

**MAYNARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
MINUTES OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
FOWLER LIBRARY  
NOVEMBER 29, 2018**

Present: Justin Hemm, Bethlyn Houlihan, Maro Hogan, Mary Brannelly, Dawn Capello  
Administrators: Dr. Robert Gerardi, Jennifer Gaudet, Michelle Resendes, Chuck Caragianes, Donna Dankner, Mike Barth

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes

A motion was made to accept the minutes of November 1, 2018 as written. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Capello. The motion passed 5-0.

Chairperson's Report

Mr. Hemm acknowledged the Maynard Business Association for organizing the Sip and Stroll this Saturday from 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. downtown Maynard.

Next weekend is the Beacon Santa Telethon. Thank you to the members of WAVM and the members of the Community. This event kickoff on Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>.

The Christmas Parade is on December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

Best of luck to the Winter Sports Athletes.

Student Representative Report

Patrick O'Neil/A.J. Noble

The telethon is coming next weekend, December 7.

20 members went to Quabbin High School for the Central District auditions in chorus, orchestra and band. 50% made it. The Fowler School will audition in January. The Winter Concerts are coming up in December.

Homecoming had 200 people in attendance. Members on the NHS are working on individual service projects including tutoring.

MHS hosted celebrating MHS night. It was a good experience for all.

MHS Spirit Week before Thanksgiving was successful.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Gerardi thanked Senator Eldridge for coming to the School Committee meeting tonight.

Dr. Gerardi read some positive emails he received from Ms. Blanchard and Principal Costello.

Dr. Gerardi talked about the Fowler students working with the High School students now on a regular basis for transitional programs.

The Global Stem Network Program has started at MHS. We have an MHS teacher co-teaching with a teacher in another country on a collaborative artificial intelligence research project with a culminating event being a presentation to a large community audience. It is an internet based program. We are preparing our students to be global citizens. Thank you to the MHS staff and Principal Caragianes.

Ms. Brannelly said that this week about 20 8<sup>th</sup> graders were allowed to shadow students at MHS. She thanked Principal Caragianes.

### State Senator Jamie Eldridge

Dr. Gerardi said one of the biggest issues for the committee is the Foundation Budget Review Commission recommendations. MASC put together a video about the contrast of funding in different districts.

Dr. Gerardi showed the video titled A Tale of Two Sisters. One worked as an Art teacher at a Middle School in Burlington and the other is a Third Grade Teacher in Brockton.

If the foundation formula were to be implemented, it would have a positive impact on the Maynard Public Schools.

Michelle Resendes, Business Manager, presented a summary of the foundation budget premise.

See the full report at: <https://www.maynard.k12.ma.us/documents>

- Started in 1993, the intention was to assure a fair and adequate minimum spending by defining a Foundation Budget for each community.
- Communities pay a share of the Foundation Budget based on ability to pay, aggregate wealth, using property taxes and income.

Findings and Recommendations are based on:

#### (Benefits) Findings

- Actual spending far exceeds current foundation budget allotment by more than 140%.
- Current formula does not factor cost for retiree health insurance.

#### Recommendations

- Adjust the employee health insurance rate to the state GIC rate.
- Add Retired Employee Health Insurance to the foundation budget.
- Change inflation factor to annual change to GIC rates.

#### (Special Education) Findings

- Districts spend far more than the current foundation budget allotment for out-of-district placements by more than 50%.
- The current assumed in-district special education enrollment is less than the actual statewide enrollment.

#### Recommendations

- Increase the assumed in-district special education enrollment.
- Increase the out-of-district cost rate to capture the total costs that districts bear before circuit breaker is triggered.
- ELL
- Low Income Students

Mr. Hemm attended the recently attended the MASS/MASC conference expressing how much we are struggling. He also heard School Committee members in the western part of the state report how they are suffering. It is part of a bigger picture.

Ms. Brannelly is on the Budget Sub-Committee with Ms. Capello and every year the town has been very generous, but we are at a crossroads now with the Town. When a parent feels a lack of confidence or a need not being met in their child's education, they start looking at different avenues like Charter Schools. We pay the largest price per student going to AMSA. Marlboro is at their maximum at AMSA with students.

