

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, April 10, 2018

**Minutes of School Committee Meeting, April 10, 2018**, 100 Lothrop Street, Simmons Lecture Hall, convened at 6:32 p.m. Present: Jacqueline Weisman, Nancy De Luca, Jane Martin, Michelle Durrance, and Caroline O'Neill.

Others present: Superintendent Dr. Cabral, Theresa Skinner, Marilyn Gordon, Wes Paul, and Bill Matthews.

**Schedule of Payments:**

Payments circulated for signatures.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move agenda item "FY19 Budget Discussion" to the next order of business.

Due to technical difficulties projecting the FY19 materials, on a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee agreed to move agenda item "Vote to Approve School Council Presentation Schedule" to the next order of business.

**Vote to Approve School Council Presentation Schedule:**

Chair Weisman reviewed the schedule of the School Council Presentations. Chair Weisman suggested changing the start time for the May 24th meeting to 6:00 p.m.

On a motion by Ms. Durrance, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the School Council Presentation Schedule with noted change.

**FY 19 Budget Discussion:**

Dr. Cabral presented a powerpoint presentation on the FY19 Budget. Dr. Cabral stated that the FY19 budget continues to evolve as she receives feedback. She stated that difficult decisions have been made around existing cost efficiencies as a result of a limited budget. Dr. Cabral reminded everyone that the budget targets a Reactive/Essential Budget which is level service for the students in Easton next year. She spoke of the challenges associated with Social/Emotional learning. She noted that it costs between \$20,000 to \$200,000 to send students out of district and that the cost does not include the transportation. Dr. Cabral reviewed:

- Existing cost efficiencies
- Reactive/Essential budget target for FY19
- Mental Health conditions of children
- Jessica Minahan, a presenter who came to Easton

- Reactive/Essential needs of the district
- MassCore recommended minimum requirements of students graduating from high school
- Massachusetts Department of Education recommendations on Physical Education
- The Coordinated Program Review findings
- Medication Dispensation Registration from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Recommended school nurse to student ratio by the MA Office of Health & Human Services
- English Language Learners services
- Reactive/Essential and Proactive Budget needs
- Funding Losses and State Aid
- FY19 Budget and FY18 Budget
- Continuing the work

Following the presentation a discussion took place. A conversation took place over the need for special education teachers for programs to be implemented in the middle and preschool to second grade level schools. Dr. Cabral spoke of the increase in student hospitalizations for mental health issues and discussed the costs associated. She spoke of the importance of adding health instruction to the physical education component. A discussion took place over the workload of the school nurses and how Easton is understaffed. Chair Weisman mentioned the security audit and asked if the school resource officer had been recommended in the security audit. Dr. Cabral responded that it was not recommended; however, the intention of a school resource officer is not for security services. Dr. Cabral discussed the 2015 comprehensive security audit that was performed in the district.

Chair Weisman asked if anyone in the audience had questions for Dr. Cabral pertaining to the FY19 Budget Presentation.

Kathy Stanley stated that the School Committee and Dr. Cabral seem to be on top of everything that is happening pertaining to the social emotional needs of students and asked if they felt it was making a difference. Dr. Cabral responded that the Special Education programs that have been put in place are making significant gains. She continued that the district is in need of more support staff to work with the general education teachers as the children move in and out of the programs.

**Discussion of and Possible Vote on Fees (ie: Athletics, Clubs/Activities, Buses, Parking):**

Dr. Cabral stated the last time athletic fees were raised in Easton was in 2012. Marilyn Gordon provided a list of the cost of each sport per player. Chair Weisman noted that with the exception of gymnastics and hockey, the cost of the athletic fees per student is

\$150.00. She noted that the gymnastics and hockey fees were \$250.00. The Committee discussed and noted that the list of comparables from other districts show Easton on the lower end of fees. Ms. Martin suggested raising fees from \$150.00 to \$175.00. She noted that in 2012 gymnastics and hockey fees had been raised. Ms. Martin suggested raising the football and basketball fees to that of the hockey and gymnastics costs. Bill Matthews confirmed that football, basketball, gymnastics, and hockey are the highest cost sports. Mr. Matthews said if the fees were raised for basketball and football to \$250.00 and other fees raised to \$175.00 that would generate approximately \$40,000. Mr. Matthews stated that 40% of the Athletic budget is the coaches. He continued that the boosters provide half of the funding for the uniforms and the Athletic Trainer is outsourced. Ms. O'Neill commended the incredible athletic program. She stated that most of the budget does go to personnel. Ms. De Luca had concerns about students who are not on the Free and Reduced Program and not having the ability to pay the increase in the fees. Mr. Matthews said that he has an anonymous donor willing to fund the fee for any student who cannot afford the fee and is not eligible for the Free and Reduced Program. Mr. Matthews said the DJ Dream Fund has funded several athletes as well.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved raising the athletic fees with the exception of girls and boys basketball and football from \$150.00 to \$175.00 with a family cap of \$700.00.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. Durrance, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved raising the girls and boys basketball and the football fees with alignment to the gymnastics and ice hockey fee from \$150.00 to \$250.00 with a family cap of \$700.00.

