

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
Town Hall, 6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048, Room 3ab**

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An **Open Meeting** of the Mansfield School Committee was held in room 3AB of the Town Hall on Tuesday, January 21, 2020. The open meeting session was called to order by Chair Kiera O'Neil at 7:01 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Kiera O'Neil, Chair  
Lynn Cavicchi, Vice Chair  
Linda Fernando  
Jenn Walsh

**Administration Present:**

Teresa Murphy, Superintendent of Schools  
Michael Connolly, Assistant Superintendent (Teaching/Learning)  
Edward Donoghue, Assistant Superintendent (Finance/Operations)

**Members Absent:**

Lauren Scher

**Public Speak:** None

**Communications:** None

**Administrative Reports:**

***Superintendent:*** Superintendent Murphy highlighted two points:

- Teresa met with the town to discuss limitations to snow plowing this year due to decreased services from our contractors. They will make every effort to get schools open if there is a storm but high accumulation or long duration storms could be troublesome.
- Kindergarten registration is underway and we have already matched our enrollment numbers for this year. We will monitor and determine if we will need to add classrooms for 2020-2021.

***Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning:*** Assistant Superintendent Michael Connolly announced staff recognitions:

- MASSCUE Educator of the month: Jennifer Keller (November) Sandra Beck (December) for their use of technology in the classroom.
- Theresa Nyhan was awarded the MA Women in Athletics Distinguished Service Award for her guidance and nurturing of female athletes.

***Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations:*** None

**High School Student Representative Report:** Lily Barnes provided an update on a recent meeting between the Student Advisory Committee and Principal Watkins. Items discussed: Use of technology, Communication improvements across the student body, Upcoming semi-formal, Prom, and upcoming finals week.

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
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**Approval of Warrant:**

**Warrant Memo dated 12-09-19**

Warrants	Warrant #'s	Dates	Amount
Salary & Wages	2019-09	11/01/19	1,723,168.61
Goods & Services	2020-1011	11/12/19	570,022.99
Salary & Wages	2020-10	11/15/19	1,735,025.48
Goods & Services	2020-1012	11/26/19	651,516.45
Salary & Wages	2019-11	11/29/19	1,691,192.47
			\$ 6,370,926.00

**Motion** to approve the warrant by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Warrant Memo dated 01-10-20**

Warrants	Warrant #'s	Dates	Amount
Goods & Services	2020-1014	12/10/19	565,329.67
Salary & Wages	2020-12	12/13/19	2,016,254.43
Goods & Services	2020-1015	12/24/19	688,017.69
Salary & Wages	2019-13	12/27/19	1,711,995.43
			\$ 4,981,597.22

**Motion** to approve the warrant (with memo date correction) by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Open Session Minutes of 11-19-19**

**Motion** to approve the minutes by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Open Session Minutes of 12-19-19**

**Motion** to approve the minutes by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Open Session Minutes of 01-07-20**

**Motion** to approve the minutes by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Executive Session Minutes of 01-07-20**

**Motion** to approve the minutes by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh  
**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
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**Gifts:**

The following are all PAC gifts to QMS. All items have been discussed and approved by Principal McGovern. TOTAL: \$4,238

- **Flexible seating for one classroom on blue team \$660 (Kristen Morris)**  
Purchase flexible seating units in Kristen Morris' grade 7 Social Studies classroom in order to promote social/emotional learning.
- **Updated lighting & Flexible seating for two Academic Learning Center classrooms \$608 (Betsy D'Ambrosia)**  
Purchase flexible seating units in ALC classrooms in order to promote social/emotional learning. New lighting will not be as harsh as fluorescent lights.
- **New lights for tower garden \$270 (Jill Sheridan)**  
Garden will be maintained by Green Club but will serve grade 8 students in lessons in sustainable soil as part of the environmental engineering curriculum.
- **Three presentations on bullying and harassment "Deanna's Education Theater" \$2700 (Dave McGovern)**  
Presentations for each grade which will help improve the culture of the school for students in line with objective IV.

**Harvard Pilgrim \$500 Grant for Backpack Buddies**

Will be used for storage and shelving. This will aid in our growing supply of donations.

**The Stop&Shop Family Foundation & Hockomock Area YMCA \$1000 gift for Backpack Buddies**

Will be used to purchase additional food items.

