

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, March 2, 2017

Minutes of School Committee Meeting, March 2, 2017, Simmons Lecture Hall, convened at 6:30 p.m. Present: Laurie Han, Jackie Weisman, Caroline O'Neill, Nancy De Luca, Jane Martin, Dr. Keough and Dr. Cabral.

Minutes: Regular 2/2/2017; Workshop 1/20/2017, 2/10/2017; Executive 2/10/2017; Executive Session Minutes for Release 9/8/2017:

On a motion by Ms. Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Regular Minutes of the 2/2/2017 meeting were approved.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Workshop Minutes of the 1/20/2017 meeting were approved with amendments.

On a motion by Ms. Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Workshop Minutes of the 2/10/2017 meeting were approved.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Executive Session Workshop Minutes of 2/10/2017 were approved but not to be released.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a 4-0 vote, Ms. Martin abstained from voting, the Executive Session Minutes of 9/8/2017 were approved for release.

Schedule of Payments:

Circulated for signatures.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move Public Comment to the next order of business on the agenda.

Public Comment:

Mr. Ed Lemish asked the School Committee to make good on a promise that was made back in 2003 to start a "Wall of Fame". Mr. Lemish said this "Wall of Fame" would recognize people who have attended the Easton Public Schools and have made great accomplishments, not limited to just athletes.

Chair Han said that they would start the conversations and put it on as an agenda item for discussion at a future workshop meeting.

MSBA Update:

Dr. Keough announced at a prior workshop that Easton had been invited into the eligibility phase with the MSBA for Center School. Dr. Keough said that Alanna Seiti has been assigned by MSBA as our Project Manager. He continued that a Statement of Interest (SOI) had been submitted for Parkview, Moreau Hall and Center Schools with Center being identified as the most in need especially in regards to space constraints. Dr. Keough said the eligibility period will commence on April 3rd counting down to a 270 day period which includes the Initial Compliance Certification that requires signatures from the Superintendent of Schools, Chair of the School Committee and the Chief Executive Officer of the Town. Dr. Keough said the Town would have to commit to spending approximately \$700,000 to \$800,000 for a feasibility study. Dr. Keough suggested having a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen in April to start the process.

Chair Han agreed.

FY 18 Preliminary Budget Update:

Dr. Keough presented a powerpoint presentation of the FY 2018 Preliminary Budget update.

A discussion followed the presentation.

Dr. Keough proposed that the FY 2018 Budget be put on the March 17th School Committee Workshop agenda for the School Committee's approval so that it will be ready to be presented to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at the joint meeting with the School Committee scheduled for March 22nd.

The Committee agreed.

Dr. Keough thanked Marilyn Gordon for her help with the Budget Presentation.

Presentation by the Task Force of the "Successful Superintendent Candidate Profile" followed by a discussion and vote by the School Committee of the next steps in selecting the new Superintendent, including possible appointment:

Chair Han said that as Dr. Keough will be leaving Easton at the end of the school year for the position of Superintendent of Dover-Sherborn, his hometown district, the School Committee voted and formed a Task Force from a group of volunteers. She continued that the Task Force was charged with researching past Superintendent searches, the

Easton Superintendent Search of 2014 information and to gather a candidate profile suitable for Easton. Chair Han said that some of the members from the Task Force were in the audience to present their findings.

Lauren Egizio, teacher at Richardson Olmsted School, and a member of the Task Force, thanked the Committee for letting them take part in the process. Ms. Egizio said that the Task Force had three sources of information; the NESDEC document that was generated in 2014, Easton's District Action Plan and Strategic Goals for 2016-2018 and how they match or aligned with what qualifications a successful candidate would need to have, and the Massachusetts Module Rubric for Superintendents from the Department of Education's website. She continued that they took time to compare, contrast, match and align what the similarities were and took into consideration the unique needs of Easton. Ms. Egizio said the Task Force then prepared the "Suggested Candidate Profile for Superintendent of Schools". Ms. Egizio continued that the Task Force highly recommends the following profile as a candidate who:

"Understands, believes in, and follows our District Core Values of Academic Excellence and Equity for All, cooperative and caring relationships, respecting and valuing diversity, and commitment to community, understands the importance of initiatives, including but not limited to STEAM and Special Education, and is willing to bring these programs and initiatives to fruition in our district, as well as to continue and improve those currently taking place, is able to develop a strong professional development plan which includes utilizing current staff expertise and seeks alternative funding from grants and other pertinent resources, and is an exemplary communicator who will effectively present to the community the needs of the school system, and is able to advocate for their support and inspire community stakeholders and citizens to take positive action for our district's fiscal needs."

