

MHS BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

Superintendent Manuel reported that Harvey Construction will be the general contractor for the new school and the mechanical bid came back significantly lower the second time. Dr. Manuel will be meeting with the Department of Education on April 3rd to go over the final budget. We are still scheduled to go out to bond in May for the full \$75 million. We have established a color/design committee and have some staff going to Boston this week to a furniture show. The percent for art committee which is funded by the state that allows us to have different forms of art throughout the building will be starting soon. Harvey Construction will be moving into their trailer on April 1st and will begin pouring concrete shortly afterwards.

CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT AND INSTRUCTION UPDATE

Assistant Superintendent Katie Joseph provided the Board with an update on the plans for the Title I, Title II and Title IV funding for next year. In speaking to a representation from the Department of Education, Ms. Joseph was told that Maine's funding would come in flat or slightly lower next year. Principal Sandra Gorsuch-Plummer and Ms. Joseph are planning for a 5% decrease; however, Ms. Joseph hopes to have more information next month.

Ms. Joseph reported that the administrative team has been looking at how to increase student attendance numbers in each of our buildings. A parent reached out to Ms. Joseph who had contact with a consultant from Count ME In! that works with schools to increase attendance and promote creative ways to get students to school. Fisher-Mitchell and Woolwich Central School will be piloting this program with Susan Lieberman next year. The cost for both schools will be minimal but the benefits will be great. The program requires that we share data in advance and participate in some staff surveys. Student attendance will be a school goal for the principals at these schools next year.

PROPOSED 2019-2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Assistant Superintendent Joseph stated that we are allowed 5 dissimilar days between RSU 1 and the sending schools that have students attend BRCTC. Right now we have 4 dissimilar days in the calendar which meets that requirement. School will be starting after Labor Day next year and we will continue to have a professional development day in November during election week because we have schools that are voting sites. The calendar has been reviewed and approved by the SEA and administrators as well.

MOTION: Perkins

SECOND: Ensel

VOTE: Board (6-0)
Students (2-0)

TO: Approve the 2019-2020 school calendar as presented.

LATER START TIME ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Assistant Superintendent Joseph reviewed the proposal for the Later Start Time Advisory Committee. The committee will be co-facilitated by Ms. Joseph and Vice Chairperson Lou Ensel. The idea to form the committee came from parents in the community. The committee would conduct a lot of the research for the Board and provide a presentation along with a write up of the findings for possible Board action. The committee includes members of the Board, administrators, teaching staff, community members and a Morse student. The first meeting will take place on April 23rd. Ms. Joseph is preparing articles the members will read in advance of the meeting. All the meetings will be public if anyone is interested in attending. Vice Chairperson Ensel stated the committee will have an opportunity to look at all the information available, different scenarios and options. Ms. Joseph reported that Athletic Director Nate Priest and physical education teacher Charlie Bingham will also be a part of the committee to talk about the athletic piece of this topic.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chairperson August reported that the Finance Committee met three times this month that included two presentations from the administrators to review the details of the individual cost centers. The committee also had a follow up meeting to review the Superintendent's recommendations and discuss some possible modifications. Superintendent Manuel will present the proposed budget and his recommendations later in the meeting. Mr. August reminded the Board and the community that there will be a public forum on the budget on April 1st at 6:00 at Bath Middle School. This will be the first opportunity that the Board and the public will have to talk about the budget. Members of the public were encouraged to attend. Mr. August reviewed the schedule of the upcoming meetings to discuss the budget. The Finance Committee met with Financial Advisor Dick Ranaghan to discuss the bonding of the Morse/BRCTC school project and he came back with a proposal and a couple of recommendations. 1. We do a negotiated sale of the bonds as opposed to a competitive sale. This costs a little more but the advantage is that we can control the specifics on refunding. 2. Begin interest payments on the bond as soon as possible as this saves us some money over time. The Finance Committee agreed with both of the recommendations.

FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Board member Perkins reported that the committee paid a visit to Fisher-Mitchell School to look at the facility and the utilization of space. Facilities Director David Richards and Principal Ross Berkowitz led the walking tour of the building and found that the school is not ideal but the leadership and the staff there has done an excellent job in utilizing the space that they have in a very constructive way. Mr. Richards suggested that we begin to form a committee to start talking about the Bath elementary schools, see what we have, and what we might need so that we would be prepared to move forward.

Mr. Perkins stated that there has been a request to move forward to use capital improvement funds to do some major work in some of our schools.

- Dike-Newell School needs to replace heating pipes and conduct some conversion of the heating system - \$129,000.
- Bath Middle School is slated to move to gas but will require funding to convert from oil to gas system - \$88,000.
- Phippsburg School needs an overhaul of the gymnasium floor which is starting to deteriorate. The current floor was put in over an asbestos floor so the cost will also need to include asbestos abatement - \$53,000.

The Facilities Committee is recommending to the Board that we spend \$275,000 from the existing capital improvement funds which will leave us \$75,000 from existing fund and will be appropriating each year an additional \$50,000 to go into the fund. We would end up with \$125,000 in the account which would be enough to meet any contingency which may occur over the next school year and make improvements without affecting the overall budget.

STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Hayden Platteter reported that the unified basketball team ended their season very strongly and continues to bring a lot of pride to the Morse High School community. Spring sports season has begun and teams are busy practicing after school.

Student Representative Sydney Hollingsworth reported that a few students attended the Maine State Science Fair recently and Morse just held their winter sports awards night. Students are excited to begin the spring sports season.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Manuel reported on the following:

- BRCTC had 18 students attend the SkillsUSA competition which is the most we have had attend in many years. Dr. Manuel recognized the students and the awards they received.
- RSU 1 had all three of the Bath Middle School Odyssey of the Mind teams and one Fisher-Mitchell team take first place in the regional competition. Next is the state competition which takes place on Saturday, April 6th at Biddeford High School.
- Staff member Lawrence Kovacs was recognized by the Bicycle Coalition of Maine and Maine Recreation and Parks Association for his work promoting cycling in the RSU and the community. The pump track at Bath Middle School was also recognized as a Project of note by the Maine Recreation and Parks Association.
- The Battle of the Books took place at Woolwich Central School last week. It was a very well attended, fun and exciting academic competition.
- Congratulations to Morse swimmers Hailey and Olivia Harper for receiving all-state recognition in the Portland Press Herald over the weekend.

FINANCE REPORT

Business Manager Debra Clark provided the Board with the Financial Report for the month ending February 28, 2019. To date, the district has spent close \$18 million which is about 59% of the budget. There is \$9.5 million encumbered for salary and benefits. Mrs. Clark received notification from the state on our final MaineCare seed reduction from our subsidy. The reduction of \$38,000 will be the last one this year which brings the annual total to \$177,490. The district has received \$20 million in revenue and we expect to have a positive balance at the end of the year that is similar to the one we had this year.

REVIEW OF 2018-2019 BOARD GOALS

Chairperson August reported that the Board is doing well in meeting our goals. Superintendent Manuel is working on a presentation to address goal #4 which is a review and update on the Schedule B positions for the April meeting.

SECONDARY READING OF POLICY JC - TRANSGENDER AND GENDER EXPANSIVE STUDENTS GUIDELINES

MOTION: Ensel

SECOND: Fuller

VOTE: Board (6-0)
Students (2-0)

TO: Approve the second reading of Policy JC – Transgender and Gender Expansive Students Guidelines as written.

SECOND READING OF POLICY JJIA - EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION REGULATION

MOTION: Walton

SECOND: Perkins

VOTE: Board (6-0)
Students (2-0)

TO: Approve the second reading of Policy JJIA – Extra-Curricular Activity Participation Regulation as written.

NEW MUSIC COURSE PROPOSAL FROM MORSE HIGH SCHOOL

Morse teacher Sandra Foreman was present to review the proposal for a new music course at Morse. Ms. Foreman reported that students have asked about doing a musical each year. In researching other districts, Ms. Foreman found that many schools have a musical theater performance semester class. Ms. Foreman share the process involved in choosing musical and what the course would involve. Morse Principal Eric Varney stated that this would be added to our electives opportunities without adding staff.

MOTION: Perkins

SECOND: Ensel

VOTE: Board (6-0)
Students (2-0)

TO: Approve the proposal to add a Musical Theater course to the Morse curriculum.

PERSONNEL ITEMS

Superintendent Manuel announced the resignation of Callie Wells, 1st grade teacher at Phippsburg School and the retirement of Betsy Lane, Administrative Assistant at Woolwich Central School.

FIRST READING OF FY 2019 BUDGET

Superintendent Manuel thanked Lorna Ryan and Ben Chubbuck for attending the Finance Committee meetings this month. Dr. Manuel reported that the budget was put together while looking through three different lenses: 1. Level services, 2. Changing demands, and 3. Our strategic district educational plan. Superintendent Manuel reminded the Board that the district received \$636,000 more in state subsidy than we did last year. The interest payment of \$243,000 for the new school is also included in the budget.

Other additions include:

- Additional 2 days for ESL teacher
- Outdoor classroom position at Phippsburg School – 1 day
- Enhancing Morse music program
- Special Education Ed tech at Dike-Newell and Bath Middle School
- Additional funds for substitute teachers
- Communications/Public Relations position - part-time position
- Literacy materials for K-5 reading curriculum

The local overall contribution increase would be 2% which breaks down per town as follows:

- Arrowsic – (-10.3%)
- Bath – 2.54%
- Phippsburg – (-.03%)
- Woolwich – 3.7%

In looking at the student population over the last several years Woolwich is the only community that is growing which plays a factor in the increase.

Chairperson August stated that the total increase to the budget is 12% but that includes debt service as well as the local share. Debt service represents \$1.3 million of the budget.

DISCUSSION OF MERGING WITH MERRYMEETING ADULT EDUCATION

MOTION: Ensel

SECOND: Perkins

VOTE: Board (6-0)
Students (2-0)

