

MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 5, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Z. Bhuj, Chair, Topsfield
K. Prentakis, Middleton
D. Casamassima, Middleton
P. Bernhart, Boxford
T. Teleen, Boxford
T. Cooper, Vice Chair, Middleton
J. Ciampa, Middleton
W. Hodges, Topsfield
J. McLean, Boxford
M. Ogden, Topsfield

MEMBERS ABSENT C. Miller, Boxford

OTHERS PRESENT: M. Harvey, Superintendent
J. Sands, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations
P. Bullard, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

- A. **Call to Order** – Z. Bhuj, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the School Committee of January 5, 2022 to Order at 7:02pm, in the High School Library.
- B. **Remarks from the Chair** – Z. Bhuj thanked the staff and administrators for their hard work in opening on time and thanked the communities for staying vigilant.
- C. **Comments from the Public** – Trevor Currier, Middleton, asked if with the updated vaccination threshold being met, if the mask waiver had been sent in. M. Harvey responded that this was discussed at the last meeting and the waiver was submitted and approved, but we have not spoken with the Boxford Board of Health.
- D. **Negotiations Update** – T. Cooper informed the SC that the language was sent to the Union to approve to move forward. A response was received today and will be reviewed.
- E. **High School Principal Report** – M. Carabatsos informed the SC that there will be no semester exams in 2 weeks due to the mental health and anxiety being felt with the rising number of COVID cases. The anticipated absences would make preparation difficult. The School Improvement Plan was reviewed which will highlight how Masco is moving forward from the instructional point of view. The committee has met 3 times as a group. The mission and expectations were reviewed. A strong mission statement is important and provides expectations for the students. Curriculum and instruction timeline for strategic objectives were reviewed. There should be support for everyone to feel safe, healthy and able to engage. Feeling connected and belonging makes you perform better. A survey will be sent out to assess how comfortable students feel in our building. Equity and achievement for students was reviewed and we need to be intentional how this will be rolled out. SHAC is creating a program to address mental health issues at Masco. We will be using USafeHS research and information app which offers students social and emotional learning content. Data can be reviewed anonymously. Z. Bhuj asked if there would be an adult/family component. The series is for students, adults, staff and families. The Academic Success Center, tier 2 and tier 3 interventions were reviewed. The National Honor Society has started peer tutoring and we want to grow this program in the spring. IEP and 504 modifications and accommodations continue. Unfinished learning is very difficult to catch up on.

We are using Formative to track growth and assess unfinished learning. After school Acceleration Academies are being created for Math and English. Students will be invited to attend and there will be 10-12 students in each academy.

T. Teleen asked if the number of absences will impact learning. The learning losses are being felt nationally and teachers are reteaching curriculum which takes more time. Discussion followed regarding how students are identified. It is the school's intention to provide ongoing and intentional professional development to meet the needs of all learners and it is important for all teachers to be available for all professional development being offered. This will ensure the curriculum is relevant and provides opportunities for authentic learning.

- F. **Student Advisory Board** – Stella Nagle informed the SC that Student Council and Student Government are exploring ways to promote community and connection in a safe way. She thanked the administration and staff for their hard work in keeping everyone safe. There was an overwhelming thank you from the students for canceling semester exams.
- G. **Financial Forecast** – J. Sands provided the Preliminary FY22 Operating Forecast. The forecast is to end the year \$532,000 favorable to the budget, unless something drastic happens. The revenues were reviewed with the transportation reimbursement much more than expected. The expenditures were reviewed with staff salaries reviewed for savings as well as other savings.
- H. **Superintendent's Report** – M. Harvey provided the updated 12/27 guidance from the CDC which stated that positive individuals need to isolate and non-vaccinated individuals need to quarantine, DESE adopted the same update. Positive cases must isolate 5 days instead of 10 and return on day 6 if asymptomatic and fever free for 24 hours and wear a mask at all times. However, if you have a fever, cough, congestion or sore throat stay home. Social distancing for an additional 5 days at lunch upon the return to school. If a person is fully vaccinated and asymptomatic they are exempt from the protocol. Close contact unvaccinated can test and stay 5 days from the date of last exposure. If a student is unvaccinated and is a close contact not from school, they are not eligible for the test and stay. They must quarantine for 5 days then test negative with no symptoms. A symptomatic close contact should quarantine and test ASAP. Rapid tests and KN95 masks were available to staff and over 200 employees received them. The COVID case number reporting is becoming a challenge due to at home testing. PCR tests are confirmed and catalogued by the Dept. of Public Health database. Cases are likely to be unreported due to at home testing. With at home testing no tracing can be done. There have been 55 positive cases since 12/15 with 29 reported over the break. To date in January we have had 34 positive cases. M. Harvey reviewed the break down of staff/students and high school/middle school. The number of staff and faculty absent is continuing to rise daily and the lack of available substitutes is a problem. Z. Bhujju asked how sports teams are being impacted. If 1/3 of a team tests positive, the entire team has to quarantine. T. Teleen asked for an update on the mask waiver. The week of 12/17 we hit the 80% vaccinated status and submitted the attestation form to the state and the approved waiver was received. The Boxford Health Ordinance states that you have to wear a mask in public buildings.
- I. **Subcommittee Reports**
1. **Community Relations** – T. Teleen informed the SC that the next meeting is scheduled for 1/12 at 6:30pm
 2. **Budget** – T. Cooper reminded the SC that the next meeting is 1/26 at 5:00pm with the Dept. Heads.
 3. **Anti-Racism** – W. Hodges informed the SC there is not a meeting scheduled.

4. Policy – M. Ogden informed the SC that the next meeting is 1/10 at 7:30pm.
5. Liaisons Update – M. Ogden gave a brief update on the Topsfield Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee.

J. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of December 15, 2021 Meeting Minutes
2. Warrants of \$1 254,399.85 (12) signed since December 15, 2021.
3. Approve Model UN Overnight Field Trip

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda by T. Cooper, seconded by T. Teleen, and unanimously approved

MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda

VOTE: 10-0, Motion passed

Z. Bhuju made a Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm .

Submitted By: _____ Approved _____
Lynn Viselli, Recording Secretary Date

Per the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, the list of documents that were either distributed to the Masconomet School Committee before the meeting in the packet or at the meeting.

1. Agenda
2. HS Principal Report
3. Financial Forecast
4. Superintendent Report
5. Consent Agenda