

## MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT #37

November 29, 2023

A regular meeting of the MSAD #37 Board of Directors was held at 7:03 p.m. on November 29, 2023 at the DW Merritt Elementary School to consider and act on the following business:

**Board Members Present:** Leann Beal, Chris Chartrand, Steve Dunham, Shelby Greene, Dan Kane, Grace Kennedy, Ronald Kennedy, Kimberly Look, Debra Murphy, David Perham, and Tiffany Strout

**Board Members Absent:** Bethany Hartford

**Other persons present:** Ken Johnson, Denise Vose, Eric Brooks, Carol Ann Lisee, Lorna Greene, Todd Emerson, Marla Bagley, Jonathan MacLeod, Lucille Willey, Ron Green, Ronie Strout, Valerie Kennedy, Lisa Emerson, Sunshine Strout, Jeff Chick, Laurel Carroll, Harry Thompson, and Dawn Fickett

### MINUTES

#### A. INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chair Debra Murphy. She noted that Director Hartford was excused from tonight's meeting due to illness.
2. **RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 18, 2023 REGULAR MEETING**  
**ACTION:** Motion by Grace Kennedy, second by Chris Chartrand, and voted (852-yes, 52-abstentions) to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2023 regular meeting as printed. (Dunham abstained as he was absent from that meeting.)
3. **RE: REPORT—SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (Including Legislative Updates)**  
**INFORMATION:** Supt. Johnson reported that he attended the MSSA/MSMA Fall Conference from October 25-27. The tragedy in Lewiston overshadowed the event and some sessions were cancelled due to presenters being in areas with the shelter-in-place order, but there were still many good sessions to attend including several by Drummond and Woodsum. The keynote speaker presented information on Artificial Intelligence and the advantages/disadvantages of using it in schools. ~ The legislature will be back in session in January and will be considering several bills carried over from the fall that might impact funding. One is the \$50,000 minimum teacher salary. If this is approved, it does include transition funding over a few years. He will be watching for other changes that might impact our budget. ~ The ED279's should be released in February giving us an estimate of what our subsidy for the coming year will be.
4. **RE: REVIEW OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**INFORMATION:** There are no surprises on the financials. We are on track with spending where we would expect to be at this time of year. Our audit for FY23 should be completed soon.
5. **RE: ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**  
**INFORMATION:** Denise Vose, Director of Special Education, noted that the district is currently serving 156 students in special education as well as twenty 504 students. She has chaired 104 meetings since the start of the school year, several 504 meetings, and completed twelve evaluation sessions with students. She and the staff are busy working on paperwork for the site review. She attended the Special Education Fall Conference which was very informative. Lynn Lyford has completed Safety Care training for thirty staff members and has ten more to do.

Eric Brooks, Principal at Harrington Elementary, reported an enrollment of 132. The school's November theme was "Manners Matter." Students worked on table etiquette and then practiced

that at the Thanksgiving meal at the school. Parent/Teacher conferences were well attended, and contact was made in some manner with all parents. Jr. High Basketball is underway with seven girls and eighteen boys playing. They did not have enough interest in cheering. Student Council did a food drive to donate to the Maine Sea Coast Mission. Wren Wakeman, of the EdGE program, has been coming in and working on students to teach self-regulation techniques. He attended the MPA conference, which was very informative. Drummond and Woodsum presented information on pertinent laws. He noted the ranking of HES as 3<sup>rd</sup> in the state based on a report in US News and World Report. While he is proud of that, he wants people to know that the ranking is based on data from 2020-21 and is hard to authenticate because of the lack of consistency in testing. All of our schools are great schools, and we should recognize that without basing it on an obscure report.

Lorna Greene, DW Merritt Principal, reported an enrollment of 92. She was pleased with the growth students showed during the first quarter, and her staff made 100% contact with parents during conferences. The school held a Veterans' Day assembly on November 9<sup>th</sup> with a local Boy Scout troop participating. The student council raised \$1,184 from a turkey dinner raffle. They've had the book fair and a chili cook-off. DW Merritt has twelve girls, fourteen boys, and five cheerleaders for junior high basketball. **Professional Development:** She noted that staff is continuing to work on school goals in monthly PLC meetings, and the staff book study continues. **ESEA:** We are currently serving 140 students in reading and math with our Title I staff. She recently met with Title I staff for their second meeting of the year. **Gifted/Talented:** Grades 9-12 hiked Schoodic Mountain, grades 4-6 and 7-8 visited the Downeast Institute, and grades 4-8 hiked the Birch Harbor Trail. Students do team building and STEM activities learning about their environment.

Carol Ann Lisee, Principal at Milbridge, noted they have an enrollment of 124. Four classes visited the Milbridge Historical Society recently to learn about some of the town's history. Five veterans visited the school on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Grades 3-6 had a clam chowder cook-off in advance of a visit from the Island Readers and Writers. EdGE is underway in the school. Parent/teacher conferences went well. The school has eighteen boys, fourteen girls, and eleven cheerleaders for junior high basketball. A successful Mother/Son Dance was recently held.

