

Tewksbury School Committee
Wednesday, February 8, 2023
Regular School Committee Meeting #8
Tewksbury Memorial High School
Christine McGrath Performing Arts Center Auditorium
320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bridget L. Garabedian, Chair
Kayla Biagioni-Smith, Clerk
Nicholas G. Parsons, Member
Richard Russo, Jr., Member

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER EXCUSED

Keith M. Sullivan, Vice-Chair

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Brenda Theriault-Regan, Superintendent
Lori McDermott, Assistant Superintendent
David Libby, Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Garabedian called the February 8, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Garabedian noted that Mr. Sullivan was excused from the meeting this evening. She also announced that the meeting was relocated from room LGI-1 to the auditorium (Christine McGrath Performing Arts Center) at Tewksbury Memorial High School. The Town Clerk was notified of the room change and a note was placed on the door of LGI-1.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to convene an Executive Session non-public session, to discuss the January 11, 2023 Executive Session minutes and to discuss Collective Bargaining pertaining to the TTA (teachers).

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to enter into the Executive Session to discuss the January 11, 2023 Executive Session minutes and to discuss Collective Bargaining pertaining to the TTA (teachers). The Committee will reconvene in Open Session for the Public Hearing on the Budget and will reconvene the business portion of our Regular School Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

At 6:05 p.m., Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to adjourn the Executive Session. Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith to adjourn the February 8, 2023 Executive Session. The Committee will reconvene in Open Session.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET

At 6:05 p.m., Ms. Garabedian reconvened the February 8, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting and opened the Public Hearing on the FY 24 Budget Workshop.

Business Manager Dave Libby welcomed the audience to the Public Hearing on the FY 24 Budget reporting that the District Strategy and the Theory of Action are the tenets we keep in mind as we go through the budget process. He reported on the challenges faced as they prepared the FY 24 budget and presented the Grant Funding for FY 23, an update on the Revolving Accounts and capital projects. The next steps in the budget process is to continue discussions with department heads, principals, town officials, teachers and staff. The recommended FY 24 School Budget is a 3.02% increase which is consistent with the Town Manager's recommended budget. Salaries are \$38,690,763, an increase of 2.98%; Operating Costs are \$15,187,649, an increase of 3.46% and Capital Outlay totals \$761,974. Mr. Libby pointed out that the budget information is available on the district website.

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

At 6:27 p.m., Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to take a three minute recess, Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Parsons to take a three minute recess and return at 6:30 p.m. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

At 6:30 p.m., Ms. Garabedian reconvened the Regular School Committee meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Garabedian asked that everyone rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

At 6:31 p.m., Ms. Garabedian announced that the February 8, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting will be televised and recorded and may be viewed live on Comcast Channel 22, Verizon Channel 34, or YouTube.com/TewksburyTV. 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. Garabedian asked if anyone in the audience was recording tonight's meeting to please identify themselves. Recording the meeting are: Alex Mason, WHDH-TV 7 and Chetan Rakieten, Boston 25 WFXT.

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to move the request for trips up on the agenda. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to move the Domestic and International Trip request up to this portion of the agenda. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS ITEM #18.a.

TMHS Domestic and International Trip Requests - February 2024 & April 2024

Ms. McDermott addressed the Committee relating that the requests for a domestic and international trip will require a vote from the Committee. She introduced Bailey Mahoney to present the information. Bailey Mahoney, TMHS Travel Committee Chairperson, addressed the School Committee members and presented the details of the domestic trip to San Francisco, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles, California, during the 2024 February Recess. Bailey presented the details of the International trip to the Dominican Republic during the 2024 April Recess. Ms. Mahoney responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members. Ms. Grabedian entertained a motion to approve both trips.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the TMHS Travel Committee's trip request to California to visit San Francisco, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles during the 2024 February Recess and to approve the International trip request to the Dominican Republic during the 2024 April Recess. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith, and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

RECOGNITION

Ms. Regan announced that the district received notice from the Massachusetts Secondary Athletic Directors Association's Executive Board announcing that Ron Drouin was named Athlete Director of the Year. She reported that Mr. Drouin could not be here tonight as he was attending two athletic events this evening.

