

City Council – Committee on Education Minutes

Date: February 3, 2020 5:30 – 6:30pm

Location: Senior Center

Committee Members

At Large Councillor Afroz Khan, Chair

At Large Councillor Barry Connell (Absent)

Ward 1 Councillor Sharif Zeid

Sean Reardon, Co-Chair, School Committee Member

Brian Callahan, School Committee Member

Bruce Menin, School Committee Member

Superintendent Gallagher

Mayor Holaday

Members of the Public

Jane Snow

Agenda Items Discussed

1. **School Committee Update** - Sean Reardon updated committee about agenda items before the School Committee that evening including the Discussion on Draft 2020-2021 School Calendar and to see if alternating late start versus early release days worked. The School Committee will also have a presentation by Steve Bergholm on the Capital Improvement Plan.
2. **Capital Improvement Plan** - Mayor Holaday briefly highlighted the Capital Improvement Plan projects for the schools including applying for the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) grant for the NHS Roof and Expanded STEM Wing as a joint undertaking. Due to the number of grants per school; it makes sense to combine those two projects. Other projects can be found in the presentation by Mr. Bergholm which can be found on the school committee website after it is presented later at the School Committee Meeting. The group agreed to have Steve Bergholm at the next Education Committee Meeting on March 2nd to answer details on the proposed CIP projects for the schools.
3. **Budgetary Items and Process** – Superintendent Gallagher provided two documents to talk through budget considerations which are undertaken through coordination with the School Council for each school. He also provided a copy of the 2019-2020 District Goals. The process starts in December 2019 where budget priorities are identified by each school in coordination with the School Council. The Leadership Team meets to review all of the proposed considerations which are collected and compiled into an initial budget

book. Central Office will review with Budget Managers in February of 2020 and the Preliminary Draft Budget is then presented to the School Committee which will happen on March 16, 2020. Councillor Zeid asked if it would be possible to get the initial budget book so that all of the requests made can be seen before the "Preliminary Draft Budget" is presented. Superintendent Gallagher shared that he tries to show those initial requests. The group agreed that a narrative accompanying the Preliminary Draft Budget can also draw attention to those requests. The link to the District Goals which was shared with the group can be found here:

https://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/documents/SC%20Minutes%202019-2020/SC_9-16-2019%20District%20Goals%202019-2020.pdf

4. **School District Update** – Superintendent Gallagher presented to the Education Committee what he presented last year on the MCAS. Some of the key items noted through the presentation related to the fact that in Spring 2017 there was a significant change to the MCAS which is referred to as the next-generation MCAS. Changes include testing to be administered by computer with some writing. The intention of the next generation MCAS is to better reflect if students are on track for the next grade level and eventually for college and a career. Next-generation MCAS scores fall into four categories: Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations and Not Meeting Expectations. The Superintendent pointed out that the scores are not comparable between the next generation MCAS and the previous MCAS. The presentation can be found on the School Committee website:
<https://www.newburyport.k12.ma.us/documents/SC%20Minutes%202019-2020/2019%20MCAS%20Presentation%20Review.pdf>