

**APPROVED MINUTES
MARLBORO SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance:

Board:

Douglas Korb (Chair)
Dan MacArthur (Vice-chair)
Celena Romo (Clerk)
David Holzapfel
Jude Robinson

Administration:

Bill Anton (Superintendent)
Wayne Kermenski (Principal)

Faculty & Staff:

Patti Donnelly

Members of the Public:

Nelli Sargsyan
Peter Barus (Recorder)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04PM.

Mr. Korb acknowledged Mr. Holzapfel for his extraordinary service. There was consensus. Mr. Anton discussed his appreciation for Mr. Holzapfel, for the depth and history of his perspective while always looking to the future; and expressed the hope for continued relationship. Mr. Holzapfel noted that he had started working at MES in 1977 as a bus driver. Ms. Donnelly expressed appreciation and gratitude. Mr. MacArthur noted a question and answer session at the Marlboro Community Center February 26th on the school votes, and offered to attend an additional public session on the 27th, possibly with other board members.

Changes to Agenda (none)

Members of the Public (none)

Faculty Representatives (none)

Addressing Academic Support Post Pandemic

Mr. Korb discussed the standing agenda item to update Mr. Kermenski and Mr. Anton about work and needed resources regarding student issues, trauma, academics.

Mr. Anton explained that there had previously been two rounds of federal support for this, one ending December 31 for PPE and other supplies related to the pandemic emergency; and the next was ESSER funding, used well by Mr. Kermenski; and that ESSER 2, a similar amount of resources, \$40,000 to \$50,000 is expected, probably in April. Mr. Anton had worked up plans with two other superintendents at the request of the VSA, and developed a model to allow funds to flow directly to the school districts so that building administrators can address specific issues for their school populations.

Mr. Kermenski explained that the budget has more social/emotional and academics supports for the most vulnerable students; that nurse, paraeducators, and staff FTE were increased; that the winter benchmarks had identified students in need, and interventions funded with remaining ESSER money; that the JH has new curriculum to support the whole class; that he is teaching science, freeing Ms. Mullett to teach two differentiated math classes and tutor students needing extra support; that ESSER 2 funds were connected to the Continuous Improvement Plan for next year, and the first meeting had been held, involving all voices to best meet the needs; that the social/emotional supports had helped the community and students to take on academics feeling safe and supported.

Ms. Robinson discussed the benefits of math differentiation and preparation for the trifold teaching model; and acknowledged Ms. Mullett and Ms. Shaeffer for the JH social nights, a warm thanks for staying on for three more hours to support students entering middle school years in challenging circumstances.

There was discussion of summer services as needs are being assessed, resources for specialists, teachers, etc., for children over a long break. Mr. Kermenski confirmed that this was under discussion and would be in the CIP, even if just two weeks in midsummer or before school starts. There was discussion of teachers

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being part of decision making, and the possibility of social/emotional support funds going toward more robust art and music integration. Mr. Kermenski noted consultations with Laurie Garland as part of the first CIP meeting.

Mr. Korb noted that post-pandemic academic support was on the agenda for Mr. Kermenski to bring needs to the board, rather than to receive board directives or suggestions from the public.

Mr. Kermenski noted that the CIP must be approved at the next meeting, in March, with all the plans for next year and the summertime; and discussed the possibility of a local education council to review the CIP and get the word out to the community, noting that this year it was only possible to share the outline for next year, that there will be a lot of change, and the need for transparency; and suggested putting it in Friday Notes and asking for suggestions, although it has not been past practice.

Mr. Korb noted that a CIP is mandatory for every school.

Mr. Kermenski explained that by March 31 the CIP must be complete but can be continuously updated; but that the CIP is attached to the ESSER 2 grant, and there must be specific language to qualify for Title 1 funding; and that these requirements come on short notice. There was discussion about who reviews CIPs.

Mr. Anton explained that all federal funds are now connected to the CIP, so that Mr. Kermenski must be very articulate in his goals, to make sure they are matched to strategies that can be funded, as well as future pandemic-related federal funds, to make certain that the funding can be defended, measured, and tracked; and that the CIP is the hub of recovery plans, funds, grants; the core has to be in line with the goals of the community; and added that Mr. Kermenski is very good at this. Mr. Korb observed that the CIP is not a “community input” document, it is federally mandated and very specific.

Banwell/Building Subcommittee Update

Mr. Korb reported that Banwell had been invited to the March meeting, that a meeting will be held with them for one hour every month during the bond vote process. Mr. MacArthur reported on the second meeting on North El; that the students’ questions had been answered; and it was agreed that after passing the budget, work with Banwell will begin, on their progression of how the students, faculty, and community integrate with the project, starting March 18. There was discussion.

Mr. Anton noted that he had been interviewed in the *Reformer* on the global Vermont view, and had talked about the MES building project and needs, that funding from the state makes this easier.

