

CARVER SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 13, 2020

7:00 p.m. OPEN MEETING

Town Hall, 2nd Floor, Meeting Room 1

School Committee Present:

Andrew Cardarelli
Jason Greenwood
Stephanie Clougherty
Andrew Soliwoda

Not Present

James O'Brien

Also Present

Scott Knief, Superintendent
Brad Brothers, Chief Operations and Finance Officer
Meredith Erickson, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

Meeting Opened: Andrew Cardarelli opened the meeting at **7:02 p.m.** with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition:

Seal of Biliteracy: Malu Souza, Grade 11

The Seal of Biliteracy (SoBL) is an award that recognizes students who have achieved proficiency in English as well as one or more additional languages, whether it be a native language, a heritage language, or an additional language learned in school or in another setting. It is a statement of accomplishment that helps to signal evidence of a student's readiness for career and college, and to engage as a global citizen. Mr. Knief shared with the committee that Malu enrolled in December of 2018 at which time her english proficiency was limited in both speech and understanding. She has made amazing strides in terms of english language proficiency. In order to have received the Seal of Biliteracy, she had to prove literate in two languages and pass exams to do so. Only 5 months after enrolling in Carver schools she took and passed the MCAS exam in English. With the passing of the MCAS Math and English exams combined with the passing of the Portuguese test, she has earned the Seal of Biliteracy by the state of Massachusetts.

Both Mr. Knief and EL Teacher Beth Goodwin noted that Malu always has a positive attitude, is always smiling, and has always challenged herself. She has independently taken on individual challenges in order to acquire the language and is an inspiration to our students in Carver and to staff at Carver Middle High School. Mrs. Goodwin has worked with Malu since she enrolled and said she has found Malu to be motivated, kind, and intelligent, and sees a bright future for her. The school committee members offered their accolates and thanked Malu for the example she is of a student striving for more for all students in the community.

Project 351: Dylan Young, Grade 8

Mr. Knief began by showing a brief video overview on the mission of Project 351. The Project 351 program was started by Governor Devall Patrick to motivate students to be involved in community service activities. Each of the 351 communities in Massachusetts select one grade 8 student to represent their community each year. Students are nominated by school leadership based upon criteria such as character, leadership, hard work, dedication, etc. The committee congratulated grade 8 student Dylan Young for this distinction.

Dylan informed the committee about the Project 351 day he attended in February in Boston where he was

able to hear such speakers as Charlie Rose, Governor Baker, Devin McCourty, and Boston Chief of Police. In addition to hearing speakers Dylan and his fellow Project 351 Ambassadors worked at the Pine Street Inn making activity books, and preparing silverware for the dining hall and said over 50,000 lives were affected by their efforts that day. Dylan will be organizing a community service effort in Carver by collecting donations for the Cradles to Crayons organization, which is a non-profit organization that provides children newborn to age 12 who are in homeless or low income situations the essential items they need to thrive at home, school and play. He will be setting up donation boxes at the Middle High School.

I. Comments from the General Public:

None

II. Comments from the EAPC: EAPC President, Tom Pinto

Mr. Pinto wished the staff and students a good vacation. He also thanked all those who worked collaboratively on the new E.S.P. evaluation system and hoped that that committee would be as supportive of it as the EAPC is.

III. Update by Student Council and Student Advisory Council:

Student Council Representatives: Morgan Campbell, President

Ms. Campbell outlined the events that the Student Council participated in during the month of January, including a leadership conference in Foxboro, and two events where they teamed up with Best Buddies.

IV. Approval of Minutes

January 9, 2020: Open Session Minutes

Motion: Andrew Soliwoda

Second: Jason Greenwood

Vote: Unanimous

V. Communications:

None

VI. Reports from the Superintendent:

A. Personnel Updates:

Mr. Knief reviewed the following changes in personnel at Carver Public Schools.

Resignation: Kayli Hom, *ESP Special Ed, CES*; Christine McCarron, *ESP Special Ed, CES*;

Retirement: Pam Reed, *ESP Special Ed, MHS (effective 6/30/2020)*

New Hire: Ruthanne Donovan, *ESP Special Ed, CES*; Avery Sherwood, *ESP Special Ed, CES*; Frank Calore, *Long Term Substitute, Tech Ed., MHS*;

B. Vocal Survey Data Meredith Erickson

Meredith Erickson, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology presented an overview responses received from the Vocal Survey which was given to students in grades 4, 5, 8 and 10. The survey's participation is voluntary and is administered as part of the MCAS testing for those grade levels. Students are asked to share their views in three categories: Engagement, Safety, and Environment. Mrs. Erickson along with Middle High School, Assistant Principal, Mike Martin reviewed this data upon its receipt; Mr. Martin leads the Safe and Supportive Schools group at the Middle High School level. This was the second year the district was given this data and with the advice of the state will wait a few years in order to gather accurate data for trends, etc.

