

Date Approved/Released: 12/7/07

Date Approved/Hold: _____

School Committee Chair: _____

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2017
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

1. **Call to order:** 6:00 pm/ Pledge of Allegiance
Present: Dawn Fronte, Larry Murphy, Felicia Nurmsen
Steven Haddad, Superintendent, Richard Ikonen, Business Manager

2. **Audio/Video Disclosure**

3. **Citizen Questions and/or Comments:** None

4. **Student Representative Report:**

Nicole Lemire reported that at the Greater Gardner Relay for Life wrap up/kick off meeting, the Murdock High School Student Council was awarded the Fight Back award for their participation in the Relay. Last year, through Coaches vs. Cancer events, Wall of Hope cards and other donations, Murdock raised \$1,500 for the American Cancer society. The Council's advisor, Stephanie Rondeau, was recognized as the #10 top individual fundraiser in the region, having raised almost \$2,200. Tonight, the Council hosted the Coaches vs. Cancer games for field hockey and soccer; the football game is on Friday, October 20th. Students have participated in Spirit Days as part of Homecoming Week, including a pep rally today. Friday is Blue and White Day. The Homecoming semi-formal will be held Saturday at TTE. Next Tuesday, the Junior and Senior girls will face each other in the annual Powder Puff Football game. One dollar (\$1) from each ticket will be donated to the American Cancer Society. The Haunted High School will be held on October 26th; crafts and games will also be available in the cafeteria. The Middle School will hold a Bottle Drive on Saturday, October 28th; proceeds will go towards tuition for Camp Takodah.

5. **Student/Staff Recognition: Students of the Month, October** – Murdock High School – Ariana Berman, 12th grade; Pre-K – Makannah LaGrassa-Belanger, Murdock Middle School – Alexandra Robichaud, 6th grade; Toy Town Elementary – none; Memorial School – Ivy Fitzmaurice, 1st grade; Murdock Academy – Thomas Hogan, 12th grade. MHS Principal Ralph Olson reported that 16 students were recognized as John and Abigail Adams scholarship recipients at the pep rally today.

6:28 pm F. Nurmsen moved for a 5-minute recess. Second by D. Fronte. Approved 3-0-0.

6:34 pm Reconvened

6. **Teaching and Learning Highlights:** None

7. Consent Agenda:

a. Minutes:

- September 28, 2018 – Regular Meeting
- September 28, 2018 – Tri-Board Meeting

b. *“Consider and approve the purchase of a perpetual license with Footsteps 2 Brilliance, Inc., with financing from Government Capital”.*

Vote/Approve - F. Nurmsen requested a hold for discussion. S. Haddad reviewed the proposal with a cost of \$46,850; the committee would go to Government Capital for the loan. United Way of Winchendon will pay half of the annual \$10,476 bill; \$5,238 from the town is due on July 1, 2018. This is a 5-year commitment. D. Fronte moved to accept the consent agenda. Second by F. Nurmsen. Approved 3-0-0.

8. Superintendent/Business Office Report:

- a. **Superintendent Goals and Action Plan:** S. Haddad presented the action plan based on the goals developed at the School Committee Retreat in August. He noted the administration is reviewing the recently released MCAS results; each building administrator will present their school results at future meetings. S. Haddad noted the results are difficult to compare to past years due to changes in the testing process. F. Nurmsen was glad to see it adjusted per comments by committee members. The new testing process may necessitate further adjustment. S. Haddad used the Dibbles test data boards created from testing results as an example of tracking student achievement. The importance of concrete evidence of progress was discussed. F. Nurmsen noted a tracking mechanism is needed at the High School; the NEASC study will provide additional data. The Middle School will use the MAP assessment tool included in the Summit Learning program. D. Fronte believes the goals are realistic and achievable.
- b. **Budget Training Review:** S. Haddad and L. Murphy attended a Chapter 70 & Net School Spending training seminar at Taunton High School. He noted Winchendon at %1.7 is far below the Mass. district average district of 24% above NSS, adding that all local area schools except Gardner contribute more. S. Haddad noted we have a supportive Town Manager who is helping the district move in the right direction. L. Murphy noted how difficult it is to comprehend the complicated state budget and formula. F. Nurmsen stressed the district has to do the most it possibly can with the funding it have. The necessity to inform and educate the voters about the school's needs was discussed. F. Nurmsen stressed the need for concrete programs and processes that specifically show where the money is going and how will it help the district achieve student growth. L. Murphy noted the individual costs for individual items included in the Superintendents' Goals must be clearly identified. The committee agreed it needs to be transparent and gain the voters trust, and put its' effort for change at the state level. L. Murphy questioned the distribution of Chapter 70 funds to towns that clearly do not need it while other districts have a great need. S. Haddad stressed that the old 1993 formula does not take into account technology, healthcare or special education. F. Nurmsen noted the district has issues other than financial; the committee agreed it is a bigger discussion for another night. D. Fronte was grateful we are above NSS and working with that.