Ms. Regan gave a big *Shout-out!* to Custodian Paul Bishop announcing that Mr. Bishop saved the life of a student at the Center Elementary School. During lunchtime, Mr. Bishop noticed a child struggling, realizing the child was choking he quickly used the heimlich maneuver. Ms. Regan thanked him for his quick response. Ms. Regan will inform the School Committee members if the Center School has an event to recognize Mr. Bishop.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School

Rania Elouahi presented the Notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School:

Student Council members gave tours at the Center Elementary School Open House this past weekend. After the break they will have a fundraiser where they will play an annoying song on the loudspeaker; one would have to pay to make it stop. March 8th-10th the Student Council will go to Hyannis for the annual Massachusetts Association of Student Councils conference.

The TMHS Theater Company put on a great performance of "A Great Night for Singing" this past weekend.

International Club is offering a great volunteering opportunity through *ENGIN* in which students can apply to teach Ukrainian students English. Last month students made blankets to be donated to those in need.

Robotics Club is building a robot designed to pick up cones and cubes which will be entered into the 2023 FRC games called Charged-Up.

Rania reported that winter sports are coming to an end and MVCs are approaching for nearly all teams in the next few weeks. The high school entered a new term and most students swapped electives, report cards will be posted on February 15th and the February vacation is upon us. Today there was a field trip to the museum of Fine Arts in Boston directed by the Latin Club and the Class of 2025 will hold a Calendar Raffle in March.

PRESENTATIONS

None

Ms. Garabedian, School Committee Chair, read a prepared statement from herself in response to a press-release shared by the TTA today and asked that if any member of the school community has concerns about the safety or treatment of any student or child to speak up at any time. Our teachers and staff are appreciated and respected. Any person who comes forward with a concern of any student or child will be taken seriously. We are proud of our administration and leadership relative to the matter that was publicly shared by the TTA. She shared and read the policy BBAA, School Committee Authority. She invited Ms. Regan to say a few words to clarify the issue at hand.

Ms. Regan commented that our work will always begin and end with what is best and safe to protect our students. We encourage and appreciate when members of our community come forward if the safety and well-being of our students is in jeopardy. I appreciated that the reporting party did just that in this case. The district annually trains and supports staff to effectively communicate and report issues of concern with student safety. All teachers are aware of their responsibility as Mandated Reporters and know that anonymity cannot always be guaranteed in order to appropriately investigate. The concerned party here was reminded of that in the investigation and did not file as a Mandated Reporter and did not file a 51A. If the administration believed a 51A should have been filed, we would have done so. Upon receipt of a report from Principal Long of the issue, she notified the School Committee Chair and reached out to the Tewksbury Police Department Office-in-Charge and our School Resource Officer for guidance and assistance on this matter. The TPD informed us that it should be a TPS inquiry and if a victim came forward they would launch a police investigation. The district investigated the incident and the findings were consistent with students and families, and, no hazing had taken place. She believes everyone involved wants what is best for students, social media is not productive and we need to communicate effectively with each other.

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Ms. Garabedian asked if there was anyone in the audience that wished to speak on anything on the agenda, and if so, to please state their name, address and the specific agenda item that they would like to speak on this evening.

Bridget asked that comments are held to three minutes per speaker for a total of 15 minutes for the Citizen's Forum. Ms. Biagioni-Smith will track the timing. The following people requested to address the Committee.

Peter Molloy, 3 Village View Road, Chelmsford: Mr. Molloy addressed the Committee relative to the legal responsibilities of teachers as Mandated Reporter and his concern that his report was not kept confidential as he requested.

Julie Taggart, 7 Heath Street, Tewksbury: Ms. Taggart addressed the Committee in support of Mr. Molloy.

Lauren Carlino, 3 Julia Lane, Pepperell: Ms. Carlino addressed the Committee relative to the way the issue concerning Mr. Molloy was publicly handled.

