrs. Bowman stated she is confident that we will have a 1.6 FTE working with the remote children and is confident their needs will be met. Mrs. Bowman stated she is aware of our Kindergarten children and their beginning of the understanding of language, reading and writing, and it is critical to have someone with a strong reading background teaching those children.

Ms. Lavin – Were there any discussions if there would be a way to bring back AM/PM Kindergarten sessions and still offer the reading intervention programs, since we are now bringing Grades 1 and 2 back for literacy?

Mrs. Bowman stated a long time ago, that is the way Kindergarten was set up (AM/PM sessions). Mrs. Bowman stated as we debated back and forth, we had to take into consideration as it impacted families. Mrs. Bowman stated if we bring the children back five days a week at just ½ time (so as to have AM/PM sessions), they are only gaining 2.5 hours a week, and we had to weigh how much of an impact that is to their families. Mrs. Bowman stated there will be a change in the number of students who are presently in remote and noted if the remote teachers brought to her attention that they are not able to meet the children's needs; an adjustment would have to be made. Mrs. Bowman stated she is confident they will be able to implement the program and with the Plan that was presented tonight, every Kindergarten child would be able to have a five, full-day education at a critical time in their life.

Shannon Finning:

Ms. Finning thanked everyone who was involved and stated this was the first time for her, as well as the committee who are not a part of the Joint Labor Management Committee, to see the Plan, and wished potentially the meeting started with this before the Open Comments, because she thinks it would have saved a lot of heartache that families expressed.

Ms. Finning thanked Mrs. Bowman in particular, for meeting the needs of our earliest learners. Ms. Finning stated she is a committee member first when she is at meetings, and she truly takes off the hat as a parent to a second grader.

Ms. Finning stated having lived through the impact and loss of learning literacy last year and this year, despite having resources personally to try to provide support for her child, she is heartened because this is what our parents said (every person who spoke earlier), and because we also are honoring our commitment to continue to provide remote learning to our families who want to continue with that.

Ms. Finning stated during the presentation she received 18 emails and counting, from parents saying they will volunteer to be paraprofessionals, they will provide transportation, they will move library stations....seriously, if there is a budgetary impact, Ms. Finning stated there are people in the community who would be very willing to step up and help make this happen and she believes they are very serious and there is a desire to walk their talk as they have been saying for the last three months.

Mrs. Bowman stated we have all listened and understand this critical time and how difficult this pandemic is, and we tried to create an optimum environment for children that they feel safe with people that they know, and also addressing financial needs of the town and school committee's budget. Mrs. Bowman stated in trying to balance all of this, these were the decisions that we made.'

Karin Barrows:

Ms. Barrows echoed gratitude to the Joint Labor Management Committee, the Administration and to everyone that has been involved behind the scenes to make this happen in a very safe and responsible way. Ms. Barrows stated she appreciates all of the hard work everyone has done.

Ms. Barrows – Mrs. Bowman, you mentioned what would happen if some of the remote students turned to in-person, full-time, but are we also prepared for any jump or pivot for in-person population to go to remote learning and what that may look like?

Mrs. Bowman stated her priority tonight was to present these global options, but understands clearly if many of the parents that are in hybrid choose to go remote she will have to look at staff and see what resources are available, and if additional resources are needed, Mrs. Bowman stated she would go back to the school committee to explain what and why we need it.

Superintendent Nelson stated if we have learned anything, nothing is predictable at this point and what he said in August remains true. Mr. Nelson said everything remains fluid and even if there is support for tonight, we will have to go through the process of working with families and opening the doors and see where they lead to, even if we have to come back to the school committee and further problem solve.

Carly Lavin:

Mrs. Bowman, you spoke about Grade 2 at OHS and having the ability to deal with food allergies. Could you speak to any concerns around Gr. 1 and Kindergarten – are we able to handle those food allergies as well?

Mrs. Bowman – yes would be able to. Mrs. Bowman stated when students have an early lunch, then they have their snack in the afternoon in order to balance a nutritional morning and afternoon. Mrs. Bowman will continue to maintain the same schedule that has already been in place, making any changes needed to accommodate any additional food allergies.

Carly Lavin stated we didn't have specific questions about changing schools/school locations in the survey, but in leaning to the question regarding change of teachers, Ms. Lavin hopes that parents, students and teachers, would be willing to have a mindset to go to a different physical building. Ms. Lavin stated she hopes Grade 2 would be comfortable with that, if it means going back to school full-time, five days a week.

