

MHS PCO Meeting

January 13, 2024 7 pm

Welcome

Melissa Kaplowitch, Co-President, welcomed everyone and introduced the guest speaker, Interim Superintendent Robidoux. Other board members present were Julie Peach (co-President), KerryFrances Bourne (Vice-President), Stacy Farris (Treasurer), Sylvia Kane (Secretary).

Guest Speaker

Interim Superintendent Robidoux stated that in the six months that he has been in Marblehead Public Schools he has witnessed a lot of passion. Despite all the challenges, he saw a basis for discussion to move MPS forward and do what's best for students. He commended the administrative team he works with.

Mr. Robidoux reiterated that he has an open door policy and endeavors to respond to emails within 48 hours.

Mr. Robidoux discussed some of the new initiatives at MPS. He discussed the Joint Committee for School Safety, Joint Committee for Labor Relations, and the Anti-Discrimination Committee, which will initially focus on anti-semitism, but eventually incorporate focus on other forms of discrimination such as racism and xenophobia.

A parent expressed concern about teacher attrition post strike and discussed the correlation between well funded schools and property values.

Superintendent Robidoux indicated that 94 new staff were hired by MPS in the last six months. In his opinion the new contract is pretty fair with room for growth and an opportunity to close the delta between MPS and neighboring districts.

A parent expressed the need for transparency about the 2026 school budget in order to get buy-in from the community should an override become necessary. The Superintendent expressed his intention to ask for a level service budget. Special education tends to be a variable cost and difficult to anticipate.

A parent pointed out that the high school will be paid for in 2026 and will be coming off of tax bills.

A parent asked about teacher morale. The Superintendent stated that generally the faculty were joyful to be back, with some dissatisfaction at the outcome of the negotiations. Dr. Carlson indicated that everyone wanted to come back.

Interim Superintendent Robidoux expressed his desire to stay at MPS on a permanent basis and would welcome the support.

Treasurer's Report

Available funds are \$87, 177.

Funding Requests

A motion was made to increase the Scholarship Budget by \$3,000. Part of existing budget went to give two scholarship to music students going on an enrichment trip to Ireland. It is anticipated that there will be more requests as we get closer to the end of the year. The motion was seconded and the motion passed.

A motion was made to increase the Enrichment Budget by \$5,000. Assistant Superintendent, Julia Ferreira is implementing a program for media literacy and safety for middle and high school students. MVMS and MHS are sharing the cost of the program. There are two planned sessions at MHS, one at MVMS, and one for the community. The motion was seconded and the motion passed.

A motion was made to increase the Teacher Appreciation budget by \$3,000. Since teachers will be in school during what would normally be February Break, the PCO has planned a week of treats for them, including bringing in Espresso Dave, lunch, a soup day and a sandwich day. The motion was seconded and passed.

A motion was introduced to allocate \$1,000 to the Junior class to fund a web engine that is needed to conduct the junior auction. The motion was seconded and the motion passed.

\$73.98 was allocated to Dr. Carlson for materials for a team building activity. Since the amount was below the threshold no vote was necessary.

Magic Hat Update

MHS week is January 28-February 1

Snack Fairy

A parent asked about alternative ways to send in snacks other than bringing in. Parents can send snacks directly to the school via Amazon.

Principal's Update

Girls Varsity basketball team played at TD Garden.

An updated calendar will be released shortly. Events already listed will not change.

Scheduling for next academic year is starting.

MHS was due for a NEASC visit, but has agreed to delay it by one year due to the strike.

The state of the roof was discussed.

Next meeting is March 10, 2025 at 7 pm