

**MINUTES**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Location: 5 West Street, School Committee Room**

**October 20, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

**In Attendance:**

**Absent**

George Scobie

Jessie Harrington

Gail Holloway

Dottie Kauffman

Meghan McCrillis

Casey Handfield

Beth Chamberland

Cecelia Wirzbicki

Erin Lambert - Framingham State Student, 2020 AHS graduate

Gregg Desto via Zoom

Nathan Castellano via Zoom

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Scobie called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:** None

**SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS:**

Dr. Handfield introduced Nathan Castellano (joined via Zoom), a 7th grader at Auburn Middle School. Nathan recently rescued a boy who was struggling to stay above water in a pool. This action was incredibly heroic and brave.

Nathan explained that he was swimming in a pool at Pine Acres during a Boy Scout outing. While in the pool he noticed a boy, not from his group splashing, coughing and struggling, He jumped to help the boy which alerted adults.

Mr. Desto recognized Nathan over the morning announcements and had a pizza party for Nathan and his friends.

The committee thanked Nathan for his bravery and congratulated him for his impressive extreme effort to save the boy's life.

Dr. Handfield also announced that our longtime SRO, Officer Brian Kennedy, will be leaving his position for a promotion to Sergeant. Dr. Handfield could not thank Officer Kennedy enough for all of his work with the students, staff, administration and community over the past 12 years.

**Motion made to approve** 9/22/21 school committee meeting minutes, Jessie Harrington made motion to accept, seconded by Dottie Kauffman, unanimously approved.

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT:** Jasmyn Gates, and Alli McGill joined us through Zoom.

Jasmyn stated the high was in a tricky position with COVID but all are bouncing back. The football team and soccer team will be back practicing and playing soon. STUCO is selling bracelets for breast cancer awareness month. Seniors are in crunch time for college deadlines.

Alli McGill stated the girls Soccer team is starting to practice again, she agrees the COVID situation is getting better. Many students just completed PSATs.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**COVID Update:**

Dr. Handfield provided an update on COVID cases in the district. The high school was especially hit hard, with many close contacts and a number of positive cases between students and staff. We have had 109 total positive cases in the district. 72 of those cases were unvaccinated, 26 vaccinated and 11 partial vaccination.

### **State Mask Extension**

Dr. Handfield shared the official statement from Commissioner Riley regarding the state's mask extension that will continue through at least November 1st. As of now, we are still waiting for extended guidance from the state regarding masks as well as Winter sports.

Meghan McCrillis asked if Hopkington met the 80% threshold because of mandated staff vaccination. Dr. Handfield stated he did not believe that was the case.

Dottie Kauffman stated as most students eat outdoors at the high school, if there would be closer monitoring of the students. Dr. Handfield stated that the policies and procedures have been looked at and will be adjusted.

### **Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

Dr. Handfield discussed the three warrant articles from the school department for the October 26th Special Town Meeting. After review and discussion with the Town Administration, it has been decided to indefinitely postpone Article 5 related to the proposed parking/traffic mitigation measures at Bryn Mawr School. It will be held and looked at in May. Dr. Handfield stated we have unanimous approval for the other 2 warrants.

Gail Holloway asked if this expansion will be for parent parking as she has noticed all of the no parking signs. Dr. Handfield explained yes, this work would alleviate the parking issues as well as assist in the traffic problem during drop off and dismissal. This space will also serve as an overflow parking area for Swanson Road Intermediate School. This will benefit the schools as well as the town people.

### **Staples Donation**

Dr. Handfield spoke of the Staples donation of 500 pencil boxes full of school supplies that were delivered to Bryn Mawr & Pakachoag last month. On Friday, October 15th, Staples donated another 600 pencil boxes full of supplies to Swanson Road Intermediate School. Dr. Handfield thanked Staples for their generous donation, and thanked Kristien Pappas for assisting with procuring the donation and delivering the materials.

**Motion made** To accept the donation of 1100 pencil boxes from Staples with gratitude. Gail Holloway made a motion to accept, seconded by Dottie Kauffman, unanimously approved.

