

Regular Meeting
September 12, 2016
School Committee Meeting
Council Chambers

The regular meeting of the Medford School Committee was called to order by Mayor Burke in the City Hall Council Chambers at 7:02 p.m. Those present were Ms. Cugno, Ms. DiBenedetto, Ms. Kreatz, Ms. Mustone, Mr. Skerry, Ms. Van der Kloot, Mayor Burke and Superintendent Belson.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot that the minutes of June 20, 2016 be approved:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot that the minutes of the special meeting August 29, 2016 be approved:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto that the Bills/Transfer of Funds be approved:

Voted: That the Bills/Transfer of Funds be approved.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot that the Payrolls be approved:

Voted: That the Payrolls be approved.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Report on *Team Medford* School Supply Drive 2016

Deputy Superintendent Beverly Nelson invited Sam Tarebelsi from Hallmark Health to join her at the podium. Ms. Nelson reported that for nine consecutive years *Team Medford* and Hallmark Health have conducted a drive to collect school supplies on behalf of the Medford Public Schools. Supplies arrived at Medford High School on August 25th. The supplies are estimated to be worth over \$27,000. We are extremely grateful to Hallmark Health and *Team Medford* for making this drive so successful. Ms. Nelson

introduced Sam Tarabelsi from Hallmark Health who introduced other members of the team who helped organize the drive including Janet Perault for the Hallmark Health VNA and Louis Rocco from Lawrence Memorial Hospital. Mr. Tarabelsi gave a brief background of how the drive began and thanked the Medford Public Schools for allowing them to continue year after year.

Mayor Burke thanked all on behalf of the City of Medford.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on the Opening of School SY 2016-2017

Superintendent Belson reported that there have been eight days of school over the last two weeks. Kindergartners have now completed four days of school. Overall it has been a very good opening this year. Student enrollment is still emerging as our parent center continues to receive new enrollees. As of Friday, September 9th our overall enrollment is 37 less students than last year. The current numbers are as follows:

- Elementary 1882 (-2)
- Middle 943 (+51)
- High School/Voc 1365 (-86)

It is expected that these enrollment levels will change as we progress through September. There will be students registering and leaving which is typical. Also the actual distribution between the High School and the Vocational School still needs to be refined as we now have many students participating in both program sites. Pre-school enrollment is also emergent at this time. Class sizes across the district are good and well within contractual limits. A chart detailing elementary class sizes by school and grade is attached to this report. We will provide you with a secondary school report once class schedules are completely stabilized. This year we made four administrative appointments that filled vacancies covered by two resignations, one retirement and one promotion. We reduced one administrative position in special education during budget. There were thirty-two new teacher hires to fill the gaps caused by resignations, retirements, leaves of absences and non-rehires. There were multiple shifts of teachers to different positions to better address enrollment and program needs. Additionally we hired a few new positions based upon our budget deliberations including:

- 1 Middle School Librarian
- 1 Math Coach (Title One)
- 1 Middle School Adjustment Counselor
- 1 Behavior Specialist
- 3 FT Kindergarten Aides

We were also able to cover both clerical reductions with internal transfers. There were multiple changes among paraprofessionals and we are working on a full listing. We will provide the School Committee with a full listing of personnel once it is completed and final assignments are determined. School security plans are in place at all schools and

