MENDON-UPTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Committee Meeting
Superintendent’s Conference Room – Miscoe Hill Middle School
Monday, April 24, 2017

Committee Present:
Leigh Martin, Philip DeZutter, Dorothy Scally, Diane Duncan, Tanna Jango

Administration Present:
Joseph Maruszczak, Superintendent of Schools
Jay Byer, Business/Finance
Dennis Todd, Director of Student Support Services
Maureen Cohen, Director of Curriculum
Janice Gallagher, Principal, Clough Elementary School
Debra Swain, Principal, Memorial Elementary School

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm by Diane Duncan.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Approval of Agenda
MOTION: On a motion of Tanna Jango, seconded by Dorothy Scally to approve the agenda.
VOTED: Unanimously approved

Motion of Approval of Open Session Minutes of April 10, 2017
MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Tanna Jango to approve the Open Session minutes of April 10, 2017
VOTED: Unanimously approved

Motion of Approval of Executive Session Minutes of April 10, 2017
MOTION: On a motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally to approve the Executive Session minutes of April 10, 2017
VOTED: Unanimously approved

III. STUDENT COMMENTS

- 4/25 - Student Support Field Trip to Quinsigamond College to learn about college life
- 4/26 - 4/29 - 26 students will be attending DECA International in Anaheim CA
- 4/27 - Marine Science Field Trip
- 4/28 - Field Trip to French Restaurant in Providence RI
IV. COMMUNITY COMMENTS – NA

V. SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

International Night – April 26
Superintendent Maruszczak reminded the School Committee of the 3rd Annual International night on April 26 from 5:30 – 7:30 at Nipmuc. All parents/students are invited. This year is an Amazing Race theme.

Confronting Genocide: Never Again Presentation – April 25
Superintendent Maruszczak informed the School Committee about the presentation of Holocaust survivor Janet Singer Applefield on Tuesday, April 25 at 10 am to Nipmuc Students. Her story of evading the Nazis in her native Poland promotes teaching tolerance. A follow-up discussion on Mrs. Applefield’s presentation for students and their parents will be held at 6 pm at Nipmuc. All students, staff and the community are invited to attend.

Congressman McGovern’s Visit to MURSD
Superintendent Maruszczak recapped Congressman Jim McGovern’s visit to Memorial Elementary School on April 13th. Congressman McGovern met with Spanish Immersion students in grades K, 2 and 3 via town hall style and spoke to them about the work of Congress and how laws are made. He took several questions from the students.

FY17 Budget Update
Jay Byer explained the FY17 Budget is in good shape although still some issues with building maintenance and field and grounds is over budget. There is savings in the snow and ice budget so the district’s budget will be good.

VI. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Policy Subcommittee
Policy Subcommittee presented the first ready on Policy JJF-R: Student Activity Account Guidelines. This policy was developed by Jay Byler to bring the district into compliance and provide greater consistency in procedures between the four buildings.

Negotiations Subcommittee
Negotiations with the teacher’s union are continuing.

VII. OLD BUSINESS - NA

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

MURSD FY2016 Audit – Tim Craven CPA
Tim Craven was present to discuss the FY2016 Audit. Mr. Craven explained the audit report is a little different due to different guidelines. He also reported the audit found the district to be in compliance with all state and federal award programs as well as internal controls. The district was also found to be a low risk auditee. Mr. Craven mentioned food services are now running as a positive balance and the undesignated balance is good.
Discussion of Elementary Recess
Superintendent Maruszczak invited Jessica Crowley and Matt Mead to discuss elementary recesses. Ms. Crowley explained her background as a parent and teacher. She discussed how extra recess, which is unstructured play, is important for kindergarteners to develop their social skills. She feels this is as important as academic skills. Ms. Crowley has about 250 parents in a Facebook group with many links to articles about how more recess time is good. She would like to develop a committee to look at the schedules and have more recess time even if that means extending the school day. Ms. Crowley stated students should love school in kindergarten and first grade.

School Committee members stated they do not disagree more recess would be beneficial for students however school administrators need to be involved in the discussion. Superintendent Maruszczak stated there is a statutory obligation for academic time. He also shared a survey of recess time of area schools. MURSD has a 6 hour day with 25 minutes of recess. Other districts have longer days and about the same amount of time for recess.

Janice Gallagher and Debra Swain explained a typical school day for kindergarteners at Clough and Memorial. Movement is built into the daily schedule. Also kindergarteners have choice time and 1 hour for lunch and recess. At the end of the day, there is ‘center time’ which was compared to indoor recess. They felt the students do not spend a lot of time at their desks.

Mr. Mead would like to have unstructured choice time to be consistent thought the district.

Superintendent Maruszczak explained Jessica and Matt are passionate about this topic but there is a need to involve all stakeholders in a committee to investigate if more recess time is needed.

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

- FY2018 Regional Transpiration Reimbursement – email to district’s state representation asking for their support for increasing the Regional Transportation reimbursement to $64,021,000

X. Other Matters Not Anticipated By The Committee Within 48 Hours Of The Posted Meeting

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Inclusion Practices & Student Performance Data – May 8
- School Committee Reorganization – June 5

XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: On motion of Leigh Martin, seconded by Dorothy Scally to go into executive session and not return to open session per MGL Ch. 30A, §21(a), under
exemption #2 to discuss strategy in preparation for a successor contract for the Superintendent of Schools and prepare for Collective Bargaining. The School Committee will not return to open session.

VOTED: Phil DeZutter, yes
       Tanna Jango, yes
       Dorothy Scally, yes
       Leigh Martin, yes
       Diane Duncan, yes

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.
Minutes by Kelly A. McElreath