



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES March 20, 2018

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	March 20, 2018
Location:	MERHS Library
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Ann Cameron, Chairman Julie Riordan, Co-Chairman Shannon Erdmann Sarah Wolf Rachel Fitzgibbon Ken Warnock Caroline Weld
Absent:	
Guests:	
Recorded by:	Gail Hunter

A. Call to Order

Ms. Cameron called the School Committee Business Meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

B. Executive Session

Mr. Warnock moved the School Committee meeting to Executive Session, Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee in Executive Session

Mr. Warnock moved the School Committee close the Executive Session, Ms. Erdmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Business Meeting Open Session

- 1) **Public Comment** – will take place at the end of the meeting.
- 2) **Student Report** – There was no student report this evening.
- 3) **Chairman's Report** – Ms. Cameron did not have a report for this evening.
- 4) **Consent Agenda:**

- Acceptance of Warrants
- Minutes 3/6/2018

*Ms. Erdmann moved to approve the **Consent Agenda**, Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. The motion passed 6 approving, 0 against and 1 abstaining.*

Ms. Weld abstained did not attend March 6, 2018 meeting. Ms. Erdmann had 2 edits to the Minutes: on page 3 Ms. Marshall is not scheduled to make a presentation and on page 4 Crisis Manager is an app, not a person.

5) Sub-Committee Reports:

Elementary Facilities (Ms. Weld and Ms. Cameron)

Superintendent Beaudoin and Mr. Urbas are meeting with MSBA tomorrow to provide a progress report. JCJ is tasked with reviewing the decision-making process as it related to N3 and MERSD is providing a synopsis of the Educational Plan and will discuss how the building selection meets the needs of the District's Educational Plan. Additionally, Superintendent Beaudoin anticipates questions regarding the flexible space. She is prepared to answer those question.

Ms. Cameron would like to schedule a meeting with Essex to discuss what the new Memorial School Building means to Essex within the next 4 weeks.

At a meeting with Ms. Riordan and Superintendent Beaudoin, Superintendent Beaudoin listed improvements made and proposed for Essex Elementary School. Ms. Cameron believes it is important for Committee members to be aware of the improvements already made to Essex Elementary School. New LED lighting and the HVAC Systems Control upgrade – an investment of more than \$200K according to Ms. Urbas.

An Essex resident suggested an additional “cash ask” when the Towns are voting on the new Memorial School. MSBA has very specific language that needs to be adhered to in the process of approving the new school build. Superintendent Beaudoin proposed a non-binding referendum to reassure voters in Essex that there will be a new Elementary School in Essex. Mr. Warnock indicated Essex residents will reap the benefit of lessons learned on the Memorial Building

process – it is important for the residents to understand that the Towns worked collaboratively and will work collaboratively in the future.

Finance Committee (Ms. Cameron and Ms. Erdmann)

Collaborative Meeting was cancelled due to snow. Summit meeting with both Towns all Committees and Boards was postponed waiting for preliminary projections for bond funding prior to rescheduling the long term capital summit.

Communication/Policy Committee (Ms. Fitzgibbon and Mr. Warnock)

Meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 22, 2018 at noon.

Negotiation Team (Ms. Wolf and Ms. Riordan)

Ms. Wolf indicated the first negotiation meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday, March 14, 2018 was cancelled due to Snow Day and rescheduled for March 28, 2018.

6) Superintendent's Report – Goals Update

Superintendent Beaudoin's goals are divided into three categories:

Professional Practice – Utilize interest based bargaining methodology to renegotiate META contract. Everything is on track. Ms. Cameron asked about a new association for Teaching Assistants. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated that would go forward when ready, it is separate from negotiations.

Student Learning – assess quality and provisioning in target areas of the academic program.

- Identify and utilize third-party professional organizations to review and evaluate financial, staffing resources allocation of district programs.
Athletics Program: Review completed with report to School Committee on January 9, 2018. Task Force led by HS Principal formed to organize action plan based on recommendations. On the path to getting recommendations addressed. Ms. Riordan serves on the Task Force and pointed out the Athletic Director's role is a significant point.
Middle School Special Education Program: Review complete with report to School Committee on April 24, 2018. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated areas of concern in General Education emerge in Special Education. It is important to identify areas that need help. The Reading Program is an area with inconsistencies which will be addressed.
NEASC: Year 1
- Report out findings (see above)

- Revise District Improvement Plan to reflect recommendations in curriculum and professional development – in process update provided to School Committee on June 5, 2018.
- Prioritize and Integrate findings in to multi-year budget development (staffing and resources) – complete for FY19
- Implement recommendations from FY17 reviews – in process.

Support the implementation of curriculum and training to support district goal of providing a coordinated approach toward social emotional learning.

