

**Tewksbury School Committee
Wednesday, April 14, 2021
Regular Meeting
All Members Attended Remotely via WebEx**

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Keith M. Sullivan, Chairperson
Shannon M. Demos, Vice-Chairperson
Bridget L. Garabedian, Clerk
Nicholas G. Parsons, Member
John R. Stadtman, Member

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Christopher J. Malone, Superintendent
Brenda T. Regan, Assistant Superintendent
David A. Libby, Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Sullivan reconvened the April 14, 2021, Regular School Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m.

RECOGNITION

Tewksbury VFW Post 8164 2020-2021 Patriot Pen & Voice of Democracy Essay Winners

Vinnie Oliva, Commander of Tewksbury VFW Post 8164 announced the winners of the 2021 Patriot's Pen and the Voice of Democracy Essay competition. Mr. Oliva reported that Brooke Bunyan, a tenth grade student at Tewksbury Memorial High School, won the Post level competition, placed first at the District level, and advanced to the State level taking fourth place, Brooke was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Chris Rabideau, a sixth grade student at the John Ryan Elementary School, won the Post level, placed first at the District level, and advanced to the State level taking sixth place. Kevin Daigle, a sixth grade student at the John Ryan Elementary School, won the Post level and advanced to the District level placing third. Mr. Oliva recognized and thanked Ms. Kathleen Anderson, a teacher at the Ryan Elementary School relating that she sends over 200 entries yearly to Post 8164. Mr. Sullivan thanked the VFW for the great program and offered thanks to Ms. Anderson. On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Garabedian read a Resolution of Recognition in honor of Kevin, Christopher, and Brooke for their outstanding performance.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Notes From Tewksbury Memorial High School

Jack Stadtman presented the notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School stating that it has been a busy month at Tewksbury Memorial High School.

- Mr. Statman offered congratulations to members of the DECA State's Team for their hard work during the MA State finals, unfortunately none of us made it.
- The Esports Team is still up and running and placing high in games like Rocket League. If you would like to join, see the *Morning Update* for more details.
- TMHS Drama Club is working on their latest production of *Charlie Brown*. It will be a virtual performance coming this month.
- Mr. Bernard is hosting a school orientation meeting for all students coming back to the school, who have not been in the school yet, to learn more about the new traffic patterns and stairway procedures. If you would like to attend, it will be held at the school tomorrow at 2:15 PM.
- Student Council is meeting weekly to find new virtual activities for the school.
- Tune-in daily to the *Morning Update* Show.

PRESENTATIONS

None

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Mr. Sullivan checked-in with Jason Marshall to inquire if anyone had called-in wishing to speak on any item on the agenda. Seeing no one, Mr. Sullivan moved on to approval of the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (File)

Ms. Demos moved, seconded by Mr. Stadtman, to approve the March 3, 2021 Special School Committee meeting minutes.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Mr. Stadtman, and Mr. Sullivan. Voting to Abstain: Ms. Garabedian and Mr. Parsons. Motion carried 3-0-2.

Ms. Demos moved, seconded by Mr. Stadtman, to approve the March 10, 2021 Regular School Committee meeting minutes.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Mr. Stadtman, and Mr. Sullivan. Voting to Abstain: Ms. Garabedian and Mr. Parsons. Motion carried 3-0-2.

SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS (File)

Ms. Garabedian moved to approve the payroll period ending March 18, 2021, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,376,916.60, seconded by Ms. Demos.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Stadtman, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Garabedian moved to approve the payroll period ending April 1, 2021 to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,382,275.40, seconded by Ms. Demos.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Mr. Stadtman, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Malone, Superintendent

Mr. Malone provided an update on the Pooled testing and implored parents, students, and staff members to adhere to the travel advisories. Last Friday, Tewksbury Memorial High School students had a remote day as there was a water leak in the boiler room causing a flood and the water had to be shut off until repaired. The district continues to work with AlphaBEST in the K-4 schools, the Before & After School programs will begin after April recess, and they are planning the summer programming. Community Services Preschool at the Heath Brook began with all cohorts in-person last Monday. We are continuing to look at how to assist staff in getting vaccinated. Mr. Malone offered congratulations to Dr. Basteri for securing a two year grant in the amount \$70,000 per year for the ASOST program at the Heath Brook and Wynn School. It will also support the Credit Recovery Program at the high school and free programs for kids at the Wynn Middle School. DESE has released new guidance regarding Special Education extended year services. They have been approved for in-person and they will offer in-person or a remote option. Mr. Malone reminded the Committee that the Day on the Hill legislature event will be virtual this year held on April 16, 2021 from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM.

