

Date Approved/Released: 10-6-16

Date Approved/Hold:

School Committee Chair: LaPointe

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2016
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

1. Call to order: 6:00 P M.
 - a. Present: Danielle LaPointe, Janet Corbosiero, Dawn Harris, Greg Vine, Larry Murphy
 - b. Steve Haddad-Superintendent, Richard Ikonen-Business Manager
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Citizen Questions and/or Comments: none
4. Correspondence and Announcements: G. Vine noted that the TTE Playground Committee collected \$1,000 at the Boot Drive on Saturday, August 27th and \$200 at the Lickety Splitz fundraiser event. Suzanne Michelle and Renee Tenney-Eldridge presented the various playground fundraising activities to the Gardner Rotary Club. Approximately \$5,500 has been raised by parents through Project Playground. The Save the Playground fundraiser, funded by direct donations, has raised about \$3,500. The group may receive additional funds from the District Attorneys' office, totaling just shy of \$6,000. Other fundraising events may raise the total to \$12,000. She noted this is a community effort.
5. Student Representative: none
6. Student Recognition: none, Teacher of the Month- none
7. Superintendent Report: S. Haddad reported that opening day went very well. The town wide campaign to build support for the schools will begin with the mailing of the marketing postcard next week, followed by a letter to area business owners. Members of the administrative team will then personally visit those businesses.
 - c. Business Office Report: none
8. Old Business: none
9. New Business:
 - a. Walkers and Riders Policy-S. Haddad noted the WPS draft is the same as the MASC policy; he reviewed the policy. Requests from parents with extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. The bus company established the bus routes to be most efficient; S. Haddad is not suggesting any changes. L. Murphy suggested changing 'Grades K-6' to 'Grade 1-6' as stated in other paragraphs of the policy. The policy sub-committee will review and bring the policy back to the committee. Carolyn Hendricks reviewed a federal program, 'Safe Routes to Schools', which helps districts find the safest walking routes. Several buses are at or close to capacity due to adding walkers. C. Hendricks announced there are 2 openings for Crossing Guards; the job postings are on the website
 - b. Communication/Website- Carolyn Hendricks reported that each building has an assigned person to put events/activities on the school calendars; that information will immediately be posted on the district calendar and will eventually be color coded. The information will also be posted on the

community calendar. She explained the online 'community bulletin board' she plans to create; school information will also be linked to other sites. Manuel King, the new Beals Memorial Library Director, will also be contacted. D. Harris voiced concern that information is not coming through to several of the school calendars and websites. S. Haddad commended the Murdock Booster page and the people who manage it. S. Haddad noted the proposal to get new phones in TTE and in Central Office costs \$50,000-\$60,000. The other schools would be upgraded later.

- c. First Day of School Report-Memorial School (298 students)-Principal Michelle Atter reported there was much excitement and the school looked great. The first fire drill was very successful.
 - Toy Town Elementary (approx. 300 students)-S. Haddad read Mary Akers' report. The Bridges Grant funds programs that allow the Council on Aging to bring 3rd grade students to work with seniors at the Old Murdock Senior Center. M. Aker commended the refurbished playground and all of the TTE staff.
 - Murdock Middle School (approx. 315 students)-Jessica Vezina noted the school is focusing on keeping a positive framework and mindset for students and staff. She reviewed classroom expectations, various changes and new programs and activities. The athletic teams are starting their practices.
 - Murdock High School (number of students not determined)-Josh Romano reported the school had a good first week. He noted 2 new grants the district received and also the need for more iPads. He was very upset by the DOE Preliminary Accountability Report that lowered the schools rating although many areas were on target or above the target level. He stated that he does not understand the rationality for the rating; strongly dislikes the perception it gives the school and that it hurts morale. MHS continues to be a Level 3 school and will continue to receive DSAC support. S. Haddad suggested a team meet with the commissioner and a letter from the school committee chairperson be sent. Discussion included steps to identify what the focus should be and get clarification from DESE. L. Murphy urged him to not be discouraged by this set of test scores, noting the Academy students who came back to school and graduated. J. Romano praised the football team for their 2 great scrimmages. D. LaPointe asked the public to let J. Romano talk to the staff before this goes out on social media.
 - Murdock Academy (28 students)- Chris Provost praised J. Romano for his collaboration during the preparation, noting 3 new students from outside the district and 3 town students who had dropped out. He reviewed the focus of the school, noting the blended approach of the academy is in full swing. He reviewed the changes and additions. The students who did not pass MCAS did so by small percentages.
 - Special Education-Kristina Mecelicaite reported the out of district placements are the lowest ever; she reviewed the numbers stressing the district is building and developing programs to keep the students served well in district. She reviewed the grant applications submitted and her goals for the students.
 - Pre-School-Suzanne Michele reviewed the changes to the layout of the program, the classrooms areas and the staff support materials. Home visits are being conducted as required for accreditation. She also reviewed grants the school was approved for and applications that have been submitted. The total grant monies approved are \$86,393 and the applied for/pending are \$116,000. The program is creating new relationships and partnering with organizations to maintain the outstanding staff. .
- d. Question 2-Discussion - D. Harris read the question that proposed lifting the cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools. The Winchendon School Committee resolved to oppose lifting the cap on Commonwealth Charter Schools. G. Vine moved that the School Committee approve this resolution. Second by L. Murphy. Members discussed the pros and cons of additional charter schools and that effect on funding for public schools. S. Haddad noted that the MTA advises districts to vote NO. At the suggestion of D. Harris, the committee will also bring the question to the Joint meeting on September 15th and present it to the BOS. Posters supporting a NO vote could then be displayed in

public places. Approved 5-0-0. Tina Santos suggested a spokesperson explain the position of the School Committee to the PTO's and School Councils. The School Committee will take it under advisement.

- e. Fall Festival- The 3rd Annual Fall Festival at Ingleside is on September 17. S. Haddad reviewed the activities and entertainment.
- 10. Citizens Questions and Comments: Tina Santos recognized many residents and local businesses that helped clean and ready the TTE playground for the new school year. She inquired about and suggested the need for air conditioning or fans at TTE. L. Murphy noted the prohibitive cost of installing/providing air conditioning.
- 11. Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meetings Not Yet Approved or Released:
 - a. Thursday, August 4, 2016-Regular Meeting- J. Corbosiero moved to accept the minutes of
 - f. August 4, 2016, in their entirety. Second by L. Murphy. Approved 5-0-0. J. Corbosiero moved to amend the motion to read approve and release. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5-0-0.
- 12. Questions and Comments by Members: G. Vine suggested the school crosswalks be painted in the school colors. He will present the idea to the BOS at the September 15th joint meeting. S. Haddad noted the street signs should be blue & white to reflect school and town spirit.
- 13. Other: none
- 14. Future Agenda Items:
 - a. MCAS Test Scores
 - b. Communication/Website-Carolyn Hendricks (10/6/16)
 - c. TTE Security Camera Update (9/15/16)
- 15. Executive Session: none
- 16. Adjournment: 7:49P.M. J. Corbosiero moved to adjourn. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Barrie E. Martins, School Committee Recording Secretary