



Winchendon Public Schools

Date Approved/Released: 11/17/22

Date Approved/Hold: _____

School Committee Chair: _____

WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK
RCUD NOV 28 2022 AM 10:56

School Committee Meeting

October 20, 2022 - 6:00 pm

Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium

Attendance:

Ryan Forsythe, Chair; Greg Vine, Vice Chair; Larry Murphy; Karen Kast-McBride;
Thad King, Superintendent; Angelina Dellasanta, Student Representative

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

R. Forsythe reads audio visual disclosure.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Student Representative Update:

A. Dellasanta gives update on student council; the Massachusetts Association for Student Representatives conference and the workshops attended and topics voted on. Updates at Murdock included an explanation of spirit week and homecoming, field trips and college visits; high school band performance; and sporting events. Updates for the elementary schools included the Monster Ball, PTO donations needed.

Discussion is had regarding the MASR conference and the importance of student representatives on the School Committee. S. Rondeau approaches and speaks on the student representative function and the manner in which they are appointed.

A. Dellasanta asks about the process for adding an item to the agenda. R. Forsythe explains the process.

5. Consent Agenda:

R. Forsythe introduces the Consent Agenda. There is an incorrect date on the minutes presented for approval. It is also noted that the video recording of the meeting for which the minutes were created ended during the meeting. G. Vine moves to approve the minutes pending the correction of the date on said minutes. Seconded by L. Murphy.

6. Superintendent's Report:

T. King presents the district administrative team, J. Vezina, A. Diaz, C. Jillson and M.J. Rickson, who will speak on the data from their individual schools. J. Vezina begins by introducing the Renaissance STAR data for reading and math, which is a customized assessment used for grades 1-12. It provides teachers with learning data and benchmark assessments that happen three to four times a year. The assessments are linked to studies that determine the state benchmarks and how students score is then correlated to how they could potentially score on MCAS.

Discussion is had regarding the studies mentioned and how it correlates to student learning. The district administration team uses the data to inform instruction and the way each school's efforts are linked to how the district is doing overall. C. Jillson explains the differences in the way the lower elementary grades use the assessments. G. Vine asks for clarification on whether/how DIBELS and STAR correlate if at all. C. Jillson describes the way that STAR can not be used for students who are non-readers, but DIBELS gives the teachers what they need to instruct for the students to give them that skill base. C. Jillson describes Memorial's DIBELS and STAR scores and how they will use them to support student learning goals. Discussion is had regarding what can be done to assist parents of 3, 4 and 5 year olds to help students be more successful with reading and literacy. T. King reminds the group that early childhood literacy is a concern across the state. He also asks the committee to examine the test scores and understand that improvements have been made in only a year's time. K. Kast-McBride asks if there is data to show how many students have had early intervention services. C. Jillson explains that they track whether students have had preschool or any other kind of early childhood experience, but the school depends on parents to provide that information, so it is difficult to collect data.

R. Forsythe asks how we get to thresholds of being a benchmark if we're not aligned with MCAS scores; what determines where a student falls on this scale since Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 do not take the MCAS. C. Jillson explains that DIBELS is aligned to MCAS. J. Vezina provides the committee with the exact language that shows how it differs for Grades 1 and 2.

A. Diaz presents data on Toy Town Elementary assessments. Discussion is had on how to help students improve in reading and math. R. Forsythe asks if there will be a benchmark on October 31. A. Diaz confirms that it will take place then. Discussion is had regarding the need to see constant improvements and what the schools are doing to ensure improvement. R. Forsythe questions what can be blamed on COVID and what is now being labeled as a stamina issue with attention. J. Vezina confirms that when students are required to sit and think and write, they do struggle with giving their full attention, but the schools are working to build on those skills through all content areas. Discussion is had regarding learning stamina and tolerance and the strategies being implemented to help students to rebuild those skills. A. Dellasanta confirms that as a student who went through online learning, she can see how her attention span has suffered.

