

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, February 10, 2021
Greenfield MA**

Note: This meeting was held fully remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, §20.

Present: Katie Caron (KC); Susan Eckstrom (SE); Susan Hollins (SH); Glenn Johnson-Mussad; (GJ); Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW); Roxann Wedegartner (RW) (arrived approx. 6:30)

Absent: Jordana Harper (JH)

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (KC, SE, SH, GJ, AP, JW), Chair Proietti called the meeting to order at 6:01p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

GJ moved to approve draft minutes of January 13 and January 25, 2021. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

Speaking in favor of resolution cancelling MCAS and supporting moratorium on high-stakes testing:

- Michael Sustick, Four Corners teacher
- Doug Selwyn, Greenfield resident
- Garrett O'Brien, GHS staff
- Paul Jablon, Greenfield resident
- Susan Worgaftik, Greenfield resident
- Jayme Winell, Greenfield, ELL teacher

Speaking in favor of moving to hybrid in-person learning:

- Stephanie Coffin, Greenfield parent
- Emmy Phelps, Greenfield parent

Ann Valentine, Greenfield teacher and GEA president, urged that 2021-22 calendar be created in customary cooperation with GEA and use lessons from pandemic to "think outside the box."

Lukas Martin, GHS teacher, GEA Executive Board, parent, requested information re: superintendent, absence of leadership, search for new superintendent.

Liz O'Connell, Greenfield parent, spoke in favor of MCAS resolution, in favor of in-person learning, asked for update on Covid funds & expenditures, asked for communication re: superintendent.

Chair Proietti gratefully acknowledged receipt of many emails from public.

IV. Reports

A. GHS & Superintendent's Award

Students D.L. and S.T. reported on GHS activities, service projects, and winter sports.

GHS Principal Karin Patenaude presented Superintendent's Award to senior A.O. for academic excellence, participation in school activities, volunteering, athletics as expert pistol marksman; will attend Yale.

B. Racial Justice Advisory Committee – GJ

Advisory Committee voted unanimously to support MCAS resolution.

Seeking comments on racial justice issues in the schools. Seeking people interested in serving on Advisory Committee. Email: racialjustice@gpsk12.org

C. Superintendent's Search – JW

Those wanting to serve on the search committee should email letter of interest to Jean Wall: jeawal1@gpsk12.org

D. Redrawing the District Map

JW invited public to attend meetings.

E. Collaborative for Educational Services

SH reported on new grant program for early childhood services and potential to host alternative middle school program. SH to research. AP will include on next School Committee agenda.

V. Business

A. FY22 Budget Update & Discussion – SE, SH

- Budget Subcommittee supports funding of curriculum staff and office. Gather in one expense center. Funding for curriculum director is in the budget; plan to carry over \$ and fill position.
- Working with TMS and GPS IT dept. to create instructional technology/educational software line item, separate from general technology expenses.
- Request to create new line item for K-3 literacy expenses, to allow separate tracking.
- FY22 Budget:
 - TMS working with principals to create FY22 budget.
 - Want budget to accurately reflect what schools need, but expect eventual cuts to that budget.
 - FY22 deadlines: Publish budget by Feb. 17; public hearing Feb. 24-March 3; budget vote March 10.
 - Mayor requested level-service budget.
- Special Covid funding:
 - Remote Technology Grant is fully spent
 - Coronavirus Relief Fund is fully allocated.
 - ESSER-1: \$432K remaining; ESSER-2 \$1.8million, preparing needs assessment, application underway
 - GPS also received CARES \$ through City

B. MCAS Discussion

AP reviewed additional materials in meeting packet: DESE Commissioner's Jan. 5 statement related to MCAS; and Sen. Comerford's bill 409, asking state to move away from standardized testing, provide multiple pathways to show competence. Update from DESE on MCAS dates for Spring 2021.

GJ made this motion, SE 2nd:

That the Greenfield School Committee vote to support Resolution #1: MCAS and High-Stakes Testing, which was approved by the delegates to the Massachusetts

Association of School Committees by a vote of 112-9 with 2 abstentions at the MASC Annual Meeting on Nov. 7.

I further move that we inform Governor Charlie Baker, Education Secretary Jeffrey Riley and our state legislative delegation Senator Jo Comerford and Rep. Paul Mark of our position in favor of canceling the MCAS tests this year. The resolution reads as follows:

Resolution 1: MCAS and High-Stakes Testing (submitted by the MASC Board of Directors)

BE IT RESOLVED that MASC rejects the calls for the students of 2022 who missed their 10th-grade MCAS testing to be required to make it up in the 2020-2021 school year, or ever. We demand that those students be held harmless for not taking the MCAS and that their graduation requirements shall be determined by locally controlled voices of the School Committee and school administration within the remaining graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Additionally, we reiterate our call for a moratorium on all high-stakes testing for the 2020-2021 school year so all students can benefit from their time being focused on direct instruction — and we urge the Legislature to enact a moratorium on high-stakes testing for three years.

Discussion:

- Support for 3-year extension of moratorium
- Find ways to change assessments entirely
- Testing exacerbates community disparities

Motion passed unanimously.

GJ to communicate to elected officials.

C. In-Person Learning Update & Discussion

AP acknowledged community petition.

KC moved to authorize the Superintendent and District Leadership to begin preparation for implementation of a hybrid-style learning model in April 2021. JW 2nd.

KC explained:

- Next phases are supervised remote learning and, for PreK-4 in-person, socially distanced outdoors instruction, not in-classroom direct learning with teacher.
- Later hybrid models offer in-person teaching in school some days, at-home independent work other days with parents supervising; or teachers running remote & live classes simultaneously.
- GMS, GHS students change classes; did not begin schedule with cohorts
- Teachers are working very hard.
- Classrooms other than Kindergarten do not have 2nd staff person (IA) to support hybrid models.
- Moving forward must be in conjunction with union (MTA, GEA)
- Quarantining after exposure will complicate students' non-remote education.
- Genuine concerns about students' mental/emotional health.

Discussion:

- Look to other schools' experience with hybrid learning
- Need to offer virtual program to meet needs of families, staff

- Consensus to move forward with GREAT plan's phases
- KC will set up family questionnaire to determine preferences, program needs

Motion passed unanimously.

GJ moved that we authorize up to \$200,000 for the purchase of air purifiers as needed to move toward a hybrid-style learning model. SE 2nd.

Added level of safety. Some air purifiers already purchased, installed.

Roughly estimated amount \$160K; "up to" provides flexibility

Motion passed unanimously.

D. 2021-2022 School Calendar

Committee lacks necessary documents.

GJ moved to table. 2nd JW. Motion to table passed unanimously.

VI. Executive Session - MGL c 30A, §21, (2) and (3): (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; (3): To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

RW moved to open executive session. 2nd SH. Motion passed unanimously.

Entered Executive Session at 8:13 p.m.

Returned to public session at 9:23 p.m. Present: KC, SE, GJ, AP, JW, RW.

JW moved to accept the proposal from The Management Solutions (TMS) for district leadership services. SE 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

SE moved to adjourn. RW 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary

Meeting Documents

1. Agenda, February 10, 2021
2. Minutes: January 13, January 25, 2021
3. Financial Reports (Feb. 4)
4. Racial Justice Advisory Committee motion re: MCAS, high-stakes testing
5. Memo from DESE, "2021 Assessment & Accountability Update" (Jan. 5, 2021)
6. "An Act expanding opportunities to demonstrate academic achievement," Sen. Jo Comerford, Jan. 29, 2021
7. School newsletters