Maura Dearing, 45 Autumn Road, Dracut: Ms. Dearing addressed the Committee in support of Mr. Molloy and her concern of how the situation was handled.

Emily Niles, 40 Coburn Road, Dracut: Ms. Niles addressed the Committee relative to teachers in the role as Mandated Reporters, the response by some School Committee members to Mr. Molloy's report and asked for a public apology.

Connor Bourgoïn, 305 School Street, Apt. 2, Woburn: Mr. Bourgoïn addressed the Committee relative to the response from Superintendent Regan regarding Mr. Molloy's report and requested an apology and to condemn the action by a School Committee member.

Ms. Garabedian thanked everyone for attending tonight and entertained a motion for a five minute break. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to take a five minute recess. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0. The Committee reconvened at 7:14 p.m.

Mr. Russo requested to make a brief statement before the Committee moved onto the next order of business. He appreciates Mr. Molloy and personally reached out to him to have an open dialogue; Mr. Molloy declined

the invitation. Mr. Russo reported that he did put a comment on Facebook and not unlike his concerns during the pandemic. His understanding of parents is that generally they want kids to be kids. He will not stop fighting for parents' concerns and how they would like their child's education to be.

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to move Old Business item 17a.) 2023-2024 Preschool and Kindergarten Registration & Enrollment up on the agenda. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to move Old Business item 17a.) 23-24 Preschool and Kindergarten Registration/Enrollment up to this portion of the agenda. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

TPS 2023-2024 Preschool and Kindergarten Registration & Enrollment

Ms. McDermott introduced Karen Baker O'Brien to present the TPS 2023-2024 information on preschool and kindergarten registration and enrollment. Ms. O'Brien reported that preschool registration will open on February 28th. She reported that we keep a waitlist throughout the year and families do move off the waitlist through the year. During the kindergarten registration we schedule meetings with families and have streamlined an online process using DropLift. Parents may register with virtual appointments or in person. She presented the current pre-registration enrollment numbers for the preschool programs and kindergarten for the 23/24 school year.

Ms. O'Brien responded to questions from School Committee members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved to approve the January 11, 2023 Regular meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Russo. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 4-0.

SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the payroll period ending January 19, 2023, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,477,681.10. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith, and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the payroll period ending February 2, 2023, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,493,426.44. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith, and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS

Ms. Garabedian requested to move the order around for the staff reports. Mr. Russo motioned, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to move the Business Manager's report first in order. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Libby reported that he received a call from Anthony D'Ambrosio, a parent of a kindergarten student and grade 3 student in the district. He called to say he is a robotics competitor and that his team qualified as a finalist in a competition. The prize is \$5,000 to be donated to a charity of their choosing. His team won the event and selected the Tewksbury Public School as their charity to be used to support the STEM program. Mr. Libby announced that the check was received on Monday and asked Mr. D'Ambrosio to attend the meeting tonight. Mr. Libby took this opportunity to introduce and acknowledge Mr. D'Ambrosio for the generous donation. Ms. Biagioni-Smith commented that as a fan of the Bee-Bots program she asked Mr. D'Ambrosio to do a presentation or something at a later date.

Mr. Libby reported that during the move to the Center Elementary School and putting out the specifications, it appeared we missed the Dewing Library. We didn't want to add it onto the moving company so we reached out to our friends at the high school. Mr. Libby gave a *Shout-out!* to Ron Drouin, Brian Aylward and the six or seven TMHS boys who helped for two days during the December break. They emptied three classrooms of furniture as well as the three classrooms from the library to the Center Elementary School. He thanked them for all they did.

Mr. Libby put out a desperate call for help relating that Tewksbury Transit has been struggling for van and bus drivers and bus monitors. If interested, please go to the Tewksbury Transit website to apply. Anyone interested in the position as a bus monitor may apply to the Tewksbury Public Schools or Tewksbury Transit.

