

Regular Meeting  
September 26, 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 Ms. Van der Kloot seconded by Mr. Skerry that the minutes of September 12, 2016 be approved:

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Cugno 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. Cugno 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

Committee of the Whole Minutes – September 12, 2016

On the motion of Mr. Skerry, seconded by Ms. Kreatz the minutes were approved.

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

#### Community Participation

Cheryl Rodriguez, 281 Park Street, was given permission to speak. Ms. Rodriguez said that she had questions about the classrooms at the Roberts School. She said that the Roberts has the highest enrollment in the district. She described problems in the inclusion classroom. She said that she has tried to speak to the teacher, principal and administrators regarding this but keeps getting “privacy issue”. She wants to make the population at the Roberts the same as the rest of the district. She would like to shift

either the EL or sped students to another school. She feels the needs of all the children need to be considered.

Discussion:

Superintendent Belson said that he met with Ms. Rodriguez today and a lot is going on. Sometimes there is disruption. This classroom has been visited many times and adjustments can be made. Superintendent Belson said that the population shifts year to year however they are very concerned about this situation. Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell said that the classroom has EL and sped students but the problems have been with two students who are not special education students. They are being evaluated presently. A plan will be in place as soon as possible. Safety is first and foremost. Ms. Medaglio stated that sped enrollment is consistent across the district. Ms. Cugno stated that rumors start and asked why the parents were not informed instead of hearing bits and pieces from students. This is her biggest concern. She would like Mr. John to speak on the enrollment numbers and what is going on at the next meeting. Ms. Van der Kloot said that she shares her colleagues concern. She feels that she is in the dark regarding this situation. Ms. Medaglio tried to fill her in. As a parent she said she understands Ms. Rodriguez's concerns. Ms. Caldwell said that adjustment counselors will speak to the students in this class tomorrow. Ms. Caldwell said that the classroom teacher is very supportive and passionate about her students. Ms. DiBenedetto commented that these students have witnessed stuff that makes them nervous and scared. Adults deal with things differently. Parents need to be notified. But the main issue is the number of students in classes at the Roberts. They are higher than the other schools in the district. Our job is to meet the needs of all our students. Lower class size may help here. Ms. DiBenedetto requested the Superintendent to look at the enrollment numbers again. She also would like the EL and sped enrollments in each class. Mr. Skerry is dismayed that parents were not contacted. He suggests having a meeting with Mr. Johnson and the parents. The Roberts is a tight knot community. He heard various versions of this situation over the weekend. Superintendent Belson said lets not blow the situation out of proportion. We will contact the parents and deal with it. Let's not escalate this. Ms. Mustone suggested looking at possibly moving the EL population to another school to give the Roberts more space.

On the motion Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Mr. Skerry that the Superintendent review enrollments in all classes including EL and sped inclusions and report back to School Committee

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

On the motion of Ms. Cugno seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto to request Mr. Johnson appear at the next meeting regarding the enrollment distribution and this situation.

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. DiBenedetto that Mr. Johnson and the team meet with the parents.

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

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

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

On the motion of Mr. Skerry to suspend the rules to take the papers out of order

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

#### Report on Complete Streets

Mayor Burke stated that the city was able to secure a \$400,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to achieve safety improvements to six road/crosswalk sites under the highly competitive “complete streets grant program. Medford received the maximum amount and was one of eleven communities to acquire funding. This grant program is especially significant since it will address intersections that our students use for crossing main streets and for accessing bus stops. Medford worked with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to design proposals. MAPC designated the Toole Design Group to work with the City for the development of an optima plan. The first project will be on Route 60 High Street/Allston Street near the Brooks School. The plan will include the following:

- Curb extensions to narrow the roadway and provide a shorter crossing route.
- Rectangular rapid flashing beacons that will provide grater visibility.
- Reduced speed limits in area to 20 m.p.h. in school zones.

All projects under this grant will be completed by June 30, 2017. Mayor Burke convened a group of parents with city officials to review the plan and add further measures to increase public safety.

#### Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot she is so happy since this has been an ongoing issue with parents. Ms. DiBenedetto asked if there are any updates about the crossing guard on the Fellsway. Mayor Burke said that the issue was brought up at a meeting with Representatives Garboly and Donato. This is a DCR road so they are trying to get it resolved.

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto, seconded by Mr. Skerry to send a request to Representatives Donato and Garboly regarding the crossing guard at Salem Street and the Fellsway.

Vote:

Yes: 7  
No: 0  
Absent: 0

Also while under suspension:

Ms. Van der Kloot requested accepting the gift of a shed from Urban Sheds of Medford and read the following:

To School Committee Members:

We, the Medford High School Garden Club, ask for approval to receive a donation of a garden shed from Urban Sheds of Medford. They have offered to custom build a 4 foot by 6 foot shed in the inner courtyard adjacent to our garden free of charge. Due to the nature of their business, the best time for them to build the shed is in the fall. They have proposed a build date of Saturday, October 1, 2016.

Thank you for your consideration,

Retta Smith, Nutrition Specialist and Garden Club supporter,  
Lisa Beaulieu, Biology teacher and Garden Club Advisor,  
and Medford High School Garden Club members

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot, seconded by Mr. Skerry to accept the donation of a shed from Urban Sheds of Medford:

Roll Call:

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

A recess was held at 7:59 p.m.

Mayor Burke left at 8:00 p.m.

Vice Chairperson Erin DiBenedetto chaired the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Recommendation to Accept School Supply Backpacks from Agero

Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell presented the report. Assistant Superintendent Diane Caldwell thanked the giving committee of Agero for their generous donation of backpacks and other school supplies to our students. Agero donated more than sixty backpacks filled to the brim with supplies. These backpacks were given to the most economically needy students. This year the distribution also included students in middle school. Unfortunately members of the team from Agero were unable to attend the meeting due to a scheduling conflict.

Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot requested a letter of appreciation be sent to Agero from the School Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Van der Kloot to accept the backpack donation from Agero:

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

#### Report on School Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment

Supervisor of Health Services, Toni Vento presented the report. Ms. Vento explained that Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) is a comprehensive, integrated, public health approach for early identification and intervention with patients whose patterns of alcohol and/or drug use put their health at risk. Unhealthy alcohol and other drug use are among the most common causes of preventable morbidity and mortality. Despite their frequent presentation in healthcare settings, unhealthy alcohol and other drug use often go unrecognized. The purpose of SBIRT is to promote prevention and identify early risk for substance use in our adolescents and to take appropriate actions as soon as possible if a problem is identified. This year the screening will begin with the ninth grade and grade seven will follow next year. Medford received a grant for \$15,000 for training and resources. Ms. Vento said that parents can opt out of the screening if they want.

#### Discussion:

Ms. Van der Kloot asked if a student reveals danger and is referred for treatment, are the parents notified. Ms. Vento answered yes, so that treatment can be obtained. Ms. DiBenedetto asked if the students are informed that the outcome is not confidential. Ms. Vento said that they will be. Ms. DiBenedetto asked what the procedure is to opt out. Ms. Vento answered that the parents will be notified of the procedure in the parental letter that will be sent. Ms. Cugno commented that parents will be asked if they want to opt out but students results will be revealed to parents. Can students opt out if they are eighteen years old. Ms. Vento answered students older than fourteen can opt out.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot, seconded by Mr. Skerry the report was accepted and placed on file.

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

#### Report on District Priority Educational Goals SY 2016-2017

Deputy Superintendent Beverly Nelson reported that the Educator Evaluation System requires that each year teachers develop goals that they are planning to accomplish during the school year. The requirement is that a teacher develops at least one professional goal and one student performance goal. These goals are written as SMART goals which mean they are measurable. Educator goals must align with school and district goals. Therefore each year the school develops district educational priority goals to help guide teachers as they formulate their own SMART goals. This year the teachers' contract required the establishment of a Professional Development Committee comprised of 6 administrators and 6 teachers who help formulate the direction for professional development for the

district. This year's goals incorporated the suggestions of this committee. Deputy Superintendent Nelson continued her report by reviewing last year's goals and discussing the goals for this year.

