

MEDFIELD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

High School Library - 7:30 p.m.

Monday, September 17, 2018

PRESENT: Anna Mae O'Shea Brooke -Chairperson
Jessica Reilly - Vice Chairperson, Legislative Liaison
Christopher Morrison - Recording Secretary
Timothy Bonfatti - School Committee Representative
Madison Reddy - High School Student Representative
Jeffrey Marsden -Superintendent
Francine Kelly -Secretary

ABSENT: Leo Brehm - Financial Secretary

Executive Session – To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the MTA, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.

Ms. O'Shea Brooke informed the School Committee and those in attendance that for the sake of public participation and input, the agenda will be rearranged to accommodate those in attendance that may want to speak publicly to the School Committee with regard to some of the agenda items..

Public Input - Ms. Chris McCue Potts of 7 Curve Street Medfield voiced her opinions and concerns with the Homework Policy 2.0 revision. Ms. McCue Potts said she liked the protection of school vacations and school holidays from homework being assigned to students, the wording sentiments and intention of what homework is intended for, and the homework amount/times guidelines for the typical student. Ms. McCue Potts reviewed her concerns which included what role the School Committee has in establishing the Homework Policy, the process of how we should follow the Homework Policy and changes made on the Homework Policy draft that was presented to the School Committee over the summer vs. the Homework Policy 2.0 draft being presented. She went on to say the SEL Task Force put a lot of time and effort into the Homework Policy draft that was presented to the School Committee at the June 4th meeting and is concerned that over the summer, another Homework Policy Sub Committee came back with another draft different from the one the SEL Task Force presented. Ms. McCue Potts suggested that volunteers in any district are hard to find and when people do volunteer and work very hard in groups or committees, their suggestions, voices and views be heard and not passed over. Ms. McCue Potts went on to say that she feels an effective policy should have strong decisive language which should not include words like meaningful, or purposeful to name a few, which

could be interpreted in many different ways as well send mixed messages. She also feels the Homework Policy should include parents having an option of communication with teachers when family dynamics may have had an role in the incompleteness of student homework when assigned. She also feels that there is some confusion with the homework expectations during state assessments and should have stronger language with regard to teacher accountability and respecting of the Homework Policy further noting that the School Committee holds the role of making policies for the school district not the teachers.

- Homework Policy (Second Reading) - Ms. O'Shea Brooke welcomed Mr. Tim Knight and Ms. Karyn Healey, part of the SEL Task Force Homework Policy Committee to speak on the original Homework Policy Draft. Mr. Knight reviewed the participants in the SEL Task Force Homework Policy Committee, the process to identify and look at drafting a new homework policy, and the positives and negatives of the current homework policy. He continued saying the SEL Task Force Homework Policy Committee outlined a list of some of the problems within our district regarding homework expectations, researched what other schools have for homework policies, as well as sending out formal and informal surveys to parents, students, and teachers. Mr. Knight said that many hours were spent reviewing this information with the SEL Task Force concluding there were many inconsistencies of expectations from teachers, students and parents. Ms. Healey stated that teachers were excited at the idea of a new Homework Policy and it was determined that the focus of students well being, fostering a clear balance between students, families and curriculum demands while maintaining some individual students unique needs should be the forefront of a new Homework Policy. Superintendent Marsden asked Mr. Knight and Ms. Healey if they could summarize the difference between the two drafts written with Mr. Knight saying in his view, the draft version of the Homework Policy updated this summer by the Homework Research and Development Committee, captured the evolution and spirit of what the SEL Task Force was committed to and put forth in the original draft. Mr. Vaughn, Principal of Blake Middle School, spoke briefly of his participation in the Homework Research and Development Committee. Mr. Vaughn noted the committee spent a lot of time discussing just what their intent should be used for with everyone mutually agreeing that their work was not to shift all the hard work the SEL Task Force did in creating the draft, but to collaborate with them to set forth a process with realistic homework time frames and grade level expectations, while still maintaining and understanding students individual needs. Mr. Vaughn went on to say that the group he worked with this summer was one of the best collaborations he has been a part of as an educator. Mr. Vaughn suggested he feels this is a step in the right direction and will need ongoing conversation but this process is a great start. There was a short conversation around the SEL Task Force and Research and Development concerns with the Homework

Policy highlighting weekends, homework at different grade levels, and number of minutes spent on homework.

