

**REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #57
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
WATERBORO, MAINE 04087**

District School Board Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2023

7:00 PM

MHS East Building

Zoom Link: <https://rsu57.zoom.us/j/82779048196>

- A. Call to Order @ 7:00pm**
- B. Pledge of Allegiance**
- C. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum - 14 members present**

Bauer, Suzanne	Cartisano, Mark	Cole, Jason	Crowley-Colwell, Tina*
Day, Elizabeth	Dryden, JoJo	DuBois, Norman	Ferguson, Anastasia
Laine, Jodi	Mastraccio, Katie	Mayo, Jennifer	Phinney, Wes
Shaw, Jason	Tanguay, Adam*	Vasalle, Judith	Vermette, Dominic
(Newfield - Vacant)	(Shapleigh - Vacant)	**VanBrocklin, Hunter - Jr. Class	**Harris, Maggie - Sr. Class

***Student Representative*

*Absent**

- D. Adjustments to the Agenda**
 - Remove the first Executive Session under section L.
- E. Approval of the Minutes from [February 8, 2023](#) and [February 15, 2023](#).**

Motion: J. Shaw motioned to approve the minutes.

2nd: J. Mayo

No discussion

Unanimous

Motion Carried

- F. Public Comment**

No Public Comment.

- G. Board Chair Report**

1. Recognitions and Celebrations

No Recognitions and Celebrations.
2. Board Chair Update
 - Chair Laine thanked Katie Mastraccio for her service on the School Board.
 - Chair Laine welcomed new Board Member Suzanne Bauer from Lyman.

- H. Superintendent's Report**

- Dr. Marquis, Mr. Colin Walsh, Mr. Dominic Vermette, and Mr. Kyle Keenan attended a meeting with town selectmen to discuss the upcoming budget and strategic plan. Dr. Marquis believed that it was a well-attended meeting which was productive and a good opportunity to connect with representatives within the District.
- Many RSU #57 administrators attended two career fairs at UNH and UMF earlier this month in an attempt to hire and retain good, quality employees. Of all employers present at this fair, Dr. Marquis felt that they were the most prepared to answer potential candidate questions with great visuals. Will be connecting with over 30 potential employees in the coming weeks.
- Dr. Marquis and other York County Superintendents had a meaningful discussion with Joe Rafferty; reviewed key issues relevant to York County and the bills currently in the process of being developed.
- Dr. Marquis attended the MMS Student Council assembly, where students were able to pie MMS staff members in the face as a reward for their outstanding donation of food items. 6870 items were generously donated by MMS families and local businesses.
- The MHS Boys Basketball team won the MPA Good Sportsmanship Award for AA basketball. The banner will be on display in the MHS gym.

1. [Student Representative Report](#)

- Student Representatives H. VanBrocklin and M. Harris provided an overview of the report.

2. [Staff Report](#)

- Dr. Marquis explained that there will be an increase in staff nominations as we head into the hiring season. A new ROTC teacher candidate will be brought to the Board on the March 22, 2023 meeting.

3. [Enrollment](#)

- Dr. Marquis provided an overview of the enrollment data and explained that he expects enrollment to remain constant through the end of the 22/23 SY. He continued that he anticipates enrollment will hover around 2900 and 2950 students in the next several years.
- Dr. Marquis reviewed historical enrollment data in regards to homeschooled students, parentally placed students, privately schooled students, and students who have an active Superintendent's agreement.
- Dr. Marquis explained that the overall state average for homeschooling is around 4%; higher rates are more common in rural areas such as RSU #57.
- J. Shaw asked what the trend of enrolled homeschooled students was across the District.
- Dr. Marquis said that students opt for homeschooling instruction across all levels, but that homeschooling is seen less with high school students because of the increasingly challenging curriculum.
- Dr. Marquis elaborated on how a Superintendent's agreement works, explaining that oftentimes students will opt for schools with special programs that are not currently offered through the RSU. He explained that no Superintendent agreements are given to students who wish to attend pseudo-independent schools. No taxpayer dollars are going to these schools as a result of these agreements.
- J. Vassalle questions what the impact would be if two-thirds of the currently homeschooled students entered the District.
- Dr. Marquis explained that financially, there would be an increase in state subsidy per pupil, and the targeted multipliers for economically disadvantaged students, ELL students, and students who receive special services would increase. Dr. Marquis estimates that it would cost approximately \$5,000 per student who returned to school.
- J. Vassalle expressed concern about space to accommodate the increase of student populations.
- Dr. Marquis explained that in previous years there were upwards of 3700 K-12 students that the District was able to accommodate. Currently, the District has 2900 PreK-12 students and he has no concerns about accommodation.
- Dr. Marquis stated that he would welcome any school-aged students within the District to attend RSU #57 schools, noting that the rate of taxation decreases when more students attend public schools.
- M. Cartisano asked if Dr. Marquis believed any of the data points were influenced by Covid.
- Dr. Marquis explained that the homeschooling rates have been extremely influenced by Covid, but are seeing returns to pre-Covid enrollment levels. He predicts that the number of homeschooled students will drop below 350 by next year.
- J. Shaw asked Dr. Marquis to clarify if Superintendent agreements could be made for students seeking athletic opportunities.
- Dr. Marquis explained that Superintendent agreements are approved when students cannot be properly educated in the school district in which they live. Approval of the agreement must be signed off by both Superintendents. If an agreement is denied, the parent can appeal to the Commissioner of Education and then the Board of Education. Typically, the COE upholds the Superintendent's decision, and the BOE overturns it (due to belief of choice).

