

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, September 7, 2017

Minutes of School Committee Meeting, September 7, 2017, Simmons Lecture Hall, Oliver Ames High School, convened at 6:30 p.m. Present: Jacqueline Weisman, Nancy De Luca, Jane Martin, Caroline O'Neill, Michelle Durrance, Dr. Cabral and Christine Pruitt.

Minutes: Workshop 8/4/2017; Executive Session 8/4/2017:

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. De Luca with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Workshop minutes of 8/4/2017 with edits that Chair Weisman will supply.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Durrance with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Executive Session Minutes of 8/4/2017 but not to be released.

Schedule of Payments:

Circulated for signatures.

Out of State Trips - OA and Parkview:

Dr. Cabral said this out of state trip proposal is for the Boys and Girls Cross Country teams and Kyle Sousa, the Cross Country Coach is here to present.

Mr. Sousa said they are requesting approval to travel out of state to attend two Cross Country meets on Saturday, September 23rd and on October 13th. He continued that the teams have attended the meets for the past four years. Mr. Sousa said these meets allow all the kids to participate; they are standard Cross Country meets over the state line.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the OA Boys and Girls Cross Country trip to Warwick Rhode Island on September 23, 2017 to compete in the Cross Country Meet.

Dr. Cabral mentioned that the date for this trip has been changed to October 4th, it is the North Smithfield Rhode Island trip to Jaswell Farm for the first graders at Parkview which is a traditional trip where students learn about apples.

On a motion by Ms. Durrance, seconded Ms. Martin, with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved Parkview's grade 1 field trip to Rhode Island on October 4, 2017.

Preliminary Enrollment Update:

Dr. Cabral said that there have not been any remarkable changes in terms of enrollment, we are down approximately forty three students. She said this figure is as of September of each year. She continued that last year we were up by thirty one students and over the course of three years we have remained flat. Dr. Cabral reminded the Committee that when they have been doing the projections for MSBA, they go out twenty years and they project the enrollment to go up slightly, nothing remarkable.

Ms. Martin asked if the numbers typically change a lot from September to January.

Dr. Cabral said the numbers do change and that we get enrollment figures the first of every month and we report to the state for October 1st.

Ms. De Luca noted that this year's biggest class is graduating.

Dr. Cabral said that she provided the updated Avalon numbers. She continued that we have forty students living in Avalon, eight of which have transferred to Avalon and thirty two who are new to Easton. Dr. Cabral said she is concerned with Center School, as it is the smallest school and falls within the Avalon district.

Opening of School Year Update:

Dr. Cabral said the opening was standard and went very smooth. She said we had a couple of power outages that were beyond our control. Dr. Cabral said we did not have power at at Central Office. Dr. Cabral said they checked the schools, the main campus was out. Dr. Cabral said she was in a meeting, was notified of the power outage and the Central Office administrators dispersed to the schools. She continued that everyone had what they needed, the schools were all set, they had all hands on deck. She said that everybody was a true professional, it didn't surprise her but nice to see. She said due to the power surge, a roof top unit at the middle school caused an odor, they evacuated the building everything was fine, everyone handled it like the true professionals they are and she was so proud. Dr. Cabral said she included in their packets the staff hires, updated the transfers that the Committee requested. She continued that there have been some shifts in the schools which are reflected in the transfers. She said Ms. Pruitt and herself visited all the schools and it was fun to see the shiny backpacks, the new shoes and the excitement for the first day.

Ms. Pruitt said it was wonderful to see not just the buildings but the schools in full effect.

Notice of Professional Staff Reception:

Dr. Cabral reminded the public that any educator employed after three years of service in Easton Public Schools, the Principal can recommend them for Professional Teaching Status the first day of their fourth year with Easton. She said that the teachers bring their

families and children, and it is a wonderful event. She referred to the invite and booklet in their packets.

Chair Weisman said that it is a nice event.

Public Comment:

Mashs Khanbabai, a parent with children in the Easton Public Schools questioned the training that is being implemented and asked for a better understanding of the new Math program.

Chair Weisman said that the Math program, Bridges Math, has a great website that shows lessons.

Ms. Pruitt said this year grades K through five will be using the new Bridges Program in their classrooms. She continued that it was adopted to help design the math units. She said that Easton uses the Understanding by Design method for creating units to meet the children's needs and this year teachers will be using the program as intended so that the program can be eventually added into the units as a resource when needed. She said the teachers will be receiving professional development on the program the last week of September and the first week of October. Ms. Pruitt said the publishers want you to try the program first so that the teachers will come to the training with more questions.

Dr. Cabral said that they received an electronic version over the summer and the materials in August so most teachers have reviewed the materials and they are excited about it.

Ms. Pruitt said this year we will be looking at the actual program itself and when designing units using UbD, there are three different stages and stage three is providing the instruction. She continued that one of the reasons why this program was adopted is that we didn't have a common resource to draw from in implementing some of the instruction so by adopting Bridges that supplies a common resource. She continued that all teachers grades K through five will be able to draw from when teaching our frameworks. Ms. Pruitt said that any program that is adopted by any grade level or grade configuration is written for fifty states and many countries so we always make sure that we drive our instruction based the frameworks that Massachusetts puts out. She said that is what our educators in Massachusetts decided, that the best way to educate our students is to always set high rigorous standards for us so, we want to make sure we are meeting those standards regardless of a program.

