

# Swampscott School Committee

## Regular Session Meetings

March 24th, 2021

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held virtually in Swampscott, MA commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Suzanne Wright, Ms. Carin Marshall, Mr. John Giantis, School Committee members. Also, present: Pamela Angelakis, Superintendent of Schools, Jean Bacon, Director of Teaching & Learning, Martha Sybert, Director of Finance, and Martha Raymond, Asst. Superintendent of Student Services. Myra Diaz was present. Ms. Amy OConnor, School Committee Chair, and Mr. Ted Delano were absent. Tabitha Randell, Student Rep was absent.

The School Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, fully remote via teleconferencing, practicing social distancing, and in accordance with the Governor's suspension of certain open meeting laws. The meeting was being recorded and broadcast live on the local cable station.

### **Community Announcements:**

Ms. Diaz spoke about seniors hearing back from colleges.

Mr. Giantis asked about a presentation on college acceptances. He commended the nursing team, board of health, and all those involved for their work the past week with the COVID cases.

Ms. Wright gave a shout out to Ms. Mackey-Knowles for arranging a meeting with tech directors across MA that have built new schools. She said hearing the lessons learned were beneficial and they have done their due diligence with the school building project.

**Superintendent's Report:** Ms. Angelakis' report will be posted on the Superintendent's Page under the SPS web page.

Ms. Angelakis thanked the custodial staff and the facilities department for all their work preparing classrooms, parent volunteers, and the nursing staff. She provided an update on the Ventilation Report. The "purple rooms" (12 rooms) were retested. Seven rooms are no longer an issue, and the other five rooms remain purple but may be used with 6-foot distancing.

The ventilation project at the Stanley School is scheduled to be completed by this Friday, March 26th. Ms. Huntley will be sharing a drafted transition plan which will be shared in the coming days (no transition before next week).

Ms. Angelakis provided an update on the Survey Results. The majority of families have chosen to return to in-person learning across all the schools (Clarke 93%, Hadley 89%, Stanley 95%, Middle 88%, High 85%). She said that they are moving ahead with the schedule outlined at the last meeting with the exception of the HS. On March 29th students will be brought back in (PreK 8:30 am-2:00 pm (5 days), K & 1: 8:00 am -12:15 pm (5 days), Middle School (all grades 5-8) 8:00 am - 12:30 am (5 days)). Ms. Angelakis spoke about taking care of the littlest learners (K/1) and giving them time in the school on their own.

On April 5th Kindergarten-Grade 4 and the High School will return to 5 full days with lunch. The Middle School (all grades 5-8) will return to 5 full days with lunch on April 12th.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about the lunch challenge and the use of the purple rooms, good weather, etc. She gave a shout out to the teacher union. She is proud of the relationship they have and the flexibility and understanding as they all work to the goal of getting kids back in school.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about returning to pre-pandemic absent policies. She said during the Hybrid model that people would change their schedule if it was not convenient for their family. She stressed that if you commit to in-person learning and are absent then it is marked as an absence. Students will not be permitted to pop on Zoom.

Ms. Wright asked about siblings that need to change if another sibling tests positive. Ms. Angelakis said that COVID related accommodations will be made but changes unrelated to COVID will not have access to Zoom and links.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about two letters received from football parents requesting to play before April 5th. She said that we follow the state's guidelines as the Department of Public Health (DPH) Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC) when it comes to quarantine and or isolation, not the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She spoke about testing, monitoring for symptoms, quarantines, and the mobile testing unit. Ms. Angelakis stressed that the decision was not made in isolation but made in consultation

with the Swampscott Health Department. She stated that all sports were being treated the same. Football is considered a high-risk sport in relation to COVID, and as of 3/23, they still did not have test results from more than half of the football team.

Mr. Giantis asked about not having the results of the football team. Ms. Angelakis said it means they haven't received results yet but it doesn't mean they weren't tested. Mr. Giantis asked if the April 5th date could change if they all tested negative. Ms. Angelakis said no, based on close contacts that could turn positive during the 14- day period and high risk/close contact of football.

**Director of Finance:** Ms. Sybert provided an FY21 update. She mentioned the budget transfer (\$30K) at a special town meeting in November. Overall the school department is tracking toward its total appropriation and will spend its entire budget for FY21.

Ms. Sybert spoke about the information they are receiving from DESE regarding FEMA. She stated that a lot of the infrastructure work (\$400K) could potentially be reimbursed from FEMA. Ms. Sybert said as the landscape changes so will the budget and she may be able to move things around.

Ms. Sybert stressed that payroll is \$9.6M of the overall \$10.3M projection or 93% of the anticipated expenditures. She reviewed each cost center. Overall, the Administrative Cost Center is tracking on budget. Under the General Ed cost center, Supplies and Materials are mostly unused, and Other Expenses are under budget by \$26k as conference attendance is down. Ms. Sybert said the savings are offset by the projected \$85K loss in food services. She mentioned that all lunches are free until the end of the year.