Ms. Martin suggested leaving the music fee at \$150.00, the Committee agreed. Dr. Cabral said they have talked at great length about the parking fees and bussing fees. She continued that they are collecting information and recommended tabling the discussion until further information is presented.

**Discussion of and Possible Vote on Robotics Fees:**

Dr. Cabral said the Boosters are currently a 501 3(c) organization and they collect \$150.00 from the students and encourage a \$100.00 fund raising. She continued at the recommendation from the district's attorney, the district should be collecting the \$150.00 fee from the Robotics. She said the funds would go to the Robotics Club. Ms. Martin acknowledged that the Robotics Team has become a team that garners awards for the district; however, in terms of the budget deficit in the district, the district does not have the capacity to absorb a new program in the budget. A parent of one of the members of the Robotics discussed the Robotics' need for a coach. Ms. Martin noted that the fees that are collected do not fund the coaches. Dr. Cabral stated that adding a coach is bargainable and would need to be accepted by the union. A discussion took place

around coaches and advisories. Chair Weisman stated that the Committee will not be voting on this topic at this meeting; however, the Committee will continue to have more conversations around this topic at a future meeting. Chair Weisman said that the Robotics fee will remain as is at \$150.00. Ms. Martin thanked everyone for their patience and understanding. Ms. Durrance gave a shout out to the Robotics team who recently completed and won the Rhode Island District Championship and Safety Award. She continued that they will be moving on to the New England Championship.

#### **Discussion of and Possible Vote on Outsourcing of Special Education Transportation:**

Dr. Cabral stated that she had a meeting with the bargaining unit in an Executive Session and the bargaining unit asked that information be brought to the School Committee. She continued that information in return was brought to the bargaining unit from the Committee and she said they are negotiating impact. Dr. Cabral said this vote is for the outsourcing without the negotiation of impact. Chair Weisman said that she appreciated Mr. Lucini attending the previous meeting with information about his transportation. She reiterated that this discussion is not for any dissatisfaction with the current system as the system works well but that it is budget related. Chair Weisman relayed information that Mr. Lucini provided at a previous meeting. Ms. Martin suggested the community view the recorded meeting of the School Committee from March 23rd on ECAT as that is the meeting that Mr. Lucini attended. Ms. O'Neill said that as a School Committee member she must keep an open mind especially when difficult decisions come before her that will impact the students and staff. She continued that Mr. Lucini provided significant reassurances and she was impressed. Ms. O'Neill said one of the things the district is trying to do is to create savings to fund the programs to support the special education children. She said that it is important to allow the administration to move forward with negotiation and that great care will be taken in the best interest of our employees; therefore, she feels the Committee should follow the recommendation of the administration to outsource the special education transportation. Ms. De Luca recommended that if the outsourcing is approved it should be reevaluated next year to review whether it was successful and if it created a savings. Dr. Cabral responded that they will evaluate regularly and provide information to the Committee. Chair Weisman asked for public comment. A parent took the opportunity to advocate for the drivers. The parent commended the drivers and stated they go above and beyond. Chair Weisman thanked everyone for sharing their wonderful stories. She said the Committee members have listened and have heard their concerns. Chair Weisman stated that the Committee would not consider outsourcing if they felt it would be detrimental to the students in the district.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 3-2 vote, Ms. De Luca and Ms. Durrance opposed, the Committee approved to vote to outsource the special education transportation drivers with negotiation to impact.

**Discussion of School Bus Camera Use:**

Dr. Cabral said that there have been requests from parents to have cameras on the buses. She said parents are looking to see if students are being successful on the bus. Dr. Cabral said that she is asking permission that as needed, or on an as needed basis, cameras be allowed on buses. She continued that it is a video recording that records a short period of time. The Committee asked Dr. Cabral to obtain more information from the vendor.

