

WESTBOROUGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WESTBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS

MINUTES

Wednesday

May 25, 2016

The Westborough School Committee was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Jody Hensley. Committee members in attendance were Ilyse Levine-Kanji, Stephen Doret, Nicole Sullivan and Sara Dullea. Administrators present included Amber Bock, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Daniel Mayer, Assistant Superintendent; Irene Oliver, Director of Finance and Administration; Kerry Larkin, Student Representative; Principals, Brian Callaghan and Jack Foley; Tara Howard, Advisory Finance Committee.

Mrs. Hensley called for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and reviewed the Agenda. There will be a need for Executive Session under Chapter 30A, Section 21, to discuss negotiations and litigation.

MINUTES

Mrs. Levine-Kanji made a motion to approve the Regular Session minutes of May 11, 2016. Mrs. Dullea seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-0 in favor. Mrs. Levine-Kanji made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of May 11, 2016, but to hold them since they deal with negotiations and litigation. The motion carried unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND HIGHLIGHTS

Superintendent Bock reported with the yearend high school closure approaching, many honors and recognitions are taking place. She feels one of the most welcoming and friendly clubs is Best Buddies.

Program Manager, Heidi Kalinowski, who works with all Massachusetts schools, recognized Jonathan Kalinowski as the Massachusetts Outstanding Officer of the Year, stating he went above and beyond what the role calls for. Jonathan stated he appreciates the recognition and feels Best Buddies is a defining aspect of his 3 years in high school. The Westborough Chapter makes sure all students are included and not segregated. Jonathan was accompanied by Angelina Corazzini, Club advisor, who also praised Jonathan's participation.

Mrs. Levine-Kanji noted club activities occur twice a month and Mrs. Bock donates her time also. Next year's student school committee representative, Tom Jacob, is also an officer of the club.

COMMITTEE REQUESTS AND REPORTS

Kerry reported the Fales 3rd grade string students will be performing June 30 and the kindergarten will celebrate the wedding of Q & U. The Goin' Buggy performance will be June 2 and 3. Many of the high school athletic teams have qualified for MIAA tournaments. Information is on www.miaa.net. Fall sports sign-ups are June 1. High school seniors are taking final exams this week. An ice cream social and yearbook signing was held May 20. The senior Fine Arts Banquet was held last evening and Mill Pond grades 5 and 6 held a band concert May 23. The instrument petting zoo for grade 4 was held. Students can try all instruments.

Mrs. Hensley thanked Kerry for her year of service and Mrs. Bock thanked her for the important gathering of information. As a token of appreciation she was presented with a Holy Cross sweatshirt, her college of choice.

Mrs. Sullivan attended the 3rd grade string concert and the Q and U wedding. Mrs. Levine-Kanji attended the WEF breakfast.

Mr. Doret was able to participate in the Executive Session May 11 Committee meeting via satellite. He reported the picture was excellent. The start date of the Gibbons renovation project is June 17, and a number of items are still being discussed. The PreK-3 committee met last week and received a report from HMFH on details and expansion of its original report. Mr. Doret also reaffirmed his support of the Westborough music program. His son, a graduate of WHS, has played in the Berkshire Symphony. Music goes wherever you are.

Mrs. Hensley added the Senior Ball was held and the staff at the Aquarium called the district to report on what a great group of students were in attendance. The staff went out of its way to praise the behavior of the Westborough students. The One Act Play was a great success. Alumnus, Robbie Hersced, assumed a role in the play at the last minute due to an injury of a performer. The Student Council sponsored the Mr. Westborough High School contest. Anthony Casparello won the contest. Mrs. Hensley also praised the a cappelloza performance.

STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Dr. Mayer noted there will be 3 changes that have been approved by the Committee, in the student handbooks for 2016-17. The school absentee procedure and the district's allergy protocol will be added as well as information on the new substance abuse screening program mandated by the Massachusetts legislature. Letters explaining the program will be sent to families shortly.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL CHOICE

At 6:30 pm Mrs. Levine-Kanji made a motion to open the Public Hearing on School Choice for next year. Mrs. Dullea seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-0 in favor of the motion.

Superintendent Bock recommends the district decline School Choice for the Westborough Public Schools.

MOTION

Mr. Doret made a motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation of declining School Choice for 2016-2017. Mrs. Sullivan seconded the motion and the Committee voted 5-0 in favor of the motion.