Ms. Egizio said that the Task Force also reviewed recent Superintendent searches and twelve open searches. She continued that the information revealed that almost half of the finalists named were Assistant Superintendents in their current district and that current Superintendents and Principals made up the majority of the remaining finalists.

Chair Han said that Susan Hadge provided an article called "Musical Chairs" that was written in July 2016 about the turnover of Superintendents and that when you lose leadership at the top, the whole district suffers and the momentum of the district comes to a halt. She continued that the average length of a Superintendent is three years. Chair Han said that in Massachusetts, 240 Public Districts, within the last 2 years, a third of them replaced Superintendents and of the 76 new hires, two thirds of them were out of district and one third were in the district with outside searches.

Ms. O'Neill said that she had interviewed Wes Paul, Luke Carroll and Deborah Hammett and Ms. Weisman interviewed the elementary principals and the administration office. She

continued that basically they sat down and talked about the Task Force and what was put in place with the Task Force charge. Ms. O'Neill thanked Mr. Paul, Mr. Carroll and Ms. Hammett for taking the time out of their busy schedules, sharing their ideas and recommendations with her. She continued that two of the Principals expressed their beliefs that in an ideal world, the School Committee would be in position to engage in a traditional lengthy search process however, to initiate a full blown search in March would be a significant challenge and would very unlikely result in few if any, qualified candidates from other districts. She continued that both Principals expressed the opinion that Dr. Cabral was the most logical choice for Easton and appointing her made good sense. Ms. O'Neill quoted some of the statements the Principal said verbatim, *"The best candidate is already here, that's Lisha, Lisha is a great communicator, I can go to her with any questions or concerns about anything, disciplinary issues, legal issues, really anything. She's so knowledgeable about everything and is always able to offer great suggestions. She's not afraid of difficult conversations, she's has a non-confrontational style she can get her point across without being abrasive but she's not afraid to step up and say that's wrong when the situation calls for it. Lisha has a really good handle on where we are going around curriculum and instruction, she has initiated a number of research based objectives and she has done a lot to enhance our Special Education programs. It's important to maintain the momentum that is underway largely thanks to Lisha. I believe Lisha is crucial to our stability. The greatest risk is losing her if the process drags on too long. It is hard to fathom that you can find a better fit for Easton."*

Ms. O'Neill mentioned that she never brought Dr. Cabral's name into the conversation, they mentioned her first.

Ms. Weisman said that she had the opportunity to talk to Mr. Getchell, Mrs. Weintrob, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Twombly, Mrs. Gordon and Mrs. Skinner and she appreciated the time they spent talking to her. She said it was very interesting to her because she learned a lot talking to the administrators as they are the ones who work with the Superintendent on a day to day basis and they know what works, what doesn't and what they need in a Superintendent. She said they all stressed that they wanted to keep the momentum going particularly with curriculum development and thought it would be beneficial to have a Superintendent who knows how to be an educator and who can lead professional development, has budget experience and who can work well with the rest of the team, and while some did note that a comprehensive search could be useful, they all stated that they know we have a strong internal candidate in Dr. Cabral. Ms. Weisman said that as Ms. O'Neill had stated, she as well did not mention Dr. Cabral's name, the team brought her up in the conversation. Ms. Weisman said that the descriptions given by the Task Force about who would be an excellent Superintendent describes Dr. Cabral to a "tee".

Dr. Keough said Dr. Cabral is absolutely ready for the position as she has been by his side literally since the moment he came to Easton, even when interviewing here. He continued that Dr. Cabral is someone he has always trusted and has been involved in the MSBA process with him and involved with negotiations, with the budget and instrumental with the

goals setting for the district. Dr. Keough said that Dr. Cabral is the one who conducts the training Evaluation and Supervision and led the conversations with the Principals. He said this whole job is about communication and relationships and Dr. Cabral is a strong communicator and forms good relationships, she has those qualities.

Ms. Martin thanked the members of the Task Force and the documents they prepared were very helpful and helped her think about what was in the best interest of the district. She continued that one of the things that MSBA will look for in a district is stability as it is important to them. Ms. Martin said we need to make a decision that is in the best interest for the town of Easton and she said the obvious choice is to appoint Lisha Cabral as the Superintendent and to keep things moving forward and that is the best way to ensure that we do that.

Ms. O'Neill thanked the Task Force and especially liked the document that identified those performance descriptors that were considered particularly important for our community and it was like reading a description of Dr. Cabral's strengths and how invested she is in Easton. She said we are fortunate to have someone in house who meets all those criteria and it would be a real disservice to Easton to take the risk losing Dr. Cabral.

