

Middletown Public Schools  
Middletown, Rhode Island

**February 8, 2018**

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Michael S. Pinto Conference Room

Members Present: Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Chairman  
Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chairman  
Douglas Arnold  
Liana Fenton  
William O'Connell

Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools  
Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent  
Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager  
David Fontes, Director of Facilities/Safety and Transportation

The Budget Workshop was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by School Committee Chair Kellie DiPalma Simeone. All members were present. Administrative staff members present were Beth Hayes, Michelle Fonseca, Dennis Soares, Stephen Ponte, Gail Ponte, and Donna Chelf. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

- o **Teaching and Learning** - Assistant Superintendent Linda Savastano reported on Teaching and Learning. There are 250 students who attend private schools, 11 attending charter schools and 14 that are home schooled. The school district pays for books and transportation for private school students. The primary need to be addressed by the 2019 budget is to increase all student achievement levels by increasing Literacy and Math levels while preparing the students to be future ready.

*Aquidneck School* Principal Michelle Fonseca reported that there are 100 students not reading on grade level. They would like to increase the current Reading Specialist .5 and increase the Library/Makerspace position by .20 to make a full-time position. This has been a great program at Aquidneck School. Student now receive instruction 5 out of 6 days.

*Forest Avenue School* Principal Stephen Ponte would like to increase academic interventions for students with PLP's and PMP's. The percentage of students entering kindergarten without any preschool experience is 33%. They would also like to increase social and emotional supports for students. In the budget, they would like to increase the social worker and psychologist, as well as increasing the Library/Maker Space position from .8 to full-time.

*J.H. Gaudet Learning Academy* Principal Beth Hayes reported that they would like to increase student achievement in all core areas, with an emphasis on providing interventions in reading and math where there is significant need, and increasing the social emotional supports for students. The Learning Academy goals are aligned with elementary goals. The only budget impact is increasing one Grade 4 teacher due to

enrollment. *J.H. Gaudet Middle School* would also like to increase student achievement in all core areas and increase the social and emotional supports for students. They are requesting to increase a .5 Guidance Counselor to full-time. This would designate a full-time counselor for grade 8. They are also requesting a .2 Student Assistance Counselor.

*Middletown High School* Principal Gail Ponte reported that the primary goals are to increase the level of social emotional supports for students and maintain staffing in core areas. They would like to create a support room. Their requests include:

- Increasing the College and Career Readiness position .4 to full-time
- Increasing Special Education by .4 to provide for a Coordinator
- Increasing Guidance by 1 full-time position
- Increasing a social worker by .5, a psychologist by .5, and the Student Assistance Counselor from .8 to full-time.
- Add a leadership stipend position for the Anchor Academy Coordinator

After building principals made their presentations, Mrs. Savastano spoke about the resources that support Middletown's Pillars of Success. Middletown currently has over 30 software systems. SchoolMax, our student information system, is at its end of life and will need replacement during FY19. Some of the many annual services used in the district are Internet access, telephone repair, network monitoring, and external network access. In the FY19 budget, \$150,000 is needed for curriculum planning materials and textbooks. \$83,000 is budgeted for Project Lead the Way STEM K-12 Supports. The network infrastructure project is a multi-year project that will provide a major upgrade to the network switches, which are 15 years old and coming to end of life. Equipment needs to be upgraded to support the 21<sup>st</sup> Century needs, such as security cameras.

- **Special Education** - Director of Special Education Sarah Kraeger reported on the Newport County Regional Special Education Program, which serves Little Compton, Middletown, and Tiverton. There are 714 students who receive services, with 381 from Middletown. Services provided through the regional staff include evaluations, services for students, transition and post-secondary services. Classrooms in Middletown include Preschool, Elementary Behavior Support, Middle School Alternative Assessment Class, Middle School Behavior Support Class, and High School Life Skills. Some students attend classes in other districts due to space issues.

Current Budget Considerations are to increase social work at MHS from .5 to full-time, .9 to full-time at Gaudet School, .3 to .5 at Forest Avenue School, and .3 to .5 at Aquidneck School. They would also like to increase the Early Childhood/Preschool speech pathologist from .6 to full-time and add one additional teacher assistant. The increase in health insurance is estimated at 7% and dental insurance is estimated at 5%. There would be a decrease in purchased services to reflect trend data. Currently, each district has a different transportation provider. It needs to be determined if a shared service would save dollars.

Middletown Staff Requests - The number of teachers and school psychologists would remain the same. The program is looking for an increase of one full-time social worker and .4 speech/language pathologist, and one full-time teacher assistant.