She discussed that she is carrying a \$100K projection for unemployment expenses. Ms. Sybert said the last claim statement was through September 2020. Ms. Wright asked if we can predict the expense. Ms. Sybert said communication is slow right now. Ms. Wright asked if we could estimate based on who we laid off. Ms. Sybert said some may not file and it was mostly extended day staff that was laid off. She said that it would not be worse than her projection. Ms. Marshall asked if we were on the hook for the "extra" unemployment. Ms. Sybert said that we were not obligated as that is federal funding.

Under the Special Education cost center, transportation savings are offset by increased tuition expense and contracted services and Professional Salaries turnover savings were offset by a \$50K reduction to SE Tuition Revenue.

Ms. Sybert discussed the School facilities cost center which highlighted overtime compensation for custodial staff, contracted services, and other services. The District Wide budget is overall tracking to budget.

Ms. Sybert said that we will continue to monitor and use grants.

Ms. Sybert's data pulled on March 28th shows that there is still 38% of the SY to happen. She restated that teachers are the largest expenses. Payroll represents \$9.6 Million of the overall forecasted expense.

Ms. Sybert said the town has a budget freeze. In an effort to bring FY2021 in on budget the school is following the town lead and implementing a spending freeze on all General Fund Line Items, effective immediately.

Ms. Sybert reviewed the lost revenue streams totaling \$375K (i.e., PreK, SE tuition, extended day) with no corresponding reduction to expenses. She reviewed absences and impact on substitute costs.

Ms. Sybert said the FY21 update as presented and forecasted has two cost centers overspent (Special Ed, School Facilities). The SC can approve a budget transfer at this time to bring the cost centers into balance, or defer correcting transfers until closer to the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Wright asked if Ms. Sybert had a preference. Ms. Sybert prefers to wait but it is the SC call. Ms. Marshall said it makes more sense to wait. Ms. Wright said there are still things that will change. Ms. Sybert said there are a lot of moving parts. Ms. Wright mentioned substitutes and the costs. Ms. Sybert said she is very conservative in her projections. Mr. Giantis leans toward waiting unless there is a compelling reason to vote now. He asked if we would know about FEMA reimbursement by the end of the fiscal year. Ms. Sybert said yes, we should.

### **Chair:**

### **SubCommittee:**

**Foreign Exchange Students (policy draft JFABB) (Vote requested):** Ms. Wright mentioned the first read of the policy at the last meeting.

Ms. Raymond said once they enroll, they are our students which means they are entitled to services if needed. Ms. Angelakis mentioned a one year commitment.

Ms. Wright said that plenty of schools have exchange programs. She mentioned writing something into the policy about per pupil expense. Ms. Raymond would not recommend denying student rights. Ms. Wright feels the benefits outweigh the risks.

Ms. Marshall agrees that it is beneficial and mentioned charging for costs above and beyond per pupil. Ms. Wright spoke about adding internal protocols and limiting the number of students in the program.

Mr. Giantis asked about placement agencies and re-evaluating them after a year. Ms. Wright said that it is a good idea and an internal policy.

Ms. Sybert mentioned the program being a revenue generator for the agency and procurement laws. Ms. Wright did not see it as an issue or revenue program.

Ms. Marshall asked if we are sure that all of the protections are in place. Ms. Wright said we should have legal read over the policy. Ms. Angelakis would feel better if counsel read it over.

**SBC Meeting Updates:** Ms. Wright said things are moving along. She spoke about the site work and surveys the Design team is doing. They are working on data to give to the cost estimator. Ms. Wright said once the numbers come back they will set meetings to discuss. She mentioned construction management risk and determining what kind of procurement model we will use.

**Consent Agenda:** Ms. Wright read the purpose of the consent agenda and the items on the agenda.

- A. Regular Session Minutes-March 10, 2021
- B. Warrant 21-37

**Motion:** It was moved by Ms. Marshall to accept the consent agenda & seconded by Mr. Giantis

**Vote on Motion:** The motion passed 3 to 0 via roll call vote.

**Public Comment:** Ms. Wright said comments were 3-minutes or less and not for a response.

No Comments.

*Next meeting to be held on April 14th, 2021*

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** At 8:08 p.m. It was moved by Ms. Marshall to accept the motion to adjourn & seconded by Mr. Giantis.

**Vote on Motion:** The motion passed 3 to 0 via roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,




Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.

Superintendent of Schools


/dmm

Date: April 15, 2021


Supporting documentation:

 Agenda March 24, 2021, School Committee Meeting 

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 Approved March 10, 2021 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final 



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 Approved March 10, 2021 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final.pdf 



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 Copy of Policy JFABB - INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.docx 

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 Donation-Boys Basketball Boosters Club.pdf 

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 FY21 Budget Update 03.24.21.pptx 

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 March 10, 2021 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final 

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 Superintendent's Report to SC 3.24.21.pdf 

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