

**Tewksbury School Committee
Wednesday, December 8, 2021
Regular School Committee Meeting #6
Tewksbury Memorial High School - LGI-1
320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876**

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Shannon M. Demos, Vice-Chairperson
Bridget L. Garabedian, Clerk
Nicholas G. Parsons, Member

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

Keith M. Sullivan, Chairperson
John R. Stadtman, Member

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

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

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Demos called the December 8, 2021, Regular School Committee meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (File)

Ms. Demos entertained a motion to convene an Executive Session to review and approve the Executive Session minutes and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with employee groups and/or personnel matters or litigation.

Mr. Parsons moved to enter into the Executive Session to review and approve the Executive Session minutes and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with employee groups and/or personnel matters or litigation, seconded by Ms. Garabedian. At 6:00 p.m., the School Committee members will attend the student recognitions in the auditorium. At the conclusion of recognitions, the School Committee will reconvene in open session in LGI-1.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Ms. Garabedian, and Ms. Demos. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 3-0.

At 6:00 p.m., Ms. Demos moved to adjourn the December 8, 2021 Executive Session, seconded by Ms. Garabedian. The Committee will reconvene in the auditorium for student recognition.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Ms. Garabedian, and Ms. Demos. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 3-0.

RECONVENE REGULAR MEETING

At 6:31 p.m., Ms. Demos reconvened the December 8, 2021 Regular School Committee meeting. She announced that Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Stadtman were unable to attend tonight's meeting. Ms. Demos read a statement prepared by Mr. Sullivan regarding his absence from the meeting.

RECOGNITION

Ms. Demos reported that at 6:00 p.m., the School Committee attended the student recognitions in the Christine Performing Arts Center. The Committee honored the 2021 MCAS top performing Tewksbury Memorial High School students along with the TMHS recipients of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. (See attached list)

APPROVED 1-12-2022

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ms. Demos reported the December 8, 2021 Regular School Committee meeting will be televised and recorded and may be viewed live on Comcast Channel 22 and Verizon Channel 34 or YouTube/TewksburyTV.com. Under the Open Meeting Law, the public is permitted to make an audio or video recording of an open session at a public meeting. Ms. Demos inquired if anyone in the audience was recording tonight's meeting. Seeing no one, Ms. Demos moved to the next order of business.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Jack Stadtman led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

On behalf of the School Committee Ms. Demos read a prepared statement regarding the ongoing negotiations between the Tewksbury School Committee and the Tewksbury Teachers Association. (*Statement is attached to the minutes*)

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Notes From Tewksbury Memorial High School

Jack Stadtman presented the notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School.

- The TMHS Drama Club is starting rehearsals on their next production of *Forbidden Broadway*.
- Student Council is holding weekly meetings on Thursday mornings.
- The Spirit Day Dippin' Dots Award is back on. All senior class students should receive their Dippin' Dots during lunch on Friday.
- The *Morning Update Show* is broadcasting live on *YouTube* every morning; tune-in to get the latest in-school updates.
- The International Club helped out at Haverhill's Jingle Bell 5K by passing out water to runners.
- TMHS DECA Team is preparing for their District Competition. Wishing them the best of luck.

PRESENTATIONS

MASC Presentation - Dorothy Presser, Field Representative

Ms. Presser addressed the School Committee relative to the process to follow to hire a new superintendent, relating that hiring a superintendent is the primary responsibility of the School Committee. The process does not have specific guidelines. Superintendent Malone will be leaving at the end of February which would leave little time for the process recommending that the Committee hire an interim superintendent. She added that a full search for a new superintendent generally takes about three to four months. Ms. Presser presented the outline of a superintendent search.

Ms. Presser responded to questions from the School Committee members. The Committee thanked Ms. Presser for the presentation.

2022 TMHS Costa Rica Trip & 2022 TMHS Trip to U.S. National Parks Updates

Principal Bernard, along with Lindsey Bowden-White and Bailey Mahoney, addressed the School Committee providing the Committee with an update on the Costa Rica Trip and the U.S. National Parks trip. The Committee received the trip information in their packet. Ms. Mahoney has been in touch with the EF tour representatives relating that EF has robust travel protocols for COVID. They reported on the cancellation and refund policy and procedures for both trips relating that the deadline for the Costa Rica trip is December 27, 2021 and the deadline for the U.S. Parks' trip is December 28th. The information has been shared with the travelers and families. They are scheduling presentations for students and families to provide them with the updated information.