Special Education Funding - For FY19, Middletown's share to NCRSEP is approximately 53%, or \$2,672,472.

Two parents spoke regarding the budget. Mrs. Kealan Faerber commented that as a parent of a preschool student, she feels that early childhood screenings should take place when the child turns 3 years old. Mrs. Paula Hawes said there needs to be more support for Guidance Counselors.

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To adjourn from the Budget Workshop at 5:45 p.m.* Unanimous Vote.

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To go into Regular School Committee Meeting at 5:55 p.m.* Unanimous Vote.

The Regular School Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:55 p.m. Administrative staff members present were Michelle Fonseca, Stephen Ponte, Beth Hayes, Donnal Chelf, and Dennis Soares.

### **PROCLAMATIONS/AWARDS**

No "Proclamations and Awards" for February 8, 2018.

### **SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

No "Spotlight on Teaching and Learning" for February 8, 2018.

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

No "Student Government" for January 25, 2018.

### **INFORMATION**

Mrs. Kraeger noted the following items of information:

- Letter from Greenlove Foundation for the new bottle filling station at Aquidneck School.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

No public comments on agenda items.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Letter from Christopher Cobleigh**, NEARI, regarding entering into negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the Middletown Paraprofessional Association/NEARI.

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee receive the communication.* Unanimous vote.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To approve the Consent Agenda.* Unanimous vote.

January Vouchers		
Voucher Number	Date	Total
1163	1/29/2018	\$235,065.43
1162	1/23/2018	\$329,750.34
1161	1/16/2018	\$521.20
1152	1/12/2018	\$4,959.51
1151	1/12/2018	\$23,000.19
1150	1/12/2018	\$302,155.61
1149	1/12/2018	\$132,715.91
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 1,028,168.19</b>

- Approval of Vendors/Purchases over \$5,000
- Approval of Minutes
  - Minutes of January 25, 2018 Budget Workshop and School Committee Meeting.
- Superintendent’s Recommendation on Personnel
  - Appointments
  - Resignations

**SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATION ON PERSONNEL**

**APPOINTMENT EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 9, 2018**

Susan Petti  
Shanthi Genga

MOST Grade 408 After School Intervention Teacher - Literacy  
Chemistry Teacher (One Year Only), Middletown High School



of the School Committee. Currently the School Committee appoints the Superintendent as Clerk. The change would be that the Clerk would be a member of the Committee.

**Youth Restoration Project** – The idea of the project is instead of punishing students who constantly misbehave, to solve whatever was driving the misbehavior in the first place. Assistant Principal Dennis Soares has been trained in this.

**RIDE/Food Service Audit** – Ms. Pellerin reported that Middletown is one of the first districts to participate in the audit. The responses from the audit have been sent to RIDE. A lot of RIDE’s concerns would be addressed with a new software program, since a lot of the recommendations are about updated software, although this is not a requirement.

### OLD BUSINESS

**Strategic Plan** – Mrs. Kraeger has been in touch with facilitator from the previous Strategic Plan. This will be completed in the Spring.

### ACTION ITEMS

#### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS 2018 - 2<sup>nd</sup> READING

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve the High School Graduation Requirements 2018 Policy – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading.* Unanimous vote.

#### NEGOTIATIONS

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve entering into negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement with the Middletown Paraprofessional Association/NEARI.* Unanimous vote.

### SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

- Curriculum – No Update.
- Financial – Ms. Pellerin reported that budget adjustments will be on the docket of the Tuesday, February 20<sup>th</sup> Town Council Meeting. The adjustments require approval because they are changes to revenue. A detailed report will be available at the next School Committee Meeting.
- Facilities – Mr. Fontes and Mrs. Kraeger met with representative from Jacobs on January 29. Thermal imaging was performed at all schools using equipment borrowed from the Middletown Fire Department. The tests showed the temperatures across the switches. For the Middletown High School roof project, counter flashing will be installed when the weather clears. The design approvals have been received for Forest Avenue and Gaudet School roofs. At the completion of the LED project at Aquidneck School, 291 fixtures will be replaced during February vacation. We are waiting for funding, which came from the cell tower rental, to be finalized.

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee receive the Superintendent's Reports.* Unanimous vote.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

No "Reports of Officers and Committees" for February 8, 2018.

**ADJOURN FROM MEETING**

**MOTION:** 1) Kellie DiPalma, 2) Theresa Spengler. *To adjourn from School Committee Meeting at 6:32 p.m.* Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rosemarie K. Kraeger  
Superintendent of Schools