Mrs. Bowman stated her focus was to utilize the largest spaces in each of the schools, to keep the classes together, and be cognoscente of the number of seats available in a classroom to maintain the social distancing and of the teachers that would need to be hired.

Mrs. Bowman stated for all of those factors, utilizing the largest spaces seemed ideal to meet the needs of our youngest learners.

Mr. Muse stated the Joint Labor Management Committee did a fantastic job! Mr. Muse stated Mrs. Bowman presented in a very clear fashion something that is extremely complex. Mr. Muse stated there are going to be a lot of changes and he hopes and expects, (frankly because everyone understands if we have to be doing everything individually to approve things), the focus has been given to our youngest learners, particularly Grades 1 and 2.

Mr. Muse trusts Mrs. Bowman as an educator of elementary schools more than anyone on the universe and stated Mrs. Bowman is a fantastic resource who cares deeply about each and every piece.

Mr. Muse stressed, not to be negative, and stated we have to make sure that people understand there are things happening that are not going to be optimal. Mr. Muse stated there are people that are changing the way things are being done and we are asking potentially for families to go to a different school for a period of time. Mr. Muse stated what was presented is advantageous given the circumstances, which are different than the circumstances we focused on in August. Mr. Muse stressed this is fluid and unfortunately we don't know what tomorrow will bring, and we will need to be prepared to do whatever we have to, to keep educating our children no matter the circumstance.

Vanaress Angerly – Chapel Road

If we go to having K-2 back full-time, does that mean there is no more hybrid option – there will only be a remote option and a full-time option?

Mrs. Bowman stated there would be a full-time option and a remote option. Mrs. Bowman stated she doesn't know how a third option of hybrid could be offered successfully at these three grade levels.

Mr. Nelson further stated this is why it is so important to be able to maintain at least six feet of social distancing between students/staff to alleviate that concern and try to prevent close contacts.

Mr. Nelson stated the guidance is constantly changing, whether it is the amount of time in quarantine, or close contact definition, and this may impact our programming, whether it is for the hybrid model for upper elementary or lower elementary remote. Mr. Nelson stated whatever it may be, if there is a change in guidance, we would come back to the committee and stakeholders to improve our product.

Mr. Nelson stated the next steps are working with Grades 1, 2 and possibly Kindergarten parents/guardians in terms of transportation; moving furniture; obtaining technology; and, obtaining coverage for classrooms/lunches (adding two paraprofessionals).

Mr. Nelson stated at this time, we are able to provide services to children now that are quarantined or isolated, however, if grade levels are brought back full-time, students that are quarantined or isolated will not have the same resources for check-ins, etc. Mr. Nelson stated this does not mean that we won't work really hard to provide opportunities, but he wants to be very clear with school committee members and those parents who are listening, this is a give and take that we all have to consider and be aware of.

Ms. Lavin asked if we have thought about how we are going to support students in quarantine?

Mr. Nelson stated quarantine is going to be a bit of a challenge and stated this is not a road block he is identifying or reason not to, however Mr. Nelson wants to be clear and transparent that it is something that we all have to consider as well.

Mr. Muse stated what is being presented will have its complications and things will come up that we are not aware of now. Mr. Muse stated this Plan does not address Grades 3, 4 or 5 and we want those children back in school full-time as well.

Mr. Muse stated the original Plan put in place in August was voted on by the committee 3:1 (with one person mission), and implementing the contract for the teachers and the teacher's union, who has been fantastic in supporting, developing and giving a lot of input and support in developing these options tonight, was 4:0 (with one person missing).

Carole Clifford:

Ms. Clifford stated in working with the Joint Labor Committee, she would like to be more positive. Ms. Clifford stated coming up with these options, knowing there would be complications - questions from parents regarding the change of schedules, knowing teachers would be upset about classroom changes, Ms. Clifford stated she would like to be more optimistic about how this committee worked together.

Ms. Clifford stated working with the Joint Labor Committee members, Mrs. Bowman, Mr. Tavares, Superintendent Nelson, Ms. Lavin and the teachers, has been very rewarding. Ms. Clifford stated the possibility of having Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 back in the buildings full-time, no matter what roadblocks we come across, let's just try to move forward.

