

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting
Superintendent's Conference Room, Miscoe Hill
Monday, September 9, 2019

Committee Present:

Leigh Martin, Dorothy Scally, Sean Nicholson, Vikki Ludwigson, Kerry Laurence

Not Present: Phil DeZutter

Administration Present:

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Sean Nicholson.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Approval of Agenda

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

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Approval of Open Session Minutes of August 26, 2019

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally, to approve the Open Session August 26, 2019

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Approval of Executive Session Minutes of August 26, 2019

MOTION: On a motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Kerry Laurence, to approve the Executive Session August 26, 2019

VOTED: Unanimously approved

II. STUDENT'S COMMENTS – NA

III. COMMUNITY'S COMMENTS – NA

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Initial District Enrollment for 2019-20

Dr. Maruszczak informed the School Committee the enrollment for school year. The number is subject to change and the official number will be determined on October 1. Last Friday, there were 2,304 total students with 33 out of district students. Dr. Maruszczak noted the budget accounted for 2300 students. This represent a loss of 29 fewer students from Oct 1 last year which is less than 1%. The losses occurred at Miscoe and Nipmuc. There are 162 students at Miscoe when in the past more than 200 and at Nipmuc there are 149 students at Nipmuc with 160 graduated. The percentage for each town is 55% by 45% Upton to Mendon respectively. There are 10

fewer kids choosing in (by design) due to diminishing returns. Dr. Maruszczak also noted the average class size is reasonable and noted 4th grade is at 25 students per class; Miscoe have reasonable homerooms; and Nipmuc has fairly reasonable class size.

PowerSchool Implementation Update

Dr. Maruszczak noted there have been issues with some data transfer. The current data is up to date except for some holds situation for contact information. The district is manually going through the 2304 student records to review contact information to ensure accuracy. This contact information needs to be up to date for the mass contact to work effectively. Also, some there are some outstanding issues with historical data on courses taken especially at Nipmuc. The district is working on correcting this and in the meantime iPass is still running.

Proposed Charter School in Milford

Dr. Maruszczak discussed the proposed Charter School in Milford with the School Committee and the impact it could have on the MURSD's budget. The K-8 Charter School would open in fall of 2020 with 210 students if approved. There are nine communities involved. Dr. Maruszczak noted at this point, the district has only 7 students attending Charter School for a total cost of \$106k. As with regional transportation reimbursement, charter school reimbursement from the State is not what is promised. History shows reimbursement is less than 2/3 of what was promised. Due to the lack of reimbursement, MURSD cost is \$92k for the 7 students going to area charter schools.

Thus, there is a potential hit to MURSD's budget where 270 students are chosen from a blind lottery over 2 years. If 50 students from district were selected, MURSD's cost would be \$680k. If 20 were selected, the cost would be \$272k.

Leading Edge Charter School's executive summary states average class size of 15 students with 'authentic learning opportunities.' Superintendent colleagues believe there is very little innovation in the application. The proposed school approaches are common practices in practice in MURSD classrooms. DESE Commissioner Jeff Riley has agreed to meet with all nine communities on September 26 where objections to Leading Edge will be discussed. All schools affected are currently school choice districts. If Leading Edge is selected, the final application is due October 16. Public hearings in Milford during the month on November and MURSD School Committee should be prepared to make a public statement opposing the charter school.

Comments included: Reason why the school was proposed? - Justification would be class size of 15 with personalized teaching. MURSD class sizes average 22 – 25 students. This could be an additional burden to the district for funding purposes. No location has been determined. More information as the application progresses this month.

We Care Miscoe – An Update: Diane Duncan

Dr. Maruszczak commented there have been over 125 volunteers working 750 hours to help beautify Miscoe. Projects included several painting projects, most notably doors to provide color scheme for grade level wings. The teacher's lounge was spruced-up and athletic lockers in the boys' and girls' locker rooms were constructed. Lastly, some of student restrooms were painted.