- Collaborate with Director of Curriculum & Instruction on the implementation of staff training.
- Target resources to support staff training in preparation for student roll-out in 2018-2019.
- Collaborate and assist in the promotion of parent education and information on the initiative.

District Improvement --Develop and pass a budget that addresses impact of significant increased health costs on instructional program.

- Identify and implement an online tool that allows the public to easily view data related to District finances. Tool identified and acquired. Data check in process before going live. Estimated go live date June 2018.
- Work collaboratively with the MERSD School Committee and Director of Finance to develop a communication plan aimed at educating the public about the impact of the health care increase.

7) **New Business** – There was no new business to be addressed.

8) **Continued Business** –

- **Budget Update**

- FY 18 Year-to-Date Review – Mr. Urbas Presentation
- FY 18 budget vs. actual is looking much tighter than prior years.
- Impact of \$400K+ in reductions to fund 28% health Insurance:
 - Many, but not all reductions are proceeding as expected.
 - Out-of-District (ODD) savings have been a bright spot
 - Still early, potential for unknown costs could have a meaningful impact.
- Big Picture:
 - Ex tent of cuts significantly reduces opportunities for end-of-year savings.

- Challenging FY 18 status compounds into FY 19 – some portion of \$200K set aside will likely be needed.

○ **FY 18 Budget Update: Detail**

- Personnel (\$16M budget, 665 of total):
 - Now forecast within 0.05% (\$9K) – razor thin.
 - Much tighter vs. prior years at this point in the school year.
 - Unexpected leaves often add cost in the final months of the school year.
- Health Insurance (\$3.5M; 14%)
 - Right in-line with estimates (28% rate increase) \$400K.
 - In prior years, conservative estimates allowed for some savings by year end.
 - Exact OPEB obligation not final, will not be known until 6/30/18. The figure is based on a contractual promise, cannot be finalized until full 12 mos. is known.
- Out-of-District (\$724K; 3%)
 - Reduced budget by \$100K in fall of 2017, with health care changes.
 - On track through proactive management, in-district programming
 - FY 19 assumes \$125K pre-paid at end of FY 18 – status TBD.
- Snow -- \$34K invoiced through Feb; could hit \$60K, which is high end of typical range.

The take away according to Mr. Urbas is FY 19 will be a tough budget year due to the Health Insurance challenge. The goal is to end in the black.

○ **FY 19 Status Report**

Phase I of the budget process – prepare and present District Budget to the Towns.

**Phase 1 - Gap Closing for Balanced Budget
Gap Closing Measures**

<i>Services/Fees/Revenue Reductions</i>		Impact
Staff Reduction through attrition	\$354,000	Reduction 1 Classroom Section @ Memorial Combing Library/Technology FTE @ EES
50 % Reduction Overtime/Summer work All Depts.	\$60,000	Reduction in Summer Maintenance Summer Guidance Availability Reduces
Hiring Cap	\$30,000	M5 Target
Eliminate Late Buses	\$25,000	No Afterschool Transportation
HS Student Activity Cut	\$20,000	Parent/Student Assume additional travel costs

Curriculum/PD Small Cap Reduction	\$20,000	Limits to program development/training/material
IDEA Grant Reorganization	\$17,000	Accounting Shift
Solar Savings	\$10,000	No Impact - Savings
Essex - Green Community Upgrades	\$10,000	No Impact - Savings
Full Day K on Wednesdays/Eliminate Transportation Cost	\$8,000	Increased Service - Eliminates K Early Release Wed/Staggered Start
Reduce Custodial Supply Line	\$7,500	Reduced Supply Funding
Retirement Replacement Offset	\$5,000	Anticipated savings
Eliminate Crossing Guard Fund	\$4,500	No Impact – Unused past two years
Reduce Nurse Substitute Line	\$3,000	Reduced
	\$574,000	

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the above chart highlighted the steps take in Phase 1 to assure balance budget to the Towns.

Committee discussion on the Phase 1 cuts:

- Summer guidance drop ins will be handled at the beginning of the new school year. However, boot camp will be held. Committee members collectively responded positively to this news to run boot camp.
- Full Day K: Superintendent Beaudoin noted this is a positive move and will likely help parents with child care issues. Ms. Cameron asked is this was for both Elementary Schools, it is. Ms. Cameron also inquired about Kinder Swim, a popular after school program with parents. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated she had spoken to the Y and the Y is working on rescheduling the program for interested parents. Ms. Cameron asked if extended Wednesday Kindergarten would help literacy, Superintendent Beaudoin indicated it would very likely help.
- Ms. Cameron asked about the substitute nurse budget line – it has been decreased to reflect actual usage. The line was decreased from \$13K to \$10K not eliminated. Ms. Weld asked for clarification – Mr. Urbas gave the accurate line item decrease.
- Ms. Cameron indicated she felt positive about the recent Collaborative Meeting, Superintendent Beaudoin agreed, and thought is funds were provided it maybe possible to reinstate the late bus with a consolidated 4:30 run. Superintendent indicated if this was the plan, supervision would be provided for students waiting for the bus.
- Late bus discussion continued with Ms. Riordan, Mr. Warnock and Ms. Wolf commenting in support for reinstituting the bus. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated this could be revisited.
- Ms. Cameron asked about the .4 and .4 librarian and technician positions in Essex Elementary: Superintendent Beaudoin clarified the curriculum is developing and will likely change. Computer Science will become part of the Math Curriculum and for 2018-2019 Essex Elementary and Memorial will share a resource.
- Ms. Cameron asked when the subject would be revisited. Superintendent Beaudoin stated she will continue to provide updates.

