

Tewksbury School Committee
Wednesday, January 8, 2025
Regular School Committee Meeting #7 - 6:00 PM
Tewksbury Memorial High School
Large Group Instruction Room #1
320 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

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

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Brenda Theriault-Regan, Superintendent
Nancy Milligan, Assistant Superintendent
David Libby, Business Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Garabedian called the Regular School Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:01 p.m., 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 December 11, 2024 Executive Session minutes and to discuss Collective Bargaining pertaining to Secretaries and TTA (Teachers) Collective Bargaining Units. The Committee will reconvene in open session following the Executive Session.

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

At 6:32 p.m., Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to adjourn the Executive Session. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Ms. Garabedian, to adjourn the January 8, 2025 Executive Session and reconvene in open session.

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

ADJOURN INTO PUBLIC SESSION

At 6:41 p.m., Ms. Garabedian reconvened the January 8, 2025 Regular School Committee meeting. She apologized for the late start.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approved 2-5-2025

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ms. Garabedian announced that the January 8, 2025 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.

Ms. Garabedian entertained a motion to take out of order and to move up on the agenda, New Business items 18a and 18b, Out-Of-State Field Trips Requests. Ms. Biagioni-Smith moved, seconded by Mr. Russo. All Aye. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Ron Drouin addressed the School Committee announcing that the TMHS Baseball Team won a lottery through the Baseball Hall of Fame to play a game on Doubleday Field in Cooperstown, New York. He is requesting approval of an Out-Of-State Field Trip for the team to go to New York, April 18th and 19th, to play a League Game with Methuen High School. The teams will travel together, the game will be played on Saturday, and the teams will return home Saturday after the game. Ms. Regan reported that Mr. Drouin has submitted all the necessary paperwork. There were no questions from the School Committee members.

Mr. Russo moved to approve the Out-Of-State Field Trip request from the TMHS Baseball Team to travel to Cooperstown, NY, on April 18, 2025 - April 19, 2025, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Celeste Pellegrino addressed the School Committee requesting approval of an Out-Of-State Field Trip for the Wynn Middle School and TMHS Drama Programs to travel to New York City to attend a Broadway performance of *Hadestown* on March 5, 2025. She reported that the trip is limited to 42 students. Ms. Pellegrino responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Mr. Russo moved to approve the Out-Of-State Field Trip request for the Wynn Middle School and TMHS Drama Programs to travel to New York City, NY, on March 5, 2025, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

RECOGNITIONS

Julia Borushik, YoungArts Musical Theater Award

Celeste Pellegrino introduced Julia Borushik for recognition. She reported that Julia is involved in the TMHS Concert Choir and Theater Program and she participates in musical arts outside of the high school. Julia entered the YoungArts National Competition winning the Musical Theater Award. On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Biagioni-Smith read and presented Julia with a Proclamation of Recognition. On behalf of Governor Maura Healey, Ms. Biagioni-Smith presented Julia with the Governor's Citation in recognition as the recipient of the 2025 YoungArts award.

PRESENTATIONS

Tewksbury Public Schools Special Education Audit

Ms. Regan gave an overview of the request for a third party audit of the Special Education Department. Senior Consultants William Lupini and Cyndy Taymore of Ribas Associates, addressed the School Committee and the community to present the findings of the audit. Ms. Taymore reported that the Committee has received a copy of the Special Education Audit Report and the Powerpoint which acts as an Executive Summary of the audit findings. They were hired to provide Tewksbury with an objective review of the strengths of Tewksbury and the improvements needed in order to improve outcomes for students. They presented the Powerpoint and pointed out the findings and recommendations in the following areas:

- Students with Disabilities Population
- Regular Education Interventions and Supports
- Continuum of Services and Specialized Programs
- 504 Accommodations and Process
- Early Childhood Programming and Oversight
- Case Manager Structure
- Grade Span Configuration and Transitions
- Educational Support Personnel
- Professional Development
- Communication
- Educational Evaluation

Mr. Lupini and Ms. Taymore presented their summary and responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members. The Committee thanked them for the presentation.

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. No one requested to speak.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith took a Point of Order to report that Rania was not present this evening.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Rania Elouahi - TMHS Student Council Representative Report and Highlights

Rania was excused tonight due to a scheduling conflict.

Ms. Garabedian invited Ms. Tharrett to comment on the Audit Presentation. Ms. Tharrett stated that she appreciated the opportunity to have experienced the audit. Everything that was brought forward are things we have been discussing as a leadership group. She is excited to have a focus for her department and for the district to move forward.

Ms. Milligan commented that on reflection of the School Committee's questions, she asked that as the district creates a plan please keep in mind that our professional development time is limited and that will be a barrier when we are looking for training for consistency. We cannot take on everything at once. As we are creating the plan she points out that it takes three to five years to get something going and five to seven years to sustain. Looking to Mr. Russo's point, what can we talk about and how often should we talk about it; that should be part of our Indicators for Success.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Moncada moved to approve the December 11, 2024, School Committee Regular Business Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Anderson. A vote of 4 ayes and Mr. Russo abstained as he had not been in attendance. Motion carried 4-0-1.

