

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, April 27, 2017

Minutes of School Committee Meeting, April 27, 2017, Simmons Lecture Hall convened at 6:30p.m. Present: Jackie Weisman, Caroline O'Neill, Nancy De Luca, Jane Martin, Michelle Durrance, Dr. Keough and Dr. Cabral.

Reorganization of the School Committee:

Dr. Keough opened the meeting at 6:30pm, in the absence of Chair Laurie Han who stepped down this week. He said she will be missed.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee voted Jacqueline Weisman to be Chair of the School Committee.

Dr. Keough congratulated Ms. Weisman.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee voted Nancy De Luca as Vice Chair of the School Committee.

Chair Weisman thanked everyone and welcomed back Ms. Martin and Ms. O'Neill and welcomed Michelle Durrance, the newest elected member of the School Committee. Chair Weisman said she was looking forward to working with Ms. Durrance.

Minutes: Regular 4/6/2017; Executive Session 3/17/2017, 3/24/2017, 4/6/2017:

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the regular minutes of 4-6-2017.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Executive Session minutes of 3-17-2017 but not to be released.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Executive Session minutes of 3-24-2017 but not to be released.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Executive Session minutes of 4-6-2017 but not to be released.

Schedule of Payments:

Circulated for signatures.

YMCA Center School Swim Wise Program Presentation:

Dr. Keough said that guests are here to present a very exciting program that has begun at Center School, the first of its kind in Southeastern Massachusetts. He continued that Dr. Cabral is actively involved and has been working with Ann Weintrob, Principal of Center School.

Dr. Cabral said that Easton has a wonderful partnership with the Old Colony YMCA of Easton and as a result, have been constantly communicating about ways that they can augment the opportunities that the district is providing to the children in Easton Public Schools. Dr. Cabral reiterated that this is the first program in Southeastern Massachusetts to be involved in this type of program. Dr. Cabral introduced Serah Selmon, Executive Director of the YMCA, Tina Kusick, Aquatics Director of the YMCA, Christen Foote, Grade two teacher at Center School and Ann Weintrob, Principal of Center School. Dr. Cabral commended Ann Weintrob for beginning this program.

Serah Selmon thanked Easton Public Schools for “diving” into this opportunity with the YMCA. Ms. Selmon said that if the Y is doing their job correctly then they are able to say that they are changing communities for the better in ways that are so very necessary. She continued that they are providing swim lessons or opportunities for children to become healthier, stronger and to “drown proof” a community, they don’t want to leave any children behind. She continued that partnering with a public school and being able to ensure that every second grader in the district goes through our pool training every year, is something that they would love to do.

Following the powerpoint presentation, a discussion took place and the Committee members expressed strong support for the initiative.

Approval of Foreign Travel Proposal by Helen van Riel to Dominican Republic February 2018:

Helen Van Riel said that they had just returned from their last trip to The Galapagos Islands and wanted to thank the Committee for approving the trip. Ms. Van Riel said the students had an amazing time and that they were so grateful.

Colleen Less, a parent in Easton, said her daughter attended as a sophomore, and it is remarkable that she had the opportunity. She continued that her daughter made close friendships and it was such a great experience, a dream come true for her daughter.

Ms. Van Riel said she is here proposing a trip to the Dominican Republic to study marine conservation, February 16 through February 23, 2018, where the students will be able to learn about coral reconstruction and work with a local nonprofit in the Dominican. She said the trip is open to students in grades 9 through 11, the cost of the trip is \$3,505.00 and the students are responsible for paying for the trip. She said the trip is through Education First, the same travel company they have used several times in the past.

Ms. O’Neill said that it is an incredible trip.

Ms. Martin said that these trips are exciting and that they present an opportunity for interdisciplinary education.

Dr. Cabral commended Ms. Van Riel's very thorough proposal and that it is important for the parents in the community to know that there is a formal proposal process that is fully vetted and completed by everyone making a proposal for a trip.