Ms. De Luca thanked the Task Force and that she talked to several teachers. She continued that she knows that curriculum is so important and that if Dr. Cabral moves to the Superintendent, she is worried about losing that momentum with curriculum. Ms. De Luca said that there is a lot of things that have to be fixed and she is concerned with the MCAS this year being on the computer. She said she is concerned with the dynamic of everything and getting along with administration and the staff.

Ms. O'Neill said that Superintendents, to some degree, can determine which areas they focus on and bring in an Assistant Superintendent to focus on the other areas as there are many Superintendents that focus on curriculum.

Dr. Keough said that the New Superintendent Induction Program is a three year program, that is a collaboration of the Massachusetts Association of Superintendents and Mass Ed and it provides support and structure for Superintendents entering as Superintendents for the first time.

Ms. Weisman said having Dr. Cabral involved in every aspect of running the district along with Dr. Keough, she can hit the ground running and not lose momentum which is crucial to the District.

Chris Getchell, Principal of Parkview School, said that Dr. Keough said earlier that we are in the relationship and communication business and any good leader that is highly skilled at those two things, building relationships and communicating, the cornerstone to those relationships is trust and trust is not built overnight. He continued that trust is built over five

to ten years, especially with teachers who put their heart and soul into the job and that trust that they have with the leadership is important. Mr. Getchell said Dr. Cabral has been with the District for four years and she has poured her heart and soul into the District, she is fully committed and in it for the long haul, and that is what Easton needs, consistency of leadership, and for those reasons and many more he supports her as Superintendent.

On a motion by Chair Han, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, pending successful negotiations, the Committee appointed Dr. Cabral as the next Superintendent of Easton Public Schools.

Ms. Martin suggested having an Executive Session at the next workshop to discuss Dr. Cabral's contract as Superintendent.

Dr. Cabral thanked the School Committee, and said they clearly did a lot of work, and thanked the Task Force on extremely impressive band of work that they did and from what she saw and heard from others it was focused, clear engagement, and purpose. She said it is a reminder of what she sees all the time in the schools, at the games and at community engagements. Dr. Cabral said she loves the community and would love to stay at Easton for as long as Easton will have her. She said that she has worked closely with four Superintendents for the past six years and she is fortunate to know what is required of the Superintendent and what is required as the Assistant Superintendent. She said she is extremely thankful, humbled, and enthusiastic about this.

Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Keough said he attended a beautiful show this week at OA called, "Seussical". He said they are performing this weekend and the show is awesome and that Charlene Dalrymple is a gift to this community, the leadership she provides to the kids in music and drama is off the charts. He continued that as today was Dr. Seuss' birthday, he read at Moreau Hall in Ms. Jolly's class and Ms. Bader's class at Center School. He gave a shout out to all the winter athletes, several teams are still in tournaments, it was a great season, and the kids really set a great example. Dr. Keough said the OA Art students have an Art Show at Gillette next weekend, check the website for more details. He congratulated and wished the Robotics students the very best as they will be competing next weekend at Bridgewater Raynham High School. He said he is so impressed with the kids and the program which is now at the high school. Dr. Keough said they will be at Bryant College the weekend after next.

Assistant Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Cabral said that they set the date for the next STEAM Family Event, May 19th and starting Monday they will be reaching out to people who would like to have activity tables.

She asked that if anyone is interested in hosting a table, contact her Assistant, Julie Shine at Central Office. She continued that it requires minimal resources for hands on activities.

School Committee Notes:

Ms. Martin congratulated the OA jazz band who just participated in the MAJE and brought back a goal medal.

Ms. O'Neill said that two weeks ago she visited the English Language Learners class for adults that LouAnn Falls and Janice Narsasian instruct and that it was such a lively, engaged group. She said there were people from China, Syria, Bangladesh and some students who were so enthusiastic about this opportunity. Ms. O'Neill said that was very uplifting and would encourage everyone to go. Ms. O'Neill said that Mitchell Chester, the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education wrote a letter to all the Superintendents about protecting the rights of transgender students. She said a lot of Superintendents are sending letters home to students' families across the Commonwealth.

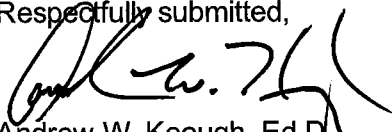
Ms. Martin said we are fortunate that we live in a District where the Administration take those values to heart and not because they are required to but, because they take those to heart and it makes a difference in terms of the message that gets sent.

Ms. O'Neill said she read three new studies on the difference between students who receive vouchers and students in local underperforming public schools. She continued that the students who received vouchers and went to private schools with the vouchers, within a year their scores plummeted. She said one study was with the Walton Foundation and the kids did not perform nearly as well as in the local public school.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew W. Keough, Ed.D.

Secretary