



**EDGARTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, December 1, 2021– 4:30pm  
Edgartown School Library**

**AGENDA**

- I. Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2021**
- II. PTA Report**
- III. Finance Report**
  - A. FY23 Budget**
- IV. Public Comment**
- V. New/Old Business**
- VI. Schedule Next Meeting(s)**
- VII. Adjournment**



**EDGARTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, December 1, 2021– 4:30pm**  
**Edgartown School Library**

**Present:** Co Chairs: Kimberly Kirk and Kelly McCracken (on the phone),  
Others: Asst. Supt. for Curriculum & Instr., Dr. Richie Smith, Principal Dr. Shelley Einbinder, School Business Administrator, Mark Friedman, PTA President, Brooke Leahy, Nedine Cunningham, Deb DeBettencourt, Abigail Williamson, Jennifer Fournier, Nancy Cole, Recorder, MaryAnn Bartlett, AP

The meeting was called to order by Kimberly Kirk at 4:39.

**I. Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2021 (agenda item #1)**

Kimberly Kirk moved to table the minutes due to the unusual circumstances of she being the only SC member present and Kelly McCracken being remote via phone.

**II. PTA Report (agenda item #2)**

Brooke Leahy, PTA president, reported that there are now

The last meeting was via Zoom and in-person and very well attended with new parents. They donated \$400 towards the Ed Jerome Memorial Bench. The PTA participated in the good-bye celebration for nurse Nicole Barlett. The PTA is very interested in learning more about the road that is being put in for the Boys and Girls Club project.

The next meeting is on Tuesday, December 14, at 2:45 at the Staff Dining Room.

**III. Finance Report (agenda item #3)**

**A. FY23 Budget**

Mark Friedman, School Business Administrator, reported. He and Dr. Einbinder have begun crunching the numbers. There are 3 documents included with the report. The level-service budget draft is presented with the present staff salaries rolled forward next year. This accounts for step and lane changes. The unknown is the Union negotiation results on the salaries. The unknown is the equivalent of a COLA [cost-of-living-adjustment] if there is one and there is a placeholder in the budget for salaries if that is needed.

The highlights of the new budget were discussed from the summary page which was handed out. Enrollment is increasing so the demand for services is derived from the enrollment. 347 in 2017 and in October it was 394.

There is a placeholder for the Shared Services budget and that will be discussed on December 2 at the AISC. Currently it is \$49,000.

Under the existing line item for contracts \$81,000 will be incurred by step increases and there are only one or two lane changes that will add about \$5,500 for next year. And the placeholder for contingencies for salary negotiations is there. Substitute pay is now approved by all the school committees on the island so those budget lines have been increased by 33%. There is a salary adjustment to the technology coordinator which has been discussed very briefly in other meetings and may be in all the schools. There were new hire savings of almost \$114,000 when new staff come in to replace senior staff. Overall the total increase in salaries will be 2.54%

Transportation will be going up \$16,000 next year. This is due to addressing the pay structure needs and recruiting needs for bus drivers and monitors.

Student accident insurance has increased this year. The MVYPS has an island-wide policy that is not specific to each school. The amount of expenses from medical claims, mostly due to minor injuries, are often addressed by the emergency room which is due to the lack of options available on the island and this drives our costs up. There are discussions with the insurance company to address those costs. It is not a competitive market. One suggestion was to raise the deductibles but that is not a satisfactory option. The school will have to absorb the increase in the insurance.

Network and internet security upgrades is another increase in the budget. A technology task force was made up of the technology administrators from each school and the superintendent and these initiatives were accelerated, especially in regard to the ransom-ware incident at the Steamship Authority during summer of 2021. The total cost is \$19,000.

Fuel heating oil budget has been increased by 10% as an estimate since prices are rising with no indication of coming down next year.

A warrant article request was submitted for matching money for energy upgrades and Ken Romero worked on getting that organized. This is in response to information shared at the November ESC meeting.

Dr. Einbinder gave information on furniture updates which were added to the budget as a direct result of conversation from the November ESC meeting regarding room usage and rising enrollment. The costs for the purchase of operable sliding wall room dividers with soundproof panels has been added to the budget to make the best use of the current rooms to address the needs of the school, especially when rooms need to be shared for small groups.