4. Strategic Plan

- The Committee is making good progress and is currently in the process of receiving input from community members and grade 6-12 students through an online survey. Currently,

1406 surveys have been received and the committee is looking forward to focusing on changes that are most important to the community.

- A Community Forum will be held on Monday, May 1st at 7pm in the MHS auditorium for a roundtable discussion between the Strategic Planning Committee and community members. Childcare will be offered to adults with children who would like to attend.

I. Standing Committees

1. Finance/Building and Maintenance Committee
 - D. Vermette explained that the committee received its first look at the preliminary budget for next fiscal year.
 - Received notice that electricity rates are increasing in October of 2023 and the cost of fuel is decreasing. Anticipates the changes to be even and not a hard hit to the budget planning process.
 - J. Vassalle questioned how the committee is prioritizing special funding requests.
 - D. Vermette explained that the list is color-coded. The committee is still determining which requests take priority at this time.

Next Meeting: March 15, 2023 @ 5:30pm - East Training Center
Budget Review Session for the Public: March 20, 2023 @ 6:30pm - MHS Auditorium
2. Curriculum Committee
Has not met.
Next Meeting: March 14, 2023 at 6pm - East Training Center
3. Negotiations Committee
 - Chair Laine stated that the committee is continuing its ongoing negotiations with administration.
4. Policy Committee
 - Chair Laine explained that in their last meeting, the committee made no major changes to the policies; cleaned up the language for consistency across policies. The committee is bringing forward policy CB-R for its second read.

Next Meeting: April 4, 2023 @ 6pm - East Training Center
5. Public Relations/Technology Committee
Has not met.
Next Meeting: March 21, 2023 @ 6pm - East Training Center
6. Transportation and Safety Committee
Has not met.
Next Meeting: March 28, 2023 @ 6pm - East Training Center

J. Old Business

1. Second read of policy [CB-R](#) - Superintendent of Schools. **Action Needed.**
Motion: J. Shaw motions to accept policy CB-R.
2nd: M. Cartisano
Discussion: M. Cartisano explained that the policy leads to discussion about assessing the Superintendent; establishing a tool and timeline for which to do so.
 - Chair Laine intends to review the policy related to Superintendent evaluation and will discuss the process with Vice Chair Crowley-Colwell and Dr. Marquis. Chair Laine explained that she intends to have the Superintendent evaluation completed by the end of this fiscal year.

Unanimous

Motion Carried

K. New Business

1. MHS Band [Field Trip Request](#). **Action Needed.**
Motion: N. DuBois motioned to approve the field trip request.
2nd: J. Mayo
No Discussion **Unanimous** **Motion Carried**
2. First draft of [RSU #57 2023-2024 School Calendar](#).
 - Dr. Marquis presented the SY 23/24 Calendar, highlighting changes from last year's calendar. He explained that this draft was developed with other Superintendents from York County to ensure they were in compliance with the ME DOE; no more than five dissimilar days.

- E. Day questioned if snow days counted as a dissimilar day. Dr. Marquis said no.
- Dr. Marquis stated that he is committed to providing transportation to SRTC students; students must sign an agreement that states they will attend every SRTC school day, regardless of the RSU #57 calendar.
- The upcoming school year will be staggered to allow time for students in transition to get familiar with their schools and new environment.
- Final student day on June 10, 2024. If there are more than 6 snow days, alternatives for make-up days will need to be considered, since continuing school beyond June 19 (Juneteenth) has budget implications.
- J. Mayo questioned why the start date is not September 1, 2023.
- Dr. Marquis explained that it would have been a dissimilar day. Historically, RSU #57 has not had school the Friday before Labor Day Weekend (September 1).
- J. Mayo: Questioned the PD day on November 8, 2023; thought the School Board had voted to only use schools for voting every-other year.
- Dr. Marquis clarified that the November 8, 2023 PD has nothing to do with voting, but rather to set a precedent and meet teacher contract agreements.
- Chair Laine asked if election day was considered a dissimilar day.
- Dr. Marquis explained that the ME DOE does not consider election day as dissimilar because Districts are allowed to make their own choice in regards to student safety. Only SRTC students will report on election day.

Motion: J. Shaw motioned to approve the SY 23-24 calendar.

2nd: N. DuBois

No Discussion

Unanimous

Motion Carried

L. Executive Session @ 8:03pm

1. To discuss a student matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(B).

Motion: A. Ferguson motioned to enter Executive Session.

2nd: J. Shaw

No discussion

Unanimous

Motion Carried

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:03pm.

The Board exited Executive Session at 8:38pm. No action was taken.

M. Calendar/Announcements

N. Adjournment @ 8:38pm

Upcoming Meetings

03/14/23	6:00pm	Curriculum Committee	MHS East
03/15/23	5:30pm	Finance Committee	MHS East
03/20/23	6:30pm	Public Budget Review Session	MHS Auditorium
03/21/23	6:00pm	Public Relations/Tech. Committee	MHS East
03/22/23	5:30pm	Finance Committee	MHS East
03/22/23	7:00pm	School Board	MHS East