Ms. Katie Feldman of 5 Causeway Lane, Ms. Meredith Chamberland of 10 Pleasant Street and Ms. Deborah Lutz of 22 Hawthorne Road each spoke briefly on their perspectives of a homework policy with guidance and structure for both the teachers and students. Ms. Donna Olson, Principal Ralph Wheelock School, spoke briefly of her role on the SEL Homework Policy Committee sharing her perspective on equity vs. equality of homework between classrooms, grades, and individual students. Superintendent Marsden reinforced the hard work of both committees saying they have put in many hours with the development of this updated Homework Policy which now gives us a framework to use going forward. Mr. Morrison thanked both committees for their efforts noting his appreciation of the SEL Task Force undertaking the Homework Policy as one of their first efforts. Further Mr. Morrison said he appreciates the organic type of policy written suggesting that he would not have felt comfortable endorsing a policy that included rigid language or standards. There was a brief conversation on how this policy will be rolled out to the teachers and community.

Ms. O'Shea Brooke asked that before taking a vote, for clarification on what is considered end of "teacher school day." Superintendent Marsden clarified it to be the end of the "teacher contract day." Mr. Morrison made a motion to approve and adopt the Homework Policy 2.0, second by Ms. Reilly. **The vote was unanimous.**

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. O'Shea Brooke asked for a motion to approve the June 4, 2018 minutes and September 4, 2018 minutes; first by Mr. Morrison, second by Ms. Reilly. **The vote was unanimous.**

New Business:

- Mary Bruhl - Director of Student Services - Superintendent Marsden introduced Mary Bruhl to the School Committee saying that since Mary has come on board July 1st, she has hit the ground running and doing a great job. Ms. Bruhl thanked the School Committee for having her speak saying she is very excited to have the opportunity to work in Medfield. Ms. Bruhl talked about the many conversations she has had with staff, parents, and administrators sharing their concerns, prioritizing needs while hoping to stay true to the passion and the great things people are doing. Ms. Bruhl reviewed some of the objectives she worked on over the summer which included working closely with SEPAC. Ms. Bruhl stated her door is open for any conversations and/or suggestions in

helping the Student Services Department transition and continue moving the department forward. Mr. Morrison welcomed Ms. Bruhl. Superintendent Marsden suggested that there will be a comprehensive entry plan put together and Ms. Bruel should have it done by January.

- Superintendent Appointment to ACCEPT and TEC Board of Directors - Superintendent Marsden informed the School Committee a vote is needed to appoint him as the school representative to the TEC Board of Directors and Accept Board of Directors for the 2018-2019 school year. There was a brief explanation from Superintendent Marsden on how each board operates, the many benefits it brings to the Medfield Schools by being part of this educational collaborative, noting that Medfield has been a member for many years. Mr. Morrison made a motion to appoint Superintendent Marsden as a Board Member second by Ms. Reilly. **The vote was unanimous.**
- Superintendent Evaluation - Ms. O'Shea Brooke read the School Committee's summary of Superintendent Marsden's evaluation. She noted that the performance ratings for all four of Dr. Marsden's standards were a combination of proficient and exemplary. His strongest overall rating was in Standard II with the majority of the School Committee giving him an exemplary rating. Ms. O'Shea Brooke also highlighted the responsibilities that extend beyond the school department. He works collaborating with the Town Administrator, Police and Fire Chiefs, DPW, Park and Rec. Directors. In addition, he serves on the Board of Directors for both the TEC and ACCEPT Collaborative's, is Co-President of the Tri County Superintendents Roundtable, member of the MCAP and MCSP, and a committee member for the MIAA. Ms O'Shea Brooke closed with saying the School Committee is proud and grateful of Dr. Marsden's commitment to our schools and have full confidence that he is invested in the success and well-being of all our children and staff. The spirit of all five School Committee members reflect satisfaction and confidence in the work Dr. Marsden has done and continues to do. Mr. Morrison made a motion to accept Superintendents Marsden's evaluation as written, second by Ms. Reilly. **The vote was unanimous.** Superintendent Marsden thanked the School Committee for his evaluation and feedback saying how proud he is to be working with wonderful groups of people not only within the Medfield School system but the Town Municipal employees and staff as well as so many of the folks within the community that volunteer and are invested in our students and their education. Superintendent Marsden said Medfield is a special place to work and is proud to be part of a community with such strong commitment to our schools. Mr. Morrison voiced his concern that of all the Public Officials that hold office, the Superintendent of Schools is the only position that is subject to this type of public review and feels it is an unfair process for the Superintendent of Schools to have such a public leadership evaluation. Mr. Bonfatti gave his reflections of Superintendents in years past saying that Superintendent Marsden has transitioned into this community with exemplary leadership. Mr. Bonfatti said

although he will not be a voice on the School Committee moving forward, it is his hope that the School Committee and community continue to recognize Superintendent Marsden's value and strive in having him continue here as priority for our district.

