

***MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT***

School Committee Meeting  
Professional Development Center – Nipmuc Regional High School  
Monday, August 26, 2019

Committee Present:

Diane Duncan, Leigh Martin, Dorothy Scally, Sean Nicholson, Vikki Ludwigson, Phil DeZutter

Administration Present:

Joseph Maruszczak, Superintendent of Schools  
Maureen Cohen, Assistant Superintendent  
Jay Byer, Business/Finance  
Dennis Todd, Director of Student Support Services  
Joe Leacu, Director of Technology Operations

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Sean Nicholson.  
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES**

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally, to approve the agenda.

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Approval of Open Session Minutes of June 17, 2019

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally, to approve the Open Session June 17, 2019

VOTED: Unanimously approved

**II. STUDENT'S COMMENTS – NA**

**III. COMMUNITY'S COMMENTS –**

Representative from CPAC introduced herself and stated this group will be trying to attend the School Committee meetings

**IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS**

*MURSD School Choice Openings, 2019-20 School Year*

Dr. Maruszczak announced there were no changes to the openings reported on June 3 except for one opening at Clough grade 1; and one opening in Grade 5 at Miscoe. Thus the openings are:

Clough ES

K: 4

K SI: 0

5: 1

No other openings

Memorial ES

No other openings

Miscoe Hill MS

5: 1

Nipmuc Regional HS

9: 5

10: 1

11: 1

12: 0

*DESE Project Kaleidoscope Pilot*

Dr. Maruszczak informed the School Committee about the Project Kaleidoscope from Jeffrey Riley, DESE Commissioner. This fall there will be an opportunity for school districts participate in the program. The goals of the program consist of the following:

- Create a research and development (R&D) hub of educators, schools, and districts focused on incubating and assessing innovative approaches to deeper learning, including standards-aligned instruction and assessment
- Form a highly engaged network of practitioners, through which holistic support (wraparound) and enrichment efforts and evidence-based practices can be identified and shared
- Model a new approach for how DESE can partner with the field to support adoption of promising practices, especially those shown to close achievement gaps, while respecting and learning from each community's context

MURSD filed a letter of intent for more information to learn more about the pilot and looking to apply to be part of it.

*Safer Schools & Communities Grant Award*

Dr. Maruszczak informed the School Committee of the grant for \$28,760 to upgrade security camera system at Miscoe. The funds came from surplus funds of the State's FY2018 budget. It is a major upgrade. There are now over 50 cameras around Miscoe (there was only 9) with new monitors in the office. Thanks to Jay Byer and the school resource officer for pursuing this grant.

*Final FY2020 State Budget*

Dr. Maruszczak updated the School Committee on the FY2020 budget. There is a shortfall of \$282,000. The final cherry sheet was given to members. The State budget included the bare minimal of \$30 per student for increase of \$66,030. Regional transportation was finalized at 80% reimbursement for an increase of \$26,510 more than FY19. This is \$50,755 more than the budgeted amount.

**V. ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS**

*Technology Updates, Implementation of PowerSchool and Apptegy - Joseph Leacu, Director of Technology Operations*

Joe Leacu updated the School Committee on a very busy summer for the IT department:

- New student management software of PowerSchool. Expanded parent portal.
- Program is used locally by other school districts
- Existing iPass was showing its age and updates were difficult
- Concluded on PowerSchool and signed contract in March.
- Program is ready for Day 1.
- During PD, teachers were trained on the product with 2 trainers from the company.

- Most of the data moved from iPass to PowerSchool in mid-July. Current schedule is on the program
- Need finalization on the Parent portals section of program. Should be done early next week
- Staff has embraced the product and happy to be working with new program.
- Joe thanked Bernie Curtis for her hard work in getting the product ready.

New website: Apptegy

- No longer using Blackboard for website and email notification
- Host website and call notification on one platform as oppose to having to go to different options (email, Twitter, and calls)
- Research as shown many parents access on a mobile device so website designed for mobile devices.
- MURSD has an app where you can sign up for notifications
- Another tool to effectively communicate with parents.

