

  
Date Approved/Released: 10/5/17

Date Approved/Hold: \_\_\_\_\_

School Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2017  
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

1. Call to order: 6:00 P M/ Pledge of Allegiance

Present: Danielle LaPointe, Dawn Fronte, Larry Murphy, Felicia Nurmsen, Greg Vine  
Steve Haddad-Superintendent  
Richard Ikonen-Business Manager

2. Audio/Video Disclosure

3. Citizen Questions and/or Comments: None

4. Student Representative Report: None

5. Student/Staff Recognitions: Blue Devil Cool Award

S. Haddad introduced Ralph Olson, a superstar Principal, who had served as MMHS Interim Principal during the 2013-2014 school year. S. Haddad reviewed his background, noting he is all about spirit and community. He added Mr. Olson will guide and lead the district with respect, adding he favors walking the buildings to being in his office. R. Olson stated he has good memories from his time here, and intends to work with the Junior and Senior students to form that same attachment as before. He is looking forward to his time here.

L. Murphy announced that former teacher and administrator Bob LaPointe passed away in Florida today. He praised Mr. LaPointe as an educator and a person. The assembly observed a moment of silence.

L. Murphy noted the agenda format has been changed as a result of information learned at a School Committee Chairman Workshop run by MASC. He explained the Consent Agenda item that includes routine and usual items that can be approved as a whole or individually. The minutes and field trips will be listed individually.

6. Teaching and Learning Highlights-S. Haddad introduced Sara Jordan, DOE Data Specialist Central Mass/ District and Schools Assistant Centers (DSAC advisor), who has worked with the district for several years. Kristina Mecelicaite reviewed her work, noting Ms. Jordan assists with the building walk-throughs and data analysis. Ms. Jordan noted she also helps to implement new initiatives on inclusive practices, instructional support and lesson studies. She is working with J. Vezina on the Middle School Turnaround Plan and S. Haddad and the administrative team on the District Improvement Plan. The district initiative is in the area of SPED but since it is co-teaching it is included in general teaching. She also works on initiatives with 4 other local districts as a data analyst. As a DOE initiative, she noted that Winchendon is at the forefront; the DOE said 'this is fantastic stuff'.

K. Mecelicaite noted she is a wonderful resource and is amazing. S. Jordan stated that success will be measured by student growth as measured by the MCAS and graduation, which includes dropout prevention. She stressed a district has to change daily practices to change yearly measurements to move

children toward success, adding adult behavior influences student behavior that later influences student outcomes. Her results are shared with the staff and she will share them with the school committee. L. Murphy stated that the district has been stuck and needs to move the scores but that is not the only indicator as measured by the state. He added the committee needs to see tangible evidence of progress. S. Jordan will document and present some of the measureable changes that she has seen in adult behavior but has not come through in achievement yet. L. Murphy added that he feels an override would happen if people could see progress.

D. LaPointe noted the information must be user friendly because the public does not understand how the progress correlates to what will be shown down the road. S. Jordan correlated that to a road map that measures change and success from a baseline. S. Haddad noted the district Turnaround Plan will be presented at one of the next meetings.

G. Vine noted none of these efforts take place in a vacuum or as an exercise; measurable benchmarks will help retain students and help the budget.

Suzanne Michele and Michelle Atter – M. Atter reviewed the K-5 programs that recently concluded this summer. Students also participated in an alternative program. F. Nurmsen noted her daughter attended in past years and it was hugely helpful in preventing the 'summer slide'.

Suzanne Michele extended her gratitude for all of the staff who participated in the ESY program. The Pre-K -12 program worked with suggestions from participants last year; she feels it was very helpful to enable staff to plan lessons according to student individual needs. She added that as a team they worked hard and well and were flexible. The staff received thanks and appreciation from the parents.