Mr. Muse stated he couldn't agree more with Ms. Clifford and he agrees this is a major step. Mr. Muse stated he knows it hasn't been easy, it is not a simple answer, and we are going to have to continue to work to make sure everyone works together to maximize this. Mr. Muse stated it is an enormous step forward and that is due to the hard work of the Joint Labor Management Committee who has spear-headed everything that is happening. Mr. Muse is grateful to all and is looking forward to a positive step taking place.

Carly Lavin stated in conjunction with this conversation and the commentary we heard at the beginning of the meeting, Ms. Lavin asked Mr. Barber, when he presents facilities, to keep in mind what will it look like bringing Grade 2 to OHS? What will that do to the facilities? Will there be enough outdoor space? Will they need anything?

Ms. Lavin also asked will Center School need anything to assist children with mask breaks, to get outside more often, etc.?

Mr. Barber stated there will be large community tents (banquet sized tents) installed at each of the schools to allow children to access the outdoors for mask breaks during inclement weather.

MOTION:	by Shannon Finning to accept Option 2 of the presentation with targeted implementation for mid-January, pending other decisions that have to be made
SECONDED:	Carly Lavin
OPPOSED:	None
MOTION PASSED – 5:0	

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; James Muse – Yes

V. New Business

B. Business

1. Financial Report

Mr. Barber presented a memo as of December 4, 2020 indicating the Mattapoisett School District currently has \$548,499 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2021 Fiscal Year. Mr. Barber stated we are able to identify how our funds are currently encumbered and expended and out of the \$7.3

million-dollar budget appropriated to the District – 91.29% is directly assigned and is spent/encumbered to student instruction.

Mr. Barber stated at present, we are not able to fully encumber funds for substitutes and utility costs until we get further in the school year.

Mr. Barber reported on the Facilities Director’s Report (By: Gene Jones) as follows for Center School:

- Ground mosquito spraying of our fields and grounds completed
- COVID-19 protocols strictly adhered to for HVAC, Cleaning, Sanitizing and traffic control
- Nightly sanitizing all our buses with static spray sanitizing equipment, including buses
- Deployed all DESE/CDC required Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Protective shields installed in all required areas
- Testing shields acquired and available on site
- Playgrounds temporarily closed per DESE/CDC recommendations
- Nurse and student services issued required additional safety PPE
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

Old Hammondtown School:

- Ground mosquito spraying of our fields and grounds completed
- COVID-19 protocols strictly adhered to for HVAC, Cleaning, Sanitizing and traffic control
- Nightly sanitizing all our buses with static spray sanitizing equipment, including buses
- Deployed all DESE/CDC required Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Protective shields installed in all required areas
- Testing shields acquired and available on site
- Playgrounds temporarily closed per DESE/CDC recommendations
- Nurse and student services issued required additional safety PPE
- Completed Building Management System (BMS) software upgrade
- Replaced motor in Office roof top Unit (RTU1)
- Conducted routine maintenance on all facility systems

Mr. Barber stated he will continue a high level of ridership for the Mattapoisett School District and will try to provide transportation to all of our students, in regard to the Plan voted on tonight, for students in K, Grade 1 and Grade 2, returning back to school full-time.

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

Mr. Barber stated the Food Service Director’s Report dated December, 2020, shows an overall increase from the percentage perspective of the participation with the free lunch and breakfasts being offered at each of the schools. Mr. Barber stated he would like to see more students utilizing both the free breakfast and free lunches that are offered daily in school. Mr. Barber stated on Monday evenings, from 4:30 to 5:30 at the Old Rochester Regional High School, meals are being offered to families with students from 0 to 21 years of age for the entire Tri-town community, and explained the process of how to order these meals on line.

Shannon Finning:

Ms. Finning stated some parents have expressed concern about the timing that the “Grab-and-Go” meals are available for them to pick up.

Mr. Barber stated original pick-up times was between 11:30 and 12:30pm, however an additional pick-up time at Old Rochester Regional High was added on Monday evenings from 4:30-5:30pm for all of the Tri-town communities.

Carly Lavin:

I thought we were doing a “static spray” after every bus run?