She outlined the main themes of each section of the survey. The "Engagement" section asked questions

based around cultural and linguistic competency, relationships and participation. The “Safety” portion asked questions on both emotional and physical safety as well as bullying and cyberbullying. The last section on “Environment” focussed on topics like instruction, mental health and discipline.

Mrs. Erickson noted that when looking at the data it was important to know what the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) used as a statistically valid measure. Any differences of 3-4 points or more in the average index score and 7 percentage points on the item responses were found educationally meaningful. She also mentioned that it was important to note that 4th and 5th grade report higher scores than the 8th and 10th graders do which the state says mirrors trends found in other states nationally. With the impression that feelings around school in older ages are weighted naturally by their developmental stage.

Several questions in each grade level with the ratings were reviewed for the committee. There were about 40 questions in total asked to each grade level. Students were asked to answer on a scale of all the time, almost all the time, sometimes, rarely, or never. The ratings given were based on the percentage of students who said “all the time” or “almost all the time”. Mrs. Erickson shared that the questions selected to share were the pieces of the survey that impact student instruction and how students feel in terms of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as compared to and align with the Educational Blueprint, which are the goals of the school district.

Carver above State or equal in all indicators in grade 4 and grade 5. Grade 4 and 5 questions and ratings displayed were as follows:

- Engagement** My teachers will explain things in different ways until I understand.
- Engagement** My teachers ask me to share what I have learned in a lesson.
- Safety** I feel safe at school.
- Safety** I feel comfortable talking to my teacher about something that is bothering me.
- Environment** In school, I learn how to manage (control) my feelings when I am upset.
- Environment** Teachers give students a chance to explain when they do something wrong.

The questions in grade 8 and 10 were changed to be developmentally appropriate but were similar questions and on the same topics as the questions posed to grade 4 and 5 students.

Carver scored below or equal to state in all indicators in grade 8. Grade 8 questions and ratings displayed were as follows:

- Engagement** I have a choice in how I show my learning (examples: write a paper, prepare a presentation, make a video).
- Engagement** Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully regardless of a student’s race, culture, family income, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
- Safety** Teachers don’t let students pick on other students in class or in the hallway.
- Safety** If I tell a teacher or another adult that someone is being bullied, the teacher/adult will do something to help.
- Environment** If I need help with my emotions (feelings), effective help is available at my school.
- Environment** The things I am learning in school are relevant (important) to me.

Carver scored below or equal to state in all indicators in grade 10. Grade 10 questions and ratings displayed were as follows:

- Engagement** In at least two of my academic classes, I can work on assignments that interest me personally.
- Engagement** Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully regardless of a

	student's race, culture, family income, religion, sex or sexual orientation.
Safety	Teachers don't let students pick on other students in class or in the hallway.
Safety	If I tell a teacher or another adult that someone is being bullied, the teacher/adult will do something to help.
Environment	I have access to effective help at school if I am struggling emotionally or mentally.
Environment	The things I am learning in school are relevant (important) to me.

Mr. Knief added that although the state recommended not to compare data from year to year yet, he is interested to see some of the results of these questions next year with the focus on relationships, relevance and rigor, as there has been a lot of work done at the building levels centered around those themes since district has recognized the need for focus on the climate of the school and curriculum.

Mrs. Erickson shared that in regards to next steps, administration in both buildings have had the opportunity to review this data and, as part of the Safe and Supportive Schools grant, is in the process of action planning and looking at multiple measures. The Middle High School is looking at the Shadow a Student Challenge, PACE training (Personal Approach to Change and Equity) and exploring the Power Hour concept for a potential launch next year. A site visit to another district that has the Power Hour is scheduled so administration can see how it operates in the average school day. The Elementary school is looking to the Shadow a Student Challenge as well as additional work within their SEL toolbox. The Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Committee will also look at the data to make sure there is an opportunity for all staff to review the data and see the value of student perception in terms of making improvements and honor the things the district is doing well.