**Old Business:**

**Committee Updates:**

Audit: No Update

CIP: No update

Budget: Met last Thursday. Meeting with town Budget subcommittee is scheduled Feb 5.

Facilities: Met last week to review updates. Matt Jacques will provide an update tonight.

Policy: Have not met but will be regrouping soon.

Master Plan: Met 2 weeks ago. Reviewed data collected at the community forum. Fine-tuning items and setting priorities. Superintendent Murphy will meet with Master Plan Committee regarding school efforts.

OPEB Task force: No update

**New Business:**

**Facilities Quarterly Update:**

- Raptor: From 9/9/2018 through now, the district has checked over 5900 visitors through the system.

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
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- Work orders have been closed at a rapid rate. Many are old work orders that have been sitting in the system. Recently most work orders are being addressed within 48 hours. It may not be resolved but at least the item is assessed.
- Water testing: The district will continue to test each year on a rotating schedule.
- Security: All work on exterior doors related to the safety grant have been completed. All doors have been re-keyed.
- Fobs: The district has converted to fob entry. This has been very successful.
- Winter break: Painting of the QMS main hallway and MHS halls/doors have been completed. Paul's place work has been completed to clean the inside and prepare for use with Backpack Buddies.
- Upcoming projects:
  1. April vacation: prepare for electrical work at MHS
  2. Paving behind MHS and QMS
  3. Training on the use of our facilities system 'School Dude.' Hope to automate rental of facilities by community.

***MSBA Accelerated Repair Program:***

Assistant Superintendent Edward is working with an engineering consultant on review of the MHS and QMS boilers. The engineer reviewed our systems and made recommendations. Tonight, Ed is presenting the Statement of Interest for both units. Priority 1 is the MHS boiler replacement and priority 2 is the QMS boiler replacement.

Steps needed:

- School Committee approves
- Select Board approves
- Receive response from state
- If approved, Mansfield would need to commit to our share of \$ toward project at town meeting
- Potential start date would be summer of 2021

**Motion by Jenn Walsh / Linda Fernando:** Resolved- Having convened in an open meeting on January 21, 2020, the School Committee of the Town of Mansfield, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated January 21, 2020 for the Mansfield High School located at 250 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048 which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future. Submitted Statement of Interest – Priority 5- the Mansfield High School was constructed in 1967, the building boilers & related components were last upgraded in 1989 and currently do not operate effectively & efficiently. This situation and the environment it creates presents many challenges in delivering the best education possible for the students of Mansfield; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
Town Hall, 6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048, Room 3ab**

**Discussion:** Does the estimate allow for inflation cost if we are not completing the project until 2021? Ed said some buffer should be added. At this point, the district is not voting for any cost figure.

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

**Motion by Jenn Walsh / Linda Fernando:** Resolved- Having convened in an open meeting on January 21, 2020, the School Committee of the Town of Mansfield, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated January 21, 2020 for the Qualters Middle School located at 240 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048 which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future. Submitted Statement of Interest – Priority 5- the Qualters Middle School was constructed in 1953, the building boilers are over 25 years old & in poor condition, they do not operate effectively & efficiently. This situation and the environment it creates presents many challenges in delivering the best education possible for the students of Mansfield; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

***Connolly Bus- One year Extension to contract through 2020-2021:***

We are in the third year of our contract and have the option to extend it by 1 year twice. Ed Donoghue is in favor of extending the contract which allows for minimal fee increases.

**Motion** to approve a one year extension to the Connolly Bus Contract for 2020-2021 by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

The district will propose doing this again in January 2020 for the 2021-2022 school year. After that extension the contract must go out for bid.

***MHS proposed changes to class rank:***

Principal Mary Watkins and Guidance Director Tina Karidoyanes presented a proposal to eliminate class rank starting with this year's freshman class (YOG 2023.) They provided the historical aspects of class rank and then the pros and cons of the ranking system. A couple of notes for cons: 1) Last year the top 19 students were so close together that the school had to extend the GPAs out to 4 decimal places just to differentiate the students. 2) Class rank rarely benefits our students. For example, a 4.0 student can be ranked as low as 55 or higher. Sometimes that places a student beyond a scholarship opportunity . 3) Many area public and private schools have already eliminated class rank with no negative impact to college admissions.

