

WOBURN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

December 17, 2018

A Regular Meeting of the Woburn School Committee was held on December 17, 2018 at the Joyce Middle School Conference Room, 55 Locust Street, Woburn, MA beginning at 7:00pm.

There was a moment of silence for former educator and coach Mr. Ronald "Rocky" Nelson.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Chisholm-Present, Ms. Crowley-Present, Mr. Kisiel-Present, Mr. Metters-Present, Mr. Mulrenan-Present, Dr. Wells-Present, Chairman Demers-Present.

APPROVAL OF RECORDS

Approval of 11.13.18 SC Minutes.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

Approval of 11.28.18 SC Minutes.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Student Representative Ryan Qualey was not in attendance due to basketball practice.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Jennifer Mack, 7 Edwards Road, a grade 6 parent from the Kennedy Middle School expressed her concerns about rumors going around due to an incident that involved a student at the Kennedy Middle School. She wanted to know if she could find out for sure this student will not be coming back to school.

Erich Shukan, 46 Quimby Ave, spoke on behalf of his colleagues. He asked the School Committee to unite to support the Teachers of Woburn.

Stacey Marino, 1 Mill Street, came in support of Jennifer Mack. She had questions primarily coming from children that parents can't answer. Will the child return to school? What should they be telling their children? What measures is the school going to be taking to help ensure that weapons will not be brought into school?

Chairman Demers said that because this topic was not on the agenda tonight, they would be violating open meeting law if they entered into a discussion or debate.

He said there are certain restrictions in sharing security measures and sharing student discipline measures. He did say that sharing any legal information going forward will be done and the school district has been doing the very best they can in sharing as much information as possible. Superintendent Crowley thanked the parents for their concern and for being in attendance tonight. He told them he issued a statement which can be found on the Woburn Public Schools website and we are working hard to do the best for our kids.

Mr. Mulrenan asked that a letter be drafted to the staff and administration of the Kennedy Middle School to thank them for their expertise and professionalism in the handling of the situation that occurred.

Ms. Crowley asked the parents to share their email addresses with Ms. MacLeod so Chairman Demers can keep them updated.

CITY COUNCIL LIAISON

No formal report tonight.

REPORTS/PRESENTATION OF SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF

Woburn's Retiring State Legislators

Representatives Jim Dwyer and Jay Kaufman were honored for their service. Both Representatives are retiring at the end of this year. Chairman Demers on behalf of the School Committee thanked them both for the service they have given to the City of Woburn. Rep. Dwyer thanked everyone for the honor of being elected for State Representative. He is proud of Woburn as a community. Rep. Dwyer thanked the School Committee for the job they do and their efforts. He is looking forward to his retirement. Rep. Kaufman said it has been an honor to work with Rep. Dwyer. Upon retirement, Rep. Kaufman will be doing leadership mentoring to enhance leadership skills.

Mr. Metters commented it has been 25 years since Ed Reform in Massachusetts, and asked what do they see as Ed Reform 2.0 and how do their successors work with the school committee to get there? Rep. Kaufman said the education funding formula in 1993 discounted things that they now find to be incredibly important. Health insurance, special needs costs, transportation costs and security. The formula is out of date. These things will need to be

addressed with the new legislation. Rep. Kaufman has strong feelings on MCAS exams. He thinks it is a misplaced commitment. He believes the only thing that moves the needle forward in terms of student performance is the quality of the teacher. Charter schools, class sizes do not move the needle. Rep. Dwyer spoke on the debate on Charter schools. Public schools deserve and need the funding.

A motion was made to suspend the regular order of business to take the AP Test Results/SAT Data next.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

AP Test Results/SAT Data

WMHS Principal Ms. Callanan and Guidance Curriculum Coordinator Ms. Donovan presented on the 2018 Advanced Placement Results and discussed SAT trends and analysis.

Principal Callanan told the committee that this year there are 328 students taking AP courses and she is hoping to increase those numbers as a result of our partnership with Mass Insights. An AP Art class was added this year. Dual Enrollment course numbers have increased. Ms. Donovan stated with the new addition of CPR at the high school, students who take the dual enrollment child development can get certified in CPR and walk right out of high school and get a job in a child care center.