Mr. Malone reported that Ms. Regan will be providing an update on MCAS testing. He wanted to let the Committee know that as part of the Superintendent's Association he has sent a letter to our Congressional Delegation and our Senatorial Delegation to lift the requirement for MCAS testing this year due to the pandemic. However, it looks like MCAS will be moving forward.

Jason Marshall informed Mr. Sullivan that there was a caller online.

Richard Levasseur, of 25 Anthony Road

Mr. Levasseur inquired if the district would post the essays from the Patriot Pen and Voice of Democracy winners on the website. Mr. Oliva will ask the parents for permission and get back to Mr. Malone.

Mr. Sullivan opened for questions and comments from the School Committee members. Ms. Demos inquired if TMHS students would be able to attend the virtual Day on Hill event. Mr. Malone reported that Mr. Bernard has passed the information on to the students. Mr. Sullivan inquired if all the children signing up for AlphaBEST will be able to attend. Mr. Malone responded that AlphaBEST is in the hiring process now.

Ms. Theriault-Regan, Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Regan drew the attention of the School Committee to the Consent Agenda reporting on the new DESE Supplemental Guidance for Student Groups & School Events for SY 2020-2021 relating the guidance was revised on April 1, 2021. She stated that the principals are using the guidance for potential end of year planning. She reported on the prom and other senior activities. Ms. Regan reported that Friday is an early release day for staff and students and next week is April recess. AlphaBEST is relocating and will not be open during the week of April recess. April 26th and 27th are cohort days for grades 7th-12th and on April 28th the 7th-12th graders will return to school all in-person full-time. She related that 117 Remote Learners returned to the K-6 schools. Ms. Regan announced that May 7th will be the 37th Annual District Fine Arts Virtual Art Show. She related that substitutes are greatly needed, openings for teachers, aides, and nurses are posted on the website and on SchoolSpring.

Mr. Sullivan opened for questions and comments from the School Committee members. Ms. Demos would like to know how the transition to all in-person is going, the enrollment numbers, and if the classrooms are prepared for new students as well. Ms. Regan will report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Libby, Business Manager

Mr. Libby reported that Ocean State Job Lots donated over 6,000 bottles of hand sanitizer, 125 packets of hand wipes and 240 face shields to the Tewksbury Public Schools. He offered thanks to the Tewksbury Ocean State Job Lot's managers and Marc Perlman, the owner of Ocean State Job Lots for the very generous donation. Mr. Sullivan asked that they be invited to the next School Committee meeting for recognition.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Sullivan asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Seeing no one, Mr. Sullivan asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Stadtman moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Ms. Demos

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Stadtman, Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Correspondence

- a. Delegated Duty of Extending Expiring Administrator Contracts
- b. DESE Supplemental Guidance for Student Groups & School Events for SY 2020-2021
- c. TMHS Senior Week Attendance Survey

Enrollment Update

April 5, 2021 Enrollment (File)

Personnel (File)

New Hires: Paul Brennan, Building Custodian at the John Wynn Middle School, effective April 5, 2021

Appendix B TMHS Athletics: Anthony Pontes, Boys Varsity Lacrosse Coach, effective April 26, 2021

Resignation/Retirements/Terminations: None

Acceptance of Donations/Gifts: Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation: Donation of hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes and face shields to the Tewksbury Public Schools

Fundraisers/Raffles: Heath Brook/Trahan PAC 4th Grade Committee: Annie's Pretzel Fundraiser, April 2021 through May 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elementary School Building Committee

Ms. Demos reported that the Elementary School Building Committee continues to meet regularly. We have been delegated the task, as a School Committee, to start discussing the name for the new elementary school.

Tewksbury SEPAC

Mr. Sullivan reported that we will have a new liaison at the next SEPAC meeting.

Wellness Advisory Committee

None

Mr. Sullivan announced that he is working on filling the board vacancies for the School Committee's Sub-Committees and the public will be notified once the new roles have been determined.

POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

FY Budget Review Approval (File)

Mr. Libby presented the FY22 Budget overview of the budget and tonight we are looking for the School Committee's approval to advance the budget to Town Meeting. He reported that the salary increase is a 3% overall salary increase, operating accounts is a 1.85% increase, and we will level fund the Capital Outlay. The total budget increase request is 1.33% at \$69,659,544.00, which is in-line with the Town Manager's recommendation at this time. Mr. Libby thanked the Town Manager, the Finance Committee, and the Board of Selectmen for their continued support of education in Tewksbury. He offered thanks to the Tewksbury Police, Fire, DPW, and the Town Hall for their cooperation and efforts this year. He reported that this will be the final budget year with a seven school model. The next budget, FY23 will include the new school and see the closing of the North Street and Trahan Schools. Mr. Libby responded to questions and comments from the School Committee.