Principal Watkins proposes looking at options for continuing to recognize the valedictorian and salutatorian as that is still important to our parents and student body.

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
Town Hall, 6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048, Room 3ab**

Discussion: Generally there was a favorable response by school committee. No vote will be taken tonight to allow some thought and any feedback from the public. Vote will occur on 2/11/20. MHS Senior Lily Barnes spoke of her own personal story and how the GPA had a negative effect on her ability to get scholarships. There is also a lot of unneeded stress associated with GPA since many colleges do not look at it. Kiera O'Neil felt it important that we continue to value our top students and look at new ways to recognize our students. For example, the high school could adopt Latin honors (i.e. Magna, Summa...)

***Program of Studies- MHS:***

Principal Mary Watkins and Guidance Director Tina Karidoyanes reviewed the proposed changes for the 2020-2021 Program of Studies:

The major additions (apart from new courses) include the following:

- Updated the order of departments to be alphabetical by department/specialty title
- Updated sequencing grids based on changes
- Updated course descriptions, pre-requisites and titles in each department
- Progressed with sub-separate course name change

Major Content Additions:

- Cultural Studies Through Memoir CP/H - grades 10, 11, & 12
- Understanding Media in the Modern Age CP/H - grades 11 & 12
- World History CP/H - grade 9
- Pre-Calculus CPB - grade 12
- AP Calculus BC - grade 12
- Introduction to Business CP - grades 9 & 10
- Digital Media CP - grades 9-11
- Digital Art Studio H - grades 11 & 12
- The Art of Mindfulness CP - grades 9-12
- Musicianship H - grades 10-12

Major Content Deletions:

- Western Civilization 2 CP/H - grade 9
- Conflicts in Modern Society CP/H - grade 12
- Visual Basic I H - grades 9-12
- Life After High School - grades 11 & 12
- Vocational Awareness - grades 11 & 12
- Introduction to Child Development Theory - grades 10-12
- Child Development/Practicum - grades 10-12
- Advanced Art & Technology H - grades 10-12
- Photography II CP - grades 10-12
- Advanced Photography - grades 10-12
- Wind Ensemble - grades 10-12

Courses have been added or deleted based on resource availability, student interest, cultural competency and curriculum alignment. There was extended discussion on Child Development. It has been a long standing course that will be removed. It will be offered in a different manner as part of the career practicum. Two of the key issues were the inability to schedule blocks of time for high school students that matched up to the needs of Little Hornets and the inability to find a

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
Town Hall, 6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048, Room 3ab**

properly licensed teacher for the program. Kiera asked Mary to be sure to make students aware of this change. Mary and Tina already have plans in place for making that announcement.

**Motion** to approve the changes to the MHS Program of Studies for 2020-2021 by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

***Program of Studies- QMS:***

Principal David McGovern reviewed the proposed changes for the 2020-2021 Program of Studies. There are three key changes:

1. Science Grade 6: Next year, QMS will start with a 3 year realignment of the science curriculum. Currently grade 6 is Earth science, grade 7 is Physical science and grade 8 is Life science. The new curriculum will move toward an integrated approach where all three skills are taught each year. In 2020-21, grade 6 will incorporate the new changes and these changes will move forward with them through grade 8. By 2022-23, all grades will be taught in this manner. Kiera O'Neil asked if there was any concern with grade 8 students forgetting content. Dave reported feeling much better about this program than the one currently in place. The new method aligns with the state curriculum and the district will hopefully see improvements on MCAS scores. Lynn Cavicchi asked what would happen to this plan if the textbook portion of the budget is not approved. Dave responded that the changes could still work but staff would have to be creative in the use of online resources. Having the textbooks would be ideal.

2. Adjustments will be made to the math placement language. Course content would not change. These adjustments could help to open the door for some flexibility if a student qualifies for an advanced level placement or alternate pathways.

3. Language has been changed for the artistic design course in grade 8 allowing for greater flexibility in blending performing and visual arts skills. These changes will allow students to more fully experience the creative design process.

