

MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Committee Meeting
Nipmuc High School, Professional Development Room
Monday, May 23, 2022

Committee Present:

Erick Brown, Kerry Laurence, Phil DeZutter, Matthew Hagen, Sean Nicholson

Administration Present:

Maureen Cohen, Superintendent of Schools
Cheryl Kirkpatrick, Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Jay Byer, Business/Finance
Dave Quinn, Director of Instructional Technology

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Dr. Maureen Cohen.
Pledge of Alliance was recited

II. REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Dr. Cohen stated School Committee reorganization is governed by Policy BDA, which calls for an organizational meeting to be held at the first regular meeting following the annual town elections. Section II of the current policy indicates that the office of Chairperson will be selected by nomination and a roll call vote. Please note that the M.G.L. Ch 71, S 16A, requires vote may not be done in secret from the School Committee membership for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Assistant Treasurer.

Dr. Cohen asked for nominations for Chairperson

MOTION: On a motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Kerry Laurence to nominate **Phil DeZutter as Chairperson.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter begins chairing the meeting and asked for nominations for Vice Chairperson

MOTION: On a motion of Kerry Laurence, seconded by Matthew Hagen to nominate **Erick Brown as Vice Chairperson.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for secretary

MOTION: On a motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Matthew Hagen to nominate **Kerry Laurence as secretary.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Taft Library Trustee

MOTION: On a motion of, Kerry Laurence seconded by Matthew Hagen to nominate **Sean Nicholson as Taft Library Trustee.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Risteen Fund Representative

MOTION: On a motion of, Matthew Hagen seconded by Kerry Laurence to nominate **Phil DeZutter as Risteen Fund Representative.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Assistant Treasurer

MOTION: On a motion of Matthew Hagen, seconded by Kerry Laurence to nominate **Sean Nicholson as assistant treasurer.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Treasurer

MOTION: On a motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Kerry Laurence to nominate **Joseph Leacu as Treasurer.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Clerk to the School Committee

MOTION: On a motion of Kerry Laurence, seconded by Sean Nicholson, to nominate **Kelly McElreath as Clerk to the School Committee.**

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

Chairperson Phil DeZutter asked for nominations for Blackstone Valley Educational Collaborative

MOTION: On a motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded, by Matthew Hagen to nominate

Superintendent Maureen Cohen as Blackstone Valley Educational Collaborative.

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes; Sean Nicholson, yes; Kerry Laurence, yes; Matthew Hagen, yes

MOTION: On a motion of Phil DeZutter, seconded by Sean Nicholson, to nominate

Sean Nicholson, Erick Brown and Phil DeZutter to the Budget Subcommittee;

Erick Brown, Vikki Ludwigson and Matthew Hagen to Policy Subcommittee;

Phil DeZutter, Erick Brown, and Vikki Ludwigson to the Negotiations Subcommittee;

Kerry Laurence, Sean Nicholson and Matthew to the Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee;

Vikki Ludwigson, Kerry Laurence, Matthew Hagen, Sean Nicholson, Erick Brown and Phil DeZutter to the Golden Apple Subcommittee

VOTED: Unanimously

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the Agenda

MOTION: On a motion of Kerry Laurence, seconded by Sean Nicholson, to approve the agenda.

VOTED: Unanimously approved

Approval of the Open Session Minutes from May 9, 2022

MOTION: On a motion of Kerry Laurence, seconded by Sean Nicholson, to approve Open Session minutes from May 9, 2022

VOTED: Unanimously approved

IV. COMMUNITY COMMENTS – NA

V. STUDENT’S COMMENTS

Nipmuc School Committee Student Representatives:

Michel provided School Committee members with Senior updates:

- Senior music night is this Wednesday at 7 pm where senior musicians performs and are recognized for their time with the department
- Last day is Thursday for the seniors and they will be participating in a drive around the school
- Senior trip is Friday to Boston. Plan is to visit an escape room and then a dinner cruise
- Marching Band will be participating in the Upton Memorial Day parade
- Michel took a moment to say goodbye and thank you to the Committee. Michel stated he has learned a lot and will miss his time coming to the meetings

Diya informed the School Committee there is now Q&A box in the front office where students can submit questions and comments. This will be helpful to collect information. She also noted there is a Computer Science Showcase on Tuesday where student created apps will be featured.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Recognition of Student Service

Dr. Cohen recognized Michel Flanagan and thanked him for his service as a Student Representative to the School Committee. She noted when she expanded the role of student reps for the school committee, Michel was a great choice. She appreciates how engaged he is at the meetings and his questions have been good.

District Updates/Announcements: Dr. Maureen Cohen

- District Highlights:
 - **International Night**--Our International Night was a great success on May 12th, where our Spanish Immersion Advisory Board and many additional parent/student volunteers hosted an Encanto-themed event for our students. We had numerous dance performances to kick off the event, followed by a wide selection of international food and activities for students. The night was great with performances and felt great to be back and a nice celebration
 - **FAST**--Faculty and students together, returned on May 19th this past week with a range of Minute-to-Win-It Competitions involving egg races and hula hoops MC'd by our very own Michel Flanagan and student council leaders.
 - **Miscoe Hill Amusement Park**--Britt Kahler led her technology students through an engineering design process where they created mechanical amusement park rides. This was on display last week where students were able to come through to view a scavenger hunt and provide feedback. This is one of many highlights of the impact of our ASA Grant funding as well as the expansion of Project Lead the Way options for students. The event highlighted a lot of what has been going on
 - **Community Garden and Butterflies**--Dr. Cohen stated during her walkthroughs last week she was able to observe Clough students engaged in preparing the community garden for planting and learning about the exciting skill of identifying weeds. Additionally, she saw our second-grade students who have been studying the life-cycle of a butterfly be able to

release the butterflies outside. It was a great moment of learning for the students.