L. Murphy agreed that keeping students engaged all year round leads to success. He noted 3 areas that work well for success- school climate, collaboration within the schools and the community and Curriculum Instruction and Assessment.

a. SISEP (State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices) Presentation - Michelle Atter and Jessica Vezina presented an update on the initiatives they have been working on for the past 5 years. The work and research was done through a grant that ends in mid-October. J. Vezina noted a loss of momentum at certain stages due to staff turnover. The assessment teaches staff how to create systems so that the district is able to implement evidence-based practices across the district. The District Implementation Team explained the implementation stages and cycles of the system. M. Atter explained the stages of PBIS - Positive Behavior Intervention - from Pre-K through Memorial, Toy Town Elementary, the Middle School and High School. The system is consistent throughout the grades, using those structures now in place. This led to the Elementary Literacy Initiative; the initial implementation was in June, 2017, prior to teachers leaving for the summer. The district now has a consistent core program that everyone will follow. J. Vezina explained how the administration and teachers created rules that crossed all areas of the school day and activities. She noted that disciplinary referrals dramatically decreased; a report will be provided to the committee. Staff credits consistent, common language and a matrix of expectations that students learn and that are transferable. Discussion included the importance of those expectations rolling over at least to the freshman class to help them get through the transition to High School, with adjustments made to make the rewards system more tangible. The importance of a strong support system in the lower grades was stressed.

## 7. Consent Agenda

### Minutes & Field Trips

a. June 12, 2017-Joint Meeting of the School Committee and the Board of Selectman

b. June 15, 2017 - Regular Meeting

D. LaPointe moved to approve them with grammatical corrections. Second by F. Nurmsen.

Approved 4-0-1. (G. Vine abstained)



8. Superintendent Report: Suzanne Michel presented the United Sports Program for children ages 4 & up with special needs. Students from Winchendon, Narragansett and Gardner school districts are invited to participate. The Winchendon School has offered the program the use of all of its facilities to allow the program to continue year round. She explained the 'buddy' system being set up. Students outside of the 3 communities will be considered down the road. An all-call looking for participants and volunteers will be sent next week. The information will also be on the WPS website. The \$20 donation will be used for the shirts, and drinks and snacks. Local business and individuals are welcome to sponsor a team. S. Haddad reviewed the Superintendents Conference he recently attended. The theme was 'Leading and Creating Inclusive Schools-All Means All'.

He read the email regarding the CPAC and shared a summary of events the volunteer group has been involved with. They will present to the committee in the Fall.

He reviewed all of the work being done at the schools and fields to make them ready for the new school year.

The override was defeated; 12 positions were lost; however only 3 ex-employees will collect unemployment. He broke down the numbers. He stressed the district will get the job done despite the losses. The High School went back to a 6 period day, which requires fewer teachers. The Life Skills Learning program was eliminated due to low enrollment. J. Vezina reviewed class size numbers and the Specialist classes. General Music was eliminated at the Middle School but it will continue at the High School. There will be Band and Chorus in the morning; STEM will also continue. The elementary school class size was not affected. Enrollment looks good.

There is an administrative retreat on Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup>; he reviewed the agenda.

Professional Development Plan- He noted the boot camp with Edviate is August 8-10. The program did not kick off as well as he wanted it to last year; it will be looked at again. After discussion, the school committee scheduled a retreat that from 4:00-7:00 pm on August 17<sup>th</sup>; location to be announced. Student of the Month recognitions will begin in October.

The Converse Fund, that has \$200,000 to maintain and expand parks and recreational areas in Winchendon, has pledged a donation to the TTE Playground fund. Burton Gould is the representative for that program.

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation is on Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>; it includes a cookout.

The Winchendon Fall Festival is on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> on Central Street.

Mass. Municipal Association is holding its annual Essay Contest for 8<sup>th</sup> graders and a new Poster Competition for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. Information will be sent to building principals.

The Superintendent Evaluation - members sent their summative evaluations on the superintendent to L. Murphy; Janet Corbosiero was thanked. The composite evaluation has been made; they shared areas where improvement is needed. The comments were put into Mass. Standards in the composite report.

Mr. Haddad received a Proficient overall rating. L. Murphy summarized the comments, noting areas to focus on improvement, such as communication, and areas of strength to continue to build on.

S. Haddad noted the document will be his guide, to focus on areas he knows will move the district forward.

Business Office Report - R. Ikonen provided up-to-date FY18 numbers. He will present a brief monthly report and quarterly perspectives; September is a quarterly report.