Discussion:

Ms. DiBenedetto asked Ms. Nelson for clarity on a few of the goals. She also commented on another goal. Ms. Ricciardelli explained the reasoning for the questioned goal.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot, seconded by Mr. Skerry to accept the District Priority Educational Goals for SY 2016-2017:

Vote:

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 1

#### Report on School Brains Training

Deputy Superintendent Nelson reported that last year we began training on the new student information system School Brains which is replacing the former system iPASS. In order to support teachers during the transition we put in place School Brain Teacher Support Assistants at each building. The support assistants volunteered for the role and were given a stipend for their work. Preliminary training was provided in the spring and continued on August 29. Although all teachers were able to use the system to record attendance the general consensus was that more training was needed related to other aspects. On Wed. October 19<sup>th</sup> during the early release mandated time all teachers will be trained in their respective building with teacher support assistants and trained administrators facilitating the training. School Brains representatives will be in the district to lend support where needed.

Discussion:

Ms. Cugno said that she has heard that Paul D'Alleva and Curtis Tuden have been very helpful to staff. She asked if there is a "hot line" for help. Ms. Nelson answered that if the building trainer is not available they can contact Jean Irwin or Curtis Tuden. She also mentioned that School Brains has a very helpful tutorial. Ms. Kretz asked if there will be training sessions for parents. Ms. Nelson answered that each principal will develop a schedule for their school.

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

Vote:

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 1

#### Report on Minuteman Project

Superintendent Belson reported that currently Medford is paying vocational tuition to Minuteman Regional for seventeen students which is down from fifty students three years ago. With the development of new Medford programs and implementation of revised state regulations we expect that out of district enrollment to Minuteman to be eliminated over the next two years. Minuteman has been trying to build a new facility for over seven

years. On September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 a sixteen town/districtwide vote authorized Minuteman to go forward with the bonding of a \$145 million project in Lincoln adjacent to the current building in Lexington. MSBA is expected to support the project with \$44 million. The New England Association (NEASC) has placed Minuteman's accreditation on "warning" status due to the condition of the building. Six towns currently in the Minuteman region have chosen to leave under the new regional agreement. They include Weston, Wayland, Sudbury, Carlisle, Boxborough and Lincoln. Belmont will be petitioning to withdraw from Minuteman as well. This will leave a regional with nine member towns. Minuteman relies on 34 out of district cities and towns to supply students since the regional members only make up 60% of the enrollment at best. With the withdrawal of six – seven communities and the reduction in the out of district students it is unlikely that Minuteman will be able to fill the planned 628 student facility. Minuteman was able to persuade DESE to approve a regulation that would that would assess a capital fee to non-member districts. We believe that this constitutes an unfunded mandate under proposition 2.5. We will challenge this potential fee through the State Auditors Division of Local Mandates and through the courts if necessary. The fee would only go into effect once the school was built (Fall 2020 projection). As previously stated it is very unlikely that any Medford student would be eligible to go to Minuteman by 2020. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon us to take proactive steps to block any practice that would be financially detrimental to our city and schools. We will be joined by many other districts in this action.

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

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

#### Financial Report – FY 2016

Director of Administration and Finance Pat Velie presented the report. She reported that we have completed the fiscal year 2016. We ended the year carrying \$100,145.35 in encumbrances. These are expenses for which we did not have an invoice at closing time; however, the expenses were related to the FY 2016 fiscal year. FY 2016 natural gas budget was less due to the warmer than typical winter. This savings was offset by maintenance projects throughout the district. The year ended with a balanced budget.

#### Discussion

Ms. DiBenedetto commented that she saw three areas that were overspent – the high school, middle school and security. She asked that administration keep an eye on these areas. Superintendent Belson said that these were contract settlements and the monies were in undistributed funds and transferred to these areas.

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

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0

Absent: 1

#### Financial Report FY 2017

Ms. Velie continued with the financial report for SY 2017. Ms. Velie stated that most hiring has been completed and new employees have finalized paperwork with the requisite CORI check and request for fingerprinting. She said that we have eighteen homeless students thus far and nine require transportation. The district continues the online payment system and this year has added the afterschool group to the online system. Transportation routes have been reviewed for use and overcrowding. The initial three months of FY 2017 have been uneventful for utilities.