Legislative Update

Mr. Korb reported working with Mr. MacArthur and the Burlington Coalition, with their lobbyist, for the Weighting Study to be enacted during this session; had consulted with Laura Sibilia and written to the Senate committee and Front Porch Forum; had spoken for 30 minutes to Speaker Krowinski on the problems with education funding, who requested a list of examples. Mr. Korb invited members to send him their own lists, such as a comparison of k-8 curriculum with that of other districts that benefit more from the current weights. Mr. Korb asked members to watch a recent video of the Ways & Means committee talking about education funding, and respond to them in writing.

Mr. MacArthur reported that he and Mr. Kermenski had been with the coalition earlier in the day, and offered congratulations to Mr. Korb on the quality of the relationship and the work done; noted that the board had voted the coalition \$500 without officially joining; and had been given recommended language for a resolution.

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Mr. MacArthur moved a Resolution, “**be it resolved, the Marlboro School District board hereby joins with other Vermont school boards to advocate to the Vermont legislature for the adoption of the recommendations of the Vermont Pupil Weighting Factors Report (Act 173 of 2018, Sec. 11).**” Second by Mr. Holzapfel.

Mr. MacArthur noted that Rep. Sibilias’s bill has a three-year phase-in; that the board needs to have faith that the coalition all have the same interests; and that the Motion only expresses the board’s support for that, with Marc Schaubert (River Valleys district board) and Mr. Korb. Mr. Korb suggested that Marlboro is telling the legislators that education funding needs to be fixed, and urging them to fix it, and cited remarks by Secretary French that seemed vague about implementation.

Mr. Anton suggested that Secretary French probably understands the need to correct the weights to make sure there is equity, and at the same time faces political challenges; that he supports financial and programmatic equity but may have to align with the Scott administration’s agenda to implement the weights as corrected.

Mr. Holzapfel called the question.

On the Motion, by roll call vote, **All in favor.**

Mr. MacArthur circulated a proposed letter to the *Reformer*, explaining that a resident had said the budget was going up, when the budget is clearly down from last year, and tax down by 15%. There was discussion. Mr. MacArthur will send the letter.

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Superintendent's Report

Mr. Anton noted that he, Mr. Kermensky and Mr. Thibeault had attended training together on hard conversations; and all the superintendents are working in Windham and Windsor to develop a regional collaborative to coincide with the FY2023 deployment of act 173, which drew energy from the WCSU; and explained that students requiring a level of service the WCSU could not provide had been sent to NH; but that now, with 8 supervisory unions, there is critical mass, and a year's planning for FY2023; that Ms. Betit-Hancock had brought the energy and inclusion of special education directors in the two counties as well; that there is light at the end of the covid tunnel. Mr. Anton acknowledged Mr. Kermenski and the other administrators for their resilience coming out of this challenging year.

Ms. Romo reported on the WSESU meeting, which went very late, on dissolving their merger; that if implemented, Brattleboro becomes town schools, BUHS becomes BHS. There was discussion; that they had waited until forced to merge, and so may not be allowed to dissolve the merger. Mr. Anton confirmed that all their schools, elementary and high school, would be reverting to their previous configuration. Ms. Romo suggested speaking to friends and neighbors, noting that a lot of emotion, a lot of work had been put in to be able to have the unified district work; and discussed some of the ramifications of dissolution, noting that this will affect MES tuition rates as well, and restructure billing for everything.

Principal's Report

Mr. Kermenski discussed his report; winter benchmarks (online test for 2-8) shows trends; focus around academics, math and ELA has had an impact on student learning this year; the antiracism course changing focus, beginning another book; restorative practices continue; he had attended the "better conversations" PD; and noted staffing increases, Ms. Greenleaf's interventions, new hire to help sanitize the building (grant funded).

Mr. Kermenski discussed a VPA program with the Center for Creative Leadership, "Burning Bright," about wellness, best practices, collaboration; the building passed the HVAC assessment in the fall, and CO₂ approaching 1,200ppm was noted (1,500ppm is considered unsafe), the contractor made repairs, now not over 1,000 ppm; Vermont Wilderness school had inquired about a "writing in the wilderness" program; insurance etc., is through them, they would have the building as a home base, a benefit to Marlboro families to have the program in town, something to consider.

Mr. MacArthur expressed support for the Vermont Wilderness school as responsive, easy to work with, good program. There was discussion of fees for the use of the facility, benefits to the town, other camps being far away, the work with Banwell, impact on the property in spring and fall, capacity for accepting struggling students. It was noted that the Marlboro Alliance scholarship program and other available scholarships could help families with costs.

Mr. Kermenski will return with more information.

Approve Minutes & Pay Order

Mr. MacArthur moved to approve the minutes for January 30, 2021. Second by Mr. Holzapfel. All in favor.
Ms. Romo moved to approve the minutes for December 17, 2021. Second by Mr. Holzapfel. All in favor.