Responding to F. Nurmsen, R. Ikonen reported that the transition is not done. He found more 'challenges' after the Assistant Business Manager left and he is still trying to fix those. The administration, secretaries and paras payroll is fixed and the teachers' payroll will be fixed by the first payroll of school year. The Accounts Payable is being done by someone else; this may become a long term situation. The consultant has given his services free of charge.

F. Nurmsen stated that she does not like the open, never ending process where things are found out. The district needs a goal, a date, and a process to make an informed decision.

R. Ikonen responded that the district does not have the resources or budget to get this done in a finite

Timeline. He added a position will be posted when everyone is back from summer break; he will report on the plan to resolve the issues at the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.  
The Committee agreed it is not laying fault but that it needs a solution.

9. Sub Committee Report- None.

10. Old Business:

a. CEP officially waived FY2018 - Toy Town Elementary does not qualify D. LaPointe moved to choose to not to participate in the CEP program for FY2018. Second by G. Vine for discussion. The Universal Breakfast Program will be at Memorial. The TTE numbers do not support running the program there; it is based on Free/Reduced meal participation. Approved 5-0-0.

b. School Choice for FY2018 Approval-G. Vine moved to approve. Second by D. Fronte. The School Choice-In numbers and the number of SPED students are not known. Approved 5-0-0.

11. New Business:

a. Welcome of new member Greg Vine-L. Murphy welcomed Mr. Vine 'home', noting his steady counsel and calming effect.

b. Reorganization of School Committee & Sub Committees - D. Fronte moved to table. Second by D. LaPointe. Approved 5-0-0. It will be on the August 17<sup>th</sup> Retreat agenda.

c. School Lunch Cost Increase - The cost was increased from \$2.85 to \$3.00 to maintain the standard within the federal regulations set forth by DESE. D. LaPointe moved to approve the school lunch increase. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5-0-0.

d. Student Handbooks distributed/Review for discussion next meeting - D. Fronte moved to table until August 17<sup>th</sup>. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5-0-0.

e. Schedule for Policy Sub-Committee (3 months) D. LaPointe moved to table to August 17<sup>th</sup>, after the reorganization of the sub committees. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5-0-0.

f. New School Committee minutes' procedure - D. Fronte moved table to August 17<sup>th</sup>. Second by F. Nurmsen. Approved 5-0-0.

12. Future Agenda Items:

a. Water Report - Jim Murphy

b. Student Handbook approval on August 17, 2017 - VOTE

c. Chartwells Presentation - September 21, 2017

d. Student Activity Accounts - Sept 7, 2017

e. Social Media District Face Book Page (August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting/ retreat)

f. Student Exit Survey - Report on results - August 17, 2017

g. Converse Fund Gift Acceptance - VOTE to accept funds (Consent Agenda)

h. Quarterly Business perspective/Report - R. Ikonen (September)

i. Business Office Personal Hiring - R. Ikonen (September 7, 2017)

j. Reorganization of School Committee & Sub Committees

k. Budgeting Process and Budget Timeline.

l. Short Term and Long Term needs/goals of the District

13. Committee Member comments: In response to F. Nurmsen, a compilation of the Student Exit survey results from students who have left the district in the past will be presented at the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, and will include whatever data, figures and trends that are available from each school. The August 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting/Retreat Agenda will include a discussion on the Budgeting Process and Budget Timeline. L. Murphy noted the committee should have enough information to make an informed decision and the budget will be done in a timely fashion.

F. Nurmsen stressed the importance of determining the short term and long term needs of the district, adding 'We need to understand what the infrastructure looks like from the top down', and how that will support the goals, and adding 'senior leadership role(s) should drive results'. F. Nurmsen also added 'we can't adjust our expectations; we have to move forward'

G. Vine agreed with F. Nurmsen, but cautioned the district has to be careful how fast it pushes for some of these things and to set a realistic timeline.

The recently signed Chartwells new contract includes a stipulation that the Food Service company is responsible for those employees own clean-up.

In response to G. Vine, the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting will be recorded and aired on the public access channel.

14. Executive Session: None

15. Adjournment: 8:39 P.M. D. LaPointe moved to adjourn. Second by G. Vine. Approved 5 -0-0.

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

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