*FY2019 MURSD Budget Closeout – Jay Byer, Director of Finance & Operations*

Jay Byer discussed the FY2019 Budget closeout:

Budget closeout:

- \$100,000 balance which is well below the \$350,000 the district likes to end the fiscal year with.
- Districts continues to hit one-time accounts to keep district solvent
- There are no revenues to help with the increase in expenditures such as \$700k increase in salaries
- E&D will be about \$300,000 not the usual \$500,000
- School Choice balance is dwindling
- New budget will need to be voted at next meeting due to increase of State aid.
- Jay discussed capital issues: the water system at Clough will cost about \$30k and more work is needed; boiler at Miscoe was a factor if FY19 budget. He is hopeful building maintenance expenses will decrease in FY20.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

*MURSD Education Services Analysis Presentation – Dr. Michael Neiman & Dr. Michael Palladino, Futures Education*

Highlights of the presentation on the Education Services Analysis included:

- Acknowledged partnership from the district and thanked everyone for their efforts
- Three main areas: Related Services; Certified and Non-Certified teachers, central office personnel were analyzed
- Methodology included 50 interviews with stakeholders; non-evaluative site visits; comparative analyses and document reviews
- Findings – Related Services: Providers understand and are working within an educational model; some challenges but health ‘culture of celebration’ when students are ready to exit; younger students are receiving the majority of service minutes; Providers are effective and valued team members; need for exit and entry guidelines for speech language services to be more systematic; MURSD is very lightly staffed in psychology and lightly staffed in behavioral health and highly staffed in PT; S-LP and OT are staffed to expectations
- Areas of Opportunities – Related Services: Create systematic, district side entry and exit criteria; Encouraged to assign a lead staff member to provide oversight and support of RSPs; Consider enacting a variation of American Special Language Hearing Association’s 3:1 model; Explore a community health care entity rent space in facility to allow access to mental health provider who can support the

mediation component of students' care and ensure wraparound community based mental health supports

- Findings- Certified and Non-Certified Teachers: respondents indicated the district provided staff with sufficient supplies, materials and technologies; PD opportunities for certified staff is good however para-professionals state there are limited PD offerings; two categories of para-professionals in district and titles might be misleading; 8:1 ratio of para-professionals
- Areas of Opportunities – Certified and Non-Certified Teachers: Adding quantitative parameters for eligibility for para-professionals; review para-professional allocation for specialized programs; change “ABA” title to another title such as “Learning Support Personnel” for more flexibility; continue to provide para-professionals with training; Allow para-professionals from each school to provide input for professional development
- Area of Opportunities – Central Office Staff- Requisite time for Director to oversee higher level of services; Out of district responsibilities to Team Chairs; Institute rotating office hours at each school for the director.
- For a summary of the report, the area of opportunities was prioritized. In closing, good school district for special education and the district is doing a very good job.
- Comments: clarification of the ratio of 8:1 para-professionals and the practice patterns of the districts; other tools are available to assist the district versus using ‘ABA’ model; Low Behavioral Health ratio as compared to other schools in Massachusetts

## VII. OLD BUSINESS

### *Proposed Schedule of 2019-20 MURSD Budget Subcommittee Meetings*

Dr. Maruszczak proposed the following dates for Budget Subcommittee meetings:

<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Tues, 9/17, 7:00 pm	Nipmuc PDC	Special Education
Tues, 10/8, 7:00 pm	Clough Cafetorium	Transportation
Tues, 10/29, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Auditorium	Athletics
Thurs, 11/21, 7:00 pm	Memorial Library	Technology
Tues, 12/10, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Teachers Room	Facilities/ B & G
Tues, 1/7, 7:00 pm	Clough Library	Elementary Programs
Weds, 1/29, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Teachers Room	MS Programs
Wed, 2/12, 7:00 pm	Nipmuc PDC	HS Programs

It was discussed to start these meetings in the fall to discuss the pressing needs of the district. Each meeting will address a particular topic. There are many Tuesday nights meetings in different locations to invite the various stakeholders. These dates need to be communicated with the community so it is understood what is needed to fund the district.

## VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

- Request to Commence Successor Contract Negotiations with Teacher Association – early in the school year but advantageous to begin the process early due to budget considerations.

### Approval of Letter to Commence Negotiations with Teacher Association

MOTION: On a motion of Phil DeZutter, seconded by Dorothy Scally, to approve the Letter to Commence Negotiations with Teacher Association.

VOTED: Unanimously approved

## IX. Other Matters Not Anticipated by The Committee Within 48 Hours of The Posted Meeting

**X. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Approval of 2019-20 District Actions Plans – September 9
- Superintendent’s Annual Evaluation – October 7

**XI. ROLL CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

MOTION: On motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally to go into executive session and not return to open session per MGL Ch. 30A, §21(a), under exemption #1.

VOTED:

Phil DeZutter, yes  
Sean Nicholson, yes  
Dorothy Scally, yes  
Leigh Martin, yes  
Kerry Laurence, yes  
Vikki Ludwigson, yes

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.  
Minutes by Kelly McElreath