Mr. Barber stated that between the first bus run – HS/JHS (secondary) and the elementary bus run, there is not enough time to do the “static spray” sanitizing, because it has to sit for an amount of time before student’s board and there is not enough time in between those runs. Mr. Barber stated the bus drivers do sanitize the seats, by wiping them down with a sanitizing product in between each of the runs in the morning and when the buses are parked for the evening, that is when the full “static spray” sanitizing takes place.

Ms. Lavin asked if there has been any additional guidance on the playground.

Superintendent Nelson stated there has been no guidance update on either the playground (facilities) or transportation to date.

VI. CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT:

Chairperson Muse stated as follows:

Mr. Muse stated we have a fantastic school district that works very hard and who are very thoughtful of all of our students. Mr. Muse stated we have done a great job in addressing something as best we can, in an equitable fashion and have made it so that it is a safe environment for the teachers as well as the students. Mr. Muse stated the safest thing that we can do now is for everybody in the entire community (if you are a parent, cousin, aunt/uncle), is to do your part and try to stay safe, stay socially distant, and don’t congregate – it will end up in our schools and our children will be impacted if our community has an increase in the COVID-19 virus.

Mr. Muse stated the best thing that can happen now and could have happened at any time, is we take every possible personal measure to do so, and I know there is so much consideration for our children that we hope we can use that to instill that thought on everyone we meet to keep safe and stay well.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINSTRATOR’S REPORT:

Superintendent Nelson stated the Department of Education has allowed flexibility around snow days, and at the Joint School Committee meeting, who annually oversees the calendar for the Tri-town public schools, voted unanimously in support of the Superintendent in making the decision to convert snow days to remote learning days if appropriate. Mr. Nelson stated obviously if there were significant power outages in the towns, then the decision would be made to cancel school altogether.

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

On November 3, 2020 (Professional Development Day) Dr. Chardin and Dr. Warner spoke on Equity and Social Justice and Remote Learning; Discussions were held regarding “Teachers During a Pandemic” – because we know this is something new for our teachers; Mr. Phil Alessi talked about “Supporting Students throughout a Day” in Social/Emotional Learning; and Mr. Davidson worked alongside with our Special Education Teachers.

Dr. Pearson-Campbell stated she is working on the January 11th Professional Development Day and stated she has asked teachers in the district to submit a PDP (Professional Development Plan) for 55 minutes, since there are many staff members in the district who are experts in certain areas. Dr. Pearson-Campbell stated teachers will also be working on Project-Based Learning, based on our Strategic Plan and technology/teachers will also be meeting virtually by grade levels, to meet with their peers in different buildings.

Carly Lavin:

Ms. Lavin asked if on the January 11th PD day, if teachers in grades K-2 would be able to capitalize on any opportunity they can to prepare for full-time, in-person learning?

Superintendent Nelson stated we realize this would be a good time to work with the Association and K-Grade 2 teachers to prepare for full-time, in-person learning and this can be done.

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

Mr. Davidson stated when school abruptly closed last spring, there were a lot of initial evaluations and re-evaluations for special education students in progress. Mr. Davidson stated TEAMS in all of the buildings worked on new time-lines at the beginning of the school year, and he is happy to report all of our testing has been completed and we are up-to-date with the testing from last spring, and expressed a “thank you” to all of the hard work from our educators in all of the districts.

Superintendent Nelson - a final “thank you” to all of the Joint Labor Management Committee in terms of the work they have done all along and the work they will continue to do. Mr. Nelson wanted to be clear that the group is made up of many stakeholders – Building Administration, Central Office Administration, School Committee Members and the Associations - we do have perspectives from all of those different groups.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Mrs. Rosemary Bowman, Principal of Center School/Old Hammondtown School reported the following: Trimester 1 is drawing to a close this week and report cards will be sent out prior to the holiday break; Dr. Pearson-Campbell has been working with our Title 1 staff at OHS; Mr. Barber, Mr. Tavares and Mrs. Bowman will be working on the FY22 budget; Mrs. Bowman celebrates our 8th grade students who are a part of the Commonwealth’s 351 Leadership Team – their project this year was to collect food/clothing, and this drive is being held at our schools during this 2-week period of time; in January parents of Kindergarten students will be invited to attend an informational meeting by ZOOM in early February – parents are very appreciative of holding the meeting by ZOOM (they do not have to get babysitters or worry about the weather) – teachers will present an overview of the Kindergarten program and how it hopefully will begin next year; and, all of our children will begin the holiday break on December 24th and return on January 4, 2021.

