



SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OPEN SESSION MINUTES NOVEMBER 7, 2017

Meeting:	School Committee
Date:	November 7, 2017
Location:	MERMHS Library
Attendees:	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent of Schools; Ann Cameron, Chairman; Julie Riordan, Co-Chairman; Shannon Erdmann, Sarah Wolf, Caroline Weld, Ken Warnock, and Rachel Fitzgibbon.
Absent:	Avi Urbas, Director of Finance
Recorded by:	Adele Ardolino, Secretary

A. Call to Order

Ms. Riordan called the School Committee Business Meeting Open Session to order at 6:05 p.m., and thanked the technician from the Cape Ann Channel for filming this meeting.

B. Business Meeting Open Session

1) Student Report: Ms. Summer Burroughs explained lack of communication regarding events pertaining to the Senior Class has been an issue, for example the date, time, and location of the cap and gown fitting and when the SCORE proposals are due. After the unfortunate incidents at Spirit week, it was decided to have mini lessons for the Freshmen presented by the Seniors in Ms. Brown's class (time permitted) regarding issues such as world issues and etiquette. The black face issue was discussed in History class. Articles were read and discussions held in Ms. Tran's AP Psych class. It was decided in Ms. Tran's class to change Spirit Week to group Seniors and Sophomores together and Juniors and Freshmen together. Ms. Burroughs suggested that a Senior class

meeting should have been held to address the incidents during Spirit Week, so that the incident could be discussed and settled as a class.

Ms. Burroughs stated that she has been enjoying her English classes that are held as mini-quarters this year in seminar style, finding them engaging and learning a great deal from them. She has taken *American Western* in the first mini-quarter, and she is presently taking *Women Writers Around the World*. Another class that is offered is the *History of the Joke*, introducing the students to improvisation.

2) Annual Assessment Review (Julie DeRoche, Director of Curriculum & Instructional Tech

Ms. DeRoche explained the Annual Assessment Review as follows:

PISA 2015 Scores: The MERSD scores are higher than the Comparison Group in every category. The PISA exam is given across the world and we are ranked with other countries. PISA addresses and assesses content literacy across different disciplines—science, reading, and math, and how students apply their knowledge.

AP 2017 Scores: Our students are scored in the 3-5 range (high), which is what we expected.

SAT Scores: 99 students.

- Reading/Writing: 605 (perfect score 800)
- Math: 600 (perfect score 800)
- Average: 1205 (total score can be 1600)

ACT Scores: 56 students (this number keeps increasing)

- English: 26.3
- Math: 26.0
- Reading: 26.3
- Science: 24.1
- Composite: 25.8 (20.8 is the national average).

Colleges are accepting both exams.

Ms. Erdmann asked if the score results reflect whether or not the right teacher is teaching a given class, because this is an issue that other parents have raised.

Ms. DeRoche replied that could be an issue, or the curriculum could require updating or focusing on one aspect of the course and maybe another aspect is what is being called for. Teachers are sent for training on updating the curriculum (2-3 teachers across the disciplines are sent per year).

MCAS:

The MCAS test has changed to the Next-Generation MCAS test is a computer-based assessment. The ELA and math framework standards have changed, and the

new assessments are reflective of this change. These standards are more rigorous, robust, text complex, and require a higher level of literacy and writing across the disciplines.

MCAS Achievement Levels

Legacy	Next-Generation
Advanced	Exceeding Expectations (530-560)
Proficient	Meeting Expectations (500-529)
Needs Improvement	Partially Meeting Expectations (470-499)
Warning	Not Meeting Expectations (440-469)

Ms. Beaudoin explained that there are cross-over formulas for the last generation (Legacy) to this Next-Generation and pencil and paper vs. computer.

Evaluation of MCAS Data Results: Ms. DeRoche explained as follows:

Grades 3-8 (excludes Grade 10, because that is a graduation requirement). There is a transition in terms of narrative writing vs. extended, research, and essay writing. Reading for a purpose and then applying the purpose to the writing, and literature across disciplines.

Ms. Cameron asked about the text-heavy curriculum and the need for book storage, especially in the planning of the new Memorial Elementary School. Ms. DeRoche replied that there are book rooms and libraries in each elementary school. There is also new technology that will be installed in the new school for online texts.