**Vote to Accept the Program of Studies:**

Dr. Cabral reminded the Committee that Mr. Paul presented his Program of Studies to the Committee at a previous meeting. She continued that as part of the Coordinated Program Review the district is in need of adding a Physical Education/Health teacher to the high school. She said the district needs to provide minutes to the state indicating that the Program of Studies was approved.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Chair Weisman, with a 4-0 vote, Ms. O'Neill abstained, the Committee accepted and approved the Oliver Ames Program of Studies for the 2018-19 school year as presented at a previous meeting.

**Schedule "School Choice" Public Hearing:**

Dr. Cabral stated that every year the district is required to consider School Choice. She continued that in the past, Easton has not participated due to space constraints. She continued that a Public Hearing will be set for April 26th allowing the public to comment. Chair Weisman noted that the School Committee will vote on School Choice at the May 11th meeting.

**Review Physical Restraint of Students Policy JKAA (first reading):**

Dr. Cabral said that the handbook and School Committee policies will be reviewed by the district's legal counsel over the summer. She continued that due to new legislation some policies require immediate review such as the restraint policy. Dr. Cabral stated that the Restraint Policy brought forth has been reviewed and updated by legal counsel. Chair Weisman stated that this is the first reading and will be voted on at the second reading.

**Personnel Change:**

**Resignation: Art Teacher at Center School**

**Retirement: Special Education Teacher at Easton Middle School**

Dr. Cabral stated that the Art teacher at Center School has submitted her letter to resign for another opportunity and a Special Education teacher at the middle school submitted her letter with intent to retire at the end of the school year. Ms. De Luca read Sheila Fitzgerald's retirement letter. Ms. De Luca stated that she worked with Ms. Fitzgerald for 18 years and that she is a great teacher, very professional, caring and the district is

losing a great special education teacher. Ms. O'Neill said she has such admiration and respect for Ms. Fitzgerald and it is a loss to the district.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Chair Weisman, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee accepted Ms. Fitzgerald's retirement with regret.

**FY18 Budget Update:**

Dr. Cabral stated that there are no new updates from the last meeting on the FY18 Budget.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Superintendent's Notes:**

Dr. Cabral stated she did an entry report when she first came to the district and the administration is working on entry findings. She continued that the Committee was to have the entry findings listed in Dr. Cabral's goals in March. However, due to the many Cabinet meeting cancellations because of weather this winter, the findings will be presented before the conclusion of the school year. She said that recommended solutions will be presented to the Committee in the fall. Dr. Cabral stated that the administration has been working on the Strategic Plan which expires in 2018 and will share that with the Committee.

**Assistant Superintendent Notes:**

None.

**School Committee Notes:**

Ms. O'Neill said that she was excited to see all the students who made the scholastics list in the Boston Globe. She read the list of all the Easton students who made the scholastic list in each sport. Ms. Martin stated that as part of the Parkview Principal Search Committee, she will be attending site visits with members of the Search Committee. Dr. Cabral said the district will invite the candidates that are finalists to visit Parkview as well as the committee members will visit the candidates' districts. She thanked the candidates and their host schools for welcoming the search committee. Ms. Martin thanked the Parkview staff and teachers for their flexibility with their schedules for the staff to participate in the site visits. Ms. Martin said that she attended the site visit for the Owner's Project Manager for the MSBA Center School project. She continued that approximately twenty to twenty two OPMs were interested. Ms. Martin stated that upon approval from the subcommittee, the district will meet with the MSBA Board in June. She said that the Procurement Subcommittee has been phenomenal. Dr. Cabral noted that Senator Walter Timilty and Representative Claire Cronin visited the district. She said that staff members met with the Senator and Representative to advocate for the social and emotional needs of the students. She said that Senator Timilty, Representative Cronin, and Senator Brady have vocally advocated for the raise of the

circuit breaker funds. She thanked them for their support of the Easton Public Schools. Ms. Martin thanked Dr. Cabral and Ms. Skinner for putting together the panel for Senator Timilty's visit.

**Executive Session RE: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A §21(a) 3 To Discuss Strategy with Respect to Collective Bargaining for Unit A (Teacher's Union) and Custodian Unit:**

Chair Weisman motioned to enter into Executive Session not to return to Open Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to the collective bargaining, Unit A Teachers and Custodian Unit, and in her opinion having this discussion in Open Session would be detrimental to the bargaining position of the School Committee, seconded by Ms. Durrance, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the School Committee adjourned Open Session at 8:43 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by,  
Lynn Souza

Respectfully submitted,



Lisha Cabral, Ed.D.

Secretary