#### Discussion:

Ms. Kreatz asked about providing a bus for the elementary students to go on a field trip to the vocational school to visit biotechnology and also to go the Fells?

On the motion of Ms. Kreatz seconded by Mr. Skerry to provide a report on providing elementary transportation to the high school for a field trip.

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

Ms. Kreatz also questioned the MBTA bus passes for middle school students. Ms. Velie answered that MBTA passes are sold at the high school monthly. These are \$30/month. Rates are established by the MBTA.

On the motion of Ms. Kreatz seconded by Mr. Skerry that the Superintendent provide a report regarding the MBTA passes for middle school students.

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

Ms. DiBenedetto commented on the homeless transportation. She said that Representative Barber filed an amendment at the state level to track homeless transportation.

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

Vote:

Yes: 6  
No: 0  
Absent: 1

Report on 2016 MCAS/PARCC Test Results and School Accountability Rating  
Deputy Superintendent Nelson presented the report. She stated that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is due to release to the public at 5 p.m. on September 26<sup>th</sup> the 2016 accountability ratings and results from the state assessments.

MCAS was administered to students in grades 10 in English, math and science grade levels 5, 8 and high school. The district selected to administer PARCC for all other exams grades 3-8 (ELA and math). Medford as a district has earned an accountability rating of 2. This means that none of our schools fall below an accountability rating of 2. The previous year's district's rating was a 3 despite the fact that only one school, the Roberts Elementary was designated a level 3. In 2015 all other schools were 2 or higher. Accountability is determined by performance on the tests as well as a student participation rate. Participation rate is factored for not only the aggregate but also for each subgroup. Subgroup reports are generated for any subgroup that has 20 or more students. While Medford High School's academic performance remained strong there was an issue with the participation rate of one of the subgroups on the science MCAS. The data from the state assessments was available to us late Wednesday evening. Our analysis of both MCAS and PARCC results is still in progress. As we analyze the data more fully we will provide you an updated report at subsequent meetings. Individual student reports will be sent to districts this week. It is our plan to mail them to families by the end of the week.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot seconded by Mr. Skerry to move further discussion of the results of MCAS/PARCC to a subcommittee meeting on curriculum:

Vote:

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 1

Ms. Kreatz asked how soon a student knows if they will have to take the November retest and is there a plan for tutoring these students. Ms. Nelson answered that the results will go to parents next week so the students will know then. She said that the academic support grant is gone so we are trying to find ways to prep the students for the retest. We plan to discuss this with high school administrators and work something out.

On the motion of Ms. Kreatz seconded by Ms. Cugno to use budget monies for MCAS retest prep.

Vote:

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 1

Superintendent Belson said that at our last meeting the committee postponed the selection of a delegate and alternate to the November conference. I recommend the committee make that decision tonight. Superintendent Belson also stated that the cost for the conference was provided to them.

Ms. Van der Kloot seconded by Ms. Kreatz nominated Mr. Skerry to be the Delegate.

Roll Call:

Yea: 6 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Burke

Mr. Skerry seconded by Ms. Kreatz nominated Ms. Van der Kloot to be the Alternate Delegate

Roll Call:

Yea: 6 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Burke

On the motion of Ms. DiBenedetto seconded by Ms. Mustone that the Superintendent report back regarding all expenses related to the conference

Vote:

Yes: 6

No: 0

Absent: 1

Be it resolved, that the Medford School Committee express its sincere condolences to the family of Frank Andre. Mr. Andre was a long time Medford resident who was always involved with the youth of the city.

A moment of silence was held.

On the motion of Ms. Van der Kloot, seconded by Ms. Cugno the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Roll Call:

Yea: 6 Cugno, DiBenedetto, Kreatz, Mustone, Skerry, Van der Kloot

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Burke

Respectfully submitted:

Robert E. Skerry Jr.  
Secretary