Grade 3-8 Math: Ms. DeRoche explained that they have to work on the short answer component, place value in the lower elementary grades, understanding the operations and algebraic thinking to solve problems using all four operations, how to multiply and divide within 100 automatically, numbers and operations, fractions, and equivalent expressions. Ms. Cameron asked if the earliest certain knowledge is introduced to the students, the sooner the students will be able to grasp it? Ms. DeRoche replied that they are looking at ways to introduce certain math functions in K-8, so it isn't foreign to them and allow for repeated exposure.

Grade 3-8 Science: Ms. DeRoche explained that the two major things that stand out are earth and the solar system types of questions, and heat and transfer in the earth system.

Next Steps

- Review K-12 curriculum and content alignment to the new 2017 MA ELA, math, and science standard expectations.
- Assess K-12 vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment.
- Determine next steps for curriculum review and adoption cycles.
- Assess student work to determine grade-level expectations for writing.

- Research instructional strategies to support the implementation of best practices in ELA, math, and science curricula.
- Review assessments and interventions for students.
- Train staff and students on the computer-based MCAS exam.

Ms. DeRoche explained that we finally have a clear framework from the state level to work from. Ms. DeRoche stated that she feels confident, based on the research and knowledge gained in this scope, but added that we need to learn how to build the vertical alignment in the elementary schools. The department heads will receive the necessary training and will assist in this project.

Ms. DeRoche stated that she doesn't look at the MCAS as a test, but a grade level expectation tool—what is expected at each grade level, and how do we know that we have taught it? Are we clearly articulating and communicating that content at each grade level? Ms. Beaudoin made the point that we have to ground the students in traditional foundational skills and then prepare them for the future. Ms. DeRoche explained that the PISA test is important because it assesses the kids where they should be when the graduate high school, regardless of whether they go to college.

3) Consent Agenda

- **Acceptance of Warrants:**

Ms. Wolf made a motion to accept Vouchers 1022 and 1023. Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock voted unanimously to accept these vouchers.

Mr. Warnock made a motion to accept Voucher 1021. Ms. Riordan seconded the motion. Ms. Riordan, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock voted unanimously to accept this voucher (Ms. Cameron abstained).

Mr. Warnock made a motion to accept Voucher 1024. Ms. Riordan seconded the motion. Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock voted unanimously to accept this voucher. Ms. Erdmann was not in the room at the time of this vote.

- Minutes 10/17/2017 (Not included in the packet). Ms. Erdmann gave the secretary some edits for the 10/3/2017 minutes.

4) Sub-Committee Reports

- **Elementary Facilities (Caroline Weld/Ann Cameron):** Ms. Weld explained that they met last night, and the PDP is going to be approved on November 14, 2017 by the School Building Committee, and then by the School Committee on November 21, 2017, if agreed. We have had two community meetings, the last one was November 1st. Ms. Weld stated that she went to the morning session and there were about 25 people from the

public were present, as well as all of the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Cameron attended the evening session and about 25 people from the public were present, including Adele Irvin, who is always focal and supportive of the school district, and is supportive of the new building.

Ms. Cameron explained that at last night's meeting we went into detail about the PDP, edited the document, and discussed details about the Ed Plan. We will have meetings every two weeks and things are going well. Ms. Weld explained that by the end of December we will have solid numbers.

- **Finance Committee: (Ann Cameron/Shannon Erdmann):** Ms. Erdmann stated that tomorrow night (11/8) we are going to visit the Manchester Finance Committee, and we are first of the agenda. Ms. Cameron stated that they visited the Essex Finance Committee last week. Brendan went through the City of Hudson model to make sure that the Memorial School model is going to work for everybody. The Memorial School model didn't fit into the Hudson model, so Mr. Urbas had to work on it and put in his own projections. The Essex Finance Committee asked her committee members if they value strong schools and is that something that they want to support, and we had a discussion about it.

Ms. Erdmann explained that at the Manchester Finance Committee meeting tomorrow night we are going to discuss the Hudson model and how the Memorial School is plugging into that model conceptually. We will probably have a discussion about apportionment, and there is a section on the agenda about concerns. We will discuss how our budget is built, high-level drivers and things we can control and things we can't control.

- **Policy & Communications Committee: (Rachel Fitzgibbon/Ken Warnock):** Ms. Beaudoin explained that they want to run parallel tracks of communication and not interweave communications about the operational budget with communications about the Memorial School—keep the separate financially and the way we talk about them.
- **Negotiation Team (Sarah Wolf/Julie Riordan):** Ms. Riordan stated that they are hoping to get IBB training from the person that the MTA representative recommends. We have planned out our meeting schedule over the year.