Carly Lavin:

Will it be possible to focus on and open house (maybe with our higher-grade levels at OHS) sometime in January?

Mrs. Bowman stated this will need to be done in two phases. Mrs. Bowman stated all open houses will be done virtually, and they will begin with the early childhood classrooms first, followed by the upper grade level classes, hopefully by the third week of January. Mrs. Bowman understands the importance of holding these open houses, and will be working with Mr. Tavares and the classroom teachers to make this happen.

VIII. School Committee

A. Committee Reports

1. ORR District School Committee

James Muse reported as follows:

The committee met and a letter to the legislative and governor was drawn up regarding consideration not to hold MCAS testing and how that will impact our current students.

2. SMEC

Carole Clifford reported as follows:

We are still waiting for a budget report from the state to support disabled students.

3. READS

Mr. Nelson stated a virtual meeting was held on November 12 and reported the following:

- Meeting was called to order
- Minutes were approved
- There was an update on the Special Education Administrator's report
- There were discussions on Action Items:
 - FY20 Audit
 - Cumulative Surplus
 - Policy Updates – Actions Required
- Tuitions and Fees Adjustment for FY21 were discussed
- The Executive Director recommended approval of new staff
- Snow days were discussed – similar to how we are going to handle snow days – remotely
- Additional informational Items by the Executive Director were discussed:
 - Status of In-Person Learning during COVID-19
 - Copy of MOA and review meeting information
 - FY21 Projected Revenues/Expenses
 - COVID-19 Expenses
 - Program Updates and/or Student Feature
 - SCRO/MOEC Update
 - Resignations/Retirements

4. Early Childhood Council

Karin Barrows reported as follows:

- The Early Childhood Council has a “tab” on the District's website under “Departments”
- You can find a calendar of events on this page
- The Early Childhood Council also has a Facebook page
- The next meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2021

5. MASC

Shannon Finning reported as follows:

- She attended the day-long joint conference
- They are advocating for more clarification from DESE around transportation
- They are holding “Lunch & Learning” series, which she has shared already

6. Mattapoisett Capital Needs Committee

Carole Clifford reported as follows:

- A zoom meeting was held with Mr. Gene Jones and Mr. Barber
- Walk-throughs will be taking place at both OHS and Center School to decide on what capital needs they would like to address and put on the plan
- They are still continuing to fix the phones – this is a priority

7. Tri-Town Education Foundation

Karin Barrows reported as follows:

- They do have grants funds available
- Submit ideas to the committee and they will be reviewed for consideration

8. Policy Sub-Committee

Carly Lavin reported the meeting was held in early November and reported as follows:

- There were four policies reviewed
- They reviewed revisions that were suggested by MASC (Massachusetts Association of School Committees), which were all very minor.

9. Budget Sub-Committee

James Muse reported as follows:

- FY22 Budget is in process
- Mr. Barber is beginning to assemble information
- Ms. Finning stated next meeting is Thursday evening

10. Clock Committee

- Ms. Muse reported the clock is ticking!
- Ms. Clifford would like to thank Rose Bowman, and anyone else who was involved to have the Center School's bell ring on Veteran's Day – Ms. Clifford was very appreciative hearing it
- Mrs. Bowman stated all the credit goes to Ray Andrews

Mr. Muse stated the fact that we do have a historic school, he also thanked Mr. Andrews for his continued support to make sure this clock runs. Mr. Muse stated the fact that Mr. Andrews is particularly attentive to that "gem" we have in the center of town, making sure it continues to be a piece of history for all us – does matter!

11. Anti-Racism Committee

Ms. Finning stated the meeting was held on December 2nd and reported the following:

- We had homework from the first meeting for everyone who participated
- There are representatives from each of the school committees, representatives from the Tri-town Against Racism and since the meeting is public, we had concerned parents/guardians and teachers
- We divided into two working sub-groups to expedite progress
- There were 9 terms that surfaced as to why people chose to be a part of this group
- One sub-committee will be working on definitions of the 9 terms
- Another sub-committee (one in which Ms. Finning will be working on) is looking at school culture
- We will be working on a climate survey
- The committee would like to reach out to students to get them involved – we know they were very vocal on Instagram – we would very much like to have a seat for them at the table and including the students as we move forward.

