



Winchendon Public Schools

Date Approved/Released: 9/1/22

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School Committee Chair: 

School Committee Meeting

August 24, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Town Hall - 4th Floor Conference Room

Attendance:

Ryan Forsythe, Chair; L. Murphy; Alicia Jordan; Thad King, Superintendent; Robert Mullin, Director of Finance

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Forsythe states that meeting is not being broadcast live this evening due to technical situations.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Consent Agenda: None

A. Jordan moves to skip Superintendent's Report and go to agenda item 7 a and b.
Seconded by L. Murphy.

5. New Business:

a. Murdock Trust Presentation of Funds:

Representatives from Murdock Trust approach. History of Murdock is discussed, and funds are presented for the Winchendon Public Schools.

b. Murdock Trust Breakdown of Expenditures:

T. King presents detailed breakdown of past years' expenditures from the Murdock Trust fund. Discussion is had regarding the use of future funds. L. Murphy thanks the Murdock Trustees for their generous funding of student enrichment program and initiatives. A. Jordan asks for clarification on how students will be impacted now that the Murdock Trust funds will be used for enrichment rather than supplies. T. King explains that the supplies expenses were moved into the general budget, so there will be no negative impact for students. He explains that the plan is to use Murdock Trust funds to give back to the community with service learning days.

6. Superintendent's Report:

- a. R. Mullin presents Budget update. A. Jordan asks if there are concerns about the cost of fuel prices and utilities. R. Mullin explains that through a collaborative, the district has a locked in fuel price. T. King states that this was considered when the budget was being created, and the district looked at the amount of oil that was being used each year. The rise in fuel prices was considered and an appropriate amount was budgeted.
- b. T. King gives a COVID update, explaining where the district stands as the schools prepare to open next week and outlining the current guidance from DESE and the CDC.

Keith Kent from the town's Board of Health approaches to present a COVID update for the area.
- c. Newly hired Murdock High School Principal, Mary Jane Rickson is introduced and approaches to give a brief summary of her work and her belief system for education. The committee welcomes Mrs. Rickson.
- d. The District Leadership Team, consisting of Director of Curriculum, Jonathan Landman, and Director of Pupil Services, Nicole Heroux, give detailed updates on the topics of curriculum and special education within the district. Major investments are being made in Math and Literacy curricula, particularly with the elementary levels. This will also support intervention and enrichment and will enable the district to differentiate its instruction more effectively. R. Forsythe asks for the reasons that literacy program review has been prioritized. J. Landman responds that it was noted by some faculty and administrators that an ELA program with a richer literature that is more engaging could be found. T. King adds that the district also wanted its ELA program to be vertically aligned to K to 12. N. Heroux gives details regarding the integration of social emotional learning within the program. Supports have been initiated that will help identify when a student needs emotional support with a tiered approach.

R. Forsythe questions where Illustrative Math and Freckles Platform intersect or replace each other. J. Landman explains that I.M. includes center time at the elementary levels. One center will include computer time, which will be where the Freckle Platform is utilized. L. Murphy questions how the new platforms will support providing relative data that can be used with MCAS data. J. Landman explains that the Star program gives predictive data about how students might do on the MCAS by using an interim assessment that can be used by the district to see where students need to improve or what skills might need to be reviewed.

Discussion is had regarding the amount of implementation that the district has chosen to take on all at once. T. King explains that the district is very aware of that and has created schedules and guidance for each program to provide training and implementation practice for all staff.

7. New Business:

c. School Choice for Employees Living Out of State:

Discussion is had regarding the presented School Choice application and the district's policies for employees. L. Murphy moves to approve the recommendation of the superintendent to allow the children of P. Dillon, residents of Swansea, New Hampshire, to attend the Winchendon Public Schools under the School Choice program. Seconded by A. Jordan. Vote is unanimous.

d. Student Activity Accounts:

R. Mullin presents the data on student activity accounts. L. Murphy moves to authorize the continued use of student activities accounts as presented by Robert Mullin. Seconded by A. Jordan. Vote is unanimous.

e. Memorial Elementary Student Activity Account Increase:

R. Mullin presents the details on the Memorial Elementary student activities account and requests that the account limit be increased from \$500 to \$2000. L. Murphy asks if \$2000 is enough. T. King explains that many of the trips that students will be provided with are funded by Murdock Trust. R. Mullin explains that the building principal feels that \$2000 will be enough. A. Jordan moves to increase the funds. Seconded by L. Murphy. Vote is unanimous.

8. Old Business

a. Subcommittee Definitions:

L. Murphy moves to table the topic of subcommittee definition and put it on as a future agenda item. Seconded by A. Jordan. Vote is unanimous.

b. Superintendent Feedback:

The committee provides verbal feedback for T. King in his role as Superintendent.

9. Future Agenda Items:

Future Agenda items are as follows:

- a. Data Presentations
- b. Subcommittee Definitions
- c. Basketball Scholarship for Scott Laverdure and Nick Roy
- d. Chartwells Presentation

10. Executive Session:

L. Murphy moves to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and to reconvene in Open Session. Seconded by A. Jordan.

11. Winchendon Secretaries Contract

Committee re-adjourns into Open Session. A. Jordan moves to approve the Agreement between the Winchendon School Committee and the Winchendon Secretaries Association. Seconded by L. Murphy. Vote is unanimous.

12. School Committee Closing Comments:

A. Jordan thanks everyone for their hard work. L. Murphy thanks everyone for their hard work and wishes a happy, strong and productive school year to all students, staff, administrators and the community. R. Forsythe thanks the secretaries association for a productive, collegial and professional negotiation. He thanks Alicia for representing the school committee at last week's new teacher orientation. He also thanks the representatives from Murdock Trust for their great work and supporting the district.

13. Adjournment:

L. Murphy moves to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by A. Jordan. Vote is unanimous. Meeting is adjourned.

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

Documents Attached: None