

Swampscott School Committee

Regular Session Meetings

November 18, 2020

A meeting of the Swampscott School Committee was held in virtually in Swampscott, MA commencing at 7:00 p.m. with the following members present: Ms. Amy OConnor, SC Chair, 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. Also present was Tabitha Randell, Student Rep. Mr. Ted Delano, School Committee, and Myra Diaz, Student Rep. were 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. Wright said it was nice to attend town meeting and see the High school set up. She thanked Mr. Douillette for all his work.

Mr. Giantis gave a shout out to Joe Douillette and his team. He mentioned the citizen petition for elementary school funds (109 signatures). Mr. Giantis said they had valid points and that as a SC they may be part of conversations going forward.

Ms. Marshall gave kudos to Joe Douillette. She would like to take a tour of the HS building.

Ms. Randall acknowledged the stress of teachers and students during this time. She reminded people to check in on others.

Ms. OConnor appreciates and is cognizant of everyone's time.

Superintendent's Report: Ms. Angelakis' report will be posted on the Superintendent's Page under the Swampscott Public School's web page.

National Merit Scholarship: Mr. Kohut named the commended students in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship (Rebecca Chase, Elizabeth Delia, Henna Domian, Nicholas Parsons, Leah Stewart). The commended students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2021 competition by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Test (PSAT/NMSQT). He named the two semifinalists (Doug Dwyer, Muriel Fulghum).

Grand Concours National French Contest: Mr. Kohut announced that SHS senior, Paul Flacke, and sophomore, Lilly Gordinas, have both been honored by the American Association of Teachers of French for their exceptional performance in the Grand Concours National French Contest.

Doug Dwyer, Captain of the Robotics team, spoke about his future plans. Paul Flacke spoke about his plans related to foreign languages. Elizabeth Delia spoke about her plans related to public health.

Superintendent Report: Ms. Angelakis spoke about the bi-weekly technology training for parents/guardians/caregivers (links on the website calendar), technology help workflow chart (posted on the SPS website), and winter sports. She mentioned there is a NESC conference on Friday. The Athletic Director (AD), Ms. Wolff will bring forward to the Committee the modifications for each sport. Ms. Marshall asked if we could include the coaches' perspectives.

Ms. Angelakis talked about Thanksgiving and the MA travel plans guidelines. There will be a travel form sent to all students and staff. Students who are traveling out of state will need to plan to work remotely on Monday, November 30th, because they will need to provide proof of a negative PCR test and be cleared by the school nurse on Monday.

Ms. OConnor asked if we were asking about hosting people from a red state. Ms. Angelakis said no but would hope people will be cautious and follow gathering rules.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about the Governor's press conference on November 6th, when he set expectations that schools in communities designated as grey, green or yellow return to students learning fully, in person, if feasible. She spoke about the MA Association of School Superintendent (MASS) statement. Ms. Angelakis stated that a full in person is not feasible based on CDC guidance of 6-foot distance and the close contact rules.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about the previous plan to go to a 3-2 Hybrid model after Thanksgiving. She provided the rationale for waiting until the January assessments to make a decision. Ms. Angelakis spoke about what can be done until that time (i.e. more in-person time for the students that are struggling with Remote learning and identify students that are not meeting academic progress).

Ms. OConnor said it doesn't seem that we need data to know kids need more time in the classroom. Ms. Angelakis noted that the 3-2 Hybrid model added 4 hours of in-person time every other week.

Ms. OConnor asked how many students were fully remote. Dr. Bacon responded that it was about 20% of students. She stated that the 3-2 Hybrid model cuts the teacher time devoted to Remote students on Wednesdays.

Ms. Angelakis spoke about the data points, giving teachers the opportunity to close gaps, what happens if we don't see growth, making changes, and the intensity of class time now.

Mr. Giantis asked how quickly we can make changes if the data points are not good. Ms. Angelakis said leadership and teachers need to work collaboratively now to have a plan in place. They will be putting together a working group after Thanksgiving. Ms. OConnor asked if they could expect to hear the plan in mid-December. Ms. Angelakis said that she can't put a time frame on it right now but they will inform everyone ASAP.

Ms. Marshall is glad to hear that they are planning now for a path forward. She is disappointed about the 3-2 Hybrid model delay but understands. Ms. Angelakis said the delay in the 3-2 Hybrid model was more about the Remote students and not taking away that one solid connection. Ms. Marshall asked if people will be re-selecting a Remote or Hybrid choice. Ms. Angelakis spoke about capacity and CDC metrics going forward.

Ms. Marshall asked for an update on the hiring of tutors. Dr. Bacon will be interviewing tomorrow with the goal of starting the positions after Thanksgiving.

Ms. Randall said she was a fully Remote student. She noted that the only time they are interacting with the teacher is Wednesday and how beneficial that time is for herself and her peers.

Ms. Wright asked for clarification that the focus was on all kids, not just high need kids. She discussed the quality time for every student. Ms. Wright said it was also important to focus on keeping kids where they need to be and pushing them ahead. Ms. Angelakis said the focus is every single child in the district, and quality education and instruction.

Ms. OConnor gave kudos to Ms. Angelakis and her team for the parent training and the Tech workflow chart.

