

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting
Thursday February 4, 2021
7:00pm

Zoom Conference Meeting ID: 944 6670 8263 & Password: 548463
<https://zoom.us/j/94466708263?pwd=MHhVT2JGRzYwbDUxb243WWNyNmd0UT09>

Members Present: Sarah Gold, Meagan Taylor, Sarah Fox, Emily Barron, David Harris

Also: John J. Buckey, Superintendent
Deanna McMahon, High School Nurse
Meaghan Kalpin, High School Nurse
Dan Bauer, High School Principal
Michelle Cresta, Director of Finance

I. Initial Business and Public Involvement

1. Call to Order
Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:02pm
2. Commendations
 - a. Building Based Commendations-Glover School, Principal Brian Ota
 - Lockerbie 8 students suffered loss of parents, Care Dimensions last year March 4th of last year presentation on grieving, question is not will but when, 6 week virtual group past fall , express feelings with other who experience similar loss and share feelings in a safe place, now weekly at mental health group every Thursday, like to implement district-wide
 - b. School Committee Commendations
None
3. Student Representative – Dan Howells
 - The Virtual Club Fair was held detailing all clubs at H.S-helpful for Freshman
 - The Freshman partnered with Stow Away Sweet for their Valentine’s Day Fundraiser -15% of sales would go towards the Freshman Class
 - The Musical Urinetown will be streaming Friday and Saturday evening at 7pm
 - There would be the addition of a Spirit Week next week to celebrate the last week before February break

Ms. Gold informed the community that they could purchase tickets by visiting mhdschoolcommittee.org.

4. Public Comment
Ms. Gold requested that due to the full agenda that all public comment not relating to the naming of the new school be taken first. She also asked that comments be kept to one minute when sharing input about the school name.
 - Catherine Martin spoke in favor of lessening the social distancing guidelines from 6 feet to 3 feet to bring students back in person more days. She also spoke in favor of implementing pool testing and mentioned the importance of a well-funded budget to adopt pool testing in the long-term.
 - Dawn Johns spoke in favor of lessening the social distancing guidelines and mentioned speaking with the MEA to negotiate the change.
 - Emily Dewitt also spoke in favor lessening the social distancing guidelines and mentioned the importance of vaccinations for educators. She also discussed implementing more mitigation strategies to address wide spread mental health concerns amongst students and their families.
 - Kim Day reminded the committee about reaching out to the many volunteers in the community
 - Alexia Kearney shared that 13-20% of children were suffering from mental health diagnosis before the pandemic and that only 10% on average received support or therapy.

She stressed that the impact that remote and hybrid learning has on children was real and introduced her son, a Junior at the high school to express his feelings of that impact.

- Niall Kearney informed the committee that he had countless friends who were going through a difficult time due to the social isolation they were experiencing. He stressed the importance of more mental health/social emotional support noting that one emotional health check in a month was not enough for students.
- Kristen Pratt thanked the committee for holding public comment on the new elementary school name. She also thanked the department for the increase in communication website, multiple websites and redundant emails, clarity on what parents and community can do to supports school. Ms. Pratt stressed the importance of working together to change what is happening.
- Michelle Gottlieb from the Board of Health shared that the Board of Health is hearing the community and are listening. She noted that mental health is in the purview of what the Board of Health and they are working. Volunteering is difficult due to contract tracing. Way to help signed up for Medical Reserve Core
- Erin Noonan thanked Ms. Gottlieb for attending the meeting. She also spoke in favor of pooled testing.
- Ms. Virginia Brown addressed concerns supporting children who were struggling with their grades during a remote learning period. She spoke in favor of returning to full days even if it were only two days a week.
- Mr. Henry Turner of 18 Taft Street spoke in favor of naming the new elementary school the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School.
- Mr. Jonathan Letterman shared his concerns regarding the transparency of the school committee. He spoke in favor of the school committee engaging more with the public.
- Ms. Melanie Lloyd of 26 Arthur Avenue read a statement from the racial justice team supporting naming the new elementary school the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School.
- Ms. Sherry Gagnon spoke in favor of naming the new elementary school the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School.
- Ms. Cindy Tower-Loewen spoke in favor of naming the new elementary school the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School.
- Ms. Leah Bokenkamp spoke in favor of naming the new elementary school the Lucretia and Joseph Brown School.
- Teacher Ms. Natalie Belli spoke of the importance of considering historical events when selecting a name for the new elementary school.