5) Superintendent's Report: Ms. Beaudoin stated that there should be a press release coming up from the Chief of Police regarding the graffiti and vandalism to the Memorial School over the weekend. Ms. Beaudoin stated that she has had four conversations with people who were upset by this incident, and Chief Conley contacted concerned people as well. A couple of juveniles went throughout town tagging things up with things that were offensive to women and minorities, and one of those things was the Memorial School. Those individuals were arrested. The school staff came in over the weekend to inspect

and clean up the damage, so that everything was ready for school on Monday morning. This incident was followed by the terrible wind storm. Mr. Tom Kehoe called at 5:30 a.m. to notify us that there was no power in parts of town and trees were down in some areas, so there was a 2 hour delay for school start, and the DPW had everything cleaned up in time. The old generator was moved to Essex Elementary School, so that Essex could serve as an emergency shelter.

Ms. Beaudoin explained that some parents made suggestions for better communications. For example, this year Elementary School Open House was held on Rosh Hashanah.

Ms. Beaudoin stated that the Veterans' Day celebration will be held on Thursday morning, and the Manchester Fire Chief will be the key note address. The kids are always respectful at these events.

6) MSBA PDP (Preliminary Design Program) & Ed Plan Submission Approval:

Ms. Beaudoin put the Ed Plan on the screen and explained that the Ed Plan is an accounting on how the schools do things, so that design decisions can be made and establish how much space we need and how many classrooms we need, etc. The Committee reviewed and discussed the Ed Plan. The main question is: Does the Committee agree that we want to continue doing business this way? The Design Team will be charged with the task of figuring out how to give us what we need with the space we have.

Ms. Beaudoin proposed that we have as many classrooms in the new building as we had in the old building and that we do not look to escalate class size.

Pre-K classroom that could be subdivided into two rooms, if needed. Could this be an opportunity to expand Pre-K (Georgetown model) tuition-based (approximately \$9,000/year), open to all children 3-5 years old. Ms. Erdmann agreed that it makes sense to expand Pre-K. Ms. Wolf agreed, but stated that there should be a Pre-K at both elementary schools. Ms. Riordan stated that it makes sense financially to expand the Pre-K program at the new Memorial School, because of the equipment needed for Special Needs children. Ms. Cameron stated that she feels strongly about Essex needing a Pre-K program, and would like to have a separate conversation regarding Pre-K, not associated with the Memorial School project would like more information and consider the matter in the future.

Project space to do STEM, STEAM, MAKER, Creative Interdisciplinary, Hands-On Learning classroom/space to do the work and for storage of the kits and projects.

Hygiene Shower: To be located in the nurses' room, in the event a child has an accident, etc.

Gym: Replace elementary size gym with a full regulation sized gym. You cannot etch lines down on the floor in the current gym space. The auditorium will be removed, and the new gym and cafetorium will be the primary gathering spaces for large groups. The enlargement will include the bleachers.

Ms. Beaudoin explained that through Parks & Recreation (Manchester) and the YMCA (Essex) we get before and after-school care, and they store their supplies at Memorial School. Ms. Beaudoin asked the Committee if they wanted to continue to integrate these programs into the school, and continue the partnership that the school supplies the space and the YMCA and Parks & Recreation provide the programs. The Committee members agreed to maintain the partnership.

The Committee members suggested edits to this Ed Plan document.

Ms. Erdmann made a motion to approve the Ed Plan, as discussed tonight. Ms. Riordan seconded the motion. Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock voted unanimously to approve the Ed Plan.

7) Request for Reappointment of Essex Tech School Board Rep (Manchester):

Mr. Warnock made a motion to reappointment of Mr. Jeff Delaney Essex Tech School Rep (Manchester). Ms. Fitzgibbon seconded the motion. Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock voted unanimously to reappoint Mr. Delaney.

8) New Business: Ms. Wolf explained that she attended the CPAC meeting and several new parents were there. The focus of the meeting was parents helping parents, planning, and dates of future meetings. The CPAC members would like to attend our School Committee meetings and would prefer to present at the beginning of these meetings. Ms. Cameron stated that she will respond to the e-mail she received from CPAC. Ms. Wolf stated that she plans to attend these meetings as often as she can, and will send around an e-mail if she cannot attend a meeting, so that another Committee member can attend in her place.

9) Public Comment: None.

Adjourn

Ms. Riordan made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Warnock seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous by Ms. Cameron, Ms. Riordan, Ms. Erdmann, Ms. Wolf, Ms. Weld, Ms. Fitzgibbon, and Mr. Warnock. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adele Ardolino
Secretary to the MERSD School Committee