Facilities Report: Max Kasper provided an update on the status of projects and ventilation. He provided some background on the hiring of LBA architects and mechanical engineers. Mr. Kasper discussed the 1st phase which produced a report of each space, color-coded spaces, identified problematic spaces, and provided key recommendations. The next level was to have a mechanical contractor come in to look at spaces and equipment. The project entailed evaluating each piece of ventilation equipment at the 4 schools (elementary & MS).

They worked with the architect and mechanical engineer to create new color-coded floor plans. The contractors made minor repairs and notated anything more problematic. Mr. Kasper reviewed the new color-coded floor plans for Stanley based on the latest information. He spoke about the pivotal role of control systems, measurement of airflow, Testing Adjusting and Balancing (TAB) reports, the data, maximum occupancy based on what the ventilation can support with social distancing, fresh air numbers, and properly functioning ventilation and equipment.

Mr. Kasper spoke about purple spaces where window usage is mandatory. Ms. Angelakis stated that air purifiers are a 2nd layer in the purple coded rooms. The best ventilation on top of mechanical is to have a window or two cracked six inches. Ms. OConnor asked if teachers have been shown how to use windows for ventilation. Mr. Kasper said they have shared window instructions with principals and teachers. Ms. OConnor suggested they make someone available in purple rooms for a 5-minute overview for teachers.

Ms. OConnor asked about the medical waiting rooms. Mr. Kasper said these rooms had specific recommendations. They added equipment to create negative pressure. They are installing the first order of purifiers for the five nurses' suites this week.

Mr. Kasper spoke about the Stanley wing (eight classrooms) void of mechanical ventilation equipment. Ms. Angelakis said it was important to know they are on the design stage and moving forward. Ms. OConnor asked about a realistic time frame. Mr. Kasper said there was no exact date yet and did not want to give false expectations. The project will go out to bid and they will move forward as fast as can.

Ms. Wright asked if it was fair to say if not for COVID and the higher metrics for airflow that the eight classes are safe. Mr. Kasper said that was correct but that the Stanley project would have been something they wanted to do anyway. Ms. Wright said she heard a lot of complaints about the classrooms at town meeting. She stated that since we don't have any mechanical equipment it was not a lack of maintenance and previous airflow tests showed the rooms were safe.

Ms. OConnor asked about the cafeteria and teacher's room. Ms. Angelakis said the cafe was being used for small breakouts and the teacher's room is a classroom.

Ms. Sybert spoke about the operating budget absorbing the design work. She stated that CARES money can't be used for capital improvements. Once the project goes out to bid, they will be in a better position to talk to fincom and capital improvement. Ms. Marshall said there was a general consensus understood at the town meeting that this is coming.

Ms. OConnor asked about the Stanley art room. Mr. Kasper said it is not recommended to be used as a classroom. Ms. Angelakis said the art room is an old locker room in the basement with shower stalls. She stated that the contractors are working seven days a week. Ms. Angelakis wanted the community to understand that work is occurring.

Ms. Wright thanked Mr. Kasper. She said it is nice to see a thorough report and it was a relief to know he was keeping us moving forward. Ms. OConnor agreed and said it is nice that the superintendent does not have to deal with facilities issues. Ms. Angelakis thanked the general government and town administrator for letting Mr. Kasper focus on the school issues full time.

Ms. OConnor asked how long the Stanley classes would be at the HS and about the possibility of portables. Ms. Angelakis said she never put a time frame on the relocated classes. She said the portable path has its own challenges and would not happen any quicker than mitigation of the Stanley project. Ms. Sybert reiterated the issues with portables. She noted that it is an expensive and lengthy option.

Ms. Wright suggested taking videos and photos of the Stanley classes at the HS so people can see the space. Ms. Angelakis said they can do more pictures and she can coordinate tours for the SC.

Chair: Ms. OConnor mentioned that there is a Tri-chair meeting on Friday. Ms. Angelakis said they are interviewing Friday following the meeting for the joint Director of HR.

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

- A. Regular Session Minutes-November 4, 2020
- B. Donation - Weatherspoon Charitable Foundation - Drama Club & Green Scholars Program

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

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote

Next meeting to be held on December 9th, 2020

Adjournment

Motion: At 8:57 p.m. It was moved by Ms. Wright to accept the motion to adjourn & seconded by Ms. Marshall.

Vote on Motion: The motion passed 4 to 0 via roll call vote.



Respectfully submitted,





Pamela R.H. Angelakis, M.A., M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
/dmm



Date: December 10, 2020



Supporting Documentation:



 [Approved November 4, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final](#) 



 [Superintendent's Report to SC 11.18.20.pdf](#) 

 [Swampscott School Updated Diagrams - Final Nov-14-2020.pdf](#) 

 [MASS-Statemener-11.10.2020.docx-1.pdf](#) 

 [November 4, 2020 Regular Session Meeting Minutes Final](#) 

 [Donation - Weatherspoon Charitable Foundation - Drama Club & Green Scholars Program.pdf](#) 

 [American Association of Teachers of French - Grand Concours National French Contest.pdf](#) 

 [National Merit Information For School Committee](#) 