II. Consent Agenda and Action Items

1. Minutes: 12/17/2020, 1/21/2021

Ms. Gold noted that a set of minutes was late and asked the committee if they were ready to vote on the minutes. Ms. Fox noted that some votes were missing from the January 21st set. Ms. Gold noted that the minutes from January 21st could be held and voted the next time.

Ms. Gold made a motion to accept the minutes from December 17, 2020 and asked the committee if there were any requested edits. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Harris

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Taylor-yes

Mr. Harris-yes

Ms. Barron-yes

Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes all in favor, 5-0

III. Superintendent Report

1. Marblehead High School Program of Studies-2021-2022 Proposed Changes

Principal Bauer explained the high school was beginning to plan for the next school year with aligning the program of studies with the course selections that will be made available for the 2021-2022 school year. He shared a list of adjustments that were made to course titles and sections, adjustments per course that affected certain grade levels and which courses would be eliminated or added.

High School Special Education Chair Dr. Paula Donnelly shared that students participating in the curriculum support block would be provided 2.5 credits moving forward as opposed to no credits which would help them to meet the credit requirements for graduation.

Dr. Buckey commended the work of Principal Bauer and his team for all of the research they did in support of making adjustments to the programs of study sharing how impressed he was by the team.

Ms. Gold made a motion to accept Principal Bauer's Marblehead program of studies changes for the 2021-2022 school year. The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Ms. Taylor.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Taylor-yes

Mr. Harris-yes

Ms. Fox-yes

Ms. Barron-yes

The motion passes all in favor, 5-0

2. Pooled Testing Discussion

Dr. Buckey explained that he felt it was important for the school committee to be provided a presentation on pooled testing sharing what it was and how it could be implemented. Dr. Buckey explained that he had put Marblehead in the queue to participate to be prepared for program implementation as the adoption of pooled testing may require the hiring of a new nurse.

High School nurses Deanna, McMahon and Meaghan Kalpin presented a slideshow on pooled testing explaining how it was being used in schools to test for the COVID-19 virus.

- DESE supported pooled surveillance testing program at no cost to districts for six (6) weeks ending on March 28th
- Students and staff would be organized into pools of 10-25 per group
- Outcome of pools would prompt further testing if a positive pool was detected
- Performed at least once per week by nursing staff
- The vendor that the district would be paired with would provide:
 - a) Training
 - b) Software for managing results
 - c) Delivery of supplies
 - d) Lab Processing
- After the free six (6) weeks lapsed the district would be responsible for the costs associated with the program should Marblehead remain enrolled in the pooled testing program.

Ms. Kalpin shared the proposed cost from neighboring district Gloucester that would be associated with the program beyond the free six (6) weeks. Dr. Buckey noted that Gloucester had anticipated a total overall cost of \$65k to continue the pooled testing program.

A discussion regarding a timeframe for implementing testing and the logistics involved took place. Topics for discussion included budget implications, the testing turnaround time and quarantine protocols associated with positive pools, the confidentiality piece that would need to be considered if volunteers were involved with the testing process and the reporting requirements to both the Board of Health and DESE when a positive case was identified. It was also suggested that that testing occur after in-person school hours and that EMT's and firefighters may be able to assist with the testing procedures.

Committee member Ms. Fox noted her concern regarding how the information presented seemed to differ from the pool testing guidance from the state.

