

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting
Professional Development Center, Nipmuc High School
Monday, September 23, 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
John Clements, Co-Principal, Nipmuc Regional High School
Mary Anne Moran, Co-Principal, Nipmuc Regional High School
Paul Marshall, Assistant Principal, Miscoe Hill Middle School

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 Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally, to approve the agenda.

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Approval of Open Session Minutes of September 9, 2019

MOTION: On a motion of Vikki Ludwigson, seconded by Kerry Laurence, to approve the Open Session minutes of September 9, 2019

VOTED: Unanimously approved

II. STUDENT'S COMMENTS – Owen Brigham

- Friday 50 guest from National Defense University attended Nipmuc to learn about American Schools; shadowed Nipmuc students and went to 2nd lunch
- Food for Thought and Lead Learners workshop. 1st one last week and this week is first food for thought event. These events are an opportunity to share ideas.
- Nipmuc Homecoming is this weekend. Spirit week this week with a pep rally on Friday. Pasta dinner on Friday night and dance on Saturday night.

III. COMMUNITY'S COMMENTS – NA

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Update -Milford Charter School Proposal

Dr. Maruszczak notified the School Committee the Commissioner of Education has decided not consider the charter school in Milford for future consideration so at this point no potential drain on resources.

MURSD Inspired Learning Days

There will be a district-wide 21st century conference on December 11 and April 15. All four buildings in the district will be included. Plans are currently underway to make connections with the communities and looking for volunteers (parents) to come assist with the Days.

Also, MUEF was awarded a grant for learning adventures. This has the same vision as Learning Days but across multiple grade levels with 24 students and 8 educators participating. There will be alignment to the 6 PoL competencies. At this point, the district is currently looking at applications requirements to participate in the program.

Jon Hansen – 2020 MAEA Middle Level Art Educator of the Year

Dr. Maruszczak notified the School Committee that Jon Hansen, Art Teacher at Miscoe Hill, has been named as 2020 MAEA Middle Level Art Educator of the Year. This is a tremendous honor from his association to be recognized. Mr. Hansen will be recognized at the State meeting in November. Dr. Maruszczak pointed out how this recognition demonstrates how good our district is with its Art program.

FBRC Bill – The Student Opportunity Act

State Legislature released this bill to address the FBRC recommendations. The bill is generally being praised and it will add 1.4 billion dollars in education over the next 7 years. The emphasis will be on low income, so MURSD will not see much additional aid from this bill. 70% funding will still need to come from the 2 community. High points of the legislation include:

- Increasing per pupil increase from \$20 to \$30 per student each fiscal year
- Within 3 years, promised full funding for Charter Schools
- Established a schedule for funding of out of district transportation for special ed and for full reimbursement by 2024
- Facilities issues would benefit due to lifting the cap from MSBA from \$600M to \$750M thus enabling more projects

There is hope to have this in effect by October and funding ready for FY2021. However, the bill does not address regional school transportation funding or rural schools.

V. ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

Curriculum/Professional Development Update- Dr. Maureen Cohen, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Cohen presented updates for Curriculum, Professional Development and Mentoring:

Dr. Cohen with Curriculum, PD and mentoring update

- Dr. Cohen thanked PD committee and stated newer members are participating
- On Aug 26, theme was Empowering all Learners to thrive: emphasis on staff wellness balanced with PowerSchool training.
- There were positive reviews of the PD day
- Feedback on creating conditions where our learners thrive: empathy, connect, listen, encourage, support were the most words used
- Teachers received a folder to keep their notes they receive throughout the year. It also included notes for teachers to use. Also included a rock stating 'inspire'

- Planning for the Oct 11 PD day- this will be teacher lead PD. Includes many requests from the teachers looking for specific training.
- District has many participants in the exSEL Network. Only 10 can attend but teachers are sharing the information.
- Book studies include Mindfulness for Teachers, Project Based Teaching, Mindful by Design. Onward is a yearlong book study for all teachers.
- Mentoring for new teachers – each new teacher is assigned a new teacher. Workshops are planned to help them adjust in year 1. Year 2, 3 PD learning days and cross district classroom observations including Ashland, Milford and MURSD. Year 3 include 2 cross district classrooms with Milford and MURSD with book studies.
- Curriculum reviews- 2018-2019 Heath/PE/Wellness and Social Studies were reviewed; For 2019-2020 the focus will be ELA, Special Ed Reading and Art; Piloting resources for Social Studies and Reading Wonders 2020 for Grades 1 and 3. New course for Grade 8 Civics.