Superintendent's Report

Ms. Regan pointed out items on the Consent Agenda. She thanked Kelly Constantino for enrolling the district in the School Nurse Liaison Project. The Wynn Middle School was randomly chosen to participate in the *2023 MA Youth Health Survey* and Tewksbury Memorial High School was randomly chosen to participate in the *2023 MA Youth Risk Behavior Survey and the 2023 MA Youth Health Survey*. The Tewksbury Police Department has announced the *Officer Waffles Kindness Challenge*; a flyer was sent to families with more information.

Ms. Regan reported that February 3rd marked the 95th day of school and the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to mark the opening of the Center Elementary School. February 4th there will be an open house for the public to tour the new Center Elementary School. On behalf of the Elementary School Building Committee, Ms. Regan thanked the Tewksbury community for providing this school for the students. She added that today is the 100th day of learning and during the day students participated in many events.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. McDermott reported that the Town-wide PAC meeting was held last week at the Center Elementary School (CES) and they introduced the new PAC for the Center School and toured the new school. The upcoming PAC events are in the agenda packet. She reported that there is a concerned need for volunteers for the high school PAC. They will not be able to run the events without volunteers; please reach out to the PACs if you are interested in being a volunteer. She reported that the literacy pilot is moving ahead, thanking the piloting teachers for their dedication and to the coaches for their support. We are still on track to select the new program in the spring. On January 26th, there was a parent presentation on literacy focused on the science of reading and what caregivers can do at home to support their children. Ms. McDermott reported that the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released the District Report Card; the report may be found on the district website. She reported that the district is reopening the Standard Based Report Card. Many teachers are excited in moving forward and we already have 20 volunteers for the Steering Committee. At the request of Ms. Garabedian, Ms. McDermott will make a presentation on the Standard Based Report Cards.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Garabedian asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Hearing none, Ms. Garabedian asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

Correspondence

- a. Wynn Middle School Drama Program Out-of-State Field Trip Update
- b. Wynn Middle School Participation in *2023 MA Youth Health Survey*

- c. TMHS Participation in 2023 MA Youth Risk Behavior Survey & 2023 MA Youth Health Survey
- d. TPD Announces - *Monthly Kindness Challenge*
- e. [Valley Collaborative Newsletter - Winter 2023](#)
- f. Learn More About Massachusetts Schools! 5 Quick Facts About the School Report Card
[District & School Report Card Release](#)

PERSONNEL ITEMS

New Hires: Elise Edson, Tewksbury Public Schools' Student & Family Support Specialist, effective January 30, 2023;

Mark Russell, Building Custodian, Center Elementary School, effective January 23, 2023; William Robinson, Building Custodian, Center Elementary School, effective January 26, 2023.

Transfers

None

Retirements

Daniel Martin, TPS Maintenance staff, effective February 28, 2023; Catherine Ventura, Kindergarten Teacher at the Heath Brook School, effective June 20, 2025

Appendix B TMHS Athletics

Appendix B Co-Curricular Activities

Tewksbury Memorial High School

Sue Barnett:

- Marching Band Director
- Percussion Instructor

Acceptance of Grants

Acceptance of Donations

Fundraisers/Raffles: Center Elementary School Winter/Spring 2023 Fundraising Calendar of Events; Heath Brook PAC Winter/Spring 2023 Fundraising Calendar of Events

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elementary School Building Committee

Ms. Regan reported that the biggest event to announce is the Center Elementary School ribbon cutting ceremony and tour of the new school. They continue to focus on the punchlist and will continue to meet. The next ESBC meeting will be held tomorrow night adding that the Committee will continue to meet over the next several months.

Tewksbury Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Mr. Parsons reported that the SEPAC will offer a virtual family support group on February 13th via Zoom, Business Meeting will be held on February 17th at 7:00 p.m. and the following Business Meeting will be held on March 2nd; location to be determined. Ms. Biagioni-Smith suggested checking the website first as the February meeting may be deferred to the March 2nd meeting.

Wellness Advisory Committee

Mr. Russo reported that the last Wellness Advisory Committee meeting was held in December relating that the next meeting will be held on March 1st.

