

South Grafton PTO Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm in the MSES Computer Lab. Members of the board present were Robin Callahan, Tisia Ciesluk, Becky Miner, Mary Lou Butler, Allison Le May and Kristin Pliakas. There were 4 staff members and 5 parents present.

Parent Teacher Input:

Superintendent Cummings gave a presentation on the past, present, and future of the Grafton Public School Department budget crisis. **Grafton currently spends \$12.2 million dollars less than the state average on education annually.** Should the override not pass, reductions in staff would be as follows:

- **FY21 7 positions will be eliminated**
- **FY22 11 additional positions will be eliminated**
- **FY 23 2 additional positions will be eliminated**
- **FY 24 10 additional positions will be eliminated**
- **FY 25 10 additional positions will be eliminated**
- * **Class sizes could exceed 30 students at all grade levels, including kindergarten and first grade.**

In FY23 75% of athletics will be cut. Adding in an athletic fee will bring in, at maximum, \$60k. This will come nowhere near to covering the cost of athletic programs in the district.

Discussion took place regarding the domino effect of the override not passing. Should the override not pass, the district will lose the \$500k that is brought in from school choice because the district will no longer be an attractive option for students in other districts. Grafton will incur an extreme cost increase in outsourcing special education services because the programs and staff that currently keep these services in district face being cut. Grafton will also incur cost increases for students who decide to school choice to other districts that are better able to fund their public education programs. When the school system deteriorates due to underfunding, the property values of homes often follow suit.

To close the gap for level funding about \$3.7 million is needed from FY21-FY25.

Dr. Coakley discussed the amazing staff and their importance in the success of the students of Grafton Public Schools. If the override does not pass, staff will be eliminated, overworked, and unable to provide the services they currently offer.

Discussion took place regarding what efforts can be made to disseminate information regarding an override and how to encourage residents to vote.

Secretary's Report: The report and minutes from November 13, 2019 were reviewed and approved as written.

Treasurer's Report: The report from November 1 to 31, 2019 was reviewed and approved as written.

Principal's Report for SGES:

Since the November meeting, we have held:

- Parent Conferences- November 14th and 15th- Conferences were well attended
- Music with Ms. Jen for PreK
- Thanksgiving Break
- Collection for the Food Bank as a community service project; we collected several boxes of items.
- Report Cards
- Holiday Concert and Sing-a-Long
- Holiday Celebrations
- Golden Ticket challenges and celebrations
- Southwick Zoomobile
- Author for K: I like to read with Rick Golden

Thank you to our PTO for a wonderful Holiday Luncheon! We had lots of fun, food and a gift card raffle.

We look forward to:

- MLK Jr. Day- No School
- Progress Reports- Jan. 22, 2020, as needed
- PD Day- early release; NGES and SGES staff to work together on SEL activities
- Specialists' Night- February 6th
- DIBELS assessments

Other: EdCamp sign ups have gone out- May 1st is EdCamp

- SGES Presentation to SC on Feb. 11th, 7:00 pm
- We have had confirmed cases of the flu. It is not too late to get your flu shot.

Principal's Report for MSES:

It has been a nice transition back into the school year!

December was a busy month! We had Nature's Classroom, the Winter Band and Choral Concert, Many Thanksgivings, Colonial Day, Movie Night, the Geography Bee, Hour of Code, and an All School Meeting Holiday Sing a long. Thanks to all the room parents and volunteers who helped with the holiday parties and special activities throughout the month. Big THANK YOU from the staff and me for the fabulous staff luncheon and awesome gift card raffle before the holiday break!

Teachers have begun Winter Reading assessments on students in grades 2 – 5. In early February, the cohort of students participating in Title I Reading intervention will be reformulated. We will release students who have reached their reading intervention goal and add new students to the service.

Progress reports will be going home January 22nd for those students who merit one.

During this current month, fifth and sixth graders have basketball and floor hockey intramurals.

Chess Club has begun for grades two through six on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

Fourth, fifth and sixth graders participating in Math Olympiad continue to meet with Mrs. Buckley on Tuesdays after school. The newspaper club is approaching the release date for our second edition of the MSES Gazette.

We are looking forward to:

Movie Night this Friday, January 17th

All School Meeting on the 29th which is also a half-day of school

Gr 4 Myth Masters Presentation on the 27th

Apple Tree Arts after school Improv Class for 4, 5 & 6th graders starting on February 12th.

Committee Updates:

Movie Night this Friday, January 17th

Fun Run - Wednesday, March 4th, volunteers will be needed

High Fives to:

Gina Fraielli and Kristen Corey - MSES Movie Nights

Meghan Grass, and Julie Davis and all volunteers - SGES Bookfair

Michelle Hyland, Kaitlyn Marshall and Abby Cross - SGES and MSES Holiday Luncheons

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 12, 2020 in the SGES Cafeteria.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kristin Pliakas, Co-Secretary