Principals have been conducting practice drills. There was no disruption to school operations caused by the September 8, 2016 primary election at five of our school sites. We will be closed for the November election. You have previously received a report on Buildings and Grounds. We will update you on additional items as we progress. Capital planning is moving forward. We have retained a new cleaning service. A report is on this evening's agenda. Transportation routes are going through the typical initial adjustment to reflect actual ridership and route timing. We have added an additional bus #17 servicing middle school routes to eliminate overcrowding and improve route timing – three stops were removed from routes #4 and #9. Initial reports indicate increased ridership around the district. Once the routes settle into a pattern, Medford Public Schools and Eastern Bus will complete the first round of counts and update the new *Transfinder* software program, which will provide our initial database for the bus rosters and emergency contact information. MPS would like to thank Tatianna Hall from Eastern Bus Company for all she does acting as our liaison. Tatianna is integral to our program and provides immediate attention to our routes. School supplies and budgeted education materials have been ordered and much is in place. We are grateful to *Team Medford* and other groups for their generous support. At our next meeting we will recognize other groups who have provided for our students. We are implementing our revised supply list plan that reduces individual supply list requests of parents. Some PTO leaders are asking how they can supplement certain supplies to schools and teachers. Our goal has been to reduce the burden placed on parents to buy general supplies. Parents should only be expected to buy what they need to support their students at home. PTOs can run voluntary drives to augment supplies but it should not be coercive in any manner. This year will clearly be a pilot one for this initiative. We have a new substitute software system in place called Aesop. It is working well and we have access to many more qualified substitutes than in the past. We are still transitioning from our previous student information system (IPass) to our new system (School Brains). It will take time to work out all of the particulars. The new system will be a real improvement when it is fully implemented. Staff training will be ongoing for the next few months to ensure full optimum utilization. We completed FY 2016 with a balanced budget. Final transactions are being implemented. A report will be forthcoming when all records are reconciled with City Hall. We are entering FY17 in good shape but we must keep an eye on possible state aid reductions and/or cost overruns for programs, services, and facilities. The state is seeing lower revenues and it might trigger 9C cuts. We will pursue funding that becomes available. However, it is unclear if any supplemental funding will be authorized. In the weeks ahead we will meet to review and refresh our goals for this year.

Discussion:

Mayor Burke said that her office has received calls regarding class size at the Roberts. Ms. Van der Kloot said that she has also received calls. She asked if there are classes with 24 and 25. Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell answered that there are no classes with 25 students but there is one class with 24. She said that Principal Johnson divides the classes by individual child. Ms. Van der Kloot asked if the teacher is amenable because the parents are complaining. Ms. DiBenedetto asked if these are maximum numbers or are students allowed in. Superintendent Belson answered that students may be integrated into art or physical education. Ms. DiBenedetto commented that even with full time aides the kindergarten numbers are high and still concerning. Superintendent Belson said that we are spoiled in Medford. Districts across the

Commonwealth have much higher numbers. These are very good numbers. Ms. Cugno asked why the principals do not divide the students the same way. Ms. Caldwell said that she didn't have an answer. Mr. Johnson feels this works best for him. Ms. Cugno said this is something that they need to look at; it is not done in an equitable way. Ms. Cugno also questioned that middle school dispersment. Ms. Nelson replied that they have 200 spots per class in middle school. It is inequitable in grade 6 only but the McGlynn needs to hold spots open for ELL students that move in during the year. Ms. Van der Kloot asked if all kindergartens at Columbus have full time aides. Ms. Caldwell answered that 3 of 4 do. Ms. Van der Kloot suggested looking at increasing the remaining aide to full time. Ms. Mustone stated that Mr. Johnson does a wonderful job dividing students. We have always had wonderful class size and teachers. She said that she trusts his judgment and is a strong supporter of his. Ms. Kreatz commented that the average class size at the Columbus was 17. This year there is a large jump and perhaps we can take a look at additional aides for these classes. Mr. Skerry asked how many families requested to go to other schools and if any requests were fulfilled. Ms. Caldwell answered that she didn't have the numbers with her but it was very equitable across the district this year so therefore no transfers were granted.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Administrative Meetings and New Teacher Induction Week