The School Committee and Mr. Malone thanked the high school staff for organizing the trips. The group continued the discussion regarding COVID protocols in Costa Rica and the possible impact on parents and chaperones. It was requested that at the informational night for families, that parents have a clear understanding on the impact to them if COVID is an issue. Ms. Demos inquired why there was not an administrator on the trip to the U.S. Parks.

Ms. Mahoney will inquire if EF might have a prorated rate for another chaperone. Ms. Demos requested to have an update after the parent/student presentation.

2022 Wynn Middle School 8th Grade Washington, D.C. Trip Update

Principal Weir addressed the Committee providing an update on the Washington, D.C. trip, reviewing the COVID protocols, and the nursing concerns. He reported that there are differences in quarantine protocols between D.C. and Virginia. Mr. Weir reported that there is an issue with our nurse licenses, as the Massachusetts nursing license, is not reciprocal with Virginia where the group will be staying. He reported that parents are required to purchase, cancellation for any purpose, insurance.

Principal Weir responded to questions from the School Committee. The Committee appreciated the update. Mr. Weir will schedule a meeting with parents and will make sure that parents understand the protocols.

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Ms. Demos asked if there was anyone in the audience that wanted to speak on anything on the agenda tonight. Seeing no one, she moved onto approval of minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (File)

Ms. Garabedian moved, seconded by Mr. Parsons, to approve the November 17, 2021, Regular School Committee meeting minutes.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Ms. Garabedian, and Ms. Demos. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 3-0.

SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS (File)

Ms. Garabedian moved to approve the payroll period ending November 10, 2021, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown \$1,446,568.11, seconded by Mr. Parsons. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 3-0.

Ms. Garabedian moved to approve the payroll period ending November 24, 2021, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown \$1,562,053.37, seconded by Mr. Parsons. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 3-0.

SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Malone, Superintendent

Mr. Malone presented an update on the impact of the pandemic. The COVID tracker is at 90 today, the district is doing testing, and looking at options to bring the trend down. Parents can help by keeping kids home if they are sick. We are working closely with the nursing staff. They are managing the test and stay program and contact tracing. We will be reaching out to staff next week to determine vaccine rates and we will reach out to parents to determine student vaccine rates at a later time. If we go to 80% vaccination rate, people will not have to mask up; the town data shows that we are not there yet. Mr. Malone reported the district has received NESDEC's enrollment data reporting the next five years' trend is the same, we are at the lower point of a steady decline; there will be a little rise over next few years relating that the new school may add to that. Mr. Malone presented a staffing update giving a thank you to Precision HR for the 1:1 aides; the recent hires have brought our staffing of aides up although we are still in the need of aides, substitutes, and people to help the nurses. He reported that the MIAA put out requirements around interscholastic and winter season sports requiring masks at all venues. Other notes, AlphaBEST is open until 6:00 p.m. Waffles, the Tewksbury Police Department's new comfort dog, hopes to be doing in-person visits soon. The district is looking at school security with administrators in light of the incident in Michigan; we will also look at reviewing our A.L.I.C.E. protocols. TMHS will have a Winter Concert on December 17th, 6:30 p.m., with the Band and Chorus.

Mr. Malone responded to questions and comments from the School Committee.

Ms. Theriault-Regan, Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Regan reported that the Senior Center will offer the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine on December 10th for those that received the 1st dose there. In response to questions from staff and parents, the district shared information today that the Valley Collaborative is offering a vaccine clinic. The information has been posted on the district website. Ms. Regan reported that she and district principals, Ms. McInnes, Ms. Fenanovic, and Ms. Gerrish attended the CASE Title I Conference last week. The conference focused on Title I literacy strategies. She reported that the district is in the sixth year of the ELA contract. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on the ELA and math program relating that the principals and literacy coaches will look at resources. We have invited the K-6 teachers and team to survey and give us feedback. We are also planning observations on the most successful ELA programs in other districts. There will be more information coming. Other notes, December 23rd is an early release day for students and a workshop for our teachers. December recess begins on December 24th and school resumes on January 3, 2022. Ms. Demos offered to join in on the ELA pilot program.