- c. **Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles:** The Special Town Meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2018 at 7:00 pm. The committee reviewed and discussed the school related articles.

Article 2 – to transfer from Free Cash

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| Dump Truck and Sander | \$63, 000 |
| Replace Venrac Tractor | \$60,100 |
| Update MHS/MMS Phones | \$52, 900 |
| Security Cameras | \$30,000 |

The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee have recommended approval.

Article 7 – to raise and appropriate the sum of \$52,535 for the operating budget of the School.

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|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| MHS/MMS Electricity | Increase by \$27,095 |
| Memorial School Electricity | Increase by \$17,294 |
| Toy Town Elementary Electricity | Increase by \$ 8,146 |

The article was submitted by the Town Manager to cover costs incurred because the solar farm is not yet operational.

Rich Ikonen reported that the EOY report is finished; he will submit it tomorrow. The district was in excess of NSS. The invites for the Ad Hoc will be sent out in the next 2 weeks; the first meeting schedule soon after. The group will look at the districts' resources and facilities and what else can be done to improve the district. This was recommended by the auditing firm last year. R. Ikonen reported that he will go full force into budget preparation.

9. Sub Committee Report:

D. Fronte reported the Policy committee will meet on first Thursday of each month (prior to the school committees' regular meetings) to go over relevant items and pertinent information. The Wellness committee is meeting in November.

10. Old Business: None

11. New Business:

- a. Calendar for School Committee Meetings- The November 2nd meeting will be cancelled due to lack of quorum. L. Murphy and S. Haddad will be at the MASS/MASC Conference. The committee will meet on November 9th if necessary. D. Fronte moved to cancel the November 2, 2018 Regular School Committee meeting. Second by F. Nurmsen. Approved 3-0-0. Meetings are usually added during budget season and prior to joint meetings.

12. Future Agenda Items

- a. Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Representative (December)
- b. Concussions and damage to children's brains from sports trauma
- c. School Committee Meeting Schedule

13. Committee Member Comments:

Committee members should send questions for Austin Cyganiewicz to S. Haddad prior to the meeting. The committee discussed the Monty Tech tour offered to interested students on October 15th. The district has not participated in several years due to loss of time on learning. F. Nurmsen stated 'we need to make parents aware if past practices have changed'. She also noted that she has been vocal about not limiting students' opportunities or choices. R. Ikonen reviewed the past practices and changes, noting Monty Tech paid for the bus transportation in past years. Responding to D. Fronte. S. Haddad reported that the fans situation at TTE has been addressed; fans were placed in the halls to circulate the air. F. Nurmsen noted that she has received questions and concerns from parents regarding Summit Learning. She has directed them to Jessica Vezina, MMS Principal. There are bi-weekly Information Nights on the subject. All of the 5th-8th grade teachers went to Walsh School in Framingham to learn more and understand the premise of the learning platform. S. Haddad reviewed the benefits and uses of the Parent Portal in the program.

14. Executive Session: none

15. Adjournment: 7:22 pm. F. Nurmsen moved to adjourn. Second by D. Fronte. Approved 3-0-0.

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