Prior to a motion made by Ms. Fox, it was mentioned by both Ms. Gold and Ms. Taylor that they would like to obtain more information regarding the pooled testing process.

Ms. Fox made a motion to approve the pool testing program participation as laid out by the state. Ms. Gold noted that she wanted to be sure there was enough information from the state so the committee made an informed vote. The vote was seconded by Mr. Harris.

Prior to a roll call vote being taken, it was confirmed that consent forms to participate could be sent to families the following day. It was also decided that an additional presentation on pool testing would be provided near the beginning of the first budget workshop meeting scheduled for the following Tuesday, February 9th.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes all in favor, 5-0.

3. Unit A Collective Bargaining Agreement

Prior to the collective bargaining agreement vote, Dr. Buckey gave a brief update on his goals. He informed the committee that an agreement for all six collective bargaining units had been reached sharing that the committee would vote the agreement for Unit A that evening. He thanked MEA President Joan Miller for her invaluable partnership during the process. He also noted that with the support of the MEA, subcommittees would be set up to address proposed changes to the contractual language of the agreements.

M. Gold made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement for collective bargaining with the Marblehead Education Association and Unit A, the Teacher's Contract, covering the period from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2024 as presented. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. Prior to a roll call vote, Ms. Fox confirmed with Dr. Buckey that the vote included a five percent (5%) pay increase over the three years and no language changes. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes all in favor, 5-0.

Ms. Gold asked for a second motion to approve the establishment of subcommittees to investigate and report out findings or recommendations to the parties for consideration and negotiations. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron.

Ms. Taylor suggested using the same committee who negotiated the MOA for the start of the school year for language adjustments to the contracts. A discussion regarding passing the current motion and revisiting the membership participation piece took place. Dr. Buckey noted that individual members

from each of the respective collective bargaining agreements may join the committee(s) when their unit would be discussed. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes all in favor, 5-0.

4. 2019-2020SY Town Report Submission

Dr. Buckey explained that the district would be submitting a Town Report with some noted revisions specific to the importance of recognizing what a different year the 2019-2020 school year was. He also shared that he would be including summaries submitted from each of the directors and principals highlighting what each of the buildings and departments were able to do with the resources provided during the pandemic.

Dr. Buckey further shared recent survey results submitted by staff, students and families focusing on the areas of strength and areas of opportunity comparing results from November through present. He noted that an overwhelming percent of students were voicing their concerns with the remote learning workload and mentioned the importance of addressing the social emotional concerns of students.

Dr. Buckey asked for the committees support in working with the administrative team over two retreat days during February break to plan to bring students back in combined cohorts five (5) days a week. He mentioned that the logistics involved would be sorted out but that given the mental health concerns, it was the right thing to do.

Ms. Gold made a motion to support the Superintendent and principals to create a plan to bring students back at lower distancing levels and fully in-person. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. Topics for discussion included learning model changes and supporting families who would want to switch to remote, consistency with afternoon scheduling and the social emotional health of the students and the positive impact that returning to school every day would have.

Dr. Buckey confirmed that requests for scheduling model changes would be supported noting that such changes may require changes in teacher assignment.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

Ms. Fox confirmed that there would need to be an agreement with the MEA to which Dr. Buckey shared that they were receptive to.

IV. Finance Organizational Support

1. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the schedule of bills totaling \$3,410,305. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Harris. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes

Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-abstained

The motion passes, 4-0-1.

2. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Tuition-2021-2022 Recommendation
Ms. Gold made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 school year tuition rates for:
\$3,500/yr for Full Day Kindergarten
\$4K/yr for Half Day Preschool
\$6k/yr for Full Day Preschool
\$5k/yr for Half Day Transitional Kindergarten
\$7k/yr for Full Day Transitional Kindergarten

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Ms. Fox-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Mr. Harris-yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

3. Introduction to FY22 Draft Budget and Distribution of Draft Budget Notebooks
Ms. Cresta gave an introduction to the FY22 Draft Budget Notebooks. She walked the committee through the layout, what would be expected next and an area she designated for keeping track of adjustments/handouts. Ms. Cresta informed the committee that she had included a Food Service tab this year so the committee could see how the general fund would need to absorb food services shortfalls if the revenue the department brought in did not support its expenses. Ms. Cresta shared that summary sheet would be provide at the next meeting and a tracking sheet would be included as the process continued. So the school committee could come prepared with questions, it was agreed that budget related questions would be taken at the first budget workshop scheduled for the 9th.