Deputy Superintendent Beverly Nelson reported that the week of August 22-26 was very busy for both administrators and new teachers as both groups were engaged in a variety of different meetings and trainings. The districts new teacher induction program was held at Medford High School from August 23-26. The event was coordinated by Deputy Superintendent Nelson and Assistant Superintendent Caldwell assisted by mentor coordinators Jody Liu and Donna Laskey. Thirty-six new teachers attended the program. New teachers were pleased when Mayor Burke visited and addressed the group on Wednesday. She highlighted the agenda which included various activities and workshops. Most administrators had been working throughout the summer hiring new staff, preparing materials, reviewing preliminary state test results and scheduling students and staff. The official meetings began on August 22nd. Many topics were covered related to the opening of school and updates from DESE. There were several legal issues that were shared with administrators.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Kreatz to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on New State Curriculum Frameworks for Science Education

Director of Science Rocco Cieri presented the report. He reported The Massachusetts Board of Education approved a new Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Framework and made the publication available in April 2016. This framework replaces the 2006 Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Science and Technology/Engineering and articulates statewide guidelines for STE learning, teaching, and assessment for the Commonwealth's public schools. The 2016 STE standards maintain much of the content of the prior STE standards with updates identified by the field, changes in science and engineering over the past 15 years, and the addition of inquiry and design skills that students need to successfully engage in STE disciplines throughout their academic program as well as their civic life and post-secondary opportunities. The following changes have been made to the previous 2006 STE framework. The standards integrate disciplinary core ideas with Science and Engineering practices. The disciplines – Earth and Spaces Sciences, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences and Technology/Engineering - appear in each grade level, beginning in Pre-K and continuing through grade 8. Also, the standards are divided into grade levels (Pre-K, K, 1, 2, etc), rather than grade bands (Pre-K to 2, 3-5, 6-8), which allow for greater clarity to coordinate STE content instruction. There are changes at the Pre-K to eighth grade level, which will require district-wide curriculum alignment. For example, the 2016 STE framework adds 15 standards to the Pre-K to 2nd grade level and 14 standards to the 3rd to 5th grade level. At the sixth to eighth grade level, the framework results in a net loss of two standards. While there is the removal as well as reworking of some standards in the 2016 STE framework, there is a net gain of standards at the elementary and middle school level. At the high school level, the STE disciplines remain as subject-specific courses – High School Biology, High School Introductory Physics, High School Chemistry, High School Earth and Space Sciences, High School Technology/Engineering. Most of our current resources can be adapted to address the additional framework standards at the high school level.

MCAS

Students will continue to be assessed using the MCAS in grades 5, 8 and high school. Beginning in 2017 and over the next several years, the grade 5 and grade 8 Science MCAS exams will pilot new questions reflecting the 2016 STE standards. At the high school level, subject-specific MCAS exams will continue to use the 2006 framework until at least 2019. This is justified, since students are required to take and score *Needs Improvement* or above on one high school Science MCAS to receive a diploma.

District-wide Curriculum

Elementary and Middle School Level

Medford's curriculum resources require updating primarily at the elementary and middle school level. The area of most need is K-5 (the copyright for the current adoption "Science DiscoveryWorks" by Silver Burdett/Ginn is 1997). Over the past two years, we anticipated addressing Engineering practices by purchasing 2 units from a highly-rated program "Engineering is Elementary," designed through the Center for Technological Literacy at the Museum of Science, Boston. All fourth grade classrooms have full kits for the two units (1) Just Passing Through: Designing Model Membranes and (2) A Work in Process: Improving a Play Dough Process. Also, the School committee allocated an additional \$10,000.00 for Science materials this year to sustain and expand the effort to support Engineering practices at the elementary level. This is reflected in the Science instructional supplies budget line item. At the same time, we will need to identify new resources to address the disciplinary standards described in the 2016 STE framework.

At the middle school level, students will require new textbooks as the current texts are outdated and do not reflect the requirements of the new frameworks. During the school year I will form a teacher curriculum committee that both I and Dr. Ricciardelli, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, will oversee. The curriculum committee will meet to identify, review, and pilot textbook programs that align with the new frameworks and to make recommendations in the upcoming years.