### **New Business:**

#### **November 3rd School Committee Meeting:**

Dr. Handfield stated with the MASC/MASS Joint Conference starting Wednesday, November 3rd, there is a conflict with the next scheduled school committee meeting on November 3rd. It was Dr. Handfield's

recommendation that the November 3rd meeting be eliminated from the meeting calendar and reconvene on the next scheduled meeting date, November 17th.

**Motion made** To strike the November 3rd date from the School Committee meeting schedule and resume during the next scheduled meeting date of November 17th.

Dottie Kauffman made a motion to accept, seconded by Gail Holloway, unanimously approved.

### **Teaching and Learning Report:**

#### **October 12, 2021 Professional Development Day**

Dr. Chamberland reported the district participated in a remote professional development day. The focus for the majority of teaching staff was the introduction to Universal Design for Learning. This is exciting for the district and we are excited to begin the work. Feedback from staff was very positive.

### **MCAS Results**

Dr. Chamberland reported the 2020 MCAS results were released on September 21, 2021. Across the state, in nearly all grade levels and content areas, students did not score as well as they had in 2019. These results are not surprising given the various models of schooling students participated in coupled with disruption to school due to COVID 19. Auburn students outperformed the state average in all grade levels and content areas. Given the ramifications COVID 19 had on our students, they still performed well. Schools are in the process of analyzing these results as one piece of data that will be used to support the future success of our students.

### **Current Vaccination Reporting**

Dr. Chamberland reported that as of Monday, October 4th, the following students and staff at Auburn High School have reported their vaccination status to us:

Students:	Fully Vaccinated	318/737	43%
	Not Vaccinated	107/737	15%
	Not reported	312/737	42%
Staff	Fully Vaccinated	60/120	50%
	Not Reported or Not Vaccinated	60/120	50%

As of Monday, October 4th, the following students and staff at Auburn Middle School have reported their vaccination status to us:

Students:	Fully Vaccinated	185/646	29%
	Not Vaccinated	163/646	25%
	Not reported	298/646	46%
Staff	Fully Vaccinated	57/84	68%
	Not Reported or Not Vaccinated	27/84	32%

Meghan McCrillis & Dottie Kauffman asked if administration was considering or would consider a possible mandate for staff. Dr. Handfield feels that is an avenue that is difficult to navigate legally and with the union. He also stated he does not want to separate the staff and cause a rift. Gail Holloway & George Scobie did think the numbers would be higher, they both support whatever direction administration decides is the best option. George Scobie reiterated that Dr. Handfield and Dr. Chamberland have the full support of the committee.

### **Test and Stay**

Dr. Chamberland shared that on Wednesday, October 13th, we began the Test and Stay program at each of the schools. The provider, Omama Health Care from Worcester has done a terrific job thus far with implementing the program. In the first two days, they conducted over 200 BiNAX Now Rapid Tests on students and staff, most of which were negative. To date, only 1 positive test. This has allowed us to keep many students in school who would otherwise need to quarantine.

### **Business/Financial Report:**

#### **2027 Capital Improvement Plan Approval**

Mrs. Wirbicki and Mr. Fahey provided the 2027 CIP items for the School Department as requested by the Town Manager, for approval to the school committee.

**Motion made** To approve the 2023 & 2027 CIP as presented.

Jessie Harrington made a motion to accept, seconded by Gail Holloway, unanimously approved.

#### **Year to Date Budget Report as of October 14, 2021:**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a year to date Budget Report for review.

#### **Budget Transfers as of October 14, 2021:**

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a list of Budget transfers in an effort to account for salary increases for the new Fiscal year. Many of the transfers are within the same series and presented for information. However, there are some transfers listed that are between different series requiring approval.

**Recommended Motion:**

To approve the Budget Transfers between the series as presented by the Business Manager.

Dottie Kauffman made a motion to approve, Gail Holloway seconded, unanimously approved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

At 7:41 p.m. the meeting was adjourned. Mr. Scobie made a motion to adjourn for the evening; Mrs. Kaufman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mandy Williams

Recording Secretary

**Referenced Documents:**

Extension of DESE Mask Requirements

Warrant Article 5

MCAS 2021 - Summary

CIP 2027 and CIP 2023

Year to Date Budget Report

Budget Transfers