

School Committee Meeting
Monday, March 16, 2020 – Approved 4/6/2020
VIRTUAL MEETING
King Philip Regional High School – Library
201 Franklin Street, Wrentham, MA 02093

OPENING OF MEETING:

Mr. Gee, Chair, opened the meeting at 6:04pm.

ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members Present:

Norfolk:	Michael Gee, Jeff Curry
Plainville:	Bruce Cates, Samad Khan, Amy Abrams
Wrentham:	Trevor Knott

Members Absent:

Norfolk:	Kenneth Dow
Plainville:	Present
Wrentham:	Erin DeStefano (participated at 6:14pm due to technical difficulty)

HS Student Council Representative: Marion Linde (not present)

Mr. Gee, Chair noted that during these unprecedented circumstances due to the Coronavirus this meeting platform is by a virtual meeting based upon Governor Baker’s newly established guidelines for open meetings due to the current state of emergency. All votes will be taken by a roll call vote of members, per the Remote Participation Policy.

The Chair announced that this meeting is being recorded and the recording will be posted to the King Philip website for public accessibility. Mr. Gee provided details about how to access school committee meeting documents on the King Philip Website by visiting: www.kingphilip.org

CONSENT AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

PAYMENT OF BILLS, FINANCIAL REPORT

Warrants/Budget Report/Budget Transfers - None

COMMUNICATION:

Personnel Update:

A Personnel Update was provided in a memorandum dated March 10, 2020, from Mr. Azer.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None

DELEGATIONS AND VISITORS

Mr. Zinni, Superintendent, Dr. Gilson, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Azer, Director of Finance & Operations

COMMUNICATION:

- HS and MS Student Council Report: None

- KP DECA ICDC: Mr. Zinni congratulated the DECA participants on their awards received during the State Career Development Conference. However, due to the COVID-19 epidemic, DECA has cancelled the National Conference and since the Governor has declared a state of emergency there will be no student travel until further notice.
- MASC Day on the Hill/Registration: MASC has cancelled this conference.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

District response to state health and safety concerns: Mr. Zinni

Student Travel: Mr. Zinni announced that due to the COVID-19 epidemic the administrators have determined that all student travel will be cancelled. This includes DECA, Mock UN and the student service trip to the Dominican Republic. Information has been shared with parents on monetary refunds that will be handled for each of these trips. For the Dominican Republic trip, the travel company *Passports* has brokered a deal and will hold off on this trip for one year for freshman, sophomores and juniors. Seniors will receive a full refund and *Passports* will hopefully be able to fill these slots next year. Mr. Zinni commended *Passports* on their professionalism and their support.

(Erin DeStefano joined the meeting at 6:14pm)

Mr. Zinni indicated that he has been working with his Administrative Team on a regular basis and has had several conversations and teleconferences regarding the Coronavirus situation, including with the superintendents of Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham, the Board of Health, DESE, and other governmental agencies on topics including the sanitization of buildings, self-quarantine issues and guidelines from the Governor's directives on school closings. The buildings have been sanitized using an electro-static machine that was purchased last year for use in the Athletic Department. Until March 13, school closure decisions were being made on a district-by-district basis, and the four superintendents had decided in unison to cancel school for two weeks. Then Governor Baker subsequently issued a directive that all schools in the Commonwealth would be closed for a three-week period, through April 3.

Mr. Zinni and his Administration will continue to meet virtually to discuss students' school work and virtual learning. They will meet on Tuesday, March 17 to specifically discuss home learning and the online learning format that requires a very specific platform and we will work with staff on learning options. Mr. Zinni indicated that the DESE Commissioner has waived the 180-day requirement so that the last day of school will be June 24, 2020. Other significant concerns to be discussed with the Administration include: AP classes, where College Board has indicated that everything is still very fluid; concerns with MCAS, where we are awaiting federal government requirements to be determined; income and health insurance for staff for these days that staff are out for these three weeks to continue as administrative leave; and teacher evaluations and timelines.

Discussion ensued on special education and SEL students and online learning. Mr. Zinni indicated there are legal opinions on that matter, where all students are entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and all students have access and tools to learning and enrichment of learning and the standards of FAPE.

Discussion ensued on salaries being paid to staff during this three-week period while staff is on administrative leave and for the committee make decision and vote on paying hourly staff and teachers.

✚ A Motion was made by Mr. Curry, seconded by Mr. Khan, to pay staff members during this period.

Mr. Azer indicated that because we only would have had to make up two snow days through the 185th day - there was one snow day in November and also the last minute closure on Friday, March 13 due to the coronavirus is considered the second - there are three snow days remaining built into the calendar. He explained that they would pay the staff on schedule now but then there will be five days at the end of the school year that are make-up days with no additional pay. This is expense neutral and in the view of the administration fair to the staff; and they notified staff on Friday, March 13th.

Mr. Cates asked for clarification on the motion.

Mr. Curry clarified his motion to pay personal time off (PTO) for the time that the school is not in session, that is, hourly staff and teachers will be paid as if school were in session (the same as Norfolk has done). This is not an additional unplanned expense and teachers and hourly workers don't have control over the situation.

Mr. Cates clarified that the intent is covering the contract but not above and beyond. Mr. Curry indicated that that statement was correct.

- ✚ **Mr. Gee confirmed that the Motion was still made by the mover (Mr. Curry) and seconded by the same (Mr. Khan) and they both indicated yes. There were no further comments or discussion.**
- ✚ **Mr. Curry made the Motion, seconded by Mr. Khan, to place the hourly workers on administrative leave because of the coronavirus situation and to pay them for the days they are on leave, or mitigation, so that there is no gap. All in favor by roll call vote: Yes (8) - Mr. Gee, Mr. Khan, Mr. Cates, Mrs. Abrams, Mr. Curry, Mr. Killion, Mr. Knott, Mrs. DeStefano. No (0). Abstain (0). All in favor. Motion carried.**

Mr. Zinni commended the Administrative Team for their exceptional work and how they have rallied and are online 24/7 putting the staff and students at the foremost and how he is blessed to work with them and recognizes the purpose behind this and appreciates that they have done and what they will continue to do.

Various members thanked Mr. Zinni and his staff during these unprecedented events.

Discussion was held on E-learning. Mr. Zinni noted that the district has informed parents on a regular basis via ConnectEd and have offered resources to see that their basic needs are met including those families in need. The administration will continue to monitor and reassess this situation as we don't know what the future will hold, and Mr. Zinni will continue to work with staff as there are variables that will be addressed as they come up. Mr. Zinni has talked with the KPTA leadership and they are very appreciative of inclusion of all staff to alleviate their worries and we will continue to have ongoing positive discussions with them.

Committee discussion ensued on the general expectation that teachers will provide enrichment (versus core work), and that there is a level of responsibility on the part of the staff to provide learning opportunities.

Discussion ensued on having another virtual School Committee meeting on Monday, March 23, 2020 at 6pm as a follow-up, which was agreed. The meeting will be posted accordingly. The Finance Subcommittee Meeting scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2020, at 7pm will be cancelled.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FY21 Budget Update

Mr. Azer indicated that the state budget may be impacted by these health issues and that may impact the towns. The state has talked about a relief fund, but he has not received any details on that due to the state of emergency declared by the Governor.

The Joint Meeting of the three towns' select boards scheduled for March 18, 2020 has been cancelled. Mr. Cates noted that the three meetings to solicit public input on the Plainville budget have also been cancelled.

NEW BUSINESS:

School Committee 20/21 Meeting Dates (Retreat/August Meeting Dates): Tabled to a future meeting

Digital Literacies Grant: Dr. Gilson –

Dr. Gilson informed the Committee that a grant has been received in the amount of \$26,328 to be used for establishing aligned digital literacy and computer science education for the middle school. Congratulations were extended for securing this grant.

Concussion Policy Review:

Mrs. Abrams had asked for discussion of our current concussion policy and procedures. She noted a discrepancy between the current policy and the forms that are being used by the District. Mr. Zinni will review this policy with Mr. Brown, Athletic Director, and Mr. Bennett, Trainer, and bring it to the Policy subcommittee.

REPORTS FROM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- Norfolk School Committee Representative: Mr. Curry – Met on 3/10, where the budget vote was placed on hold based upon the recommendation of the Finance Subcommittee.
- Plainville School Committee Representative: Mrs. Abrams – The Food Service Director is retiring, and they are looking into the possibility of shared services; teacher evaluation; administrative restructuring discussion. Mrs. Abrams is advocating not to change the FTE of the Director of Student Services to a 0.6 but to keep the position as a 1.0 FTE
- Wrentham School Committee Representative: Mrs. DeStefano – Met on 3/10 and discussed the budget, presentation by the Director of Curriculum on the Math program; update on Technology Task Force.

LATE COMMUNICATIONS:

None

REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES: None

RECOMMENDATIONS OR QUESTIONS FROM INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Mrs. DeStefano thanked Mr. Zinni for his tireless work during this unprecedented event.

Mr. Zinni will post this recorded meeting on the KP Website at its conclusion.

ADJOURNMENT

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Khan, seconded by Mrs. DeStefano, to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 7:07PM. All in favor by roll call vote: Yes (8) - Mr. Gee, Mr. Curry, Mrs. Abrams, Mr. Cates, Mr. Khan, Mr. Knott, Mr. Killion, Mrs. DeStefano; No (0); Abstain (0). All in favor; Motion carried.**

Mr. Gee adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa B. Witkus

Secretary to the School Committee

Documents presented on March 16, 2020:

Personnel Update

KP DECA ICDC

MASC Day on the Hill

20/21 School Committee Meeting Date Calendar

Digital Literacies Grant

Concussion Policy