

**Uxbridge School Committee Meeting
February 6, 2024
Uxbridge High School Library and Remote Participation**

School Committee Members in Attendance:

	Present	Absent
Mr. Barry Desruisseaux, Chair	X	
Ms. Arlene Liscinsky, Vice-Chair		X
Mr. Ed Maharay, Clerk (remote)	X	
Mr. Ben Casper	X	
Mr. David Shinnick	X	
Mr. Aaron Lenart	X	
Mr. Michael Dion (left at 7:34PM)	X	

• Call to order (6:00)

Mr. Desruisseaux called the meeting to order at @6:00PM.

• Public comment (6:01-6:05)

Peter Demers shared that he believed that areas of the school finances that the district refers to as mandatory spending are partly under school committee control. He referenced the Committee's role in approving union contracts and the superintendent's contract. He said he was disappointed that "pay for performance" is not built into those current contracts. Mr. Demers also said that during upcoming FY25 budget discussions, he is hoping to hear about efficiencies that are part of the proposed budget. He then highlighted other areas of expense that are affecting the taxpayers and his concern about being able to afford all that might be asked.

• Lori Tobin / Mending Spartan Minds (6:05-7:00)

The Committee listened to a presentation and then had a two-way discussion with several students from the high school's Mending Spartan Minds. Mending Spartan Minds is a student-led club focused on practicing and spreading positive mental health awareness. The presentation gave a brief overview of the club's purpose and shared its goals, accomplishments, and future plans. During the table discussion, the students and the Committee engaged in conversations that included personal histories, the impact of the club on the school community, appreciation for the district's staff (counselors, teachers, etc.), and how the mission could expand to the district's early learning and intermediate schools. Students that attended were: Co-presidents Ellie Lewis and Sophia Mone, Cole Choquette, Savannah Gaskill, Cate Buma, and Hannah Ward. They were joined by their advisor, Ms. Tobin.

● Policies 2nd Reading (7:00-7:08)

a. Policy KF

Dr. Baldassarre recommended moving forward with the MASC reference manual policy model and a rate document that was shared with the Committee.

Motion: *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to approve Policy KF and the rate sheet. Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

b. Policy IGNDD

Dr. Baldassarre asked to approve the policy as written. He said the procedures to follow the policy will be written by the administration.

Motion: *Mr. Casper said he would make that motion. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

c. Policy IJNDB

Dr. Baldassarre said some changes have been made from the 1st reading of the policy based on feedback received from a community member. Any policy reference to “teacher” has been changed to “staff.”

Motion: *Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

d. Policy IJNDE

Dr. Baldassarre said he had no recommended changes from the first reading.

Motion: *Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

e. Background Check Policy

Dr. Baldassarre said he did not have the MASC policy number on his draft but could provide it in a later email. He had no recommended changes to the language but said that internal protocols would be in place for any family that is challenged in paying for the costs of being fingerprinted. The funding source will be the gifts revolving account.

There is an internal mechanism through the state that can help with identifying financial needs. He said he would give 30-45 days' notice to the community before the policy's implementation and in that correspondence, he would ask anyone who needs financial assistance to email the superintendent's office.

Motion: *Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Lenart seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

Dr. Baldassarre shared follow-up information he had received from the district's attorney based on questions raised in a previous meeting:

- a. They are holding off on approving the social media policy because there are areas within it that need to be addressed with the union.
- b. Their attorney did not see the copyright violation provision in the proposed policy manual contract with MASC as prohibitive, so they will be able to proceed with the contract in FY25.

● **Karen Dwyer / Update iReady / Educational Progress (7:08-7:20)**

- a. Dr. Dwyer said that they have completed the winter iReady assessments at all the district schools and she will be presenting the results at the February 13th meeting. She said the trends are encouraging and show overall improvement.
- b. Last week, consultants from Teaching Labs came to Uxbridge over two days. This is their second round of visits; they walked around and visited math classrooms at each school. They then provided feedback on what they had observed and gave recommendations.
- c. She gave an update on the major work that occurred at each of the schools during the last half day. She said that at Taft the teachers are developing new criteria for their report cards. A consultant from the Great Schools Partnership worked with ELA teachers at Whitin and the High School to develop scope and sequence. This should set them up to be able to do a thorough curriculum review.
- d. She is working with Sharon Manz on the dyslexia screening guidelines.
- e. Someone will be coming into work with the grade 5-7 history teachers at Whitin as part of the Investigative History grant that was awarded to the district this past fall.

Mr. Shinnick asked if they could see a roadmap of what is happening with all the changes and refreshes occurring with the school curriculum. Dr. Dwyer said she could create a table.

Mr. Maharay asked if it was possible to get a forecast as to what the administration believes the students might still need with the curriculum in the future.

● Superintendent Update (7:20-7:28)

- a. Shared that he was very proud of the students who participated in the Spartan Minds conversation earlier in the evening
- b. Acknowledged that budget talks will likely be a main focus for the foreseeable future and hoped those who saw the budget discussed at the subcommittee realized that it is a budget being created to put students first. He will have a preliminary budget proposal presentation for the full Committee at their February 13th meeting. On February 20th there will be a joint workshop with the school committee and the finance committee on the district's refined budget proposal. On February 27th there will be a public hearing on the proposed budget.

● 2024-2025 School Calendar - 1st Reading (7:28-7:35)

Dr. Baldassarre shared a first draft of the school calendar with the Committee. He said he had shared the calendar with the union and they have asked to have the first parent-teacher conferences happen after the first report cards have been released. He offered Committee members the opportunity to give him suggestions at the meeting or through email if they would like.

Mr. Dion shared the following SEPAC concerns:

1. The date that schools typically start is late—he said that the recently negotiated union contract will help with this
2. Concern that ½ days and days off often happen on the same day and that sometimes interferes with their children's scheduled services
3. Concerned that there is a PD day immediately following winter recess which prolongs the time away from school for their students

● Minutes (7:35-7:37)

Motion: *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion, just for executive session, to accept the minutes of 6/6, 6/13, 6/22, 6/27, 9/26, 10/10, 11/7, January 2nd of this year, the 8th of this year, the 11th of this year, the 23rd, and the 29th. Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Shinnick seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

Motion: *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to approve the minutes of January 23rd and January 29th. Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Shinnick seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

• Adjournment

Motion: *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Maharay moved the motion. Mr. Shinnick seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Aaron: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 5-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

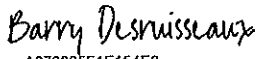
The meeting adjourned at @7:37 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

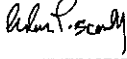
Debbie Stark

Uxbridge School Committee Recording Secretary

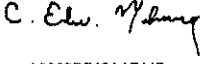
School Committee Members:

DocuSigned by:

A670885F1E154E8...

Mr. Barry Desruisseaux, Chair

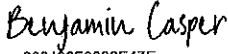
DocuSigned by:

6EB17E1C73754E7

Ms. Arlene Liscinsky, Vice-Chair

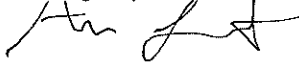
DocuSigned by:

A9368D748AA7447...

Mr. Ed Maharay, Clerk


Mr. David Shinnick, Member

DocuSigned by:

923493F9030E47E...

Mr. Ben Casper, Member

DocuSigned by:

83A16CD40DDA4E8...

Mr. Aaron Lenart, Member

DocuSigned by:

FF4F005869224A5

Mr. Michael Dion, Member