- **Transition Night** – Department of Student Support Services will be hosting Transition Informational Nights for families of students on IEPs. 4th and 8th grade families are invited to join the Special Education Department as we talk about the transition from 4th to 5th and 8th to 9th grade. There will also be time for families to ask questions

Teaching and Learning: Dr. Cheryl Kirkpatrick

Dr. Kirkpatrick was able to share the good news that the district earned another grant. Acceleration Academies grant for \$102,660. This grant will continue the academies for over 100 students. Also, the Development and Extension of High-Quality Summer Programs Grant awarded \$80,000 for extension of summer program. This program will run with a camp like atmosphere to provide more support to students from 9 am – 3 pm. The district is currently hiring for this program. Lastly, there is the Math Acceleration Grant for \$20,000 to support the math curriculum.

Dr. Kirkpatrick gave thanks and stated the awarding of these grants highlights what the community has been working on with a lot of people doing the work. The teachers are doing a lot behind the scenes with their involvement in committees and their professionalism has led to great opportunities for the students. She stated the Professional Development Committee is a great example of the work teachers are doing to assist their colleagues.

District Strategic Plan: MURSD District End of Year Highlights

Dr. Maureen Cohen, Dr. Cheryl Kirkpatrick and Dr. David Quinn

Dr. Cohen commented this is the 4th year of 5-year strategic plan. She presented MURSD District End of Year Highlights. Highlights of the presentation follows:

- List of 8 Strategic Initiatives for 2021-2022

Communications:

- website, transparency, budget - budget preparation was part of school committee meetings
- Partners in learning - bringing people from the community; #MURSD; #MURSDInspires
- Technology Plan developed to see where the district wants to be in 2025. Draft to be distributed to members soon

Student Services

- Increasing staff understanding and Tier 1 support
- MTSS is a guide to implement DCAP
- Updated accommodations drawing on inclusive practices such as culturally responsive teacher, UDL and SEL practices
- Print and digital format
- Digital resources to help teachers understand and implement accommodations
- DCAP will be shared with teachers before the end of the year and utilized in first PD of 2022-23
- MTSS Outcomes – data inquiry and understand how the students are doing

Social-emotional Learning:

- Thrively Implementation
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Outcomes: Understand, Support & Engage
- Portrait of a Learner Scholar to help student learn about themselves as well as the teachers

- Panorama software used to understand the students' needs and Thrively data used for strengths of students
- Attending to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion: 2 culturally responsive pedagogy book studies, Dr. Warnum helping to develop strategies to address microaggressions and unconscious bias in March; creation of Cultural Calendar for 2022-2023; PBL as an inclusive practice and improved equity for all students.

Authentic Learning:

- Portrait of a Learner
- Authentic learning experiences
- Taking the POL competencies and put into Thrively. Portfolio piece available as digital. Develop 'I can' statements
- Inspired learning Days – opportunities for students to interact with staff and community members in ways designed to connect the learning to the real world. Each school will host 2 inspired Learning days
- Inspired Learning Conversations
- Nipmuc (credit to John and Mary Anne) Bank of 50 Community partners; Hosted a Lead Learner workshop; collaboratively created a tool for educators focused on looking at lessons and learning through the lens of authenticity
- Miscoe Hill: Multiple PLTW modules across Grades 5-8; students share work products with industry experts; building PBL training by joining the School Leadership Network; SLN team led staff in mini slice for May PD; 3-day PBL 101 planned for June 21-23
- Elementary School: learning about plant/insect life cycle with community garden; Mystery Dough, Bridges Math; Elementary Fire safety program; PLTW pilot in Grade 4 and professional development for Grade 3, Grade 4 and Technology teachers

Sean Nicholson commented all of this has happened this school year; Tracking progress shows a lot of green for the progress made. It was commented feedback from students will include a survey and talking with students on the project lead the way activities.

Phil DeZutter asked how do we measure this? We are reaching students in different and incredible ways but how are we measuring the outcomes? It was commented the standards are embedded in these projects and will be measured. Also measured and observable outcomes go hand in hand. Lastly, this is a multiprong approach so people can see and feel the learning competencies. Phil DeZutter commented some students will see the project as in the way where other students become engaged in the project.

VII. SCHOOL COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee

Sean Nicholson commented the committee is completing its line-item evaluation feedback for Maureen. Once it is available, it will be discussed at the next School Committee meeting

VIII. NEW BUSINESS – No New Business

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

X. CORRESPONDENCE

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Golden Apple Awards-June

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On motion of Sean Nicholson, seconded by Kerry Laurence to adjourn
VOTED: Unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly McElreath