Dr. Wells asked about the AP History and who it is offered to. He commented on sophomores taking a college level course. He mentioned writing skills are developed over a course of time. Ms. Callanan said AP US History is open to 10th graders. Ms. Callanan said US History I is taken as a freshman and AP US History is taken as a sophomore. Ms. Donovan said US History is taken in Middle School as well. Principal Callanan mentioned there are many choices to take as seniors for History.

Mr. Kisiel asked what is needed for college credit, is it 3 or more? Ms. Donovan said it depends on the colleges. Some colleges don't take it all. Only 88 of our seniors have applied to use their AP scores, they know if their schools accept it or not. Ms. Callanan said some schools only accept AP scores of 4's or 5's. You do benefit by having a more rigorous application even if schools do not accept them. Ms. Donovan said the College Board does not give Woburn a cohort. Woburn students take the AP exam, this is a requirement. Other districts that have higher scores might be because that district gives the student a choice to take the exam. The students who feel they will not do well do not have to take the exam. The AP exams are done

on the same day across the state. Mr. Kisiel asked about pushing for the prior to Labor Day start. Other communities have an opportunity to prepare two weeks before our start. Principal Callanan said by starting earlier it would benefit not just the AP Exams but also students taking Access testing, EL students and MCAS Exams. Chairman Demers asked about students taking and not taking AP Exams and trying to compare scores. Ms. Donovan said it is not apples to apples. You can't compare these scores. Ms. Callanan said the AP courses are challenging and vigorous. She said there is a system, there needs to be a teacher recommendation, grades from the prior year are looked at and there has been talk about making this more stringent last year. However, this works against what they are trying to do with Mass Insight. Their philosophy is opening up access and to get students to try a course in a subject area they excel in at least one AP course. Ms. Donovan commented in terms of statistical #'s for those students she feels it is more important to have students who are excited about a course. A "B" student should have the opportunity to take an AP course if it is a course they have an interest in. A grade of "B" in an AP course is exceptional for that student and they will learn that much more. We are not tapping into kids who will benefit from taking AP courses. To the 10th grade point, Ms. Donovan agrees they are not quite there, but also feels it is a great place to get their feet wet. Ms. Donovan said that all of the grade 10 students who took AP courses are happy they did so. Ms. Crowley asked if they feel that kids in AP Courses should be mandated to take the exam. Ms. Callanan said yes, if a student is taking an AP course the expectation should be that they should take the exam. If a student is not successful in the course, students can choose to drop in the beginning. There is a period of time they are allowed to do this. One of the things that negatively impacts our schools as a district is our policy of paying for the students to take the exams. She did propose to a subcommittee that moving forward we consider not paying for students to take exams. As we encourage more students to take AP exams that cost will go up. Right now it is up to \$32,000 per year. That chunk of change could go to other things like paying Mass Insight which is an investment in our teachers. Ms. Callanan has discussed this with the subcommittee.

A motion was made to return to regular order of business. Motion was seconded.
All in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

Vote to turnover Hurd Elementary School

The School Committee will vote to turn over the Hurd Elementary school site to the Woburn Recreation Commission.

Article 97 Law was enacted and approved on August 12, 2016. An act providing for the use of a certain parcel of land in the city of Woburn for recreational purposes.

Chairman Demers said at a previous meeting Mr. Dunkley had advised that his recommendation is that the committee have a vote to turn over the property to the Recreation Commission.

Supt. Crowley said an issue that has been raised before is the playground equipment at the Hurd is still very functional. The Altavesta and Linscott schools are interested in obtaining the playground. Supt. Crowley said we can turn it over and allow us time when the weather is nicer to move the playground from point A to point B.

Mr. Kisiel said there are memorials in the ground around the flag.