Senator Eldridge asked how much money is sent to AMSA each year.

Mr. Hemm said that the per pupil expenditure is \$15,754.

Ms. Resendes said that Assabet Valley Regional Technical is spending \$19K per student whereas we are at \$15K. Also, Minuteman Vocational is at \$35K per student. Hudson is \$16K.

Senator Eldridge asked when the last operational override was passed.

Ms. Brannelly said it has been awhile and said we are reaching our levy limit. We are in a position not to be able to do that.

Ms. Capello said we have tried some things over the last few years, like cutting back on Principals, cutting back on nurses and secretaries or outsourcing and some have blown up and ruined the culture. So we've seen reverse course and the town has been very generous. We are up against how much we can totally tax families.

Ms. Brannelly said also Maynard has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest tax rate in the State.

Ms. Capello said the State has a number of 9% net school spending for Charter Schools. The State expects us to fund \$1M from our operating budget.

Ms. Brannelly said the challenge with any Charter or Vocational school is that we have no control over that and they tell us what we need to provide. We don't have a vote. Last time there was a formula, but not an depreciation every year because \$1.2 in five years is pocket change.

Mr. Hemm recommended that people go to the School and District Profile on the DESE website. It lists every City and Town in MA. It also and the Per Pupil Expenditure and has Census information also.

For 2017, we were at \$15,754 per pupil, however the proposed budget increases CH70 aid by \$30 per student for the Town of Maynard which comes to \$46,230. That doesn't cover salaries.

It doesn't keep up with increased utilities. He feels every year he is nickel and diming people to death. It is not fair. We need to continue to push and get our voices heard.

Ms. Brannelly asked how we can help you Senator Eldridge.

Mr. Hemm remarked that this is the sixth year we had to cut our budget. We need to make our voices heard. We need to continue to push and fight. It starts tonight.

Senator Eldridge thanked Superintendent Gerardi and the School Committee for inviting him. He represents fourteen communities. This is the first time he has seen the video. He also thanked Ms. Resendes for the models.

The legislative process for the foundation budget commission is that the commission was created five years ago. There was a state wide tour of schools for input on updating the 1993 foundation budget saying how much money should be going to every school district. There was a hearing at Nashoba Regional in Bolton. Then a recommendation by the commission for the State to update healthcare costs, ELL, low income, and special education. There are communities that are extremely poor and some a high level of ELL.

This session the Senate passed its version of the Foundation Budget review that increased funding over the next four years also touching all of these areas and that passed the Senate. The House passed a different version. The House and Senate could not agree, so it did not become Law.

The new session starts in January. We are optimistic that we will pass it, but he does not know if it will be enough. A \$1.2M increase for Maynard; he does not think it is enough.

Why hasn't the Legislature increased funding to education? We are looking for revenue. One of the proposals passed by the Legislature was the Millionaires Tax, but it was struck down. It would have

made an additional 4% for anyone who made over \$1M. It would have been \$2 billion for next year for the State. Half of that dedicated to education and the Supreme Court struck that down.

Now we have a four year effort to pass it. We need an increase in next year's budget. It could be the Foundation Budget recommendations passing. We need Circuit Breaker legislation to lower the threshold for special education.

The biggest burden for Maynard is special education costs.

At the end of the day, Maynard is doing a very good job of supporting its people. The state needs to step up its funding.

Charter Schools: Maynard sent \$700K to AMSA this year. The reimbursement this year is just \$183K. The funding formula is deeply flawed. The State should pay 100% of the cost for the Charter Schools. There is a push for Charter School reimbursement. We can advocate for that. There is a push to decrease the Charter School reimbursement.

Justin said we are comparing apples and oranges. We, as a public institution, are required to educate any student that walks in the door. AMSA is a self selected population with a very long history of sending students back to their home districts who have specific special needs. They are not serving their students. There needs to be a conversation about Charter Schools and what their obligations are.

Senator Eldridge said that Governor Baker and DESE are continuing to expand Charter Schools.

Ms. Brannelly said that Vocational Schools also send senior students back to their host towns to keep their graduation rates high. Charter Schools need to play by the same rules.

