

Date Approved/Release: _____

Murphy 10/5/17

Date Approved/Hold: _____

School Committee Chair: _____

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2017
THE WINCHENDON SCHOOL CONFERENCE ROOM

1. Call to order: 4:00 P M Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Larry Murphy, Danielle LaPointe, Dawn Fronte, Felicia Nurmsen (arrived 6:19 PM),
Greg Vine
Steve Haddad-Superintendent

NOTE: The minutes were prepared using a video recording.

2. Audio/Video Disclosure

3. Citizen Questions and/or Comments: None

4. Student Representative Report: None

5. Student/Staff Recognitions: None

6. Teaching and Learning Highlights-

a. SISEP Presentation - G. Vine moved to table this agenda item to the first meeting in September. Second by D. LaPointe. Approved 4-0-0.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes - August 3, 2017 - Regular Meeting Minutes

b. Field Trips - (None)

c. FLLAC Representation - S. Haddad

d. CAPS Representation - L. Murphy

f. Veterans' Day Calendar change to Friday, Nov. 10th

e. Student Handbooks - Held for Discussion. D. LaPointe noted that she had only been through the Pre-School handbook and that there were many grammatical and spelling errors but no substantial edits. She apologized for not reviewing the documents sooner, and noted that she is not faulting the timing. She agreed that the handbook could go to print tomorrow and to approve as presented but asked that the errors be fixed and the problem be addressed in the future, noting this is a public document that reflects poorly on the district. She will give her suggested corrections to S. Haddad. D. Fronte and D. LaPointe agreed that they should not be printed, period. G. Vine agreed with his committee members comments, noting the committee needs more lag time to review the documents prior to printing. L. Murphy suggested the handbooks be submitted for approval in the spring to avoid situations like this. He noted most changes are minor and known prior to the end of the school year. S. Haddad agreed, noting getting out ahead of things like this is a goal of the administrative team. S. Haddad reviewed the process for creating and submitting the document for approval. D. LaPointe moved to approve the consent agenda. Second by G. Vine. Approved 4-0-0.

8. Superintendent Report: S. Haddad / Business Office Report

a. FY2018 Budget Timeline - S. Haddad noted the document was approved at the last meeting (8/3/17) with corrections. D. Fronte again noted the spelling errors; the committee agreed documents must be checked prior to approval and becoming public documents. G. Vine stated 'it all falls under public relations and communication'. L. Murphy stressed that it reflects on the districts' degree of professionalism. S. Haddad and Business Manager Richard Ikonen will determine the exact dates for each item on the timeline in October. The elementary schools budget will be reviewed in December and the high schools in January. A budget hearing with the FinCom is scheduled for February after approval of a draft document by the school committee in January. The budget public hearing is scheduled for March. The document will go to Town Hall to be submitted in April for the Annual Town Meeting. A task force of 11 members, including R. Ikonen, and school committee members, will gather input. G. Vine suggested including critics of the defeated override to learn more about the public's concerns about the budget and the school department. The superintendent will determine the makeup of the group.

b. MHS Principal Search Timeline - S. Haddad noted the dates will be added in September. He reviewed the search process and timeline.

c. Security Update - S. Haddad reported that the district is in Phase 1 of a process that will take a few years. He noted 15 cameras to the district buildings; the most attention was placed on Memorial and Toy Town Elementary. Phase 1 is funded by Robinson-Broadhurst and Capital Projects.

d. Data Survey - Student Enrollment - S. Haddad reviewed comments submitted separately by parents and 8th grade students. Students cited academics, sports and trade as reasons for leaving the district. They cited friends, sports and transportation as reasons for staying in-district; academics was not noted a prevailing reason. Parents' choice as also noted as a reason for leaving. The administration is developing a process to conduct exit interviews before the students leave the district. S. Haddad noted that a change in culture takes time; the committee agreed with a student comment that the successes and achievements must be better publicized. It was agreed the survey information should be used to determine trends and inform the committee and administration decisions to build on what is good in the district. The committee discussed using a polling firm when the budget allows. S. Haddad noted input is needed from students, family, faculty and community. Committee members will attend a seminar at the MASC Conference in November if one is offered.

S. Haddad noted the parent comments included the curriculum, problems with the teachers or principal and family situations (transportation, financial). The committee will work to make effective change in the areas it can impact. Student enrollment will be monitored on a monthly basis. L. Murphy recommended the committee review the surveys more thoroughly and continue the discussion at a later date.

Bullet items added to the agenda by S. Haddad -

*The finalized Bus Route schedule will be available on Monday, August 21st; it will be posted on the district website and published in the Winchendon Courier. S. Haddad noted the bus route is analyzed for efficiency; recent detours due to bridge repairs have forced temporary route changes.

*Administration Retreat - A schedule was created for the Teaching and Learning Highlights item on the agenda.

*A letter from Roselli & Clark (auditors) regarding the Student Activity Accounts noted the accounts are reconciled monthly by the designated administrator and the balances put into a joint savings account with the Town Treasurer. The Treasurer and the Auditors recommend that account be closed and replaced with 4 individual savings accounts, one for each school. The firm will hold a training session on the proper administration use of those accounts during the week of September 18th. S. Haddad, R. Ikonen and the account administrators will attend. Committee members are invited to go. The audit was made more difficult because the accounts are not entered electronically.