Mr. Libby, Business Manager

Mr. Libby presented an update on the Heath Brook window project showing a powerpoint of the completed project. Classrooms will be painted this summer and there is still some caulking to be completed.

Mr. Libby responded to questions and comments from the School Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Demos asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Ms. Demos asked for approval of the Consent Agenda. Mr. Parsons moved, seconded by Ms. Garabedian, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 3-0.

Correspondence:

None

Enrollment Update: None

PERSONNEL ITEMS (Files)

New Hires (Files): Cynthia Bellino, 1-year only, full-time Occupational Therapist, at the Dewing Elementary School, effective November 9, 2021; Suzanne Dibble, district-wide, 1-year only, part-time Occupational Therapist, effective November 15, 2021; Molly Riordan, district-wide, 1-year only School Nurse, effective November 9, 2021; Katie Buck, Kindergarten Teacher at the Heath Brook School, effective November 29, 2021

Transfers: None

Reappointment: None

Retirement (File): Donna Boudreau-Hill, Social Studies Teacher at Tewksbury Memorial High School, effective June 30, 2025

***Appendix B: Co-Curricular:** None

***Appendix B: Athletics:**

Tewksbury Memorial High School

Lauren Polimeno, Head Coach, Boys Indoor Winter Track

Joel Mignault, Head Coach, Girls Varsity Basketball

*APPENDIX B POSITIONS ARE PENDING CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Acceptance of Donations/Gifts: None

Fundraisers/Raffles: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elementary School Building Committee

Ms. Demos reported the Elementary School Building Committee will be meeting tomorrow night at the Town Hall. The project is on track for completion by October 28, 2022. The project should be closed-in by December, windows are being installed and work is beginning in the northeastern classroom wings.

Tewksbury SEPAC

Mr. Parsons reports that the next Tewksbury SEPAC meeting will be held on January 20th. At their previous meeting they agreed that the School Committee designees will meet monthly with them to improve relations and communications.

Wellness Advisory Committee

Ms. Garabedian reported that the next Wellness Advisory Committee meeting will be held on March 23, 2022. Since the November meeting was canceled, there may be another meeting prior to March.

Policy Sub-Committee

None

POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS(File)

None

OLD BUSINESS

Aperture Education: About the DESSA (File)

Ms. Regan reported that the District's number one priority of the district goals is around student Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and social engagement. The district has implemented a screener as an assessment of social and emotional growth. The Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) provides scores and profiles on individual students and provides growth strategies. The December 23rd teacher workshop will provide training for teachers on the use of DESSA.

Ms. Regan responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

NEW BUSINESS

None

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST

None

FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE & FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE & ADVISORY MEETING DATES

Ms. Demos announced the upcoming dates for future School Committee meetings, Sub-Committee meetings and Advisory Committee meetings:

- School Committee: January 12, 2022; February 9, 2022; Public hearing Budget; March 9, 2022
- *Elementary School Building Committee*: December 9, 2021
- *Tewksbury SEPAC Board Meeting*: No meeting in December 2021; January 20, 2022; February 17, 2022; March 17, 2022; April 28, 2022; May 19, 2022 (Elections); June 16, 2022.
- Tewksbury SEPAC School Safety Sub-committee: TBD
- *Wellness Advisory Committee*: March 23, 2022; May 18, 2022
- *Policy Sub-Committee*: TBD

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:19 p.m., Ms. Demos adjourned the December 8, 2021 Regular School Committee meeting with a motion from Ms. Garabedian, seconded by Mr. Parsons. All Aye. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Johnson, Recording Secretary

List of documents and exhibits used (GL c.30A, sect 22(a))

AGENDA ITEM #	DOCUMENT
1	School Committee Meeting Agenda
2	Executive Session Agenda
3	Recognitions
8	Presentations - Field Trips
10	11/17/2021 Draft Minutes
11	Submission Of Payment Of Bills: Payroll period ending
13	Consent Agenda Items: Personnel Items: New Hires; Retirement; Appendix B, Athletics
16	Old Business: Aperture Education: About the DESSA