Senator Eldridge said that regarding mental health and well being. Acton Boxborough has had a number of suicides over the past 2-3 years. There was a forum to talk about what they are doing. There is talk of a separate classroom for students with a mental health challenges. When a student leaves the school and comes back they can transition in.

Ms. Capello said we have a MHS program called Oasis which is a similar program. We hope to start at some point at the Middle School level also.

Senator Eldridge acknowledged that he has received calls from parents about the special education services and that they feel they are not getting all the support they need. It is about the State needing to provide more support.

Ms Capello said when we got circuit breaker extraordinary relief funds last year, we created the Oasis Program to keep students in District.

Senator Eldridge said that there are a number of proposals on increased taxes on the wealthy and dedicate that money to education.

Ms. Brannelly said in health care every year, we had an increase of 5% and looking at an increase of 2 ½% of our budget, we are already behind. Is there any way the State can take over and have an umbrella so it doesn't fall on us?

Ms. Capello said as much as she hates retail marijuana, she likes the tax money. Has the state earmarked where the money will go? Would communities that host get a bigger benefit?

Senator Eldridge said that after the referendum passed, the Legislature tweaked the referendum and it does allow for a host agreement. It could be a negotiation and the Town can levy a 3% tax.

State has not earmarked how that money will be spent. It will provide public health funding to the education of parents and children about the dangers of using marijuana and cannabis. Additional revenues could go to education; go into the general fund.

Mr. Hemm thanked the Senator for coming and listening with an open mind. He really appreciated it.

Ms. Pimenta feels we are well represented at the State level with Jamie Eldridge and Kate Hogan. It was the House side that was difficult to deal with the Dyslexia bill. It took many years to get there.

We need to have our voices heard, but it takes a significant amount of organization and time to see how long the process is. Making the change takes a really long time. It needs to be well organized. Is the School Committee going to be that advocate?

Mr. Hemm asked Senator Eldridge that if there is any opportunity for public advocacy, please notify his Cities and Towns.

Ms. Pimenta asked about the emergency relief fund last year. How did we use that money? In the coming year, if we don't get the emergency fund again, what would we use? We used it on the Oasis Program.

The Senator said there is also a bill for a moratorium on MCAS.

### MCAS

Ms. Gaudet along with the Principals for Leadership and Operations, Charles Caragianes, Mike Barth and Donna Dankner presented MCAS. Here is the link to the presentation.

<https://www.maynard.k12.ma.us/documents>

### SC Policy #202 Organization of Administration 2<sup>nd</sup> reading

A motion was made by Mr. Hemm to approve SC Policy #202, along with the Administrative Reg #201.1. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Brannelly. The motion passed 5-0.

### Superintendent Evaluation Goals

<https://www.maynard.k12.ma.us/documents>

Mr. Hemm thanked Ms. Brannelly and Ms. Hogan for their hard work on these goals.

A motion was made by Mr. Hemm to approve the goals as written. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Hogan. The motion was withdrawn for further discussion.

The School Committee reviewed and made minor changes to the Professional Practice Goal, added language to the Student Learning Goal and Key Actions.

A motion was made by Ms. Capello to approve the Superintendent Evaluation Goals. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Hemm. The motion passed 5-0.

### Citizen's Comments

Mr. Clancy commented that it was hard to understand the direction of the district. We should be able to understand the direction of the coming year and where the goals are measurable.

Ms. Capello said the document has changed.

Mr. Hemm said we are tied to the district vision. We are learning through MASC that there needs to be more strategic planning. We have more work to do in the process.

There are some benchmarks throughout.

Ms. Hogan: This is our plan for going forward. We would like to see multi-year goals broke down with a better understanding of what the District will look at in 3 or 4 years. The summer evaluation will have a better way to see what to future looks like.

Ms. Clark asked about the Sub-Committee Reports.

Ms. Capello said that some of the budget and negotiations are not public yet.

Ms. Thayer asked about the sub-committee meetings being posted.

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The meeting was adjourned by roll call vote to enter into Executive Session at 10:15 p.m. without the intent to return to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Moore  
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools