

Record of the Marblehead School Committee Meeting
Thursday January 23, 2025
6:00 PM

Members Present: Jennifer Schaeffner, Sarah Fox, Brian Ota, Al Williams

Also Present: John Robidoux-Interim Superintendent, Julia Ferreira-Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

Ms. Schaeffner calls the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

I. Opening Business

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Commendations

- John Robidoux would like to commend both Lisa Dimier and Melissa Acquaviva in the administration office for going above and beyond over the last couple of weeks to try and keep moving the district forward after having a few personnel changes
- Sarah Fox would like to commend Jeff St. George who has served for many years as a member of our Facilities Subcommittee who unfortunately passed away earlier this week for his years of service with the district

c. Public Comment

- Mary McCariston-Pine Cliff Drive
 - Mary references the flag policy in regard to a comment that was made at last weeks school committee meeting
- Michael Kalpin-7 Saphire Ave Marblehead
 - Michael is a construction worker and asks the School Committee “why we would borrow from a 30-year bond for a roof replacement when the current roof has only lasted 20 years”

d. Student Representative-Ella **Benedetto (Spelling)**

- Senior Project is beginning, and the folders and all required signatures are due back by 02/14/25
- Two senior nights are being held tonight for the Swim and Dive team as well as the Gymnastics team
- Best Buddies dinner is tonight at 6
- Boys Hockey team is ranked 3rd in the MIAA power rankings
- MHS’s two acapella groups will be attending New England Voices competition this weekend

II. District Updates- Superintendent John Robidoux

- John starts by thanking our facilities team for ensuring that the walkways and lots have been cleared and salted during the two snow falls we have had so far this season
- In upcoming school committee meetings, we will be featuring “School Spotlights” which will be highlighting ways that each of our schools has incorporated Student voices into their operations
- We are also in the midst of Budget discussions and planning
- John provides an update on our athletics department as well as our performing arts department
- MHS Drama club is busy preparing two performances-The Sleepwalker written by MHS Senior Benji Boyd and Hadestown

- We will be discussing the updated 2025/2026 school calendar, competency determination, and will provide an update on MHS Roof Project

III. Consent Action and Agenda Items

- a. DECA Overnight Trip (vote)
 - Mr. Gleason gives a explanation of the DECA Club as well as the upcoming field trip

Ms. Schaeffner asks for a motion to approve the DECA State Career Development and competition overnight trip from 02/27/25-03/01/25

Moved by Mr. Williams , Seconded by Ms. Fox

Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota, Ms. Fox, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Schaeffner and -All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

- b. Schedule of Bills

Ms. Taylor asks for a motion to approve the identified Schedule of Bills totaling \$748,330.97

Moved by Ms. Fox, Seconded by Ms. Taylor

Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota, Ms. Fox, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Schaeffner and -All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

- c. Meeting Minutes (01/09/25) (vote)
 - Postponed to the next school committee meeting

IV. School Committee Communication and Discussion Items

- a. Competency Determination for graduating students (vote)
 - The proposal that is being presented is like the draft that was presented to the School Committee at the last meeting
 - John outlines the options available and what is required for a student to prove competency prior to graduation
 - There will be an additional, more in depth, discussion regarding competency held prior to next school year however we need to get something in place for this year's graduating class

Ms. Schaeffner asks for a motion to approve the competency determination proposal as submitted to reflect for the graduating class of 24-25 at the top

Moved by Ms. Fox, Seconded by Mr. Ota

Mr. Williams, Mr. Ota, Ms. Fox, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Schaeffner and -All Yes

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 5-0

b. 2025-26 School Year Calendar

(vote)

- The following changes were made to the previously proposed draft of the 25/26 School Year Calendar:
 - There will be 2 PD days at the beginning of the School Year on 08/25/25 & 08/26/25
 - Students would start on 08/27/25
 - New Teacher Orientation would be Friday 08/22/25
 - This allows us to have our last day of school on 06/17/26
 - 11/10/25 will be a PD Day which will allow for a long weekend for students and families
 - Parent/Teacher conferences were added for 11/05/25 and 11/12/25
- Sarah Fox and Alison Taylor would like to see the Calendar revised to have the start of School for the kids fall after Labor Day as it was originally proposed
 - 08/27/25 & 08/28/25 will be off days and 01/02/26 and 06/18/26 will be school days

Ms. Fox asks for a motion to table this until our first February meeting so that we can give the community a chance to provide some feedback

Seconded by Ms. Taylor

Mr. Williams, Ms. Fox, Ms. Taylor, Ms. Schaeffner and -All Yes

Mr. Ota-No

A vote was taken, and the motion passes 4-1

c. MHS Roof Update -Michael Pfifferling

- Left Field and Raymond Designs are the companies we have contracted with for the MHS Roof Repair
- Both attended the last Facilities meeting to present our options for MHS Roof Replacement
- They did a thorough check of the status of the roof and have determined that our HVAC systems are also at the end of their life span at MHS
- Two options were presented to replace the HVAC units:
 - A. Replace all HVAC Units
 - B. Put the old equipment back on the roof and we would have to charge it with a “recovered refrigerant” but this would be a temporary fix
 - We have 2-3 years left with this HVAC systems equipment
 - 5.5 million that was originally proposed will cover the “vast majority” of the cost of Roof Replacement
 - The additional 8.61 million will be presented at Town Meeting and the School will ask for a “debt exclusion” for the HVAC portion of the project
 - Currently it is estimated that the equipment will be delivered in May of 2026
 - The timeline for the project has been extended because the scope of the project has changed

d. Subcommittee and Liaison Updates

- Brian Ota & Alison Taylor-Communications Subcommittee
 - The School Committees website is in the process of being updated
 - The newsletter is in the final stages of development
 - The draft will be presented to the School Committee for approval prior to being published on the Marblehead Schools homepage
 - This will be ready to go live in January 2025
- Facilities Subcommittee-Sarah Fox
 - Village-Light in the front parking lot that fell
 - Brown School- Fence in the back is providing a safety concern
 - Facilities subcommittee is working with the town to see about adding a crosswalk and a stop sign as you exit the Brown School
- Policy Subcommittee-Jennifer Schaeffner and Alison Taylor
 - Met last week
 - They are making progress on the School Committee goals as well as a Policy Review
 - The Flag Policy was discussed as well
 - There will be a Student and a Community forum to discuss the Flag Policy
 - They will ask for public comment to ensure that the Community is heard regarding the policy
 - After these forums the committee will follow up with a policy
- METCO Subcommittee-John Robidoux and Alison Taylor
 - There will be another meeting with Caja hopefully in the next couple of weeks

V. Closing Business

a. New Business-School Committee announcements and requests

- Brian Ota asks a question in response to an article he read regarding immigration agents raiding Boston Public Schools and removing undocumented students
 - Has Marblehead Public Schools provided any guidance to Teachers and Principals and how they should handle this situation should it arise?
 - John Robidoux indicates that yes this will be a discussion that will be had so that we are prepared for if this happens in the future

b. Correspondence

Meeting is adjourned at 7:56PM by Ms. Schaeffner

Respectfully Submitted,
 Allison McMahan, Secretary
 Marblehead School Committee