SUBMISSION OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

Mr. Moncada moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the Payroll Period ending December 19, 2024 to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,674,580.08. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Moncada, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Moncada moved, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith, to approve the Payroll Period ending January 2, 2025 to be approved and certified in the amount and categories as shown, \$1,620,468.17. Roll Call Vote - Voting Yes: Mr. Moncada, Ms. Anderson, Mr. Russo, Ms. Biagioni-Smith and Ms. Garabedian. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

SUPERINTENDENT & STAFF REPORTS

Superintendent's Report

Ms. Regan reported that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) contracted with STV, Inc. to evaluate all Massachusetts' school buildings. They will be in Tewksbury next week to survey all our school buildings. Tomorrow is the Valley Collaborative's Annual Stakeholders meeting; the School Committee members have been invited to attend. Ms. Regan announced that Dr. Alex Hirshberg, our Consultant working with the district on our MTSS and SST processes, will be in the district tomorrow. The Committee received the updated opt-out language in their packet tonight. The new language has been added to all of our student handbooks. Ms. Regan reported that planning for the next school year is a busy time for the Central Office and our schools. At our schools, intervention and action plans for student success are kicking into action and we are planning for our 2026 budget with our departments and school principals as well as planning for next year staffing and classroom needs based on projected enrollment. She reported that tomorrow, she and Ms. Milligan will be reviewing the TMHS Program of Studies with Principal Long and Dr. Osborne. The Program of Studies will be voted on at the February 5th School Committee meeting. She asked Mr. Weir, Principal of the Wynn Middle School, to collaborate with Mr. Long, Principal of the TMHS, Ms. Baker O'Brien and the respective Guidance Counselor teams on the Program of Studies to help guide 8th parents to prepare their students for their high school career. The goal is to give them clear information on the timeline and what the course selections look like for incoming freshmen. Typically, students choose courses for the next coming school year in March. Ms. Regan responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Milligan reported on the change in the Competency Determination at the high school. The district is working with surrounding communities to create guidelines to inform needed changes in our CD and related policies. DESE has not provided guidance but we hope to have an update for the Committee in February with some recommendations. The next update is on Register Periods, she reported that historically the district has issued report cards for grade levels on semesters two weeks after grades close. Reflecting on this practice, our current turnaround time and the systems in place, the district is able to issue report cards starting in Term 2 one week after grades close. This will move the upcoming report card issue dates to February 5th and April 16th. Please note, parents may always check grades in ASPEN. She would be happy to answer any questions about the update. Ms. Milligan reported that on January 16th there will be a World Language Cultural Fair at TMHS from 6:00-7:30 PM. She reminded families about the upcoming Beyond the Books event relating that the district will be offering families four sessions at our K-6 buildings to learn more about literacy. The first session is tomorrow at the Dewing School; January 14th it will be held at the Heath Brook School; January 28th at the Ryan School; and on January 30th at the Center School. Ms. Milligan responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Business Manager's Report

Mr. Libby reported that it is down to crunch time for Budget FY26. He held an initial meeting with Town Manager John Curran to discuss where the Town will be in terms of finances for next year and how it will relate to the school budget. He has met with one school at this point and a couple of Department Heads at the Central Office to get feedback on their needs for next year. He will be scheduling meetings with building principals next week to finalize numbers for the building level folks. He reported we have a Budget Workshop scheduled on January 22nd at 4:30 p.m. He commented that the budget is a never ending process; the needs

and resources are always changing and will continue to change as we move through the Spring towards the May Town Meeting. Mr. Libby gave an update on the Greenhouse Project for the five classrooms at the Heath Brook School adding that he sent pictures of the project to the School Committee members. The project is shaping up and the move will take place during the February vacation week. Mr. Libby responded to questions and comments from the School Committee members.

Correspondence & Informational Topics

Superintendent Regan and Assistant Superintendent Milligan presented the following topics in their reports.

- 2024-25 PK-12 Student Handbooks Update
- 2024-25 Register Periods - Grades 5-12 & Kindergarten Revisions

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Garabedian asked if any member had questions and/or comments on any item on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Russo motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Personnel Items

New Hires: None

Reappointments - None

Retirements - Alan Lefebvre, Education Support Personnel Aide at Tewksbury Memorial High School, effective January 31, 2025; Sarah Yore, Districtwide Math Coach, effective June 30, 2025.

Appendix B 2024-2025 Co-Curricular Activities

Appendix B 2024-2025 TMHS Athletics

Kelly Golini - Girls Ice Hockey Assistant Coach
Co-Op Team - Tewksbury/Methuen Red Rangers

Acceptance of Grants - None

Acceptance of Donation - None

Raffles - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Tewksbury SEPAC

Ms. Anderson reported that the Tewksbury SEPAC did not have a Business Meeting in December; the next meeting will be held on January 16th. The SEPAC, in collaboration with the Tewksbury Public Library, is hosting the Sensory-Inclusive movie, *Out of My Mind*, on January 11th, 11:00 a.m., at the Tewksbury Public Library. Ms. Biagioni-Smith added that they have a poll on the SEPAC Facebook page for determining the next Caregiver Coffee Session.