*There is a workshop regarding Chapter 70 Net School Spending on October 18th. S. Haddad and L. Murphy will attend; G. Vine is tentative.
L. Murphy commended the packet information. The minutes will be submitted so they can be included in future packets and reviewed in a timely manner.

9. Sub Committee Report -

Sub-committee Reorganization 2017-2018

Policy: D. LaPointe & D. Fronte. They will schedule meetings regularly with S. Haddad and R. Ikonen to review policies.

Negotiations - Custodians - G. Vine ^

Negotiations - Secretary: F. Nurmsen & D. LaPointe

Negotiations - Para Educators: G. Vine & D. LaPointe

Capital Planning: D. LaPointe

Finance: D. LaPointe & D. Fronte

Monty Tech: L. Murphy & F. Nurmsen

Negotiations - Teachers: G. Vine & L. Murphy ^

IPOD - L. Murphy & D. LaPointe

Extended Day Programs - D. Fronte

Wellness - G. Vine

Calendar - L. Murphy

Sick Bank - D. LaPointe

Town-wide Audit Committee - D. Fronte

FLLAC Representation - S. Haddad

CAPS Representation - L. Murphy

5:07 PM D. Fronte moved for a recess until 5:30. Second by D. LaPointe. Approved 5-0-0.

5:30 Reconvened

10. Old Business: None

11. New Business:

L. Murphy explained that the following items are part of the mini retreat portion of the meeting. The goal is to be prepared for the school year to come, to run the meetings efficiently, improve communications and meet the superintendent and the school committee goals.

a. Norms for Meetings - S. Haddad noted these are ground rules the committee agrees to follow. The administration team currently uses these rules. Communication with a clear agenda and guidelines, promptness and limiting side conversations using respectful reminders are key components. He ran a group exercise during which committee members noted the kind of behaviors they consider to be ideal for a group.

They included:

After discussion, the committee condensed the list to the following:

- * Listen Respectfully to All Ideas
- * Discuss, Don't Lecture
- * Do not take Differing Ideas Personally
- * Express Disagreements with Ideas, not Individuals
- * A Different Idea is not an Attack; keep it Professional not Personal
- * Be Concise & Clear Spoken
- * Stay on Task - Follow the Agenda
- * Support the Majority Decision
- * Punctuality & Preparedness (start and end on time)
- * Maintain Confidentiality (?)

b. Social/Media/Communications - D. Fronte reported results from her survey on Face Book; parents preferred E-mails. The district one (all) calls are very broken and distorted; the information is difficult to discern. S. Haddad will check into the matter. D. LaPointe noted the emails work best without attachments. F. Nurmsen stated a clear practice is needed when views are put on medias such as Twitter; the person should say something like 'these views are my own and not those of the district'. She shared a communication plan that could be used as a template; it included different tools for the different school age populations. She stressed the importance of a District Face Book page as part of a digital marketing strategy. She asked that the daily email only contain information that will help parents stay on task and be up to date with school activities/events. Links for other information could be contained in the emails. A consistent plan practiced by all school buildings needs to be established. D. Fronte and F. Nurmsen will work on this.

c. Superintendent Goals - He noted that he needs Student Learning goals, Professional Practice Goals and School Improvement goals. He reviewed the information that will be included with each goal and specific goals within certain time periods. The importance of a consistent measure of achievement and success was discussed. S. Haddad noted that Ralph Olson, MHS Interim Principal, had a positive effect when he served the district for the '13-'14 school year. Problems with and difficulties using the current district website were discussed. He will include concise emails and a District Face Book page to improve communication.

d. School Committee Goals - The committee reviewed and updated the goals. Completion of goals was noted and new deadlines were determined where necessary. S. Haddad will present a funding proposal to Robinson-Broadhurst regarding a Job Coach/Internship program. G. Vine suggested a mechanism be found or created to evaluate the school committee. L. Murphy suggested a mid-year and an end-of-year report on the committees' goals. F. Nurmsen requested a workshop that would teach the committee how to conduct the most effective superintendent evaluation. NESC was suggested.

e. Planning Pyramid - L. Murphy conducted an activity that visually graphed the work and efforts of the school committee. The method would keep the goals front and center and help the committee to stay focused and energized. The committee noted Goals Achieved, Quick Wins, Goals for the '17-18 School Year and Goals for 3-5 years. The committee agreed that the end goal is really to have a safe and comfortable environment that will better educate and prepare students for higher education or to enter the workforce. This would include successful curriculum instruction, a challenging curriculum and positive collaboration with the municipal government and the community. F. Nurmsen cautioned against making the district a Level 1 school the top goal; what is important to the community must also be a major consideration. The importance of strong and effective leadership on all levels in the district was stressed.

School Committee Reorganization -

G. Vine nominated D. LaPointe as Vice-Chairperson. Second by F. Nurmsen. D. LaPointe accepted the nomination. Approved 5-0-0.

12. Future Agenda Items:

- a. Water Report - Jim Murphy
- b. SISEP Presentation - Jessica Vezina (9/7/17)
- c. Data Survey - Student Enrollment
- d. Revisit School Committee Goals Timeline (9/21/17)

13. Committee Member comments: F. Nurmsen commended the retreat format. L. Murphy thanked

S. Haddad for putting the meeting/retreat together with information and refreshments. S. Haddad thanked The Winchendon School for the use of the facility.

14. Executive Session: None

15. Adjournment: P.M. G. Vine moved to adjourn. Second by F. Nurmsen. Approved 5-0-0.

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