R. Forsythe asks how long ago this data was put together. J. Vezina explains that the first testing took place within the first few weeks of September. Now that we have reached October, they expect to see some growth in the next benchmark test. T. King reminds everyone that we are not teaching to a test. We are teaching standards that are appropriate to a grade level.

7. New Business:

a. Winchendon Mast Plan:

R. Forsythe states the master plan has been completed, and now the implementation committee is doing its work and has invited the school committee to be part of its work. Some of the action points on their list include: open space, land use, historical resources and transportation. One item that he would like to have the schools involved in is strategy 3.1, which is specifically developing a network of neighborhood and school playgrounds and walking routes. An investigation will take place to determine the needs and what might need to be done. Discussion is had regarding the master plan and its details. R. Forsythe states the implementation committee has been clear that it does not intend to define the strategies; that they must find the opportunities to contribute in a way that may benefit the schools as well as the town. Any funding that would come from the schools would benefit the schools. This is for every townspeople in the district and not just focused on one item that the school committee happens to be interested in. The entire town is engaged with the Master Plan.

b. MASC Conference Discussion:

K. Kast-McBride discusses the upcoming conference. She asks if the committee has any questions or concerns to bring up. Discussion is had on some of the resolutions. T. King gives insight on Circuit Breaker and the manner in which the funds are spent. G. Vine states he has concerns about resolution 4. K. Kast-McBride gives insight on other districts that were fighting receivership.

c. Substitute Pay:

T. King discusses the current substitute pay in the district. The one that has come up for the district recently is custodial substitute pay, which is currently \$17/hr. It is determined that the district's sub pay needs no changes. L. Murphy moves to pass over the discussion. Motion not needed. Motion withdrawn.

8. Old Business

a. Subcommittee Definitions/Charges:

Subcommittee definitions are included for Wellness, Sick Bank and Collaborative Subcommittees. A. Dellasanta asks if a student representative could be included on the Wellness Subcommittee. Discussion is had about the history of the Wellness Subcommittee; although it is required by Massachusetts General Law. Previous student involvement included requesting menu changes. G. Vine suggests the Wellness Subcommittee meet quarterly and that it would be a good idea to have a student representative on the subcommittee. A. Dellasanta moves to add a student representative position to the Wellness Subcommittee. Seconded by L. Murphy. R. Forsythe asks to amend the motion to add another person because the committee decided to add two school committee members. A. Dellasanta agrees to the amendment to her original motion. Seconded by K. Kast-McBride. Vote is unanimous.

K. Kast-McBride moves that the Collaborative and Sick Bank Subcommittee

Definitions be voted on together. Seconded by G. Vine. Discussion is had regarding the appointment of the superintendent to the Collaborative Subcommittee versus appointing a school committee member. Updates are made to the wording of the definition. G. Vine moves to approve the Sick Bank Subcommittee and Collaborative Representative definitions as written. Seconded by K. Kast-McBride. Vote is unanimous.

9. Future Agenda Items:

Future Agenda items are as follows:

- a. Illustrative Math Presentation
- b. CareSolace
- c. ELA Curriculum Investigation

10. Closing Comments:

K. Kast-McBride states she is looking forward to attending the conference and encourages the committee to look over the resolutions again and let her know if there are any questions.

L. Murphy states that he is thrilled to have Angelina on the committee. He thanks the principals for their presentations and their hard work.

G. Vine commends Angelina's commitment to being here and thanks her. He thanks the principals and the teachers.

A. Dellasanta states that she is excited to be here and hopes that continued student participation continues going forward.

R. Forsythe states that the committee is glad she is here. He also thanks the teachers and principals for the data presentation and commends them on their dedication and hard work.

K. Kast-McBride follows by stating that she very highly objects to teaching to a test, and she believes it is important that people know that we are not teaching our students to a test as much as we do need the data.

11. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by L. Murphy. Seconded by K. Kast-McBride. Vote is unanimous. Meeting adjourned.

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

Documents Attached: None