Wellness Advisory Committee

Ms. Anderson reported that the Wellness Advisory Committee has not met since our last meeting. The next Wellness meeting is scheduled on February 12, 2025.

Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee will meet on January 24, 2025.

Tewksbury School Facility Study Committee (TSFSC)

Mr. Russo reported that the TSFSC toured all six of the Tewksbury Public Schools. They have created a tool for potential reconfigurations of our buildings. They requested for Ms. Regan to ask the principals to evaluate the need to have 8th grade at the high school and to have three grades at the Ryan School or the Wynn Middle School and what would be the needs at the schools if that is the direction we take. A Feasibility Study will potentially be put forward as a Warrant Article in May; we will work with our Town Manager on that. At our next meeting we will discuss and evaluate the options and the pros and cons. Ms. Regan reported that she will be meeting with the principals on Monday to see the progress of this exercise and we expect we can present at the next meeting.

POLICY CHANGES, PROPOSALS, AND ADOPTIONS

Recommendation to rescind the following policy on First and Final Reading

JKA - Corporal Punishment

Mr. Russo reported that we are recommending to rescind policy JKA, Corporal Punishment; the language was incorporated into another policy. Mr. Russo motioned to rescind policy JKA, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. All Aye. Unanimous Vote. Motion carried 5-0.

He reported that the following policies are for informational purposes; there are two further readings.

Information Reading of Policy - Recommendation to Revise Policies

JICC - Student Conduct on School Buses

EEAEC - Student Conduct on School Buses

Ms. Garabedian pointed out that JICC and EEAEC are the same written policy stored in two different sections of the Policy Manual. The recommendation is to update language in the policy. This is the Information reading; there will be two more readings before the Committee will be asked to vote.

OLD BUSINESS

January 2, 2025 Enrollment

Ms. Regan reported on the Student Enrollment update as of January 2, 2025 reporting there are 3,235 students. There was no change in the student enrollment count since the November report.

NEW BUSINESS

Out-of-State Field Trip Request for TMHS Baseball Team

Item was moved up on the agenda.

Wynn Middle School & TMHS Drama Program Out-of-State Field Trip Request

Item was moved up on the agenda.

2025-2026 School Calendar Draft

Ms. Regan presented the 2025-26 School Calendar reporting that this is a preliminary draft; no vote is needed tonight. She reported that the K-4 early release days (highlighted in blue) are under consideration. We will bring a final draft to the February 5th School Committee meeting for a vote by the Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MATTERS OF INTEREST

Ms. Garabedian announced that nominations for the annual Ginsburg Family Award and the annual Krissy Polimeno Outstanding Educator Award will open in February. Information and the nomination forms will be on the February 5th School Committee agenda.

Ms. Biagioni-Smith reported that the next School Committee's Listening Session will be held on January 14th, 5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m., at Tewksbury Memorial High School.

FUTURE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Budget Workshop & Goals (SC, District, and Supt): January 22, 2025
Public Budget Hearing & Regular Business Meeting: February 5, 2025
Public Budget Hearing & Regular Business Meeting: March 11, 2025

2024 FUTURE SUB-COMMITTEE & ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

TSEPAC Business Meeting: January 16, 2025
Wellness Advisory Committee: February 12, 2025
Policy Sub-Committee: January 21, 2025
Tewksbury School Facility Study Committee: January 15, 2025

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Recognition of TMHS Athletes - February
Lions Club - Support Students to go to Camp Joslin

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:05 p.m., Ms. Garabedian moved to adjourn the January 8, 2025 School Committee meeting with a motion from Mr. Russo, seconded by Ms. Biagioni-Smith. Unanimous vote. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gail Johnson, Recording Secretary
List of documents and exhibits used (GL c.30A, sect 22(a)):

AGENDA ITEM #	DOCUMENTS
1	School Committee Meeting Agenda: January 8, 2025
2	Executive Session Agenda: January 8, 2025
8	Presentation: TPS Special Education Audit
10	Minutes: December 11, 2024
11	Submission of Payment of Bills: December 19, 2024; January 2, 2025
13	Correspondence & Informational Topics: 2024-25 PK-12 Student Handbooks Update; 2024-25 Register Periods - Grades 5-12 & Kindergarten Revisions
14	Consent Agenda: Personnel Items; Appendix B appointments
16	Policy: JKA, JICC, EEAEC
17	January 2, 2025 Enrollment

18	New Business: Out-of-State Field Trip Request for TMHS Baseball Team; Wynn Middle School & TMHS Drama Program Out-of-State Field Trip Request; 2025-2026 School Calendar Draft
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