- School Committee office hours - Ms. O'Shea Brooke reviewed the School Committee 2018-2019 office hours noting the location of the office hours and dates will be posted on our website.
- Subcommittee Appointments - Ms. O'Shea Brooke read the following names for Subcommittee Appointments
 - Jessica Reilly - Policy
 - Leo Brehm - Collective Bargaining Negotiations
 - Christopher Morrison - Budget
- Other items since posting on September 13, 2018 - Ms. O'Shea Brooke stated that because of Mr. Bonfatti's expected departure, the protocol according to the Town Charter states that once the resignation letter is received by the School Committee Chair, Board of Selectmen, and Town Clerk, this vacancy must be filled within 30 days. Ms. O'Shea Brooke went on to say that because there is not an election until springtime, the School Committee and Board of Selectmen will appoint the new School Committee member. The new School Committee member will serve on the School Committee until the next election of which at that time, this person will have to formally run for the seat. Ms. O'Shea Brooke noted that all letters of interest should be emailed to the School Committee Chairperson (email on website) no later than October 12. Included in your letter of interest please include why you would like to be on the School Committee and how you feel you are qualified. Ms. O'Shea Brooke said a Special Joint Meeting will be held on October 16 between the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee which at that time, a new School Committee member will be appointed. Ms. O'Shea Brooke noted that all the information will be posted on the website and will be made to parents via email once the new member has been appointed. Mr. Bonfatti thanked everyone on the School Committee speaking briefly of his tenor and how he came to be a member. He spoke of the collaborative nature on how Medfield works with his hope that it continues in the same tradition moving forward. Superintendent Marsden and the School Committee said a few words thanking Mr. Bonfatti for being part of the School Committee for so many years.

Old Business:

- Homework Policy (second reading) - See above
- School Committee Meeting guidelines - Ms. Reilly reviewed the structure of the School Committee meeting guidelines noting the information will be laminated and available for anyone who wishes to have a copy. Mr. Morrison thanked Ms. Reilly for putting this document together saying it is a helpful guideline for those wanting to attend School Committee meetings.
- Donations - NONE

Superintendent's Report to the Committee:

- Meeting with the MSBA - update - Superintendent Marsden reviewed the latest meeting with the MSBA saying the MSBA, with the review of Medfield's enrollment projections, are recommending that Medfield will need a bigger school than what was proposed in the S.O.I. Superintendent Marsden reviewed the projected enrollment figures and the methodology the MSBA uses for calculating their projections in the building of a larger school. There was much conversation on the growing population of Medfield with Superintendent Marsden saying there will be a lot of planning, options, creative ideas, and strategizing of needs that will be presented when the project gets underway. Mr. Bonfatti suggested the importance of Public Meetings as this project moves forward to ensure open discussions and communication with the Dale Street project.
- Informational Items - NONE

School Committee Comments:

Ms. O'Shea Brooke read the Future Agenda Items then asking for any comments from the School Committee. Maddy Reddy, Student Representative, briefed the School Committee about Spirit Week being held at Medfield High School as well as the High School Dance being held on Friday. Maddy also talked about the vote that will be held on Thursday to add more students to the Student Council. Maddy talked briefly of some of her teachers changing their options of timing to get homework done since the new Homework Policy as been drafted. Peter Barrett, Student Representative, commented on his view of Medfield Students going from grade to grade with their peers rather than splitting up grades according to the family residence feeling a sense of comradery with his peers. Mr. Morrison expressed his appreciation for entertaining some policy changes with the Athletic Program.

Adjournment:

Mr. Morrison made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Ms. Reilly. **The vote was unanimous.**

Adjournment: 9:00pm

Next Meeting: October 22, 2018

Minutes approved by the School Committee: October 22, 2018

Respectfully Submitted
Francine Kelly, Secretary

EXHIBITS AND DOCUMENTS:

- Agenda and Narrative for Monday, September 17, 2018
- Regular Minutes June 4, 2018 and September 4, 2018
- Draft of Medfield Public Schools Homework Policy 2.0
- Superintendent Evaluation Summary
- School Committee meeting guidelines

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F15u_bKufUA&list=PLypOllJHc4M3fUC59QbdX628f7ZWBfg27