Mr. Sullivan asked what would be the pleasure of the Board on the FY22 Budget.

Mr. Stadtman moved to approve the FY22 School Budget as presented, seconded by Ms. Garabedian.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Stadtman, Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Sullivan asked Mr. Libby to reach out to Mr. Parsons and extend to him the budget information and go through line items.

MCAS Update

Ms. Regan presented the MCAS update reporting that Remote Learning students will have a remote testing option although it will not be offered at the high school due to the Competency Determination. MCAS testing for students in grades nine and ten will be in-person and they will need to pass for graduation.

The Commissioner of Education has made a recommendation to the Board of Education that eleventh graders not have to make up the ELA and Math MCAS and they will be eligible for the Competency Determination. She reported that there is an exception, that any eleventh grade student would need to take the ELA and Math MCAS to qualify for the Abigail Adams Scholarship.

Mr. Sullivan opened for questions and comments from the School Committee members. In response to a question from Ms. Demos, Ms. Regan confirmed that the building based leaders will attend the DESE conference on April 29th. Mr. Sullivan would like a reminder sent to parents regarding information for the John & Abigail Adams Scholarship.

Discussion of More In-Person Time (File)

Mr. Malone presented an update on students returning to school relating that K-6 schools are back full-time, in-person and the district is preparing for the return of the middle and high school students on April 28th. The schools have revamped opening and dismissal procedures, navigating lunch scheduling, and developing routines. He announced that he is proud of the work we are all doing, thanking the staff, students, administrators and parents. Mr. Malone reported that Tewksbury is in the yellow with a 3.66% positivity rate. He reported that 3' distancing increases close contact, it is challenging and increases vulnerability of close contacts. The district will continue Pooled testing which has been extended through August for free relating that the district re-upped the application yesterday. Mr. Malone that the district continues to look at staffing issues relating that DESE has a paid internship program for high school seniors to work in elementary schools. He stated that we need to watch the data and numbers and we may have to work remotely for a time. He stated that overall, there are happy students, engaged, and moving naturally back into being a student.

Mr. Sullivan opened for questions and comments from the School Committee members. The Committee thanked Mr. Malone for the update and offered thanks to all of the staff throughout the district.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Regan asked to take New Business items out of order.

Ms. Demos presented a remark on the use of snow days, encouraging the administration to consider snow days in future, for the memories to be made and the social/emotional well being. She also suggested considering early release remote days instead of snow days.

Last Day of School (File)

Mr. Malone reported that the remote snow days were approved for this school year only. Mr. Malone asked the Committee to vote on the last day of school.

Ms. Demos moved to approve June 16, 2021 as the last day of school for the 2020-2021 school year adding that June 16, 2021 will be an early release day. Mr. Stadtman seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Stadtman, Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

The Committee members had no questions or comments.

2021-2022 Register Periods (File)

Ms. Regan presented the 2021-2022 Register Periods, based on the 2021-2022 School Calendar, relating that this is for information only and no vote is required.

The Committee members had no questions or comments.

School Choice (File)

Mr. Malone reported that annually we vote on School Choice, traditionally Tewksbury has not voted-in School Choice. This year, due to the construction of the new elementary school building project and the uncertainty of some of those enrollment pieces, Mr. Malone recommends that the Committee choose not to vote-in School Choice.

Mr. Stadtman moved the Tewksbury Public Schools not to participate in School Choice for the 2021-2022 school year, seconded by Ms. Garabedian.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Stadtman, Mr. Parsons, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

2022 Tewksbury School Committee Meeting Scheduled Draft (File)

Mr. Malone presented the 2022 Tewksbury School Committee meeting schedule for the Committee's review. Mr. Sullivan encouraged the Committee members to review the schedule relating that it will be on the May meeting for approval.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST

Mr. Stadtman gave a *Shout-out* to the Tewksbury's Ocean State Job Lots for the donations. He also commented that he is looking forward to seeing the kids at the National Honor Society ceremony tomorrow. Mr. Sullivan thanked all the staff for welcoming in the K-6 students. Mr. Sullivan asked the Committee members to let him know which sub-committees they would like to serve on. He added that Ms. Garabedian has been serving on the Task Force and he would like her to continue. He reported that there is an opening on the Elementary Building Committee.

FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE & FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

May 12, 2021; June 9, 2021; July 21, 2021

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Sullivan announced that community members may contact either him, his colleagues, or the Superintendent or the Assistant Superintendent if they would like to add an item to the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:59 p.m., Mr. Sullivan adjourned the April 14, 2021 Regular School Committee meeting with a motion from Mr. Stadtman, seconded by Ms. Gargabedian.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Demos, Ms. Garabedian, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Stadtman, and Mr. Sullivan. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.