- Ms. Fitzgibbon asked when Mr. Fleming would complete his analysis on Cap updates. Specifically hoping for funds to reinstate the late bus when the analysis is completed.

○ **Implications of FY 19 planning process**

**Phase 2 – Further Reduction to Address Phase 2
Unmet Needs**

Original Request		Reorganized/Utilizing Internal Staffing Shifts	
HS Enrollment Staffing 2.2	150000	HS Enrollment Staffing 1.2	85000
1.0 Bridge	65000	1.0 Bridge /Academic Center	65000
Reading Tutor	40000	Reading Tutor	40000
.4 Dean Behavioral Specialist / SWING-SAIL Share	15000	.4 Dean Behavioral Specialist / SWING-SAIL Share	15000
	270000		205000

Original Proposed Cuts/Efficiencies to Fund Unmet Needs

Elementary FL	68000	Removed from Consideration
FL G6 to .6	24000	Contingent
Facilities Restructure	50000	Under Review
Cap - 1 YR LTS: B1/M1		Under Review – Estimated Cost
Cap - FMLA LTS: 185		
	74000	

In Phase 2 – At this time the District will be unable to put back any of the cuts from Phase I, according to Superintendent Beaudoin. However, with the projected decrease in Health Insurance costs from a 14% increase to a 10% increase the above proposal will meet the immediate needs of the High School and Middle School.

Promising news, Elementary Foreign Language is off the list. There will be a reduction in 6th Grade Foreign Language to .6 with the Teacher assuming other duties rolled up to 1.0, a full-time position.

Additional savings may be realized through merging with DPW and capping long term sub costs. Analysis of substitute teacher costs is underway. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the budget is tight exiting FY 18 and will be tight starting FY 19. Ms. Cameron asked when the District would have a signed Health Care contract, Mr. Urbas indicated it would be ready for the April 24th meeting.

• **School Choice 2018-2019 – Projections**

The Committee discussed School Choice for 2018-2019. There were 120 applicants for MERSD School Choice. It is a blind lottery asking for the applicants' name, if they had a sibling in the

District and grade for which they are applying. Superintendent Beaudoin is recommending 2 students per grade level K-5 and waiting until late spring before considering grades 6 and 9; perhaps adding one student to the High School.

Ms. Weld indicated she was aware of 6 students returning to the District for High School. Mr. Warnock mentioned he worked with the Robotics Group recently and was interested to find out that nearly half of the students in the program were School Choice students.

*Mr. Warnock moved the **MERSD accept 10 students into the District through School Choice**, Ms. Erdmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

- 2018-2019 Calendar – Second Read

The 2018-2019 Calendar was reviewed by the Committee. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the calendar had been revised and edited and would be more thoroughly edited before being reviewed by the Committee for final approval.

Ms. Cameron asked when Ms. De Roche was scheduled to meet with the Committee. Ms. Cameron is interested in discussion the District Improvement Plan, STEM, Humanities and Computational Thinking with Ms. De Roche. Superintendent Beaudoin will forward preliminary meeting agendas to the Committee members.

Additional Committee comments:

Ms. Weld attended District Band and Chorus Concert and MERSD was strongly represented, it was a beautiful concert.

Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the music program was planning a Summer Camp and the program had dedicated, enthusiastic teachers.

Ms. Fitzgibbon spoke about the School Walk Out and the success of fundraising efforts for victims of Parkland. Students raised \$1,073.00 through the sale of tie-dyed t-shirts. Funds will be sent to a fully vetted Go Fund Me page.

Students were impressive in preparing for the Walk Out, conducted themselves well and were accepting of students who choice to remain in class.

Mr. Warnock thanked Mr. Urbas for his work on the Budget in these extraordinary times and extended thanks to Mr. Fleming, Mr. Urbas' assistant.

Public Comment

Jen Flanagan, Manchester – Ms. Flanagan spoke to the late bus budget cut and reminded the Committee transportation must be provided for students with an IEP, to allow for their full participation in after school activities.

