

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting
Virtual Meeting
Monday, April 6, 2020

Committee Present:

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

Administration Present:

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Chair Nicholson read the following statement: *Consistent with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law MGL Ch. 30A, S. 20 and Regulation 940 CMR 29.10, which allows for remote participation in certain circumstances under the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Regulations, the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee will be conducting this meeting remotely. In this particular case, all six members of the Committee are participating remotely and virtually through videoconferencing. This is consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 10, 2020, which eased the requirements of having a meeting in a physical space open to the public and having a quorum of the Committee physically present. Any and all votes will be conducted by roll-call votes. Per usual, this meeting will also be livestreamed and recorded.*

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Approval of Agenda

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

VOTED:

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

Approval of Open Session Minutes of April 6, 2020

MOTION: On a motion of Vikki Ludwigson, seconded by Kerry Laurence, to approve the Open Session April 6, 2020

VOTED:

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

II. STUDENT'S COMMENTS – Owen Brigham

Owen thanked everyone present for their efforts in assisting the students with their continued learning. He updated the School Committee with insights as a student:

- Struggling to maintain a sleep schedule
- More difficult on zoom but easier when notes are taken and reviewed;
- different for students to be learning this way and does assist with classroom discussion especially for students who don't like to make presentations
- Teachers have been incredibly helpful answering emails quickly especially for AP classes; trying new strategies
- Discussed some apps that are being used
- Seniors are missing their activities and everyone is thinking of them

III. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

Overview of MURSD Remote Learning Plan

Dr. Maruszczak updated the School Committee on the Remote Learning plan:

- Plan is effective as of today
- Town hall for staff on Friday and 200 parents participated on Saturday
- Schools closed till May 4th and this may be how we end the school year
- Pivot to provide instruction and services and progress in our curriculum
- There will be limitations
- Strikes a balance between real-time and face-to-face contact learning
- Students engagement is not optional
- Accountability will be through the submission of student work on a satisfactory basis not by attendance
- Work will be assessed using credit, no credit; resubmit for credit
- Rubric/scoring criterion will be shared that details quality necessary for credit
- For terms 3&4, all grades will be pass/fail and term 3 extended to April 17
- Elementary will feature grades 2, 3 or NA for each of the standards
- Other considerations are students with IEPs and English Language learners; continuation of IEP Team meetings; balance between real-time and asynchronous opportunities but continuation of reach out to our families; commitment to surveying all stakeholders; real possibility of 10 more weeks
- Final thoughts: committed to mapping out the week in advance with reasonable workload; issue further guidance, particularly on assessment and grading; adapt and be flexible. Stakeholders should reference mursdremote.com for further information. Credit to Dr. Cohen for her work on the website.
- Plan focuses on our core values: Family & Community First; Relationships Matter and We support all learners.
- Vikki asked about sharing the results of the survey. Dr. Maruszczak received positive feedback on the parent town halls and he plans to continue them on Saturdays and provide the School Committee with the results at the next meeting in 3 weeks.
- Getting concern from elementary families about devices. Devices have been distributed and working creatively with families to assist and the Tech crew has been tremendous. Recording sessions will help with the students who cannot attend the 'live' zoom meeting.

State Guidance on Financial Commitments/Contracted Services

Dr. Mazurczak provided an update on State guidance for financial implications of the closed schools:

- Lots of questions and not a lot of answers
- Bus contracts - want to ensure the bus companies do not go out of business; recommended to renegotiate contracts to keep them solvent and drivers are getting

paid. Spring is where bus companies make money due to field trips and sports. Still waiting to find out what State will allow schools to pay

- Other contractors are mostly special education. District is exploring work options for these contractors so the district is still able to pay. Dennis Todd stated the contractors are following the remote learning plans.
- Jay Byer is working to keep these businesses solvent since it is the only bus company in the area and if the company was to go out of business, it could create issues in the future
- Private contractors may be able to qualify for stimulus packages

MURSD Calendar for 2019-20

Dr. Maruszczak informed the School Committee he is recommending to keep Good Friday and April vacation in the calendar. It is a 70/30 split in the Valley of districts keeping the break in order to give everyone a break from remote learning and collect data of surveys to the stakeholders. In addition, if allowed to go back into the schools, another week to be face to face with the students. School Committee agreed with his recommendation.

FY20 Budget Update

Jay Byer informed the School Committee there is a freeze on all learning supplies which may result in a small amount of savings. He also noted any savings for transportation should be used for next year. It was reiterated no spending on snow/ice with all buildings closed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Nipmuc Senior Capstone Presentation- Nipmuc Co-Principals John Clements & Mary Anne Moran

Dr. Maruszczak recommended the School Committee table this discussion for when circumstances are different.

Committee Questions & Discussion

Leigh Martin asked for an update on MCAS. Dr. Maruszczak is fairly certain there will be a moratorium on the testing

Parent commented the 1st day worked well however would like to see the district not to have school vacation and for the next 5 weeks have Wednesdays off. Routine has been established and would like to continue. It was commented the School Committee would take the suggestion under advisement.

Parent expressed concern about not being able to get on Miscoe Zoom meeting this afternoon due to the number of participants. Tech is looking to upgrade the principals accounts to allow for more participants. The recorded session link will be distributed.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENTS - NA

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

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

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Updates Re. MURSD Remote Learning: April 27
- Updates Re. Graduation, End-of-Year Celebrations: April 27

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Vikki Ludwigson to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a), exemption #3, to discuss strategy with respect to a Memorandum of Agreement with MURTA, because doing so in open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. (The Committee will not return to open session.)

VOTED:

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly McElreath