Ms. Romo moved to approve Pay Order #26 in the amount of \$293,080.07. Second by Ms. Robinson. All in favor.

Executive Session (Personnel, Contracts, Superintendent Evaluation)

Mr. Romo moved to enter executive session. Second by Mr. Holzapfel. All in favor.
The board resumed regular session at 9:45 PM.

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Mr. Robinson moved that **“The board has received notification of an employee’s resignation mid-contract and request for continued benefits beyond the employee’s last day of employment. The board instructs the Superintendent to thank the employee for their service and inform them their resignation is accepted but the request for continued benefits is denied. All employment benefits will terminate on the last day of their employment.”** Second by Mr. Holzapfel. All in favor.

Adjourn

Mr. Holzapfel moved to Adjourn. Second by Ms. Romo. All in favor.
The meeting was Adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Peter Barus, Recorder, February 23, 2021

Appendix
February 2021
Principal Report to Board
Wayne Kermenski

Academic Proficiency:

LCAS Results:

	2019-2020		2020-2021	
MATH	Fall 45%	Wint. 50%	Fall 44%	Wint. 48%
ELA	Fall 50%	Wint. 51%	Fall 52%	Wint. 56%

- We have identified the students who will be receiving interventions in math and ELA.
- Junior High is integrating word work using this resource - [Word Roots Level 1](#)

Personalized Learning:

- Monday Meeting 2/1/21 - Continued in-house Anti-racism PD using *Me and White Supremacy*.
- Monday Meeting 2/8/21 - Restorative Practices. Our focus was on Harm and Repair
- Monday Meeting 2/15/21 - 2021-2022 Continuous Improvement Plan Planning. Next year, COVID funding will be tied to your school's CIP.
- Wayne has participated in:
 - 9 hours - Better Conversations Every Day though Center for Creative Leadership
 - 4 hours - Burn Bright: The Resilience Advantage through the VPA

High Quality Staffing:

- Elizabeth Motta, counselor, has increased her time 1 additional day/week.
- Gail Greenleaf has added 1.5 days/week to provide interventions.
- We added a part time cleaner named Emily. She works about 3-8 hours a week and helps to keep the school sanitized. It has been very helpful considering the time it takes to clean up from snowstorms.

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Safe, Healthy Schools:

- CO2 monitors are paying off. We noticed that the CO2 levels in the Preschool, North El and Primary Classrooms were approaching 1200ppm, an unsafe level, by lunch time every day. We had Alliance Mechanical adjust the fresh air intake and since this work CO2 has not surpassed 1000ppm.
- Vermont Wilderness School has approached me about holding summer programs at the school. Is this something we want to support? I know there is interest for summer programs held in Marlboro.
<https://vermontwildernessschool.org/woodland-words/>
- Story - Student caught in a tree. A few weeks ago, a 3rd grade student fell while climbing a tree and got their snow pants caught on one of the branches. I was on recess duty, so they called me over, by my first name, to help them get out of the tree. I wonder how many school's (1) allow students to climb trees, (2) call their principal by their first name, and (3) have students who feel safe enough to ask their principal for help getting out of a tree. I am sure there are not many and I am glad we are one of them.
- Through our Restorative Practice work, we have implemented a Harm Repair Circle Request Form. This form can be used by any community member when they request a facilitated discussion with another community member. The whole process is led by our facilitators from the Greater Falls Restorative Justice Center.

Financial Efficiencies:

-

Current Enrollment:

Category	# of Students
In Person - In school	77 (increase)
Home School and applying to the state	17 (decrease)
Home Study - supported by Erica	9 (decrease)
TOTAL	103

Each week, teachers share classroom highlights in our Weekly Memo Forms. Please see below for November's highlights.

- Preschool is learning all about transportation. Last Friday they were outside driving their cardboard box car outside that they made. You couldn't get much cuter.
- MES truly has the most loving and caring teachers imaginable. Our children are truly fortunate to have this kind of compassion and love showered upon them each day. And it is apparent by students' behavior and success that they all recognize the gift of such an environment.

