

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

Zoom Recording ID 924 3944 2187 & Password 756412
<https://zoom.us/j/92439442187?pwd=MWJOVlZpaUdkWXZUeJlJTZkpjOktRZz09>

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

Also: John J. Buckey, Superintendent
Nan Murphy, Assistant Superintendent
Michelle Cresta, Director of Finance
Amanda Rivers, School Nurse
Principals:
Donna Zaeske, Matt Fox and Dan Bauer

I. Initial Business and Public Involvement

1. Call to Order

Ms. Gold called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

a. Statement from the Chair

Ms. Gold read a prepared statement revisiting the school closure date of March 13th 2020. She acknowledged the difficult year brought about by COVID and commended the frontline workers, educators, community members and families that navigated the uncertain time. Ms. Gold asked for civil community support going forward as the school administrators and committee members worked to make decisions that were in the best interests of the students and staff.

2. Commendations

a. Building Based Commendations-Eveleth School, Principal Donna Zaeske

Principal Zaeske commended the Eveleth staff for the supportive school environment they have created which she felt created “the perfect experience for incoming families experiencing school for the first time.”

Principal Zaeske also highlighted the work of all of the paraprofessionals throughout the pandemic individually recognizing each of their strengths as an educator.

b. School Committee Commendations

Ms. Fox commended volunteers in the community scheduling vaccine appointments for educators.

Principal Bauer commended the group *Growing Together* for reaching out to the K-6th grade students once a week via zoom to coordinate experiences like zoom yoga.

Ms. Gold also commended the coordinators of the Family Feud zoom night. Mr. Bauer thanked the class advisors for organizing the event.

Ms. Taylor reminded the committee of crossing guard appreciation month sharing that nominations would close March 24th.

3. Student Representative – Dan Howells

- Family Feud was a success for being new and was very engaging.
- A survey was sent out last week discussing current scheduling and students appreciated being able to share their input.
- Senior Project internships are underway and examples of the types of internships students would participate in were shared. Mr. Howells noted all of the great opportunities available to students.

4. Public Comment

Ms. Gold noted that public comment would take place at both the beginning and end of the meeting.

- Kim Day of 18 Liberty Rd. thanked the schools for participating in pool testing and encouraged the committee to mandate pool testing for athletes.

- Jennifer Eaton spoke on behalf of the SEPAC community and invited the school committee to attend their next conference series scheduled for Tuesday March 9th at 7pm which will cover peer relationships.
- Scott Solberg of 1 Ramsy Rd. thanked Ms. Gold for her statement to “reorient the community.” He also commended the educators for working to get the classrooms ready for the return of students. Mr. Solberg commended the work of the SEL educators noting what a testament of positive energy it was taking place in the community during such an uncertain time.
- Alstar Connor spoke about concerns related to budgeting for additional unforeseen costs associated with building upkeep, technology, and student support services.
- Emily Dewitt thanked the community members for booking vaccination appointments for educators. She reminded the committee that parents were willing and able to help the schools.

II. Consent Agenda and Action Items

1. Minutes:

February 4, 2021

Ms. Gold noted that February 4th minutes would be voted at the next meeting

III. Superintendent Report

Assistant Superintendent Nan Murphy explained that the principals would be reaching out to PTO presidents to create online sign up calendars to manage and organize volunteering hours.

Ms. Murphy also shared that the Boosters would be fundraising to assist with the renting of tents for covered outdoor classroom space. She informed the community that tent rentals for all six schools from mid-March through the end of May would be close to 100k dollars.

Ms. Fox inquired about purchasing tents instead of renting them to which Ms. Murphy confirmed the concern with the flammable materials used to make the tents noting that not many companies the schools could purchase from sold tents up to the schools requirements and budget.

1. Pool Testing Update

a. Sports-Pool Testing Participation

Nurse, Amanda Rivers started pooled testing on Monday and shared that she was able to visit all of the elementary schools and that the students were able to be swabbed within under a minute with little disruption to class time. She informed the committee that up to about one third of the student population was registered to participate. It was explained that mandating testing for sports was able to be done since sports were voluntary. It was also explained that testing could only occur on Monday through Wednesday due to courier service pick up. Ms. Rivers provided examples of how testing for athletes could be completed.

A discussion about testing students that participate in other after school activities took place.

As Ms. Gold began asking for a motion, Ms. Fox clarified that the existing motion voted at a previous meeting would need to be amended instead of a new motion suggested. A discussion about how to procedural vote for either an amended motion or a new motion took place.

Ms. Taylor made a motion to amend the previous motion to mandate that participation in school athletics be contingent upon participation in the pool testing program as defined.

The motion was moved by Ms. Barron and seconded by Mr. Harris

Mr. Ceglarski confirmed whether coaches would be included in the mandate to which Ms. Fox clarified that staff cannot be mandated to participate in testing.

A roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Gold-yes

Ms. Taylor-yes

Ms. Barron-yes

Ms. Fox-yes
Mr. Harris-yes

The motion passes 5-0

A discussion regarding an effective date for the testing mandate took place.

Ms. Gold asked for a second motion to allow for families to have until Wednesday, March 10th to enroll in the pool testing program in order to continue with athletics. The motion was moved by Ms. Fox and seconded by Ms. Taylor. 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.

