



## SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### BUSINESS MEETING OPEN SESSION MINUTES

*September 19, 2023*

<b>Meeting:</b>	School Committee
<b>Date:</b>	September 19, 2023
<b>Location:</b>	MERMHS Learning Commons
<b>Attendees:</b>	Pamela Beaudoin, Superintendent Avi Urbas, Director of Finance Theresa Whitman, Chairperson John Binieris Kate Koch-Sundquist Anna Lin Mitchell Chris Reed Erica Spencer
<b>Absent:</b>	Jake Foster
<b>Guests:</b>	
<b>Recorded by:</b>	Maria Schmidt
<b>Link to Reports and Presentations</b>	<a href="https://www.mersd.org/domain/785">https://www.mersd.org/domain/785</a>

**A. Call to Order of Business Meeting Open Session**– Ms. Whitman called the School Committee Business meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

1) **Public Comment** - none

2) **Student Report** - none

3) **Chairman's Report** – Ms. Whitman mentioned that the evening's All Board Meeting was featured in the Gloucester Times. Ms. Whitman received a public recommendation to rescind the district's mask policy. The SC and superintendent will look further into the issue to see if the policy was worded to allow the district to pivot to masks on an as-needed basis. Ms. Whitman reminded the SC members to complete their documents for the superintendent evaluation.

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Mr. Binieris read from the School Committee Operating Protocols: Work together to establish a vision, create policy, approve a budget and assure accountability to sustain continuous improvement in teaching, learning and facilities.

**4) Consent Agenda –**

- Acceptance of Warrants: AP vouchers 1013-1014 (FY24) and 1087 (FY23)
- Minutes for approval: September 5, 2023

*Ms. Koch-Sundquist moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Mr. Binieris seconded the motion.*

Mr. Urbas noted that this is the last expected voucher from FY 23.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

**5) Sub-Committee Reports**

- **Elementary Facilities/MSBC Sub-Committee** (John Binieris/Theresa Whitman) – No Report
- **Collaboration Group/Finance Sub-Committee** (Anna Mitchell/Theresa Whitman) – No report
- **Policy/Program Sub-Committee** (Jake Foster/Anna Mitchell/ Erica Spencer) – No Report
- **Negotiation Team Sub-Committee** (Chris Reed/Kate Koch-Sundquist) –

**6) Superintendent's Report**

- a. General Update – Superintendent Beaudoin reported that the Policy Sub-Committee will meet on September 28, 2023 at 10:30 am. The superintendent said that the high school open house was well attended and generated positive feedback from attendees. The new high school staff are generating a lot of excitement. For the pending early release professional development day, staff at the elementary schools will gather collaboratively, focusing on curriculum and instruction in service of the Strategic Plan. The elementary schools are preparing to begin the process of accreditation. The joint effort will include self-evaluation and alignment to NESC standards. The NESC will return a report with recommendations. The process will culminate in accreditation. This undertaking is an extension of working backwards from the Vision of the Graduate and is part of the progression to achieving grade-level overview. For the half day, the middle and high schools plan safety training and continuing work with staff around DEI. Ms. Molinari, the Athletic Director, published expectations to parents regarding attendance at sporting events. Families are asked to accompany students under thirteen years of age to all games.
- b. Goals – Superintendent Beaudoin explored her goals for FY 24/25. Usually, these are reviewed during the summer and ready to implement by September, informing the work of the school year.

- i. Student Learning – Superintendent Beaudoin will focus on managing the transition for new administrators, keeping forward motion while they acclimate and setting them up for success.
- ii. Library/Media Services – Examination of library/media services at the middle/high school has been a quiet goal, but over the next two year the superintendent will convene a group to determine what the library program should look like. The current learning commons concept emerged from a team exploration. The original support systems for that program fell by the wayside during COVID.
- iii. Professional Practice – Superintendent Beaudoin attended a summer superintendent retreat. MERSD measured well in work on cultural competencies. Over the next two years, the goal will be to make it actionable in the classroom. Staff are able to see how SEI, authentic learning, and cultural competency work together. Building leadership will work to get into classrooms and note identifiers that demonstrate these principals in the classroom. The superintendent stated that it will be necessary to create a working group to collaborate with META to change any documents.
- iv. No Budget Goal – Budget aspects have moved to the District Improvement Plan and the goal will live in that document. The discussion is shifting from a focus on cutting to growth.

Discussion: Ms. Whitman further clarified the evaluation process for the superintendent, stating that SC members only need to evaluate standards specified in the evaluation document. Ms. Whitman will send out a document with highlighted standards. Ms. Whitman asked for a straw poll on whether the SC was ready to approve those goals now. Ms. Mitchell recommended approving the goals at the next SC meeting, allowing time to determine if feedback from the current evaluation is represented in the goals for the next cycle. Ms. Koch-Sundquist asked if the evaluation process is mirrored in the evaluation of the principals and from there to staff. Superintendent Beaudoin said that the administrators also have goals around training, implementation, and cultural competency, and they have a similar process of evaluation. Beginning administrators will have more first year goals. They are on a three year cycle.

## **7) Continued Business –**

- a. Turf Field Project Update – Mr. Urbas stated that the Brook Street field is a few days behind schedule. It is expected that it will be complete past the September 28 planned completion date, but the district has not yet received a an updated schedule.
- b. Preparation for All-Board Meeting – Ms. Whitman stated that the collaboration group had nothing actionable beyond distribution of the meeting notes from September 9, 2023. Ms. Koch-Sundquist asked if there is a plan to formally establish who needs to attend the collaboration group in order for the group to meet. Ms. Whitman said that has not been formalized. However, the scheduling has focused on when the representatives can meet, and the meeting

does not run without Superintendent Beaudoin. Ms. Mitchell stated that it was stated that each committee must be represented in order for the collaboration group to meet. Ms. Whitman stated that all SC members had received an email with notes from the last collaboration group meeting and an overview of how the All-Board meeting will run. After an introduction by Anne Harrison and Ruth Preen, the moderators of the meeting, Superintendent Beaudoin will present a financial outlook for FY25. Likewise, the towns will provide an overview of their financial forecast. This will be followed by input from each chair and roundtable discussion. Time limits will be implemented.

- 8) School Committee Comment** – Ms. Whitman stated that the comments section of SC meetings needs to be clearly defined. In regards to the School Committee goals usually set during the summer, Ms. Whitman suggested dedicating time at each meeting to defining them. She said that working through the budget process will inform the goals. Ms. Whitman stated that a facilities walk through is planned for the SC for October.

**9) Adjournment to All-Boards Meeting at Middle High School Cafeteria**

*Mr. Binieris moved to adjourn the School Committee business meeting; Ms. Spencer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

*Meeting Adjourned at 6:34 pm*

**School Committee Future Meetings**

- October 3, 2023
- October 17, 2023