MOTION

Mrs. Sullivan made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 6:32 pm. Mr. Doret seconded the motion and the Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE 2016-17 CALENDAR

Mr. Doret noted because of upcoming renovations to the Forbes Building and the need of cable coverage, the School Committee will be meeting at different locations during the next year. Meetings may be held at the Mill Pond School, the Edward Kelleher Library or the town hall.

MOTION

Mr. Doret made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Sullivan to accept the 2016-17 School Committee Meeting Calendar as amended. The Committee voted unanimously in favor.

FIELD TRIP – CAMP SUNSHINE

Approval of a field trip to Camp Sunshine July 17-22 and July 24-28 was requested by Colin Gormley. The

camp provides recreation for critically ill children and their families. Sixteen 11th and 12th grade students will be attending.

MOTION

Mr. Doret moved to approve the trip to Camp Sunshine and that it is covered by the town's insurance. Mrs. Dullea seconded the motion and the Committee voted unanimously in favor.

HIGH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Principal, Brian Callaghan, thanked the School Committee for its continued support of the programs and activities at the high school. The recognition of Best Buddies indicates the culture of the school as does the report from the staff at the Aquarium about the WHS students, and the coming Adaptive Theater. To be reported is the increase in the number of Merit Scholars and the solid number of college acceptances. All credit should be shared with the 1-8 grades programs and staff. Mr. Callaghan commended Gibbons School Principal, Jack Foley, for his leadership, the 1:1 initiative and the partnering shared.

Mr. Callaghan highlighted the initiative to redefine the curriculum and instruction, pointing out the vision is to prepare the students for life outside high school and to be able to acquire a second language. Ten new courses were offered this year. The Social Studies department brought in primary sources to promote critical consumers of knowledge. Differentiating instruction and teacher collaboration across disciplines was well received. Local poets, artists and authors were invited in. An MIT professor talked about underwater robotics. Field trips, assemblies, business mentorship, promoted personal development and growth. A Student Town Hall Committee was established and addressed school start time, technology, etc. Students could use their voices. The technology BTOD pilot program was successful as well as the use of Chromebooks in every department.

The Improvement Plan for 2016-17 includes creating challenging and purposeful curriculum; continue efforts of improving instruction aligned with curriculum and Technology goals; focus on BYOD; promote balance and wellness for students; receive feedback from students on important school issues; explore appropriate ways for technology to be effective teaching and learning tool.

GIBBONS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Principal, Jack Foley, provided a year-end report on the Gibbons School. He noted through a WEF grant, the choral director worked with a group of Concert Choir students. The introduction of Chromebooks 1:1 whereby 8th grade students take the computers with them and home, has been very positive. Dr. Mayer, Jon Green and Brian Callaghan viewed the program today and spoke with students and teachers. The Chromebooks will be moving with the students to the high school next year. They have enriched instruction and blended resources.

Next year the Chromebooks are being expanded to the 7th grade and the Eureka math pilot program will be expanded to all three 7th grade teams. Balanced grouping will occur in 8th grade English and Band. A 13th team teacher is being added at each grade level and the team structure is being reorganized to support additional staff. New science standards will also be implemented. The delivery of ELL is expanding and delivery is being updated. Co-teaching training with Special Education Coordinator will enter its 2nd year. Science and Social Studies will be addressed this summer. The co-teaching model will expand to include 7th grade math and 8th grade English. The Stride program will have a second teacher.

Mr. Foley reported the "move" at Gibbons is being coordinated with Diamond Relocation Services, Gilbane, Chartwells and the WPS facilities department. It is estimated each classroom will need between 40-50

boxes. It is also estimated the teachers will have a total of 3 moves. The modular classrooms will be onsite June 1 and the demolition work will begin June 17. There will be six classrooms with all amenities. The parking lot was expanded during the April vacation to accommodate the loss of 20 parking spaces where the modulars will be placed. The field house has also been cleaned out for storage purposes.

In answer to a question by Mrs. Sullivan, Mr. Foley stated the move schedule will minimize how many moves a teacher will have to make. The library will also be used as classroom space. The kitchen will be back online in mid October. Chartwells has done this a number of times. It will be preparing the food at the high school. Equipment is being purchased to transport the food for the first six weeks. Two days will have hot meals; 3 days cold. A van is being rented to do the transport.

