

**2020 Annual Report
South Middlesex Regional
Vocational Technical School
Committee
(Keefe Regional Technical School)**

This annual report is prepared by Superintendent /Director, Jonathan Evans, and composed on behalf of the members of the School Committee of the **South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District** and submitted after review and approval by the full Committee in compliance with the provisions of the Agreement among the City of Framingham and Towns of Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton and Natick.

This report reviews from the perspective of the Committee the major items with which the Committee was concerned during the year. It is a representative account of matters solely within the policy making authority of the Committee and also of matters which the Superintendent/Director brought before the Committee for information and consultation. For greater detail and discussion the reader should read the extended minutes of Committee meetings and the attachments thereto which are available at the school office.

In addition to a public high school, the South Middlesex Regional Vocational Technical School District provides continuing education opportunities for adults through the Keefe at Night program as well as Summer Discover, a summer program for area youth. We look forward to resuming Summer Discover in 2021, after canceling in 2020 due to the pandemic.

The Committee reorganized on June 22, 2020 with officers elected unanimously to the following positions:

Chair: Edward Burman (Ashland)

Vice-Chair: Sarah Commerford
(Holliston)

Secretary: A.J. Mulvey (Framingham)

Assistant Treasurer: Barry Sims
(Holliston)

Staff members working on behalf of the District and School Committee are Karen Ward, **Recording Secretary** and Jack Keating, **Treasurer**.

The balance of this report presents a summary of the discussions and actions of the Committee on a number of the important matters brought before the Committee for advice or action.

Community Engagement

Staff and students of Keefe Regional Technical School participated in many community projects throughout the school district member municipalities during the first quarter of the year, when the building was open for in person learning. Examples of these activities include:

Carpentry

Ashland House Project – Framing sections of the basement and front porch, and the installation of exterior doors and windows

Electrical

Framingham Parks & Recreation – Relocated overhead garage door safety sensors at the maintenance building. Also completed miscellaneous repairs
Habitat for Humanity, Holliston– Completed installation of a 200 amp service and all rough wiring

Irving Street Park, Framingham – Installed a 200 amp underground service
Farm Pond Park, Framingham – Designed and submitted material lists for upgrade
Ashland House Project – Installation of temporary electrical service and installation of rough wiring

Horticulture

Natick Community Organic Farm - Completed work on a weekly basis
Framingham Park & Recreation – Assistance with cleanups and maintenance projects
Framingham Department of Public Works – Assistance with cleanups and maintenance projects
Pearl Street Cupboard & Cafe – Donation of produce and flowers

Plumbing

Habitat for Humanity, Holliston – Installation of all plumbing and heating components
Ashland House Project – Installation of underground plumbing

Prior to the school closure in March 2020, the Keefe Regional Technical School swimming pool was used by the Framingham Parks & Recreation Department, as well as all five municipalities' swim teams.

Administration

In 2020, Jonathan Evans completed his seventh year in the role of Superintendent Director, with 25 years of service to the district.

The majority of focus in 2020 was a response to the pandemic and plans for re-opening. These efforts required significant adjustments to the budget in order to meet the needs of our students during the pandemic. The District was

able to acquire necessary personal protective equipment, maintenance supplies, and technology resources to safely deliver high quality instruction to students.

The School Committee completed its periodic evaluation of the Superintendent using the DESE rubric, and found him to be Proficient Approaching Exemplary for Standards I (Instructional Leadership), III (Family Engagement), and IV (Professional Culture); Exemplary in Standard II (Management and Operations), with an Overall Rating of Proficient. The complete record of this evaluation is a public document that will be available at the South Middlesex Regional School District Superintendent's Office.

School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan for the 2020-2021 school year includes the following objectives: 1) Rewriting the district Admissions Policy with a focus on consistent implementation of an updated career exploratory rubric, 2) Expanding the new model for our Student Response Team (START) to include a process for any faculty member to refer students of concern, 3) Create opportunities that focus on promoting student success in all aspects of high school, 4) Plan and implement a Two Way Immersion (TWI) model for English Language Learners (ELLs) who are designated as Level 1 and Level 2 as determined by ACCESS testing performance. The TWI model will incorporate a co-taught instructional strategy, utilizing a teaming approach, and consists of an ESL certified teacher and a content certified teacher in the areas of English, Math and Biology.

The Professional Development Program included a second series of workshops

hosted by Teachers21 to train faculty using Zoom, a workshop on Equity from Roots and Wings, and an ELL workshop for faculty hosted by the Keefe Tech ELL Department.

Handbook

With review by the School Council, updates to the Handbook were made. A section on the attendance policy was updated in accordance with legal requirements. A section was also included that Keefe Tech will follow the guidance of the CDC and the Board of Health. Finally, the requirements for students attending Business Professionals of American nationals was changed to be the same as for students attending nationals for FFA and SkillsUSA.

The Budget Process

2020 was a challenging year for all. It required the District to adjust the budget needs in order to meet new state guidelines pertaining to the pandemic issues that were faced. The District was able to utilize grant funding totaling \$426,646, through the CARES Act, Coronavirus Relief Fund (CvRF), and Remote Technology Grant in order to purchase items such as personal protective equipment and high quality air filters. The District was also able to purchase Chromebooks and hotspots for students to engage in remote learning.