Mr. Metters made a motion as per the Acts of the Commonwealth of 2016 Chapter 244, that the Woburn School Committee turn over to the Recreation Department with the agent of the City of Woburn, the parcel and property of the Daniel P. Hurd Elementary School, provided that the Recreation Commission allows for the complete transfer of the playground equipment to the Altavesta and/or Linscott and that any memorials on or near the property as described by Mr. Kisiel are addressed. A conditional transfer as per January 1, 2019.

Mr. Mulrenan seconded the motion.

All in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Crowley-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Metters-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairman Demers-yes.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Contract Extension Vote

Superintendent Crowley discussed contract extension for Mr. Elia, current Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations. His intent was to retire June 30, 2019. Supt.

Crowley and Mr. Elia had many conversations over the spring and summer of 2018 about the possibility of extending his service. Mr. Elia is interested and would like to extend his service to the Woburn Public Schools for one year. Mr. Elia would like to stay until June 30, 2020.

Ms. Chisholm made a motion to approve the contract with some typos to be fixed by personnel. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mulrenan. All in favor, motion passed 7-0.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Chisholm-yes, Ms. Crowley-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Metters-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes, Dr. Wells-yes, Chairman Demers-yes.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Chisholm said they met on 12/12/18.

Questions were asked and answered by the Administration.

List of Bills were reviewed and approved.

Balance of Accounts were accepted.

A motion was made to approve the list of bills.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

A motion was made to approve the balance of accounts.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0.

There were no transfers.

Dr. Baldassarre spoke on updating our policy for lunch food program.

Resource Utilization Subcommittee

Mr. Kisiel said they met on 11/30/18.

They discussed the old Wyman. Dinisco Design will put together a feasibility study of the new section for Admin. They are looking into the splitting of the Deed. Malcolm White school will be fitted with extended handrails. Dave Dunkley informed the committee of LED lighting upgrades. The City will be looking at Solar panels on the Joyce roof. Discussion on the electrical panel upgrade at the Shamrock.

Personnel Subcommittee

Ms. Crowley said they have not met.

Curriculum and Professional Development Subcommittee

Dr. Wells said they met on 12/11/18.

They talked about the Middle School curriculum. This has been an ongoing discussion point with the committee for a number of years.

Dr. Crowley will be collecting data and looking into this.

Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Mulrenan said they met this evening at 6:00 p.m.

The only discussion they had was International travel.

They received a legal verbal recommendation on this topic. The recommendation is to be against any International travel at this time. They did not take a vote.

They did take this recommendation for further review.

Dr. Baldassarre presented a draft copy regarding the meal debt services for a later discussion.

Dr. Wells asked if the topic of International travel can be put on a future agenda item.

Student Services and Achievement Subcommittee

Mr. Metters said they will be meeting this Wednesday.

Communication and Community Relations Subcommittee

Chairman Demers said they have not met.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Demers said there were none.

WCEF grant program is still open until Jan. 22nd.

Asst. Principal Kevin Battle was named Massachusetts Assistant Principal of the Year by MSAA.

Ms. Chisholm made a motion to send Mr. Battle a congratulatory letter on behalf of the committee.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0

Mr. Mulrenan made a motion to send a letter in appreciation to the administration and staff at the Kennedy Middle School for the handling of the situation that occurred. Dr. Wells amended this motion to include the first responders for their actions in helping to minimize the situation.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 7-0

Boys and Girls Club Pot of Gold Raffle ongoing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Winterfest will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 19th at 7:00pm.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The library has an interim director. Dr. Wells would like to invite her to a future meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

For the purpose of a strategy discussion for contract negotiations with the Woburn Teachers Association.

Ms. Chisholm and Dr. Wells will be abstaining from attending the executive session meeting.

A motion was made to enter into executive session.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 5-0-2

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Chisholm-abstained, Ms. Crowley-yes, Mr. Kisiel-yes, Mr. Metters-yes, Mr. Mulrenan-yes,
Dr. Wells-abstained, Chairman Demers-yes

No vote was taken in executive session.

A motion was made to return to regular order of business

Motion seconded. Motion passed 5-0

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion was seconded, all in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Jean MacLeod

Recording Secretary