High School Level

At the high school level, much has been gained through the current programming, staffing, and facilities at both Medford High School and the Medford Vocational-Technical High School. The City of Medford successfully funded the Science Lab Initiative, which allowed the construction of 17 state-of-the-art labs for the Medford High School and Medford Vocational-Technical High School facility. At the high school level, the curriculum is poised to maximize student learning in line with the 2016 STE framework. However, there is a need to update High School Chemistry and High School Biology textbooks.

Summary

Our approach should be a multi-year endeavor which seeks the input and support of our school community, families, and educators. Beginning this year, a curriculum committee will meet to review the details of STE curriculum framework and to identify content gaps in the current district-wide curriculum, to identify priority concerns, and to begin the process of reviewing resources for recommendation to the School Committee for adoption. It is clear that the Elementary and Middle school level will need to be a priority in the current and upcoming school budget, so that curriculum programs at that level can be adopted.

Discussion:

Ms. Mustone said that the age of the science books has been a concern of the Roberts parents for many years. She asked when the new books would be purchased? Mr. Cieri said whenever the budget could support it. Superintendent Belson commented that *Envision* would be paid this year so next year science books can be purchased. Ms. DiBenedetto asked if there are enough supplies/materials for all classes. Mr. Cieri answered that things need replacing continuously so the budget line item is used for these items and they also get assistance from grant monies.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on Before School Program

Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell presented the report. Ms. Caldwell reported that the Before School Program has been up and running since the first day of school. Information was sent home to families in June regarding the programs and information was posted on the Medford Public Schools website. Much planning and organization was done over the summer months. Families were given a handbook with pertinent information. Currently there are 45 students at the Brooks, 18 at the Columbus, 13 at the

McGlynn and 18 at the Roberts. Our families are grateful they have a safe place for their children.

Discussion:

Ms. DiBenedetto suggested that since they have always been so generous perhaps we should reach out to Hallmark Health to teach a CPR/First Aid course. She asked if this program is self-sustaining and does it generate income. Superintendent Belson replied that it does generate some income which is used for scholarships for families in need.

Ms. DiBenedetto asked if there are people who drop off early and who are not enrolled?

Ms. Caldwell said yes they have noticed a couple but the parents have been notified.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on the After School Program

Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell presented the report. The after school program continues to flourish in Medford. All of our families are pleased that we offer not only homework assistance but special projects and activities after school. The children have opportunities to participate in art and computer each day. At this time this time we have the following number of students at each school: Brooks 135, Columbus 53, McGlynn 74 and Roberts 74. Each school has a site coordinator, a group leader and assistant group leaders.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Report on Summer Programs

Deputy Superintendent Nelson presented the report. She stated that all programs took place. She updated the committee on the following programs: Summer Fun Program for elementary students, Regular Summer School for middle and high school students, English Language Learner Summer Program for elementary, middle and high school students, Middle School Computer Science Camp for middle school students, Medford Vocational Technical High School CTE Explore for middle school students, High School 101 for students entering grade 9 and Special Education Programs for PK – high school students and MVTHS Adult Summer Construction Program. One challenge this summer was that administrators felt we did not fully serve the attention and behavioral needs of Grade 6 and 7 students. We believe that alternate programming ideas should be discussed for summer school for students of that age. It was difficult for many of our Grande 6 and 7 students to sustain attention and behavior in math and English for full

two-hour blocks of time every day. A highlight of the summer is that twelve Grade 12 students met their graduation requirements and received their diplomas.