In December 2020, the Budget Sub-Committee members Ed Burman, Linda Fobes, Rick Gallagher, Jamie Shepard, Elizabeth Smith-Freedman and Barry Sims began the FY22 budget development process.

In 2020, the Superintendent continued the practice of communicating early in

the budget process with the financial officers of the member municipalities to develop mutual awareness of both municipal budget constraints and the efforts of the Committee to manage the school efficiently and effectively while recognizing those limitations. The Committee continued to consider reductions in the preliminary budget and the budget of \$21,131,000 as submitted to the member municipalities for FY21 was approved by all.

Auditor's Report

The annual audit by the independent accounting firm of Roselli, Clark & Associates is in the process of preparing the financial statements for committee review. It is expected that the audit report that calculates our energy project will meet the stipulated guarantee benchmarks for the 2020-2021 year.

Enrollment, Recruiting and Student Retention

Keefe Regional Technical School is a school of application. Maintaining a healthy enrollment of students for our day school operation is essential for our overall operational success. The Superintendent has indicated that he believes that the quality and rigor of our school programs and the safety and culture of our school environment will lead to our success in attracting students and their families to Keefe Regional Technical School. The Superintendent has emphasized that the administration, faculty and support staff must work together to ensure that Keefe Regional Technical School continues to be recognized by our community as a career and technical school of high quality.

The District's recruitment efforts needed to pivot to virtual events in response to

the pandemic. While we were unable to host all prospective 8th grade students as we normally do, we appreciate the flexibility and cooperation from our district partners in support of our efforts to inform families about the opportunities offered by Keefe Technical School.

We are pleased to report the enrollment on October 1, 2020 was 817 students, which reflects an increase in enrollment.

Buildings and Grounds

Keefe Regional Technical School has been occupied continuously since September 1973. The facility is used not only during the school day and year but also evenings, weekends, and during the summer months.

Facility upgrades that were completed in 2020 include replacement of carpeting in classrooms and common areas, upgrades/repairs to main boilers/heating system, replacement/upgrade of HVAC system filters to MERV-13, installation of touchless faucets, replacement of auditorium stage curtains, renovation/expansion of the guidance office suite, reconfiguration/upgrade of auditorium stage fire sprinkler system, upgrades/repairs to kitchen fire suppression systems, expansion of the video surveillance system, installation of a swimming pool water chemical controller/monitoring system, plumbing and electrical upgrades, and the purchase of one 14 passenger minibus and one 6 passenger crew cab dump truck.

Student Achievement

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) acknowledges the disruption caused by COVID-19. Subsequently,

DESE has paused calculating accountability determinations for the 2020-2021 school year.

Keefe Tech added an additional AP Course, AP Physics, bringing the total to seven courses, offered in a variety of multidisciplinary areas for students seeking a more rigorous course load.

Endorsed by the state of Massachusetts, the State Seal of Biliteracy recognizes and awards high school seniors who attain academic levels of proficiency in English and a second world language. This distinction is in acknowledgement of having studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by a student's high school graduation. The State Seal of Biliteracy designation appears on the Keefe Tech transcript and is a statement of achievement for future employers and for college admissions. Keefe Tech is proud to report that 8 seniors received this award for English and Spanish in 2020.

Keefe Regional Technical School hosted the Massachusetts SkillsUSA District Three Leadership and Skills Conference on February 26, 2020. 660 students and their advisors from 10 different schools attended the event. Keefe Tech had 113 students participating in a variety of competitions, and our students won a total of 39 medals at the event. Four Keefe Tech students earned Perfect Scores in the OSHA testing portion of the event. 30 students qualified to compete in the Massachusetts SkillsUSA State Leadership and Skills Conference, but this event was canceled due to the current pandemic. 28 Keefe Tech students participated in the Business Professionals of America State Leadership Conference. The Keefe Tech students earned 30 total medals at the conference: 10 gold, 12 silver, and 8 bronze medals. 10 students qualified for the National Leadership

Conference, but this event was canceled due to the current pandemic.

General Advisory Board

The General Advisory Committee consists of the Chairperson from each of the Program Advisory Committees. The General Advisory Committee reviews curriculum and equipment requests, summarizes these requests, and brings to the attention of the Administration and the School Committee observations and recommendations from the Program Advisory Committees. The points noted for the current school year include: the need to continually align the curriculum with changes in equipment and technology within specific industries; community outreach to bring Keefe's programs to potential students; increasing opportunities for students and employers through the co-op program; continued pursuit of grant funding for state-of-the-art career and technical equipment; and training students to acquire industry-recognized credentials to help them make the transition from school to work.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan Evans
Superintendent-Director

SOUTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ASHLAND

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William N. Gaine, Jr.

FRAMINGHAM

Michele Burns
James Cameau
Larry Cooper
Linda Fobes
Maria Martinez
A.J. Mulvey

Rick Gallagher
John Downing

HOPKINTON

Ruth Knowles
Jaime Shepard

HOLLISTON

Sarah Commerford
Barry Sims

NATICK

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Elizabeth Smith-Freedman