Mr. Doret added Mr. Foley is a full time principal and a full time hands-on person making the project work in the time allotted. The project was looked at without the modulars, but the penalty was in the funding. The construction would be longer. The town may save \$1.5 million dollars by extending the contract as Hastings and Armstrong may be able to use them temporarily as a solution to their space needs. Behind what the parents are seeing, Mr. Foley is dedicating his efforts to making solutions to all problems.

Mrs. Levine-Kanji inquired how often the take home computers have been broken. Mr. Foley replied there has not been a large amount of damage. There are 3 levels of protection on the devices. Loaners are available for those forgotten at home.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Director of Technology, Jon Green, gave an update on the Technology Department. He praised Mr. Foley for the expansion of the use of computers in the Gibbons School. The teaching and learning with technology for teachers and students is in a positive environment. The 1:1 program has been introduced in grades 4-9 including the BYOD program. The pre-school now has mobile lab carts.

In September Armstrong, Fales and Hastings each received 2 carts of 30 iPads and students are able to use a small number of apps to demonstrate their learning. Student learning was later shared with parents through the SeeSaw learning journal. The number of iPads at each of these schools will be doubled.

Students in grades 4-6 were prepared for the responsibilities of school network accounts. Lessons were presented so students were familiar with proper care and handling. Parents and students attended an orientation program before the iPads were activated. Fourth and fifth grade students received Digital Citizenship lessons and Google accounts. A 6th grade student Tech Squad was established to help with apps. In March, 6th grade students were allowed to take their iPads home.

Grades 7 and 8 also focused on Digital Citizenship, which included internet safety, digital literacy and online responsibility. Two parents nights were scheduled and students then began taking home Chromebooks. Next fall 7th grade will be going to 1:1.

In the fall Grade 9 students will use their 8th grade Chromebooks, and students in grades 10-12 will bring their own devices. This year some students did bring their own devices to school. 80% of students rated the experience as excellent or very good. The WETF has helped to develop a 1:1 Store and reached out to families in need of support.

Staff is being offered a choice between laptop running Windows and a MacBook Air. Teacher adoption has been successful and on track to be completed by the end of this school year. Printer surveys indicate dissatisfaction with convenience and availability. A capital warrant funded new WiFi at the high school and a

State Digital Connections Partnership Grant funded WiFi at Mill Pond. The swipe card security for students is being worked on.

SUPERINTENDENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN – FINAL REPORT

Superintendent Bock noted all departments have given presentations to the School Committee as well as six building principals. She feels lines of communication are very important and has spent a great deal of time visiting schools and community. The Committee was in receipt of Mrs. Bock's assessment of how she met the personal goals for 2015-16.

Superintendent Bock also released an End of Year Report containing 5 Major Themes and 18 Core Goals. She feels the amount of work the Leadership Team and Principals are doing is amazing. The summaries give details of the benchmarks. It is what drives the district and keeps it moving forward. The benchmarks have been met, made, or exceeded. The document will be used to drive the summer work.

Mrs. Hensley feels it is a roadmap for the School Committee and an amazing amount of work. Mrs. Bock feels she has accomplished a great deal and it has been a gratifying year. The Superintendent has passed on several documents to the School Committee documenting her work and progress. Results of a teacher survey will be available by June.

Mrs. Hensley asked the Committee to forward its comments on the superintendent's evaluation to her by June 6. An oral evaluation report will be delivered June 8.

A Special School Committee meeting will be held Monday, June 6, following its appearance before the Finance Committee, to discuss the PreK-3 report and make recommendations.

REQUEST – Mr. Doret requested the School Committee meeting not exceed 8:00 pm.

MOTION

At 8:46 pm Mr. Doret made a motion to enter Executive Session under Chapter 30A, Section 21 for the purpose of discussing litigation and negotiation. The Committee voted unanimously in favor by roll call vote.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 9:47 pm and signed bills.

MOTION

Mrs. Levine-Kanji made a motion to allow the Gibbons School students to end the year on June 17 when construction will start and to allow for the staff to pack. Students will fulfill either 3 hours of community service or an academic project to be in compliance with MGL. Mr. Doret seconded the motion and the committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Levine-Kanji and a second by Mrs. Dullea the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Nicole Sullivan
Secretary

These minutes are as recorded by the secretary of the School Committee and do not become an official part of the record until so voted at a future meeting

Documents:

Minutes Regular and Executive, May 11, 2016; 2016-2017 School Committee Calendar, Report; High School and Gibbons Schools Improvement Plans; Technology Update; Superintendent Goals and Strategic Plan; Field Trip Request;