Policy Sub-Committee

Ms. Garabedian reported that the Policy Sub-Committee is still working on a date for the next meeting.

POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

TPS 2023-2024 Preschool and Kindergarten Registration & Enrollment

This item was moved up on the agenda.

Revised: NG MCAS 2022-2023 Testing Window

Ms. McDermott reported that the district has updated the TPS MCAS testing dates pointing out the revisions. She reminded families that the TPS MCAS calendar may continue to be updated so please check the website.

NEW BUSINESS

TMHS Domestic and International Trip Requests - February & April 2024

This item was moved up on the agenda.

TMHS Student Council Overnight Field Trip Request - Hyannis, Spring 2023

Ms. McDermott reported that the TMHS Student Council seeks approval of an overnight field trip to attend the Annual Massachusetts Association of Student Councils meeting in Hyannis. This would require a vote of the School Committee.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the TMHS Student Council overnight field trip request to Hyannis to attend the Spring 2023 MASC conference. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

TMHS DECA Overnight Field Trip Request - Boston, March 2023 & TMHS DECA Out-of-State Field Trip Request - Florida, April 2023

James Sullivan, TMHS teacher and DECA Advisor, addressed the School Committee requesting approval for an overnight field trip for the DECA team to attend the DECA District Competition in Boston, March 2023. Mr. Sullivan also requested the approval for DECA to attend an out-of-state field trip to Florida to attend the DECA National Competition in April 2023.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the overnight field trip request from the TMHS DECA team to attend the District Competition in Boston, March 2023 and for the TMHS DECA team to attend the out-of-state field trip to Florida for the DECA State Competition in April 2023. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST

Mr. Russo commented on the fantastic ribbon cutting ceremony at the Center Elementary School and thanked the students from the TMHS Student Council for helping out at the Open House. Ms. Biagioni-Smith gave a *Shout-out!* to the Center PAC for all they did and added that the PAC has lots of volunteer opportunities if anyone is interested. Ms. Garabedian pointed out that February is Black History month reporting on the

scheduled events. She thanked Mr. Parsons for serving on the Town’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee and reported that nominations for the Ginsburg Family Award and the Krissy Polimeno Outstanding Educator Award will open at the end of the month.

FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

March 8, 2023 (Budget Public Hearing); April 12, 2023 Reorganization Meeting & Regular Meeting

FUTURE FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE & ADVISORY MEETING DATES

Elementary School Building Committee: January 12, 2023; TSEPAC Business Meeting: January 19, 2023 (Basic Rights Workshop); Wellness Advisory Committee: March 1, 2023; Policy Sub-Committee: TBD

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. McDermott will give a presentation on the Standard Based Report Card.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:03 p.m., Ms. Garabedian adjourned the February 8, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting with a motion from Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 4-0.

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: Regular Meeting
2	Executive Session Agenda
3	Public Hearing Budget FY 24
11	Minutes: January 11, 2023
12	Submission Of Payment Of Bills: January 19, 2023 & February 2, 2023
14	Consent Agenda: Wynn School Out-of-State Field Trip; Wynn School Participation in 2023 MA Youth Health Survey; TMHS Participation in 2023 MA Youth Risk Behavior Survey & 2023 MA Youth Health Survey; TPD Monthly Kindness Challenge; Valley Collaborative Newsletter, Winter 2023; Learn More About Massachusetts Schools! 5 Quick Facts About the School Report Card & District & School Report Card Release; Personnel Items; CES PAC Fundraiser Event Calendar; Heath Brook PAC Fundraiser Event Calendar.
17	Old Business: TPS 2023-2024 Preschool and Kindergarten Registration & Enrollment; Revised: NG MCAS 2022-2023 Testing Window
18	New Business: TMHS Domestic and International Trip Requests - February & April 2024; TMHS Student Council Overnight Field Trip Request - Hyannis, Spring 2023; TMHS DECA Overnight Field Trip Request - Boston, March 2023; TMHS DECA Out-of-State Field Trip Request - Florida, April 2023

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Regular SC Meeting
February 8, 2023*

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