VI. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Budget Subcommittee

The first meeting was held on 9/17 with the focus on Special Education. This represents 25% of the budget. Dr. Maruszczak reviewed the presentation from Jay and Dennis on what was the major cost driver and critical needs as well as the vision of the program. It made sense for this to be the first meeting due to the significant expense. The next meeting is Tuesday Oct 8 at 7 pm for student transportation. There were many participants at the meeting including both FinCom from both Towns.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Presentation of 2019-20 Miscoe Hill and Nipmuc School Improvement Plans

Principal Jen Mannion is sick so Assistant Principal Paul Marshall presented the 2019-20 Miscoe Hill Improvement Plan. Highlights included the following:

- Continuation of work from last year's work
- At the end of last school year, an analysis on what was completed and what needs more work (red, green, yellow) was done:
 - Inspired Learning Centers opened this past summer
 - Officer Sinko, Resource Officer, was a great help to keep students safe and be proactive.
 - We Care program to help transform the facility
- For 2019-20, there are 3 Strategic Objective:
 1. Supporting Social Emotional Learning
Utilize data to improve school climate and culture by revising the code of conduct, using alternatives to exclusionary discipline and providing professional development and training to improve classroom management and support engaging.
 2. Engage the Community as Partners in Learning
Create consistent, proactive communication practices to inform and engage students, staff, administration, parents, guardians and community members.
 3. Aligning Practices to the MURSD Portrait of a Learner competencies
Revise and redesign lessons and units to include real world connections and deep inquiry. Thanking the work done at Nipmuc to continue the competencies at Miscoe.

Mr. Marshall thanked the Student Advisory Council for their assistance.

Nipmuc Co-Principals John Clements and Mary Anne Moran presented the 2019-20 Improvement Plans for Nipmuc Regional High School. Highlights follow:

- Inspire, Beliefs about Learning, Definition of Learning and Call to Action with Portrait of a Learner

- Modern Learning – Agency, inquiry and real work that matters
- Last 2 years include Food for Thought lunches, Lead Learner workshop, Lunch & Learn where students can teach teachers
- Draft of the reflective tool for Portrait of a Learner
- 21st Century Learning Conference was used as the Classroom and this year will be Inspired Learning Days
- 32 Portrait of a Learner Scholars – highlights achievements outside of the classrooms of students. These are being publicized to show what their stories.
- Student Learning and Professional Growth goals for the teachers over the last 6 years
- Meet in small groups with teachers to explore, connect and reflect.
- Thanked the teachers for their hard work in the classroom and the 21st Century Learning Conferences planning. Teachers are doing a great job getting ‘stuff’ done!
- Goals:
 - Goal 1: Learning Adventures: find one experience in every course that aligns with curriculum, captures the spirit of 21st century learning conferences and allows students to explore the MURSD Portrait of Learner; Fun, active, community, non-traditional etc.; Student Learning Model Goal- where do the teachers see adventures using the students’ creativity; Freshman will assist and create their own adventures moving forward
 - Goal 2: Supporting All Students to include participating in exSEL network and sharing best practices, focus on self
 - Goal 3: Aligning our practices to our Beliefs to include lunch and learns, supporting departments priorities, norm setting, school counseling curriculum, collaborative learning opportunities, pilot internships, legacy
 - Increased Communication with social media to get information out of the happenings @NipmucRegional on all social media platforms and newsletters every 2 weeks

Approval of Nipmuc Field Trip- France, April 2021

School Committee was given information about an educational tour to Paris and French Riviera in April of 2021. It included a tentative travel itinerary. Ms. LeMaire, Nipmuc’s French teacher, is excited to offer this opportunity to her students in French class. The plan is also to open the trip to any student interested who will be in 10th, 11th, 12th grade next year. They are looking for early approval to keep price low. The price is \$3500 if sign up by 10/3/19

Approval of Nipmuc Field Trip- France, April 2021

MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Kerry Laurence, to approve the Nipmuc Field Trip- France, April 2021

VOTED: Unanimously approved

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

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

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Superintendent’s Annual Evaluation – October 7

XII. ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly McElreath