

Winchendon Public Schools



Date Approved/Released: Oct 24, 2022

Date Approved/Hold: _____

School Committee Chair: Ryan G. Forsythe (Oct 24, 2022 21:14 EDT)

School Committee Meeting

September 15, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium

Attendance:

Ryan Forsythe, Chair; Greg Vine, Vice-Chair; Larry Murphy; Karen Kast-McBride;
Alicia Jordan, Thad King, Superintendent

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Forsythe reads audio visual disclosure.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Consent Agenda:

L. Murphy moves to approve the August 4 minutes. Seconded by G. Vine. K. Kast-McBride abstains from vote as she was not in attendance. 4-0 vote with one abstention. Minutes approved.

5. Superintendent's Report:

T. King gives update on the remote meeting potential for the 2nd Floor Auditorium. A consultant is expected to create a plan for hybrid remote meetings before the holidays. R. Forsythe asks if the committee wishes to continue with the modalities that they have used, in person television, until the town has a solution. G. Vine suggests that the committee continues doing what they've been doing until the new system is set up. K. Kast-McBride asks if the new system will work for the 4th Floor Conference Room since the meetings are often moved there. T. King responds that the new system will be for the 2nd Floor Auditorium only.

T. King gives transportation update. The district is working on bus routes, adding stops to the routes. Additionally, the district worked in conjunction with the town DPW to construct a walker/bike rider path from the rear of Toy Town Elementary to the neighborhood behind the school since there is no sidewalk for students who walk or ride their bikes to and from the school building. Discussion is had about the buses that park along Murdock Avenue and the plan for winter weather and keeping the path cleared.

T. King gives an update on ESSER III, which is the largest and final ESSER grant that the district will receive. R. Forsythe requests details on the three ESSER grants to show how the funds were spent. T. King outlines the plans for ESSER III funds in addition to how the funds have been partially spent this fiscal year. The chair lift at Toy Town Elementary may be removed from the capital improvement plan under the Town since grant funds are available to pay for the updated lift.

R. Forsythe comments on the impressive diversification of the expenses included in ESSER III. He asks if the planned expenses will spend through the fiscal year 2024. T. King clarifies that the funds will be able to be spent through FY24 and elaborates on the future plans for new ELA curriculum and other projects that are normally paid through other grants. ESSER funds are allowed to be used to supplant, not just support other grant projects.

L. Murphy comments on the current team's thoughtful approach to spending the available funds. G. Vine asks how the district will continue to pay for certain initiatives once ESSER funds are no longer available. R. Forsythe responds that the big upfront cost is the purchase of materials for curriculum. T. King explains that the 240 and Title I grants are typically where these types of projects are paid from, and we will continue to have those grants looking forward and spend the funds as we normally would.

K. Kast-McBride questions what will happen when the current Superintendent leaves and another comes in and thinks a different program will be better, asking where the funds would come from at that point. T. King explains that regardless of having ESSER funds, the district would still be in the same situation. He explains that the district has not been able to invest in updated initiatives for a long time, and he believes in using the opportunity that has been afforded to the district with ESSER funds to update K-12 programs. And in the future, if issues arise that require funding, the district will adapt as needed.

G. Vine comments that he feels better about the district's situation now than he did any time in the seven years he has been on the committee, and he thanks T. King for his efforts. R. Forsythe follows by stating that the district finds itself in a fiscal year where the calculation of school funding has resulted in a strong budget for FY23.

6. New Business:

a. ALL Program Field Trip Request:

R. Forsythe asks T. King for details regarding the field trip request submitted by the ALL Program. T. King explains that the ALL Rooms get out and do vocational work with the students. They go to Market Basket in Rindge and get the students out in the community. L. Murphy moves to approve the field trip request as written. A. Jordan seconds. Vote is unanimous.

b. MASC Delegate:

R. Forsythe asks K. Kast-McBride to speak on this topic. K. Kast-McBride states that it is important to have a delegate selected to vote for the board. As part of the conference in November, there will be things the school committee members will

be asked to vote on, and it is important for Winchendon to be represented. L. Murphy nominates Karen Kast-McBride to fill the delegate role. G. Vine seconds. L. Murphy moves to appoint Karen as the Winchendon School Committee MASC delegate for the purpose of voting at the annual meeting. G. Vine seconds. Vote is unanimous.

7. Old Business

a. Subcommittee Definitions/Charges:

K. Kast-McBride states that she suggested that additional information be added to the Communications Subcommittee definition, to establish a working group inclusive of stakeholder group members to improve and enhance communications with the Winchendon School Committee and Winchendon Public Schools. For the Policy Subcommittee, she has additional notes that she can email to the other committee members regarding the responsibilities and guidelines.

G. Vine suggests a SEPAC Subcommittee but states that it would be best to contact SEPAC to ask if they are comfortable having a school committee member participating as a liaison. T. King states that a school administrator is on the SEPAC committee. K. Kast-McBride states that SEPAC is supposed to be a group for parents, constituents and students of the district, and it would not be appropriate for a school committee member to attend those meetings. L. Murphy asks why a subcommittee exists if they are not allowed to attend meetings. T. King states that it is not uncommon for school committee members to be invited to SEPAC meetings. He states that it might be best to invite SEPAC on a quarterly basis to school committee meetings to get an update on what parents are dealing with and what issues they are facing.

Discussion is had regarding Policy Subcommittee, Collective Bargaining, Communication, Finance, Capital Planning, Calendar, Townaudit Subcommittees.

Video ends here. Remaining minutes summarized based on notes.

Committee agrees to table Subcommittee discussion until future meeting.

8. Future Agenda Items:

Future Agenda items are as follows:

- a. MCAS/Data Presentations
- b. Star Renaissance Update

9. Executive Session:

Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and return to Open Session.

10. AFSCME Council 93, AFL-CIO Agreement:

Committee returns to Open Session. Motion made to table vote until next meeting.

Seconded. Vote is unanimous.

11. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Vote is unanimous. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted: *Liz Latoria*
Liz Latoria, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Documents Attached: None