Todd Emerson, Narraguagus JSHS Principal, reported an enrollment of 308 students, with 99 in junior high and 209 in the high school. Fall athletics wrapped up with much success for our teams. Cross-country boys placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the state. One girl ran as an individual and placed 18<sup>th</sup>. The big news was the Volleyball team winning the Gold Ball in the State Championship!! That morning, the team presented a check for over \$8,500 (from Volley for a Cure) to a former NHS teacher whose daughter has a brain tumor. That evening, Mr. Emerson was able to present them with a gold ball! Winter sports are now underway. National Honor Society inductions were held on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. A Career Fair was held where each grade visited businesses set up in the cafeteria to explore options for their future. There have been three on-campus college visits, and more are planned for spring. The craft fair organized by Dawn Stubbs is a fund-raiser for the junior class. The annual Veterans' Day Program was held on November 9<sup>th</sup> with three local veterans honored. Mrs. Emerson and her students did a great job. Parent/Teacher conferences went well, and the MPA conference was well-worth attending again this year.

6. **RE: SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

a. **Athletics/Student Activities**-has not met

b. **Curriculum & Instruction**—Chris Chartrand noted that the committee met earlier tonight to hear information on the recommendation for next year and will consider it later on the agenda.

c. **Negotiations & Grievance**-has not met

d. **Policy & By-laws**-has not met

**e. Facilities, Maintenance, Safety & Transportation**-has not met

**7. RE: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**INFORMATION:** Harry Thompson, cross-country coach, noted that Lucas Pounder placed 8<sup>th</sup> in the states and is one of the triple fall sports athletes we had participating in soccer, cross-country, and golf.

**8. RE: AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

**ACTION:** Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to table this article as there are no adjustments necessary.

**B. OLD BUSINESS**

**1. RE: HIRING COACHES & VOLUNTEERS**

**ACTION:** Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to approve the following coaches/volunteers as recommended by the Superintendent:

- Anna Mathews-co-coach for DW Merritt junior high girls' basketball (she was approved as a volunteer assistant last month)
- Erica Thompson-volunteer assistant for DW Merritt junior high boys' basketball
- Lanie Perry-volunteer assistant for Harrington junior high girls' basketball
- Ayden Wannemacher-volunteer assistant for varsity boys' basketball at Narraguagus

**C. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. RE: HIRING SUBSTITUTES**

**ACTION:** Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to approve the following substitutes as recommended by the Superintendent: Clayton Blood and Jasmine Rivera as substitute teachers, and Rowan Perrin as a substitute custodian.

**2. RE: APPROVAL TO PURCHASE VAN FOR CWCIT**

**ACTION:** Supt. Johnson noted that as the programs continue to grow at CWCIT, a van would help with transportation. Perkins funds, which are national CTE grant funds, can be used to purchase it so it won't cost us any money locally. WC Cressey has some vans on order already and has agreed to hold one until the board makes a decision. The cost is \$69,000. Lucille Willey, CWCIT Director, noted that we would be able to pay \$40,000 this year with Perkins, and then pay off the balance with future year Perkins funds in one or two years. Having the van would make it easier to move students such as Health Occupations to clinicals or other programs to work sites, field trips, etc. Instructors would be able to drive students so that we do not tie up buses. Most other CTE centers in the state have at least one van.

Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Grace Kennedy, and voted (unanimously) to approve the purchase of a van for the CWCIT using Perkins funds.

**3. RE: APPROVAL TO PURCHASE BUSES**

**ACTION:** Supt. Johnson noted that the application window for bus replacement was open from November 1-25. He had Jon submit an application to replace three buses, pending board and voter approval through the budget. We did not qualify for round 1 funding but were rated as round 2 because our buses don't meet the high mileage/age criteria even though we are unable to get two inspected for use. If approved and the board agrees, we would look at a three-year lease/purchase, paying for one bus in each of the subsequent three years' budgets. The transportation subcommittee will have to meet to work out specifics of what size, type, etc. to purchase if we get

state approval to move ahead.

Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to approve the application for the purchase of three buses and charge the transportation subcommittee to finalize details and come back to the full board with a recommendation.

**4. RE: APPROVAL TO MOVE FORWARD WITH SPRINKLER PROJECT AT CWCIT**

**ACTION:** Supt. Johnson shared new information received since we last met. Initially, we had an estimate of \$175,000-\$225,000 for the sprinkler project but the new proposal just received is for \$423,932. This is a dramatic increase, and the board will need to decide how it wants to proceed. Several expressed concern that we still don't have a permit from the fire marshal's office so we have no way of knowing if this will satisfy the requirements. Others noted we are too far into the process now not to do it. There was much discussion and Mr. Johnson noted he would try to set up a meeting with himself, Debi, Chris, and the Fire Marshall to go over these concerns and make sure we are on solid ground to move forward. He also noted that Parker was willing to put together an estimate for the fire wall to see if that might now be the cheaper option.

Leann Beal wondered if we could go out to bid for the sprinkler system or would it be considered a part of the initial project for Nickerson O'Day?

Supt. Johnson also noted that he had our legal team look at the contract with Haley Ward as far as liability and the maximum is the face-value of the contract with them (approximately \$85,000). Our attorneys have looked at the contract and don't find it friendly to management (the district) and if we pursue it, we will have legal costs to come out of whatever we recouped. The board will have to decide if it wants to move forward with legal action against them or not.

Motion by Leann Beal, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to table action on this article and direct Supt. Johnson to get pricing on a fire wall, make contact with the fire marshal's office, and find out if we can go out to bid for the project to get more competitive pricing.

**5. RE: APPROVAL OF SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM**

**ACTION:** Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to approve the recommendation of the social studies committee for the new social studies curriculum beginning in the fall of 2024 and to incorporate the cost of the 6-year bundle and \$500 per school for Maine Studies supplements into the 2024-2025 budget.

**6. RE: CONSIDERATION OF CREATING JV GOLF TEAM/COACH POSITION**

**ACTION:** Supt. Johnson noted that Tracie Martin asked that the board consider this because of the high level of participation. There are too many students participating to participate in any given meet as the golf course caps teams at ten. Mr. Emerson noted that having a JV team would allow kids to have opportunities to play that they might not get otherwise. There are a few other JV teams we could compete against.

Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Kimberly Look, and voted (unanimously) to approve the creation of a JV Golf Team/Coach position as recommended by the Superintendent and Athletic Director.

**7. RE: CONSIDERATION OF WCCC USE OF CDL TRAILER**

**ACTION:** Supt. Johnson noted that he received a written request and a draft MOU from WCCC to use our box trailer for its adult truck driving program. Elmer Farren is the instructor for them on his off time with us, so he would be in charge of it and would be the one moving the trailer.

Otherwise, it would be left on site at the driving range in Cherryfield and students would only drive it there. The MOU sent does not include any form of compensation. Some expressed concern that WCCC continues to ask to use our equipment, facility, etc. with no compensation.

Lucille Willey noted it does not affect our own high school students' use of the trailer as it is only after school or on weekends that WCCC would use it. It will benefit our communities as many of the adult students are residents that will use the license in local businesses. There was discussion about the liability and WCCC having insurance.

Motion by David Perham, second by Chris Chartrand, and voted (807-yes, 97-no) to approve the use of the CDL box trailer by WCCC but ask for a revised MOU that includes insurance coverage by them and acknowledgement that they will pay for any damages incurred during its use. (Beal voted no.)

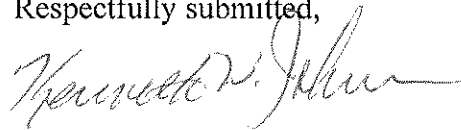
**8. RE: EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONELL MATTER PURSUANT TO  
1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A)**

**ACTION:** Motion by Chris Chartrand, second by Steve Dunham, and voted (unanimously) to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(A). Those entering the session include the board and the superintendent. Entered executive session at 9:28 p.m. Came out of executive session at 10:23 p.m.

**9. RE: ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION:** Motion by Tiffany Strout, and voted (unanimously) to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth W. Johnson  
Superintendent of Schools

## NOVEMBER 29, 2023 MEETING SUMMARY

- A. INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS
  - 2. APPROVED minutes of October 18, 2023, regular meeting;
  - 8. TABLED agenda adjustments as none needed;
- B. OLD BUSINESS
  - 1. APPROVED coaches/volunteers: Anna Mathews, DWM girls' co-coach; Erice Thompson, DWM boys' volunteer assistant; Lanie Perry, HN girls' volunteer assistant; Ayden Wannemacher, NHS boys' varsity volunteer assistant;
- C. NEW BUSINESS
  - 1. APPROVED hiring Clayton Blood and Jasmine Rivera as substitute teachers and Rowan Perrin as substitute custodian;
  - 2. APPROVED purchase of nine-passenger van for CWCIT using Perkins funds;
  - 3. APPROVED application for the purchase of three busses and charged the transportation subcommittee to finalize details and come back to the full board with a recommendation if our application is approved;
  - 4. TABLED moving forward with sprinkler project at CWCIT until more information is available;
  - 5. APPROVED social studies curriculum for grades PreK-12 for fall of 2024;
  - 6. APPROVED creation of JV golf team and coaching position;
  - 7. APPROVED WCCC's use of our CDL trailer;
  - 8. EXECUTIVE SESSION for personnel issue.