**Motion** to approve the changes to the QMS Program of Studies for 2020-2021 by Linda Fernando / Jenn Walsh

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

***Technology Integration Update:***

Assistant Superintendent presented an update on the Chromebook rollout for Mansfield Public Schools. Lori Letendre and Julia Greenstine were in attendance as well. The primary focus right now is to rollout the Chromebooks to the schools per the planned timeline and to properly communicate to staff, students and parents how the rollout will affect each individual.

Michael Connolly provided a brief history of the project, an update on what has been completed to date along with the plan through 2021-22 school year. This plan is broken down by grade level. He highlighted the communication plan which ensures that lead communicators share the same message and that details of the upcoming Chromebook rollout are communicated effectively. Included in his presentation is a detailed communication plan. Weekly, communication will be provided to the District Leadership Team. At regular union leadership meetings, Michael will

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
Town Hall, 6 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048, Room 3ab**

provide updates on progress. The Chromebook rollout plan and staff survey have been sent to staff; communication will be sent home to parents tomorrow. Further details on communication can be found in the presentation.

***Superintendent Murphy Formative Assessment:***

According to MA DESE guidelines for Superintendent Evaluations, superintendents must provide a mid-year progress report and present it to the school committee. No evaluation or vote is required at this time. Superintendent Murphy selected many highlights of the 2019-20 school year and then focused on her progress to goals. She began by letting the committee know that she is the beneficiary of working with many talented individuals who are dedicated to our students. Based on unsolicited input, she has received many comments on how the district is moving in a positive direction.

Goal 1: Student Learning Goal (Outdoor recess- begin the multi-year process of refreshing/rebuilding the schools' playgrounds.) Substantial progress has been made on this goal and Teresa is on target. A recess committee has been formed and has met twice. Members include class room, physical education teachers, health administrators and parents. The recess committee has distributed a survey of staff and will review results. Teresa's role is to take on the physical aspect of the playgrounds. Recess concepts such as various play methods and activities will be the responsibility of individual schools as they have the best vision of their students. Teresa's goal is to provide the school committee with a report at the end of the year.

Goal 2: Professional Practice Goal (Participate in ***Leadership Matters*** development program with Kevin Dumas and Ron Sellon.) Progress has been made on this goal and is on target. Teresa has attended all of the four course sessions and read all five books. Phase II of the program has begun. The Mansfield group is developing a project that will take them through the next 16 months. The visionary statement of the project is : *Mansfield has an engaged diverse citizenry who are knowledgeable and capable of contributing to decisions which affect all residents of the Town. Mansfield has an organized and replicable system that facilitates this.*

Goal 3: District Improvement Goal (Construct a program to accept international students into the Mansfield Public Schools.) The outcome was different than originally envisioned. Research was carried out with the high school staff, neighboring school districts, companies who sponsor international students, our attorney and the MA guidelines on student visas, school responsibilities, etc. The goal was originally constructed to meet two different objectives: Foster a global perspective while also being a source of revenue for the district. The surprising result of the research has led Teresa to place a hold on this effort. Reasons for this include:

- Revenue can be generated but often at an offsetting cost to run the program including increased demands on staff for guidance, counseling and EL services as well as the cost of a director for the program.
- Mansfield is not currently School Choice so our doors are not open to neighboring districts.
- Introducing this program would add a new item to the MHS school improvement plan which would be difficult to take on at this time.
- Our World Travel Club is open to all students and provides an opportunity for our students to travel internationally. We can explore options for these students to bring their experiences to life once they return to school.
- Various courses already promote global awareness. We could expand on those concepts.

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting  
Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2020  
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Teresa noted that this has been a worthwhile goal to pursue and although we will not adopt this currently, she sees great benefit in supporting efforts in all grades to provide our school community with a more global view.

**Upcoming Agenda Items:**

School Calendar 2020-2021

Student Opportunity Act (information and required reporting)

Class rank vote

**New School Committee Business:** None

**Other- Items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours prior to this meeting:** None

**Documents Referenced:**

Presentation on Class Rank

MHS Program of Studies - proposed changes

QMS Program of Studies- proposed changes

District Technology Plan- status on Chromebook rollout

Superintendent Midyear Progress Report

**Motion to adjourn:** At 9:30 p.m., **Motion** to adjourn the open meeting by Linda Fernando/Jenn Walsh

**Motion Carries 4 - 0**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Diane Nugent, Secretary to the  
Superintendent & School Committee