Diane Duncan gave an update with Lisa Loo:

- Project began 4 years with survey about what stakeholders felt about schools. Results/comments about Miscoe were not very favorable

- As a parent, Diane felt it was important to act on those comments. Environment matters and Miscoe is a 60-year-old school. There are no monies in the budget for infrastructure unless it was big ticket items such as boilers.
- Diane credits Principal Jen Mannion, Paul Marshall, Jay Byer, and Ken Choiniere for their assistance.
- Survey sent to district looking for skills for the beautification efforts. Many painters, carpenters, interior designers and others were identified.
- Meetings were held to determine which project to work on.
- Lisa Loo was recruited to help with fundraising efforts.
- For the teachers' space sprucing up, \$100 at Ikea and rest of it was donated items and sweat equity.
- Signs outside all of the doors were all faded and difficult to read. Cost was too prohibitive to replace. Volunteer took signs home and determined how to redo the signs for less than \$30 in 2 hallways. Volunteers also did the door painting.
- Staff was happy when they started the new year.
- We Care Miscoe is a subcommittee of Miscoe PTO so not a one and done. Building and grounds will be reviewed ongoing and a mission statement developed.
- Student/Teacher projects are encouraged and there are We Care grants available to propose improvements to their environment.
- Fundraisers include sale of iCare t-shirts. Flamingo flocking is ongoing now. Flocks can be purchased as well as insurance against 'flocking'. Shoe donation where \$.40 per pound of shoes is raised. In June, a Battle of the Bands fundraiser will be held.
- Great community efforts and more work to be done.
- School Committee thanked them for their efforts.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Recertification of MURSD FY2020 Budget

Dr. Maruszczak stated recertification is needed to include the \$313,873 in cuts that were made in June and the \$101,734 increase in state aid.

Motion #1 On motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Leigh Martin, to set the operational budget for the Mendon-Upton Regional School District for the 2019-2020 fiscal year at \$36,414,931, that consists of general operations within the levy limit of \$35,556,246, and debt service outside the levy limit of \$858,685.

Unanimously Approved

Motion #2 On motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Leigh Martin, to assess the Town of Mendon \$10,091,574 that consists of the following:

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|----|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Minimum Local Contribution | \$7,234,022 |
| 2. | Non-Discretionary Charges | \$739,392 |
| 3. | Discretionary Charges | \$1,702,387 |
| 4. | Long Term Debt Clough/Memorial School | \$347,104 |
| 5. | Long Term Debt Miscoe Green Repair | \$68,669 |

Unanimously Approved

Motion #3 On motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Leigh Martin, to assess the Town of Upton \$12,164,029 that consists of the following:

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|----|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Minimum Local Contribution | \$8,654,881 |
| 2. | Non-Discretionary Charges | \$928,535 |
| 3. | Discretionary Charges | \$2,137,701 |

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|----|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 4. | Long Term Debt Clough/Memorial School | \$356,096 |
| 5. | Long Term Debt Miscoe Green Repair | \$86,816 |

Unanimously Approved

Motion #4 On motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Leigh Martin, to appropriate \$13,506,678 from State Aid that consists of the following:

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|----|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Chapter 70 Funds | \$12,448,756 |
| 2. | Regional Transportation Reimbursement | \$1,145,848 |
| 3. | Charter School Tuition Reimbursement | \$14,552 |

Unanimously Approved

Motion #5 On motion of Dorothy Scally, seconded by Leigh Martin, to appropriate \$550,000 from the following School District Sources:

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|----|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Excess & Deficiency (E&D) | \$300,000 |
| 2. | Vision Sped Tuition | \$75,000 |
| 3. | Transfer In from Revolving Accounts | \$150,000 |
| 4. | Medicaid Reimbursement | \$25,000 |

Unanimously Approved

MURSD 2019-20 District Action Plan

Dr. Maruszczak presented the MURSD 2019-20 District Action Plans. Highlights included the following:

Goal #1: We will enhance communication with and outreach to our families and the community.

