

Tewksbury School Committee
Wednesday, May 10, 2023
Regular School Committee Meeting #11, 5:30 PM
Tewksbury Memorial High School
Larrabee Library
320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Bridget Garabedian, Chair
Kayla Biagioni-Smith, Vice-Chair
Kaitlyn Anderson, Clerk
Nicholas Parsons, Member
Richard Russo, Jr., Member

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

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

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Garabedian called the May 10, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. She reported that the Committee is meeting in the Larrabee Library at Tewksbury Memorial High School.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to convene an Executive Session. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to enter into the Executive Session to discuss the April 12, 2023 Executive Session minutes and to discuss Collective Bargaining pertaining to the TTA (teachers). The Committee will reconvene the Regular School Committee meeting in Open Session following the Executive Session.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Garabedian.
Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to adjourn the Executive Session. Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith to adjourn the May 10, 2023 Executive Session. The Committee will reconvene in Open Session.

Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Garabedian.
Motion carried 5-0.

ANNOUNCEMENT

At 6:06 p.m., Ms. Garabedian announced that the May 10, 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. No one was recording the meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Garabedian asked Rania to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Garabedian reported that during the Executive Session, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the April 12, 2023 Executive Session meeting minutes.

RECOGNITION

Voice of Democracy - Tewksbury/Wilmington VFW Post 8164

Ms. Regan introduced representatives from the Tewksbury/Wilmington VFW Post 8164: Commander Vinnie Oliva, Jimmy Williams and Mary Williams. The Committee and the VFW representatives recognized Brooke Bunyan, a senior at Tewksbury Memorial High School. Brooke is the Second Place winner at the State Level in the 2022-2023 Voice of Democracy Audio Essay contest. Commander Oliva announced that Brooke received over \$4,000 for her participation in the contests since the sixth grade. On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Anderson read and presented Brooke with a Proclamation of Recognition.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Notes from Tewksbury Memorial High School

Rania Elouahi presented the TMHS updates from April and May.

Club Updates:

- She's The First donates money each year to fund women's education in underprivileged countries around the world. This year they donated \$2,000 to Gambia in West Africa, in order to aid funding women's education.
- The International Club hosted a town clean-up last Saturday, May 6th, at Pines Cemetery in Tewksbury.
- Student Council is currently in the midst of setting up a multitude of activities for Teacher Appreciation Week. Each day of this week, there have been different gifts and goodies planned for the teachers to show our gratitude to them.
- ESPORTS have won the state Rocket League Championship.
- TMHS Theater Company put on an outstanding performance of *Beauty and the Beast* on April 27th through April 29th.

Sports Updates:

- The Spring Sports Season is coming to a close.
 - MVCs are nearing and many sports are beginning to have their final games, meets, and more.
- On April 28, TMHS Track & Field did amazing at State Relays. The girls team placed sixth overall, and the girls 4x200 and 4x100 team broke school records. Additionally our 4x400, placed third. On the boys side, they placed second out of the entire competition!
- Varsity Baseball has won two games recently, and they're playing Dracut tonight.

Miscellaneous Updates:

- AP Exams have been going on since May 1st. Finally, after the AP World History exam tomorrow they will be coming to an end.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to move New Business item 2023-2024 Preschool - Grade 4 Elementary Student Handbook, out of order to this portion of the meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

2023-2024 PK-4 Elementary Student Handbook

Ms. Regan reported that the elementary schools have unified the PK-4 Elementary Student Handbook. She reported that Principal Gerrish and Principal Harding are in the audience tonight to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Ms. Regan responded to questions from the Committee members. Ms. Garabedian asked for a motion to allow the principals to make updates as needed during the school year. The Committee and families will be notified of any updates.

Mr. Parsons moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to authorize the principals to make updates as needed during the school year to the PK-4 Elementary Student Handbook. Motion carried 5-0.

The School Committee approved the 2023-2024 PK-4 Elementary Student Handbook with a motion from Mr. Russo, seconded by Mr. Parsons. Motion carried 5-0.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

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. Seeing no one, she moved on to the approval of the minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Anderson moved to approve the April 12, 2023 Regular Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Russo. Motion carried 5-0.

SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

Ms. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the payroll period ending April 13, 2023, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,522,565.67. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Garabedian. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Anderson moved, seconded by Mr. Russo, to approve the payroll period ending April 27, 2023, to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,468,514.55. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Garabedian. Motion carried 5-0.

SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Ms. Regan reported that as of May 11, 2023 no masks are required in schools and hospitals. Tewksbury Memorial High School's Junior Class attended the College Fair with over 70 colleges and military representatives present. TMHS has been fully accredited by the board of New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC); they will visit again in 2028. At the last School Committee meeting she shared the District Comprehensive Review and Entry Plan with the Committee. One of the goals is to have student listening sessions. She announced that she and Ms. McDermott began and will continue with the listening sessions at all grade levels. She gave a *Bravo!* to the participants of the Annual Art Show and Band & Choir. Ms. Regan gave a *Bravo!* to the Wynn Drama Club relating that they participated in the *Massachusetts Educational Theatre Guild's 2023 Middle School Drama Festival* bringing home Tewksbury's third gold medal in theater for their production of *Fire Exit!* and five students took home the All-Star Company Awards.