2. Learning Model Update

The high school and middle school principals, Mr. Bauer and Mr. Fox shared a presentation of the compiled mixed data from a recent survey that was sent out to parents and students regarding the current hybrid learning model and the am/pm learning model that was being proposed. It was shared the four questions for consideration focused on 1) if parents and students liked the current hybrid learning model, 2) if parents and students preferred the current hybrid learning model over the one being proposed, 3) if learning models would change for families if the am/pm model was proposed and 4) if learning models would change if social distancing was lessened from the 6ft model to a 3ft model. It was noted that parents and students shared differing opinions regarding the survey and that most students preferred to remain in the current hybrid model. It was also of significance to note that many families reported that they would switch to remote learning should social distancing within the schools be lessened.

Ms. Gold thanked the principals for their presentation and mentioned that whichever decision was made, going forward the committee should remain mindful of too many instructional changes through the rest of the year due to the amount of disruption it could cause in routines. Ms. Fox mentioned supporting the students' decisions which would ultimately support their mental health.

Superintendent Buckey recommended staying with the current model until April 5th and to revisit as more information becomes available from the Commissioner, the Governor, and the Board of Health concerning the virus and vaccines that may become available.

Ms. Taylor requested that the committee consider committing getting the students back five full days k-12 with a goal date around the return. She suggested that April 5th be the goal date due to the quarter date change for both the high school and Veterans. Ms. Fox agreed to the idea and noted the contractual implications that currently prevented it.

Ms. Gold clarified that if the school committee changed the learning model, it would necessitate good faith impact bargaining. She further reminded the committee of the vote they took on February 4th with a motion to support Superintendent Buckey and the principals to plan to bring the students back at lower distancing levels and fully in person which is what began ongoing negotiations with the MEA again.

Continued conversation regarding the logistics involved with bringing the students back to more in person learning across all grade levels took place.

Ms. Taylor made a motion to have the students back by April 5th with the caveat that Dr. Buckey comes back to the committee with obstacles so the committee could problem solve in preparation for adjustments. The motion was seconded by Ms. Barron.

A conversation about accommodating remote learners for the fall took place and it was noted by Ms. Gold that information was constantly changing and that decisions for the fall could not be confirmed this early on. It was confirmed by Dr. Buckey that the remote learning model would remain in place throughout the 2020-2021 school year. A roll call vote was taken.

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

The motion passes 5-0.

Superintendent Buckey named the members of the search committee for the new Lucretia and Joseph Brown School principal search. He shared that an initial meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday.

Dr. Buckey explained that Director of IT, Stephen Kwiatek was looking for a school committee representative for his committee to design a new website. Although no formal vote was taken, it was agreed that Ms. Barron would join that committee.

IV. Finance Organizational Support

1. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Gold made a motion to accept the identified schedule of bills totaling \$3, 126,033.26. The motion was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron. A roll call vote was taken.

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

The motion passes, 5-0.

2. FY22 Budget Update

Ms. Cresta shared that there was no news to report on FY21.

Ms. Taylor shared that there was a budget subcommittee meeting and that Dr. Buckey would be working with his team to further prioritize the list of FY22 budget priorities. Ms. Taylor shared the collaborative efforts with the Town to support the needs of the schools. Ms. Taylor noted that the budget hearing is tentatively scheduled for the 18th and may need to be rescheduled depending on the meeting with the finance committee.

V. School Committee Communications and/or Discussion Items

1. Policies to Review and Vote

- a. EBCFA-Face Coverings
- b. IHBA- Observations of Special Education Programs
- c. IHCA-Summer Schools
- d. JFABD-Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services
- e. JFABE-Educational Opportunities for Military Children
- f. JFABF-Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

Ms. Gold made a motion to approve policies EBCFA, IHBA, IHCA, JFABD, JFABE and JFABF which was moved by Ms. Taylor and seconded by Ms. Barron.

Ms. Fox inquired about the policy about observing special education programs due to the number of changes to which Ms. Barron and Ms. Gold explained that information was added to be more in line with neighboring districts. A roll call vote was taken.

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

The motion passes, 5-0.

2. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates

- The METCO Annual Cultural Celebration will be held May 14th at 6:30pm outside
- Ms. Taylor reminded the committee to vote the subcommittee minutes and to update the website. She also explained that push notifications were being looked into.
- Facilities is awaiting a report and will most likely meet for two upcoming meetings.
- The policy committee usually meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and will reschedule to the Tuesday after on the 16th.

3. Building Project Update

Dr. Buckey shared that a meeting was held with the moving company to discuss the packing and moving of items to the new school to understand what the move should look like.

Mr. Harris shared a photo of the new Verizon pole over by the Tower School that will start the underground power that will be run to the new school.

VI. Closing Business

1. New Business
2. Correspondence

Ms. Gold mentioned the letter that Dr. Buckey wrote to Representative Ehrlich requesting that teachers be prioritized for the Johnson and Johnson vaccines.

Ms. Gold also acknowledged the Dollars for Scholars fundraising campaign sharing that various businesses in town would be offering a percentage of sales to the campaign.

Ms. Gold also mentioned a petition that the school committee received a copy of and mentioned revisiting it at another meeting as it was received late.

3. Public Comment

Donna Weiner thanked everyone for working really hard. She asked that the middle school and high schools be considered as separate entities and for the April 5th motion to be clarified.

Erin Noonan of Beverly Avenue thanked the members for their work on the committee during stressful times. Ms. Noonan voiced concerns about school budgeting needs. She requested clarification on how the schools plan on addressing gaps in learning.

Catherine Martin spoke in favor of Ms. Noonan's comments. She addressed the budget gap and her concerns about meeting the budgeting needs of the schools while focusing on student facing needs.

4. Adjournment

Ms. Gold adjourned the meeting at 9:43pm

*Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Dimier, Secretary
Marblehead School Committee*

Approved August 3, 2021