MURSD Strategic Objectives: Engaging the Community as Partners in Learning; Aligning Practices to the MURSD Beliefs About Learning

MURSD Strategic Initiatives: Improving School & Classroom Communication with Our Families; Sustaining and Ensuring Efficiency of District Operations; Supporting District Beliefs About Learning by Ensuring Staffing and Resources

Actions steps include website, information budget subcommittee meetings; series of short student produced information videos; engage community members without children in the schools; greater participation in Inspired Learning Days

Goal #2: We will implement effective strategies to further the social-emotional learning (SEL) of both students and staff alike.

MURSD Strategic Objective: Supporting Social-Emotional Learning

MURSD Strategic Initiatives: Providing Tiered SEL Supports and Interventions; Teaching and Modeling the SEL (CASEL) Core Competencies

Action Steps include continued participation in the exSEL network; further development of PBIS at elementary and middle schools; PD focus of educator of self-care including district wide book study on resilience; initial assessment of school-wide SEL practices; PD on leading SEL implementation; analysis of latest MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey results; relationship mapping exercises to be conducted.

Goal #3: We will further define the MURSD Portrait of a Learner competencies, using them to guide MURSD programs, professional practices, and curriculum.

MURSD Strategic Objectives: Aligning Practices to the MURSD Beliefs About Learning; Redefining and Reimagining School

MURSD Strategic Initiatives: Developing New Tools to Define and Measure Success; Implementing Maker Education, Robotics, and Emergent Technologies; Revising/Redesigning Lessons & Units with Real-World Connections and Deep Inquiry

Action steps include creation of new portrait of a learner (PoL) website; Communicate PoL with clear and vibrant visual reminders; Enhanced PoL competencies; create and pilot reflective tool; continue and expand Pol Scholars program; support and integrate the Inspired Innovation Center for 5th and 6th grade curriculum; design and implement district wide Inspired Learning Days; develop and implement district-wide Learning Adventure; commence discussion of PoL competencies for future grad requirement; pursue membership in DESE Kaleidoscope Collective for learning pilot

Goal #4: We will use structures and practices to improve Student Support Services so we may more effectively meet the diverse needs of all learners.

MURSD Strategic Objective: Aligning Practices to the MURSD Beliefs About Learning

MURSD Strategic Initiatives: Engaging All Learners in Continuous Feedback and Reflection Developing Structures and Practices that Promote Student Agency

Action steps include Implement salient recommendations as detailed in Futures staffing report; formalize roles and responsibilities for admin staff in hiring, assignment, supervision and evaluation and scheduling of all special ed staff; plan and implement current and future opportunities for additional development for all paraeducators; developed shared definition of specifically designed instructions; ensure each school has a regular RtI process; provide PD to monitor student progress and implement interventions; develop protocol to analyze impact of co-teaching.

Action plans as a foundation for individual school improvement plans. Chart 5-year progression of each of the 23 Strategic Initiatives assessing during of each and potential associated expenses; develop timetable of midpoint and end of year assessment of progress.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Updated Schedule of 2019-20 MURSD Budget Subcommittee Meetings

Dr. Maruszczak proposed an updated schedule for Budget Subcommittee meetings. One meeting needed to be changed due to a conflict.

Date & Time	Location	Topic
Tues, 9/17, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Tchr Room	Special Education
Tues, 10/8, 7:00 pm	Clough	Transportation
Tues, 10/29, 7:00 pm	Nipmuc PDC	Athletics
Thur, 11/21, 7:00 pm	Memorial	Technology
Tues, 12/10, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Tchr Room	Facilities/ B & G
Tues, 1/7, 7:00 pm	Clough	Elementary Programs
Tues, 1/29, 7:00 pm	Miscoe Tchr Room	MS Programs
Wed, 2/12, 7:00 pm	Nipmuc PDC	HS Programs

Essential Questions for All Meetings:

- What is the vision of the program/service? How does it fit with our district strategic plan?
- What are the current pressing needs for the program/service?

- What are the current and projected budget drivers?

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

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

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Approval of 2019-20 District Actions Plans – September 23
- Superintendent’s Annual Evaluation – October 7

X. ROLL CALL TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: On motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally to adjourn

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly McElreath