Additionally, Ms. Flanagan had 2 questions:

1. The first question was regarding Out-of-District placements and what is included in the District budget line item for tuition? Mr. Urbas answered the question indicating tuition was a separate line item and may include costs for summer programming. Transportation is included in the transportation line item. Ms. Flanagan asked if there were other unrelated costs included; specifically mentioned settlement costs. Mr. Urbas replied no the line item was for tuition and programming only.
2. Ms. Flanagan asked how many students in the Special Ed Program were admitted, paying private tuition and where in the budget was that revenue reflected? There is one student in the District Special Ed Program (Middle School) from a different School District. According to Superintendent Beaudoin it is an “in-kind” placement and the child has been in the program for several years. Ms. Flanagan spoke to the lack of transparency regarding the student paying private tuition and parents of Special Ed. Students not being engaged in the process. She indicated it was an invisible process and there appeared to be a “back door” in the MERSD where other Districts practice more transparency and have a conversation with Special Ed parents. Mr. Urbas indicated revenue according to MA State Law is segregated in a separate account and reviewed and accounted for in the auditing process. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the District is committed to keeping Special Ed programs small, that she understood the concerns expressed but due to confidentiality it was difficult to have an open process.

Ms. Wolf asked when the next SEPAC meeting was scheduled. Ms. Flanagan indicated the group was waiting for a response from the School Committee regarding the 14-page Annual Report SEPAC provided to the Committee on June 19, 2017. Ms. Wolf stated she did not understand why that was impacting scheduling a SEPAC meeting. She spoke to a Special Ed parent today who was interested in participating in the group. Ms. Flanagan indicated some parents felt that the lack of response from the School Committee regarding the Report submitted was heart breaking and the parents in the core group are discouraged.

Maura Hughes, Manchester – Ms. Hughes had 2 questions:

1. Ms. Hughes first question was directed to Ms. Cameron and was regarding the Community Health Group: had the Committee started work on that yet? Ms. Cameron indicated Committee members had met with other communities to see what had been done in their area and was working on developing a Web Site. The next step in the process is to have a small group meeting and training to define community home values. Ms. Weld indicated it was a bigger project than just the school. This project needs parents, communities and a larger group to help develop a comprehensive resource. Ms. Hughes indicated she had met with Mr. Warnock, Ms. Riordan and Ms. Weld and suggested a Manchester resident as an excellent resource to help with development of a

Community Health Group. Ms. Hughes suggested the Committee be in touch with Dr. Eugene Dangelo who is head of psychology at Boston Children's Hospital.

2. Ms. Hughes stated she is trying to get student records for her son to see where he is at. She is planning to line up summer tutoring for him. She asked, what's the deal with student records? Superintendent Beaudoin indicated the District complies with student record and public record laws. There are documents that are included in the student record and documents included in the public records. Parents are not charged for student records upon their first request. The District relies on the advice of counsel when complying with requests for copies of student and public records. Ms. Hughes attempted to view her son's records and asked where the records are kept. Superintendent Beaudoin stated the records are kept and compiled at every grade level and are kept at the School the student is attending. Ms. Hughes stated there was a lot missing in her son's record. She is letting the School Committee know there is a problem with District transparency and she had trouble getting her son's records. Also, she had trouble getting his testing; we were told we could look at the test questions. Superintendent Beaudoin indicated The District releases test results not the tests.

Julie Hindes, Manchester – had 4 questions:

1. Ms. Hindes first question was a multi part question regarding School Records:
 - Questioning \$500 charge for records – there is policy in place to not charge for the first request for student records. Ms. Hindes is attempting to get her daughter resources she needs and has not been provided.
 - Attorney's fees for 21.2 hours – these are reviews of public record requests; the District complies with the law and documentation for public records prior to release of the records.
 - Special Ed Staff pulling records – this is a legal compliance issue and the process is completed by lawyers under advice of counsel.
2. Why were the police not called when students were caught smoking dope in the Green Room? Superintendent Beaudoin is not able to speak to student discipline issues.
3. What will it take to get a School Resource Officer (SRO)? Ms. Cameron replied that the SRO issue has been discussed for the past 2 years. The Chiefs in both Towns are supportive of the SRO position and funding the position is being discussed.
4. Ms. Hindes indicated she was not aware a parent could review their child's records on site. Ms. Hughes indicated she had been told by 2 offices in Boston that it was possible for a parent to review their child's records on site.

Aileen Murphey – Manchester

Ms. Murphy stated she was not charged for her student records and pointed out she believed there were major inconsistencies in providing student records. She further stated she thought this was a gross injustice.

School and Public Record Requests

Superintendent Beaudoin further stated it is a District goal to establish and define process review of student and public record requests. This is a new phenomenon for the District and it is important to have a consistent intake and outflow process. The District is working with their attorneys and receiving guidance from the State Attorney General's office to establish the process and correct inconsistencies.

D. Adjourn

Ms. Wolf moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Hunter