Mr. O'Brien stated his interest in seeing how the trends in perception from the same class of kids will look over the years. Mr. Soliwoda added that while having the data is great it is more important to see what can be done with it and how we can grow. He believes the work with CTE Pathways at the Middle High School is responsive to these needs and is pleased with the progress.

C. **Student Opportunity Act**

In January the Governor released his budget with his planned implementation of the Student Opportunity Act. This is the first year of a planned 7-year phase-in of increased funding under the Student Opportunity Act which passed in the fall. Mr. Knief informed the committee what the funding and process looks like for Carver. Carver is 1 of 183 districts, (57%) that still only receives a minimum Chapter 70 aid increase of \$30 per pupil. This translates to approximately \$47,500 of additional aid for Carver. Under the law, all districts are required to present a plan to be approved by the School Committee on how it plans to use its Student Opportunity Act money to increase to benefit underperforming students. As a new accountability measure, Mr. Knief will have to present a plan to Carver will be using the additional \$47,500 to improve student performance by April 1. Once approved by the School Committee the plan must be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for review. Mr. Knief will present the plan as part of the meeting scheduled on February 25 for school committee review and then vote to approve the plan at the March school committee meeting.

While the plan only has to include how to spend the per pupil aid money and not circuit breaker, Mr. Knief explained that where the district will hopefully see the benefit of this act is being able to fund circuit breaker. The proposal under the governor's budget is 25% in the first year, which has not yet been passed. The law also requires that the state fully fund charter schools which historically have been

subject to appropriations and never fully funded. Carver should see a benefit in this area as well. Due to the uncertainty of the amount, the district cannot take this money into account for the budget this year, but perhaps next year they will be able to have a clearer picture of what the circuit breaker for special education transportation and also what the charter school funding will look like.

Mr. Knief also shared how the breakdown of how the money was divided among districts in Massachusetts and how the plan promotes equity throughout the state. As a result of the change, 37 districts receive 85% of the money. These districts maintained student population, had an increased number of English Learner (EL) students, and are districts who have a higher low income population. He shared that he believes the Student Opportunity Act really does promote equity throughout the state of Massachusetts and it is an evidence based plan focussed on the concept of closing gaps and reaching students who may be underserved.

D. Bus Cameras

Mr. Knief and Mr. Brothers addressed shared concerns about people passing busses while the stop sign is down and lights are on. Based on these concerns, the district is beginning the process of investigating mounting cameras for the bus arms (or other possible areas) as a deterrent and to possibly catch people who do pass the bus. They have spoken with Chief Duphily about this as well and he said he would issue tickets, warnings or citations to cars that could be identified using a bus camera. There are many steps to this process including looking at costs, working with the Department of Transportation in terms of legality as to where the cameras can be placed, etc. Mr. Brothers noted that in his research he has found that other states have done this and most of them are using third party services. The first step in the process would be to find out the specifics in regards to what is allowable by law before the district begin the process. While there was no official proposal made at the meeting, the administrators wanted to address the issue and community with the committee and community that is being addressed.

Mr. Cardarelli applauded administration for addressing this issue as he brought the issue to the schools after reaching out to social media and asked for feedback and the community responded with their concerns. He noted that he would like to see the schools be proactive than reactive and hoped perhaps this would cause people to think twice before anyone gets hurt.

Mr. Greenwood also thanked the adminstros for addressing this issue as it is something that has happened with his children crossing the street before.

E. Tiered Focused Monitoring

Mr. Knief and Mrs. Teichert reviewed the process for the Tiered Focused Monitoring (TFM) review in March. Every six years DESE does a compliance review of school districts adherence to Special Education, ELL, and Civil Rights laws and regulations. The review used to be called a “Coordinated Program Review”. Last year, DESE changed the name to Tiered Focused Monitoring and has also now created a 3 year cycle. The review has two stages. In stage 1 the district provides evidence online of it’s adherence to all the guidelines and regulations. Carver was in stage 1 of the review last year and submitted all of the requested evidence. Based on DESE’s review of the evidence that was provided Carver has been given a rating of “Tier 1 Self Directed Improvement: Data points indicate no concern on compliance and performance outcomes”. This is the highest rating that you can recieve in the 1st stage. In Stage 2 of the process, representatives will come out for a site visit. Carver’s site visit is

scheduled for March 17th. During the site visit they will review files and interview a range of staff members to determine if what we have submitted as evidence is happening in practice. At the end of the process the district will be assigned a rating and given recommendation, if needed, on how we could better meet the guidelines and regulations for Special Education, EL practices and Civil Rights.