V. School Committee Communications and/or Discussion Items

1. School Name Discussion

Dr. Buckley shared staff and student input as part of the school naming process expressing that he found it important to include insight into the thoughts of the staff and voice of the students. The school committee thanked Dr. Buckley for the creative idea to include other non-voting members of the community.

Ms. Gold explained that the committee would use a rank choice voting system to tally the votes with the number 5 being selected as your top choice and the number 1 being selected as your last choice. Ms. Gold also noted that community results that were although substantial could also unfortunately not be taken at face value due to the campaigning that occurred within the community and on social media platforms. She further noted that those results however could not be ignored and that the committee would vote the name after a short five minute recess was taken to tally their choices.

When the committee returned from recess, Dr. Buckley shared that the top two choices were “Anchor” and “Brown”. Some committee members shared their final input in favor of their selection and a discussion regarding the name took place. Ms. Gold shared that district policy tasked the committee with naming of school buildings and a discussion revisiting how the process began took place. It was explained that through email suggestions, public comment and other forms of community feedback, the committee took all of the submittals into considerations. The committee agreed that other names that were brought forth should be recognized and incorporated into the building of the new elementary

school. Ms. Barron noted that as district leaders, the committee had been tasked with an opportunity to “provide real change which would bring Marblehead one step further to a more inclusive community.”

After discussion took place, Ms. Barron made a motion to name the new elementary school to be named the Lucretia and Joseph Brown Elementary School. A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes
Ms. Taylor-yes
Mr. Harris-yes
Ms. Barron-yes
Ms. Fox-yes

The motion passes, 5-0 all in favor.

2. Review and Vote of Policies:

Ms. Gold noted that due to the late hour, the remainder of the agenda items would be revisited at a later meeting. She did explain that policy AC-Nondiscrimination needed to be revised per a recent DESE review.

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve revisions to the AC-Nondiscrimination policy to include the word “homeless”. The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Mr. Harris.

IHAM - Health Education
IHAM-R - Health Education Exemption Procedure
IHAMA - Parent Notification Relative to Sex Education
IHAMB - Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco & Drugs
FFA - Memorials
AC-Nondiscrimination

3. Mid-Year School Committee Protocols Check-In

This agenda item was tabled until a later meeting date.

4. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates

This agenda was tabled under a later meeting. Ms. Taylor did mention that through the Safe Routes to School Group, the district could nominate a Crossing Guard in Appreciation of the upcoming 1st Annual National Crossing Guard appreciation Day. Information would be shared on the school committee website and communicated out to families.

5. Building Project Update

This agenda item would also be revisited at an upcoming meeting.

VI. Closing Business

1. New Business
2. Correspondence

Ms. Gold shared that there was once piece of correspondence that community member Ms. Catherine Martin asked to be included with the packet for the evening. In response to Ms. Martin’s allegations of committee violations referenced in her letter, Ms. Gold read a prepared statement noting that “transparency was needed focusing on the continued efforts to undermine the productive and collaborative work of the committee and the new administrations.” Ms. Gold further explained that the committee took violations seriously and that the allegations of violations were unfounded and insulting.

After Ms. Fox voiced her disagreement with the way in which Ms. Gold presented a response to Ms. Martin’s letter, Ms. Taylor confirmed that a response was required due to the seriousness of the allegations referenced.

3. Adjournment
Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 10:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Lisa Dimier, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee

Approved March 18, 2021