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- We are in the middle of a transportation block. This week's focus is air transport. Last week we focused on land transport. Next week we look at water transport. We will build boats next week and work on our classroom transportation book.
- In North EI's geography study, students presented "Me" flags to their classmates to help us learn more about each other--where we come from and what places and locations are important to our families show us how the places we have lived affects who we are.
- South EI continues to learn about government (branches of gov, the 2-party system). We're watching the inauguration today!!
- North EI has begun a study of United States Geography. We've been learning about landforms, and students built their own 3-D map including various landforms in our outdoor classroom. Now, we're investigating how state borders came to be through building a large-scale map of the United States as it looks today.
- North EI students also presented their family artifact projects. Over the remote week, students worked with their families to find an artifact important to them (a photo, a recipe, a special object, etc.). Students shared these artifacts in class, along with a flag they made about themselves to teach us about places in the US and world that are important to them and their families.
- Primary had two birthdays in one day. We had a week of assessments and the teachers were very impressed by the first grade kids helping the second grade kids by working quietly as they did their online assessments.
- JH watched and discussed the inauguration and speeches given. We spent time comparing and contrasting the ideas of "progress" outlined by each administration, and talking about things we noticed and wondered about.
- JH is trucking along with I-Projects and making great progress.
- Primary learned about the Russian composer Sergi Prokofiev. North EI formed a drum circle where they honed their improvisational skills. South EI is making excellent progress on their ukuleles and they are continuing to work on a folk song from the late 1920's. JH learned a new song in one class meeting and they sounded fantastic!
- Well, this is the first day back so we did some number strips which kids get really excited about. They want to keep working on them, even during their choice time!
- A busy week with our theme "transportation". Preschoolers are learning about different ways of travel through air, land and water.
- North EI is thrilled to be in conversation about the building renovations project. They loved meeting with Dan this week to learn about the proposed plans and they are looking forward to meeting with the architects soon!
- Kindergarten finished assessments this week. We have started reading logs and are working on our weather journals.
- Primary students are really taking off in all areas of learning!

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- Great having Aaron on the Primary Team!
- Primary music played djembe drums and worked on rhythms and improvisation; North EI continued to work on a new challenging piece of percussion ensemble music; South EI learned about the jazz great Louis Armstrong; JH watched a film about how music was important to the civil rights movement.
- JH is reading "The Hate U Give" for our literature study. If you want to join us, pick up a copy at the Marlboro Town Library!
- JH is working hard in all subjects. We're all delighted by two new in-person students! We're having fun while re-configuring classroom procedures and making space so everyone feels welcome and able to show up to do their best learning.
- Primary class has been using their imaginations at recess and pretending to bake cakes and pastries. They have "decorated" these items with pinecones, leaves, branches, twigs and icicles and then have been "selling" them to each other.
- We are using our smart board! Kids are super engaged in learning.
- PreK children are enjoying their Valentine writing station and Valentine post office. Lots of writing practice and sound recognition is happening as well as reading practice when they compose and deliver their letters to their classmates' correct mailbox at the post office .
- There is lots of love in preschool with celebrating Valentines Day. Children are practicing writing kind notes to each other and putting them into classroom mailboxes.
- As the weeks fly by Kindergarten has been absorbing and learning ASL on top of learning about self expression and gender through the book "Julian is a mermaid" by Jessica Love. Next week we will be creating life size mermaids!
- Gender is also the topic for 1st through fourth grade as we read the book "Neither" by Airlie Anderson. Topics for discussion include how colors, toys, behavior, careers, and clothing have been marketed to children and society.
- Fifth and sixth grade got to vote on their next learning project in Elizabeth's class and chose etiquette.
- Lastly the Valentines gifts that students are making for Pine Heights Nursing home are almost finished.

Marlboro School's Local Education Council

What is the vision for school councils?

We are all interested in making the school learning environment stronger, enriching, and inclusive to our unique community. Education Councils are non-evaluative, non-

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personnel topic centered, encouraging, helpful and positive groups that will constructively provide insight on an advisory level to the building principal.

What are the main areas of responsibility for school councils?

School councils are to assist the principal in:

1. Provide input and feedback on the school budget.
2. Review the school's Continuous Improvement Plan.
3. Suggest, develop, and support strategies for partnerships within the community.
4. Provide advice on ways to improve or maintain a positive climate within the school.

Who serves on a school council?

Councils consist of parents of students attending the school, teachers, and other persons drawn from such groups or entities as municipal government, business and labor organizations, institutions of higher education, human service agencies or other interested groups, including those from school-age child care programs.

How are members to be selected?

- Parent members are to be selected by the parents of students attending the school, in elections held by the local recognized parent-teacher organization.
- Teacher members are to be selected by the teachers in the school.
- Non-school members and students are recruited by the principal.

How many members does Marlboro School's school council contain?

- 2 Marlboro School Family Members
- 2 Marlboro Staff
- 2 Non-school Community Members
- 2 Marlboro School Students

What is the term of office for council members?

Members are elected to 1 year terms and cannot serve more than three years in a row.

What is the time commitment?

Meetings will occur on a monthly basis and during half-day summer retreat. The day, time and length of the meeting will be set by finding the time that works for all members.

What are indicators of success?

- Parents and community members have structured opportunities to provide feedback to the principal on a range of issues, including school climate and improvement initiatives.

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- Local councils meet on a regular scheduled basis with the building principal, as evident in minutes.
- There are strong partnerships between the school and the surrounding community.