She gave a *Bravo!* to the TMHS Theater Company, they were nominated for 19 *TAMY Awards* for their production of *Beauty and the Beast*. She will update the Committee after the May 21st TAMY Awards Ceremony. She also thanked all those involved in the Arbor Day celebration at the Center Elementary School.

Mr. Russo thanked Ms. Regan for the report and commented on the College Fair. He added that the topic of homework has come up among students and he asked if the Policy Committee would review the homework policy.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. McDermott presented her updates reminding students and families to continue to check the MCAS schedule information on the website. She gave an update on the Standard Based Report Cards project reporting that the committee continues to make great progress and she will present the draft at the June School. Ms. McDermott thanked the ELA pilot teachers, Heather Grace, Katie Buck, Lisa Tramonte and Kim Bruff, for hosting teachers from the Westford Public Schools. They are piloting the same two ELA programs as Tewksbury and asked to observe how our pilot is going. The district is on track to launch our new automated absence and substitute management system, Frontline, on May 15th. She gave a *Shout-out* to Kaitlyn Paquette, TPS Payroll Specialists, for her diligence in setting up the backend of the system and to the TTA for their support. In recognition of Teacher Appreciation Week, Ms. McDermott thanked all the teachers for the tremendous effort they put in making each day count for students at TPS. She offered thanks to all the PACs for going above and beyond to make sure the teachers know how much they are appreciated during Teacher Appreciation Week.

Ms. McDermott responded to questions and comments from the Committee members.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Libby pointed out a letter on the consent agenda regarding mosquito spraying explaining that the district has to notify when testing goes on and what chemicals we use in and around the schools. The district received the results from the annual audit report performed by Powers & Sullivan; there were no findings, which is good news for the district. He reported that the contract with AlphaBEST will expire in June. The district put bid specifications out to eight companies licensed to perform this service. We received two bids; evaluated them on qualifications; the team looked at specifications submitted; and voted unanimously to award the contract to AlphaBEST.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Garabedian asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Seeing none, she asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Parsons moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

Correspondence

- a. TMHS College Fair 2023 Attendees
- b. New England Assoc of Schools & Colleges (NEAS&C): TMHS Accreditation
- c. Central Mass Mosquito Control Project - IPM

PERSONNEL ITEMS

Appointments

Sean O'Leary, position of shared School Attendance Officer, effective for the 2022-2023 school year; Karen Baker O'Brien, position of shared School Attendance Officer, effective for the 2022-2023 school year.

New Hires - None

Transfers - None

Retirements - Joy Wallace, Dewing Elementary School Secretary, effective July 3, 2023; Ronald Page, Building Custodian at the John Ryan Elementary School, effective July 3, 2023.

Acceptance of Grants - None

Acceptance of Donations - None

Fundraisers/Raffles - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Elementary School Building Committee

Ms. Brenda reported that at the most recent meeting of the Elementary School Building Committee (ESBC) they voted to fund items on the punch list and additional items needed. Mr. Libby reported that the ESBC asked that the work be completed by the end of the summer and be the closure of the project.

Tewksbury SEPAC

Ms. Biagioni-Smith reported there was conversation around things happening in the schools and ways in which the SEPAC might be involved to mediate. They would like to reintroduce meetings with the district leadership and the TSEPAC to discuss things they are seeing. SEPAC Board nominations were due this week; they will vote on the new leadership at their Business Meeting on May 18th. They have a *Social Meet-up*, May 13th, 10:00 a.m., at Kids Connection in Billerica; a parent workshop is scheduled on May 17th focused on de-escalation techniques and regulation; and a virtual Family Engagement parent workshop is scheduled on May 23rd. Information and links may be found on the SEPAC Facebook page or you may reach out to Ms. Biagioni-Smith or members of the Tewksbury SEPAC.

Wellness Advisory Committee

Ms. Biagioni-Smith reported the Wellness Advisory Committee is going to extend the meeting time frame and add more meetings and to expand the Committee membership. They had a conversation surrounding general mental health and how to bring in more support for students and staff. Ms. Garabedian reported that they have been working on the wellness policy and Lead Nurse Kelly Constantino will be submitting the draft when it is completed.

Policy Sub-Committee

Ms. Garabedian reported that the Policy Sub-Committee will be meeting on May 25, 2023. They will be reviewing policies related to the schools including the parking policy and the policy on lice. She asked the Committee members to let her know if they had anything to add. Mr. Russo has requested that they look at the homework policy.

POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

TMHS Domestic Trip Request - February 2024 Update

Ms. McDermott spoke on behalf of Bailey Mahoney, she had a prior engagement as she was receiving her doctorate tonight.