A 1.0 FTE bilingual guidance counselor is being requested as an additional position. This is in response to the rising enrollment and to the changing needs of the students. The number of First Language not English students is at 39.5% per 2021-2022 DESE information. This percentage includes all families that speak another language, students who are currently in the ELD program and those who exited. 22.2% of our students are students who have disabilities. 67% of those are high needs students. Our student body is 49.9% low income. These numbers show that a good portion of our students have needs. A counselor can support our students, family, and staff. A question was asked of Deb DeBettencourt, guidance counselor, who was in attendance about the guidance counselor caseload. Mrs. DeBettencourt said that having someone who could communicate with families directly would be greatly beneficial. Counselors get pulled in a lot of directions and the focus on SEL since the pandemic



has raised the need for guidance exponentially.

Kimberly Kirk said the upgrade to the network security was critically important.

Kelly McCracken asked what was the percentage in the rise in student accident insurance costs. Mark Friedman answered that it was almost 100%, just about double. It was predicted to rise last year but, due to the pandemic it was not.

Kimberly Kirk asked why the rise in insurance costs was happening all of a sudden and the answer was that it has been trending upward for a while now and it is influenced by a variety of factors that the MVYPS does not have control over. One factor is that families are going to much higher deductible plans to save money. About ½ the injuries are sports related so those expenses were recalculated and attributed to the high school.

Kelly McCracken said she thought that due to the lack of activities last year it seemed as though the costs should not be so high. A question was asked if there were other providers. Mark Friedman said they will continue to look into it but it is a private marketplace with not a lot of competition.

Kelly McCracken asked about the guidance counselor position. What percentage of the students are in the building who are ELL? 39.5 % is the answer. She asked if the new position would be specific for the ELL students. Dr. Einbinder answered that if the counselor is bilingual they could alleviate a lot of the guidance counselor burden for all students. Deb DeBettencourt said that all the statistics such as low income, affects the caseload of the guidance counselors and that includes the pandemic. They add to the trauma of the students.

Kimberly Kirk asked if any other school has a bilingual guidance counselor. Richie Smith answered no. The Edgartown School is the second largest on the island. Other schools have looked for ways to bolster their administration. Dr. Smith said he applauded this as a way to bolster services for students.

Kelly McCracken asked if any of the increase on the salary line items accounted for retirement. The answer was no it accounted for salaries only.

There were no questions.

Shelley Einbinder asked when the next budget meeting would be and would the ESC invite the FinCom and the Edgartown Selectmen? The answer was yes, and that at that meeting there would be a slide presentation and that the ESC would vote on the budget at that meeting.

Mark Friedman reminded the SC that the Town would like the budget by December 23. The ESC needs to quickly plan another budget meeting date.

#### **IV. Public Comment (agenda item #4)**

There was no public comment

#### **V. New/Old Business (agenda item #5)**

Dr. Einbinder had two items: As of December 1st, the enrollment is 401 with another new 2nd grade student beginning Friday and several others enrolling soon. A Leave of Absence request was made by Abigail Williamson for an unpaid leave of absence from January 31 to the end of the school year. This is to enable her to work in Indonesia for the State Department on a multi-year teacher training program that began before the pandemic. Ms. Williamson will return to the ES at the beginning of the next school year.

Kelly McCracken asked if the LOA meets the criteria of the contract. The answer was yes, it meets the requirements of the contract. Richie Smith said there was precedence by another ES teacher who left for a year to New Zealand. Kelly McCracken wanted to make sure that the terms of the contract were followed and asked if a teacher needs to be employed for a certain period of time and are they able to return at their current rate? Richie Smith said that an employee returning at their current rate does follow the terms of the contract.

Kelly McCracken made a motion to grant the LOA.

Kimberly Kirk seconded.

The motion carried with 2 Ayes and 0 Nays.

Nedine Cunningham commented that the advertising for the long-term substitute position for Abigail Williamson's ELD teacher position needs to be advertised aggressively. Kimberly Kirk said yes, pursuing the substitute will be pursued aggressively **by the Edgartown School.**

Jennifer Fournier asked if there is a service to hire for interpreting. Richie Smith said that the school is working with the list of trained interpreters and actively looking for people to fill interpreter positions. It is a concern for the schools across the island. Richie Smith asked that the teachers, Shelley, and Abigail consult with teachers and troubleshoot for ways to be creative in filling the position in case someone can't be hired.

## **VI. Schedule Next Meeting(s) (agenda item #6)**

The ESC needs to meet before December 23. The town FinCom and Selectboard members need to attend also.

Wednesday, December 15, at 5:00PM is the time for the budget meeting.

Wednesday, January 5, at 5:00PM is the time for the January School Committee meeting

## **VII. Adjournment (agenda item #9)**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:17