Tewksbury School Committee - December 8, 2021

RECOGNITIONS

Tewksbury Memorial High School Academics

2021 John & Abigail Adams Scholarship Recipients

Milo Bobotas	Kassidy Macdonald
Aaron Connelly	Maisan Nguyen
Jason Cooke	Ava Piccolo
Alek Cranston	Obadah Shikh Khamis
Courtney Curtin	Jack Stadtman
Nicolette Evangelista	Cuong Tran
Madison Forgione	Jacqueline Vitiello
Lily Gigante	Lila Won
Paige Harrington	Abigail Yaing
Hannah Kocsmiersky	

TMHS 2021 MCAS Student Achievement Awards

2021 MCAS STUDENTS PERFECT SCORE OF 560

John Baker	Gavriella Lightfield
Callie Finnegan	Maximus Mattuchio
Anirudhh Harlalka	Darya Mehrabani
Ceceila Ho	Pouriya Mehrabani
Kiley Kennedy	David Penney
Hannah Kwartler	Olivia Ward

PRESENTATIONS

1. MASC Presentation - Dorothy Presser, Field Director
2. Out-of-State/Country Field Trip Updates
 - a. 2022 TMHS Costa Rica Trip - Principal Jon Bernard
 - b. 2022 TMHS Domestic Trip to US National Parks, Principal Jon Bernard
 - c. 2022 Wynn Middle School 8th Grade Washington, D.C., Overnight Trip - Principal John Weir

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE TEWKSBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

To this point, the School Committee and Administration have not commented publicly about the labor negotiations with our Teacher and ESP bargaining units, out of deference to the ground rules to which both sides agreed. These ground rules contain the following provision:

All bargaining sessions will be held in executive session. All members of the bargaining teams will maintain confidentiality. However, the parties may discuss negotiations with their respective constituents as long as it is made clear that such information is not to be discussed publicly.

However, we have recently been made aware that the TTA has published some information concerning our negotiations, and in fairness we believe that we should provide a School District response:

- TTA statement: “Despite beginning the negotiation process last year, the School Committee has not been able to agree to the TTA’s offers for a fair contract, nor have they presented equitable offers or counters in return.”

School District response: We respectfully suggest that the audience targeted by this TTA message cannot reach a conclusion as to whether the School Committee has presented an equitable offer unless one has seen what is actually in the School Committee’s offer. If the TTA waives the above-referenced ground rule, we would be happy to furnish the actual proposal made by the School Committee, and readers can themselves draw their own conclusions as to whether the proposal is equitable.

The parties met on eight occasions from February 2021 to June of 2021. The School Committee offered to continue negotiations over the summer, and the TTA indicated that it could resume negotiations August 25. From that point, the parties met on three additional occasions and were unable, despite those efforts, to settle the contract. The School Committee was of the opinion that the offer on the table was fair and requested that the TTA submit that proposal to its membership for a ratification vote, but we understand that this has not occurred.

- TTA statement: “TTA Members have been working since September without a contract.”

School District response: The terms of the current contract stay in effect as the current terms and conditions of employment, until a new contract is reached.

- TTA statements:
 - “At this point the school committee and administration have left the bargaining table despite it being their jobs to negotiate a contract with the TTA”

- “Negotiations cannot happen without both parties present. This leaves educators across Tewksbury stranded without a contract”
- “The Tewksbury Public School Committee and administration have opted to attempt a process called “mediation” run by the Department of Labor Relations.”
- “Instead of working with the TTA to create a fair contract, the school committee and administration have decided to pass on an opportunity to do this necessary part of their job.”

School District response:

The School Committee shares the TTA’s desire for a settled contract, and it is not walking away from the negotiating table. That is not what happens when a party petitions for mediation. Mediation occurs when, despite the best efforts of the parties to settle a contract, they have reached an impasse. When a party files for mediation, which can be done jointly by both parties (as our negotiating team requested but was declined by the TTA), the result is that a skilled and trained facilitator comes to the table to help the parties move past their impasse and settle the contract. No one walks away from the table—the mediator joins the parties at the table.

We think that having a mediator at the table represents the most expedient path to a settled contract.

We have mediations scheduled on December 20 and January 7, and we hope that we have a settled contract by the end of this process.

More information is available via the following link, concerning the collective bargaining process in general (beginning on page 18) and the mediation process in particular (beginning on page 86):

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/a-guide-to-the-massachusetts-public-employee-collective-bargaining-law-1/download>.