B. School Committee Reorganization

- Mr. Muse stated this was completed – we appointed Wareham Pediatrics as the school's physician

IX. Future Business

A. Timeline

Mattapoisett School Committee will be held on January 11, 2021 @ 6:30pm – hybrid format

Joint School Committee will be held on March 11, 2021 @ 6:30pm – remotely via zoom

Karin Barrows:

Can we discuss having the “Open Comments” section of the meeting be moved to the end of the meeting rather than the beginning?

Mr. Muse stated the Policy for Public Comments states:

Regular meetings of the school committee will be open to the public, executive session... will be private. In order for citizens wished to be heard before the committee and have a chance to ensure the ability to conduct business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

- 1. At the start of each regularly scheduled school committee meeting individual group representatives will be invited to address the committee.**

Mr. Muse stated for the reason stated above, that was why the “Open Comments” section was held at the beginning of the meeting and he was hoping that we would’ve had positive, informational comments that would have helped us moving forward.

Mr. Muse stated MASC (Massachusetts Association for School Committees) recommends we hold “Open Comments” at the beginning of meeting. Mr. Muse stated the school committee meeting is a “business meeting” of sorts, and although they are held in public, they are not a public meeting. Mr. Muse stated he always wants to hear from the public, despite what has unfortunately been said about him.

Mr. Muse stated he does know we need to hear these things and the sequencing of what will be said or when it will be said.

Mr. Muse stated the meeting can be adjusted anyway the committee would like, but that he was just following MASC’s policy. Mr. Muse stated in the future, if there is reason to have public comments adjusted, he would be happy to adjust the Agenda.

Ms. Barrows would like this item to be placed on the next school committee’s Agenda – Review the policy of the “Open Comments” section – where should it be placed on the Agenda

Ms. Finning stated if that is the policy, we should review it. Ms. Finning said it has not been the practice and up until this fall, we have always had “Open Comments” at the end of the Agenda both for Mattapoissett (in her tenure) and the Joint Committee.

Ms. Finning stated she would like to echo what Ms. Barrows has said and she feels it would have been in the best interest of everyone involved tonight if the “Open Comments” had followed the contents of the meeting.

Mr. Muse stated if the committee prefers, we have the latitude to change it. Mr. Muse stated procedurally he is more than happy to have the public comments at any time, but he wants to have them so they are significant if there is something we can take into consideration, because we don’t have public comments for every issue.

Mr. Muse stated when the public sees the Agenda and they want to comment and give us some information about what is on the Agenda, that is what we hope to have. Mr. Muse stated many of the comments made tonight were made a few minutes too early because much of what was being stated was, and has been addressed.

Mr. Muse stated the public has been made aware that we are working on all these things and continue to. Mr. Muse stated our Plan has been fluid, and the teachers, staff and administration have been working very hard as have the school committee.

Ms. Clifford stated having the opportunity at the beginning of a meeting to adjust as to where “Open Comments” would fall, is good to know.

B. Future Agenda Items

- MCAS Results Report (November/December – depending upon receipt of results)**

- Initial Budget Review (January)
- School Lunch Statement (January/June)
- 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 Contracts (May)
- Approval of new School Council goals (June)

XI. Information Items

LIST OF DOCUMENTS USED AT THE MEETING

Mattapoisett School Committee Meeting Agenda – December 7, 2020

Meeting Minutes of October 22, 2020 and October 26, 2020

Back to School Feedback Survey Parents & Guardians – Center School/Old Hammondtown School

Technology Replacement Fee Schedule

Financial Report dated December 4, 2020

Food Service Director Report – December, 2020

Facilities Director Report – December, 2020

Principal’s Report – December, 2020

Meeting of the Regular Mattapoisett School Committee meeting ended at 9:43pm

Chairperson Muse requested at 9:43pm a Motion to go in to Executive Session for the Purpose of #3 and #7 – to comply with the provisions of any general or special law.

MOTION: by Carole Clifford to go in to Executive Session for the Purpose of #3 and #7 – to return only to adjourn

SECONDED: Karin Barrows

IN FAVOR: All

OPPOSED: None

MOTION PASSED – 5:0

Role Call: Carole Clifford – Yes; Karin Barrows – Yes; Shannon Finning – Yes; Carly Lavin – Yes; James Muse - Yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni M. Bailey, Recording Secretary