As part of the Stage 2 process the following steps have or will be taken:

- Surveys for parents of special education students were sent from DESE following February vacation.
- A parent orientation will be held on March 5, 2020 at 6:30p at the Makepeace Literacy Leadership Center to discuss the review process.
- Review of records, interviews of staff and Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAAC) representatives, and an exit meeting all to occur on the March 17th review date with DESE.

Mr. Knief and the committee thanked Karen Teichert, Meredith Erickson, Melissa Leary, Michelle Taylor, Beth Goodwin, and Pat Tobin for all the time and energy spent in preparation for Stage 2 of the review.

F. Upcoming Events Scott Knief

A list of upcoming school events was shared with the committee and community. Mrs. Johnson, Middle School Drama Advisor was present and shared a brief overview of the upcoming Middle School Drama production that includes over 45 students as part of the production. She noted that the students have worked really hard and have done a lot of study on characterization. The show is a comedy and she encouraged the committee and community to come see it. She also noted that the High School Drama production of Mamma Mia! is coming up on March 13 and 14.

VII. Recommendations from Superintendent

A. Educational Support Professional (ESP) Evaluation

A joint committee made-up of teachers, educational support professionals (ESP) and administrators was formed in the fall of 2019 to review and revise the evaluation system for ESPs. The vision and process for the new evaluation system proposed by the committee was shared with the committee as well as the revised and proposed evaluation form. The new vision statement and process and revised form has been approved by the ESP unit. Mr. Knief informed the committee that under the old system for ESPs there was not an established process. There was a form that was to be completed by the end of the school year, but not a process that outlined how it should be done. The vision statement crafted by the evaluation committee was shared and is as follows: *The purpose of the evaluation process is to promote student learning, growth and achievement by providing education support professionals with feedback in a collaborative process to enhance opportunities for professional growth and celebrate and recognize staff who maintain effective practices.* Within the new process there will be established timelines, such as, the ESP will know who their evaluator is by October 1 of each year, when evaluations should be completed and how to address concerns throughout the year. In addition they have changed the definitions of the rating scale to the following: outstanding; meets expectations; areas for growth; and unsatisfactory. The evaluation form itself showed revisions of the twelve question section and narrative parts. The work was done in a collaborative process over several meetings. Mr. Knief recommended the committee's approval of the vision and process as well as the new evaluation form.

Motion made to approve the new vision statement, process and revised evaluation form to be used as part of the evaluation system for Educational Support Professionals. to begin 2020-21 school year:

Andrew Soliwoda

Seconded: Stephanie Clougherty

Mr. Greenwood asked if the process outlined how many observations there would be for ESPs. Mr. Knief responded that through the new process, administration will meet with ESPs prior to the evaluation and or complete it together with the ESP. Due to the varied nature of ESP roles, teachers have the ability to weigh in if an ESP is tied to a program with one specific teacher for instance, while an ESP could work directly with administrators as lunch monitors, etc. With the new evaluation format teachers are not the ones completing the evaluation but are allowed to offer their feedback.

Vote: Unanimous

VIII. Reports from the School Committee

Andrew Cardarelli: Reminded everyone that tomorrow is Valentines Day!

Jason Greenwood: Acknowledged Emma Simmons, senior on the girls basketball team as the 10th person in Carver history to score 1,000 points in their career. He shared that tomorrow is the last home game and with a win, they would win the league title. He also acknowledged girls varsity basketball coach, John Rozen, for reaching out to younger students as well and building up the community. Go see the game, the play, and enjoy vacation!

Andrew Soliwoda: Enjoy vacation and come back strong for March. He acknowledged the few open seats that will be coming up on the school committee. He hopes people will take the opportunity to get involved. March 4th is the last day to take out nomination papers and March 6 is the last day to return them.

Mr. Knief noted at the end of the meeting that on the posted agenda said Monday, Feb 25 but that the meeting is on Tuesday, February 25 at 7p at which they plan to have a public hearing of the budget, the Student Opportunity Act Plan and a CTE Pathways Presentation.

Motion Made to Adjourn: Jason Greenwood

Seconded: Stephanie Clougherty

Roll Call Vote:

Andrew Cardarelli, Chairperson: **Yes**

Jason Greenwood: **Yes**

Stephanie Clougherty: **Yes**

Andrew Soliwoda: **Yes**

Motion Approved: 5 to 0

Meeting Adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by: Gina Marie Russell

NEXT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 7:00 p.m. OPEN MEETING