Discussion:

Mayor Burke asked if the 12 students walked at graduation? Ms. Nelson answered that she did not know but would check. Mayor Burke replied that she would like them invited to a meeting. Ms. Cugno commented that this was a wonderful report and thanked everyone for thinking outside the box. She agreed to invite the students to a meeting and suggested that they wear their cap and gown. Ms. Van der Kloot also commented on the report and she appreciates the administration looking at Grade 6 and 7. Mr. Skerry would like to look into having a formal exercise for the students who received their diplomas.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

Report on New Cleaning Service Contract

Director of Administration and Finance Pat Velie presented the report. Ms. Velie stated that the bid review committee of Superintendent Belson, Director of Buildings and Grounds John McLaughlin and herself interviewed the top four cleaning companies based on an evaluation process and pricing within budget constraints. The four finalists included MP Building Services, GCA Services Group, Inc., Empire Cleaning Inc., and Prospect Building Services Corp. The potential vendors were interviewed using a series of questions including employee hiring processes, union shop versus non-union, experience in cleaning public buildings, uniform requirement and safety training. Medford Public Schools is confirming the award of the bid and subsequent contract to Prospect Building Services Corporation for cleaning/janitorial services the next three years.

Discussion:

Mr. Skerry asked if the company ever worked in Medford before and where are they located? Ms. Velie answered that they have never worked here and they are located in Malden. Mr. Skerry asked Ms. Velie to supply the committee with the name of the site supervisor.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to accept the report and place on file:

Vote:

Yes: 7
No: 0
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to move negotiations and legal matters to the end of the calendar.

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

Appointment of Director of Administration and Finance

Superintendent Belson asked the committee to take a formal vote to appoint Kirsteen Patterson as the Director of Administration and Finance.

On the motion to offer Kirsteen Patterson a two year contract as Director of Administration and Finance:

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Superintendent Belson introduced Ms. Patterson who thanked the committee for this opportunity. She said she is very excited to be part of the Medford Public Schools community.

Selection of Delegates to Mass/MASS Fall Conference

Superintendent Belson stated that each year the School Committee designates a delegate and an alternate to the MASC assembly. At this meeting we should make the decision to who will represent the Medford School Committee at this important event. Also please let me know as soon as possible who will be attending so that arrangements can be made.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot said that she will serve as Alternate. Ms. Cugno said that she has been attending and serving for many years so she welcomed another member serving this year but they should check their availability first. Ms. DiBenedetto asked the Superintendent to provide the cost of the conference.

On the motion of Ms. Cugno to table the selection of Delegates until the next meeting:

Vote:

Yes: 7

No: 0

Absent: 0

School Committee Resolutions:

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of the Honorable John J. McGlynn. His honor was the former Medford Mayor, City Councilor, State Representative and World War II Ghost Army veteran. He was the devoted father of: Atty. Jack McGlynn, Jr, Atty. Dick McGlynn, Karen McGlynn Devine, Former Mayor Michael J. McGlynn, Bernadette Davis and Kevin McGlynn.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Willard “Bill” Sampson. Mr. Sampson was a retired school department custodian. He was the Head Custodian at Medford High School for many years. Mr. Sampson is the father of vocational teacher James Sampson.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Camille Mazzoni. Mrs. Mazzoni was a teacher in Medford for 35 years.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Robert L. Ryan Sr. Mr. Ryan was the father of District Attorney Marion Ryan.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Margaret Weigel. Ms. Weigel was a long time Medford resident, educational technology consultant, co-founder of the Farmers Market and member of the Chevalier Theater Commission. She also served on the Medford Public Schools Technology Committee.

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Margaret Haynes. Mrs. Haynes was a long time teacher at the Gleason Elementary School.

Observance of the 15th Anniversary of 9/11

Mr. Skerry asked all to remember John Doherty, a Medford native that was killed on 9/11.

A moment of silence was held.

On the motion of Ms. Mustone seconded by Mr. Skerry to go to Execution Session at 8:42 p.m. to discuss Negotiations and Legal matters pertaining to carpenters unit contract and update and pending legal matters. The committee may return to open session to vote.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

The School Committee returned from Executive Session at 9:01 p.m. and took the following vote:

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot, seconded by Ms. Cugno voted contract with Medford Carpenters was approved.

Vote:

Yes: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

No: 0

Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry, seconded by Ms. Cugno the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Roll Call:

Yea: 7 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot, Burke

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Respectfully submitted:

Robert E. Skerry Jr.
Secretary