Ms. McDermott reported that the TMHS Travel Committee did not have sufficient student interest in participating in the California trip requesting to switch the trip from visiting California to revisit the National Parks. The School Committee had already approved the trip; dates will remain the same to travel during the February 2024 recess. The School Committee has the new information in the packet.

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve for the TMHS Travel Committee to offer students a trip to the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon and Zion National Parks during the 2024 February recess. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Ms. Anderson, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. Motion carried 5-0.

School Committee 2024 Meeting Schedule

The School Committee reviewed the School Committee meeting schedule for the 2024 calendar year. Mr. Parsons moved to approve the 2024 School Committee meeting schedule with the updated revisions. Mr. Russo seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

School Committee Member Appointment to the Elementary School Building Committee

Ms. Biagioni-Smith nominated Mr. Russo to serve as the School Committee representative on the Elementary School Building Committee. Ms. Garabedian seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Motion carried 5-0.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee

Mr. Parsons resigned his position on the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (DEIAC). Mr. Russo nominated Ms. Anderson to serve as the School Committee representative on the DEIAC. Ms. Anderson accepted the nomination. Ms. Biagioni-Smith seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Motion carried 5-0.

District Security Team

Ms. Garabedian nominated Mr. Russo to represent the School Committee on the District Security Team. Ms. Anderson seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith asked about having a back-up selected to serve on the committees. Ms. Garabedian responded that the district has two members appointed. The ESBC and DEIAC are town committees and the suggestion would have to be brought to the town.

School Committee Subcommittees 2023-24 Assignments

SEPAC: Mr. Parsons & Ms. Biagioni-Smith; Wellness Advisory Committee: Mr. Russo & Ms. Biagioni-Smith

Mr. Russo moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the School Committee sub-committee assignments as presented. Motion carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

2023-2024 PK-4 Elementary Student Handbook

Move up on agenda.

2023-2024 Register Periods

Ms. Regan reported that the Committee has received the Register Periods for the 2023-2024 school year. This is for information only, no vote is required. We will come back with another Register Periods document for the Standard-Based report cards. At the request of Ms. Garabedian the information will be posted on the website for parents.

2023-2024 Valley Collaborative Board Member Appointment

Ms. Garabedian moved to appoint Ms. Regan as the School Committee representative on the Valley Collaborative Board of Directors for the 2023-2024 school year. Ms. Biagioni-Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST

The School Committee members commended the members of the TMHS Theater Company and all that were involved in the production and tremendous performance of *Beauty and the Beast*. The Committee offered their appreciation to the teachers of the Tewksbury Public Schools for all they do and gave *Shout-outs!* to the PACs for all they did to recognize teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week. They are also looking forward to the end-of-year events. Mr. Parsons reported that the DEIAC will host the Pride of Lights event at the town gazebo on June 2nd at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Biagioni-Smith thanked the PACs for all their hard work done between the tree dedication and funding of the project and for organizing the field days. She also thanked the parent volunteers for the Wynn festival and gave a *Shout-out* to the art teachers for their work and success with the Art Show. Ms. Garabedian reported that Friday was Food Services Hero day recognizing the TPS Food Services staff. Last week, she and Ms. Biagioni-Smith attended the MASC Day on the Hill Legislature Advocacy day. Ms. Garabedian thanked the district administrators for attending Town Meeting and thanked the Town administration for supporting the district.

FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

May 17, 2023 SC Training/Workshop; May 31, 2023 Regular Meeting; June 14, 2023 Regular Meeting

FUTURE FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE & ADVISORY MEETING DATES

Elementary School Building Committee: June 22, 2023; *TSEPAC Business Meeting*: May 18, 2023

Wellness Advisory Committee: June 7, 2023; *Policy Sub-Committee*: May 25, 2023

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Wynn Drama members, the ESPORTs team and other recognition at the June meeting.

Invite AlphaBEST in for a program update.

Ms. McDermott gave a *Shout-out and kudos!* to the choir and band members for their performance at the Annual Art Show and Band and Chorus Concert. She gave a *kudos* to Celeste Pellegrino as well.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:33 p.m., Ms. Garabedian adjourned the May 10, 2023 Regular School Committee meeting with a motion from Mr. Russo, seconded by Parsons. Motion carried 5-0.

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

*Tewksbury School Committee
Regular SC Meeting
May 10, 2023*

7	Recognitions: VFW Voice of Democracy
11	Minutes: April 12, 2023
12	Submission Of Payment Of Bills: April 13, 2023 & April 27, 2023
14	Consent Agenda: Correspondence; Personnel Items
17	Old Business: TMHS Domestic Trip February 2024; SC 2024 Meeting Schedule: SC member Appointments: ESBC; DEIAC; District Security Team: SC Subcommittee 2023-24 Appointments
18	New Business: 23-24 PK-4 Student Handbook; 23-24 Register Periods; 23-24 Valley BOD Representative Appointment