On a side note, Dr. Keough congratulated Ms. Van Riel who ran the Boston Marathon.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Foreign Travel Proposal to the Dominican Republic in February 2018.

Approval of Out of State Trip:

a. OA Orchestra Trip Proposal by Michael Korn to New York on April 2018:

Dr. Keough said that this is a Saturday, Sunday, Monday trip to New York. He continued that Mr. Korn could not be in attendance for this presentation, however, the summary with logistics had been included in the packets. Dr. Keough said he recommends the approval of this trip.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Durrance, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the OA Orchestra Trip proposal by Michael Korn to New York for April 2018.

Dr. Cabral said "thank you" to Mr. Korn as this is an incredible opportunity.

School Council Presentation Schedule:

Dr. Keough said the proposed schedule for the School Council Presentations is in the packets. He continued that each year, each School Council develops a School Improvement Plan that is linked to the District Strategic Plan. Dr. Keough said the three PK-2 Schools collaborated even though they write their own School Improvement Plan.

The Committee agreed to the following schedule: Center, Moreau Hall, Parkview and Richardson Olmsted Schools will present at the May 25th School Committee Meeting and Easton Middle and Oliver Ames High School will present at the June 8th School Committee Meeting.

Schedule "School Choice" Public Hearing:

Dr. Keough said every year the School Committee votes to either participate or not participate in the School Choice Program. He said that the decision will not be made tonight; the decision will be made after a Public Hearing which should be posted for the next School Committee Meeting.

Senior Letter:

Chair Weisman read what has become an annual senior letter aloud. It outlines expectations for senior students during the end of the year events and activities.

Dr. Keough said it is important to make sure the folks at home understand that Easton is 100% serious about this and that there is much at stake.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the School Committee approved and Chair Weisman signed the senior letter.

Ms. Martin said every year the school and community sponsors "safe grad night" for our seniors and the process for safe grad night in terms of raising donations for kids and getting parent volunteers for that event, is well underway. She continued that if anyone wants to help support that event, it is a great event and a lot of fun.

Public Comment:

None

Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Keough announced that National Teacher Day is May 2nd and he read the proclamation. He also mentioned that green shirts were seen all around town for "Day of KindNess" in honor of Devin Ness, a former OA student. Dr. Keough said the seniors go out and does community service work around town and that he worked with students at "The Wild Place" spreading mulch. He said the kids were amazing and that they worked very hard. He continued that the Ness family had lunch at OA and it was a bonding experience with the senior class coming together. He thanked Cindy Hall, Wes Paul, Joanne Coffman and the many, many teachers who helped. He thanked the Ness family for allowing the district to celebrate their son through this event.

Dr. Keough said they celebrated Administrative Assistant's Day at the Central Office this week and he publicly thanked the assistants throughout the district. He reminded the public that they could never do what they do without the assistants.

Dr. Keough said the Iron Tigers are competing in St. Louis for the National event and wished them luck. He congratulated all of our School Committee members who were re-elected and newly elected and wished them the very best.

Assistant Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Cabral said she wanted to keep the School Committee updated on the Professional Development in the District on Differentiated Instruction. She continued that the district had a full day with Math and Science teachers and a full day with ELA and Social Studies teachers, and it was great. Dr. Cabral said the teachers will be working on the upcoming early release day on May 12th continuing on Differentiated Instruction. She continued that the School on Wheels drive starts on Monday May 1st and lasts two weeks. She said

people can donate new school supplies and the donation boxes are located at each of the schools.

Colleen Less mentioned that the School on Wheels "Outrunning Homelessness Road Race" will be on Saturday at Borderland State Park, registration is on site, it is a wonderful community event.

Dr. Cabral said it is important to remember what School on Wheels does and they do service our homeless population for students in need by providing school supplies and tutoring. She continued that she wanted to express appreciation for Administrative Assistants this week and appreciation to all of the educators next week during Teacher Appreciation Week. Dr. Cabral said that she and Dr. Keough will cover lunch duties all week along with Theresa Skinner and Marilyn Gordon to give the teachers a small break. Dr. Keough said our teachers work hard and it is a hard time to be a teacher.

School Committee Notes:

Ms. O'Neill said she is so pleased to be able to continue to work with wonderful, valuable colleagues like Jane Martin, Jackie Weisman and Nancy De Luca and she very excited to be able to begin working with a brand new colleague, Michelle Durrance.

Ms. De Luca said she wanted to reiterate the "Day of KindNess", she said she worked with Frank Merinno from the Historical Society at the train station and they had nine kids who never complained, did what they asked them to do, and they were all wonderful. She continued that she attended the Senior Projects at the high school and the seniors worked all year becoming entrepreneurs and their presentations were unbelievable. Ms. De Luca also mentioned that DECA is at the National Competition in San Francisco. Ms. De Luca mentioned that Mary Louise Heath passed away, and that Mary was a teacher in Easton for 35 years and Robert Kane who was a substitute teacher in Easton passed away as well.

Ms. Martin said she wanted to mention that a series of concerts are now underway, and that it is Jazz Night at the High School this evening, May 1st is the Vocal Ensemble night, May 3rd is String Orchestra night, May 11 is the Pops Concert and May 18 is the Tempo Awards night. She said it is important to highlight the work that the music department does as they are an important part of our district. She continued that as we talk about the social and emotional needs of our students at all grade levels, she wanted to commend Wes Paul for sending out a letter to parents addressing the issues around the series, "13 Reasons Why". Ms. Martin said the letter was thoughtful and thorough and provided guidance for parents about issues relating to teen suicide. She said she appreciates that the principals at the 6 through 12 grade levels addressed the issue.

Chair Weisman said that they may have to reschedule the May 12th workshop for a later time in the day; she continued that she will email everyone for feedback.

Ms. Martin said that she doesn't want to lose sight of appointing the School Building Committee as we found the letter that documented the fact that there was a School Building Committee in the past.

Dr. Keough said a meeting is scheduled for Monday with Dr. Cabral, Connor Read, David Fields and David Twombly to clarify which representatives need to be on the Committee and should have news for the School Committee at the next meeting.

Ms. Martin gave a shout out to Ken Flanagan, custodian at Richardson Olmsted, for tracking down the information from a 1998 meeting. She asked if all the warrant articles would be all set and Dr. Keough confirmed they would be all set.

Ms. Martin said that everyone attended the Operational Audit Presentation the prior evening with the Board of Selectmen, and she wanted to acknowledge that there was a lot of data presented and it was apparent to her that the company that performed the audit did have an understanding of the complexity of issues that school districts face when making decisions of cost and benefits to certain things. She continued that it validated what the School Department looks at every single year such as fees, and they highlighted things that we do routinely was validating for us. Ms. Martin said that we need to continue to look at the recommendations and have a better understanding of some of the numbers in the report.

Dr. Keough added that there are some things that the district will benefit from such as revisiting contracts, as they identified some things that the district may not have seen.

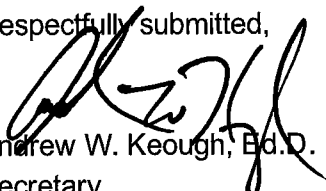
Ms. Martin said they need to think of a way to respond to some of the information presented in the Audit Report as the community is owed a response.

Chair Weisman said that the report was recently received and the School Committee needs time to go through the report, look at the data and schedule a meeting to discuss it. Chair Weisman gave a shout out to the Administrators who spent many, many hours collecting the data for the auditors and she thanked the Administrators and Connor Read. Chair Weisman wanted to remind everyone that Saturday morning is the PMC Kids Ride at Parkview School. She continued that this event raises money for the Jimmy Fund at Dana Farber and last year they raised a lot of money and it is a fun event.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 roll call vote, the School Committee meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Andrew W. Keough, Ed.D.
Secretary