Dr. Cabral said the district previously used Everyday Math and when the standards in Massachusetts came out they used more of what they called the "mastery model" as it focuses on the student's conceptual understanding over the course of the year. She continued that Everyday Math used what's called the "spiral" and it spiraled over several years. Dr. Cabral said we are focusing on end of grade standards each year and where students are in that trajectory so we can differentiate our teaching toward them. She continued that Everyday Math Program then created a new Everyday Math Program to meet the standards. She said in Easton we had a decision, we had to buy something as the core of our resource, Everyday Math was coming out with something and there were

also others, but it was so soon after the release of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks that we had a Math Committee together represented by PK to grade twelve teachers and administrators and they decided that they wanted to continue to use Everyday Math but create their own units, they soon found that it is more helpful to have a core resource that you can use, which is what they are doing for their ELA Units; they are using Pearson Reading Street. Dr. Cabral said the Math Committee spent the last year reviewing several math programs, they narrowed it down to the ones that best met the needs of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and our student's needs. She continued that the committee came up with a rubric based on the needs of the students. Dr. Cabral said it was a long process with dedicated teachers who came to this conclusion; the Committee chose Bridges unanimously and they are excited about this resource. She said that we are in the process of looking at grades six through twelve and the middle school teachers said that this program was the best for grades K through five but unfortunately, the program only goes up to grade five.

She said the team will reconvene and do the same for grades six through twelve. She said that Ms. Pruitt will meet with the team and they have already started calling districts that use the Bridges Program for grades K through five to see what they are using to find a program that aligns with that. She added that Bridges is a non profit organization.

Ms. Pruitt said she encourages parents to continue to ask questions and if anyone is confused about something coming home from a math perspective, ask your child's teacher and make sure your understanding because the way we teach math today is very different than they way we were taught.

Dr. Cabral said that each of the schools will have Math nights throughout the year and the district has a STEAM night that is typically held in May which includes Mathematics and they will have some activities from Bridges this year. She pointed out that on the rubric a very important piece is parent communication as a lot of the concepts that we are teaching are different from the way we were taught. She added that it is not an accident that our new Assistant Superintendent was a Math Coach so it was a purposeful part of her joining the team and she will be very involved.

Ms. Khanbabai asked if anything can be done as a School Committee to encourage celebrating people from different backgrounds; something like a "school like" community.

Ms. Martin said that at the end of the last School Committee meeting they discussed the turmoil and took a position of where we philosophically stand as a School Committee. She continued that Dr. Cabral's opening of the start of school letter that she sent to the community she embraced the concepts that you just talked about. She continued that we like to think of ourselves as district where there are organizations available to our students such as gay straight alliance, multicultural club at the high school and the middle school has some clubs as well. She said she would not be opposed to the idea and the work of the Human Rights Committee connected in with the School Committee as well; however, we need to make sure that every single day with every single action that our community takes speaks to those values that we say are important.

Ms. O'Neill said that two events will be coming up, the Human Rights Committee will have a project at the NRT Fair on October 1st. She continued that it is a large project designed to demonstrate in a colorful way what we have in common and how we come together. Ms. O'Neill said that Jason Daniels, the Director of ECAT, has put together with staff one hundred second movie film festival on October 7th at Oakes Ames Memorial Hall. She said it is called the International Film Festival and she encouraged people to attend.

Ms. Martin said the most important this is to keep talking about the issues encouraged by our leadership role with Dr. Cabral and Ms. Pruitt.

Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Cabral announced that without Ms. O'Neill's knowledge, she received a letter from MASC that states they have chosen Ms. O'Neill as the School Committee recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award which will be awarded on November 3rd at the MASS/MASC Joint Meeting Conference. Dr. Cabral said that this is well deserved and she understands that Ms. O'Neill feels uncomfortable because she is so humble and that she does what she does because she loves the kids. Dr. Cabral congratulated Ms. O'Neill and thanked her on behalf of the thousands of children she has advocated for over the years.

Ms. O'Neill said that she feels she has always gotten more out of being on the School Committee than she has given and that it has been a wonderful twenty four years.

Ms. De Luca said that Laurie Han, former School Committee member can take credit for the nomination.

Assistant Superintendent Notes:

Ms. Pruitt congratulated Ms. O'Neill and said it is well deserved. Ms. Pruitt said the past year the students in grades three through eight took the next generation MCAS in Math and ELA, the state is in the process of renorming all of the accountability and our results will be sent to us in mid October. She continued the official release date is targeted for October 24th and schools that have administered the next generation MCAS will not receive an accountability level or school percentile if they met the participation rate required which is over 90% and we are expecting to have met those requirements. She continued that therefore, RO and EMS will not be receiving accountability levels or receiving a school percentile. Ms. Pruitt said OA will still receive the traditional reporting information as they administered the standardized MCAS and parent reports for the high school are expected to arrive at the end of October. Ms. Pruitt said because it is a brand new assessment it is hard to compare apples to oranges.

Dr. Cabral added that it is a lot later than typical.

Ms. Pruitt said it is unclear how parents who had students in grades two through eight will be receiving the MCAS results or if they will be receiving how their children did on the assessment. Ms. Pruitt added that if Easton fell under a 90% participation rate our

level would become a level three school which means our district level would become level three. The district is based on whatever the lowest level is. She continued that we don't anticipate that our participation will not be met.

Dr. Cabral said we have always been over 95% in Easton.

Ms. Pruitt said as far as Professional Development, the Curriculum Leadership Team spent time with with Ronit Carter who is a consultant with McTighe and Associates Consulting, at the end of August to work on revisiting our Easton Public Schools units using the Understanding by Design method. She continued that Ronit initially worked with the district a few years ago so it was nice to have her back and share with her the progress that we made with our unit writing. Ms. Pruitt said during our time we reviewed the different stages that of the unit writing, had an opportunity to look within our units and think about how to continue our work. She continued that Ronit will be coming back to continue to work with our Curriculum Leaders throughout the year. Ms. Pruitt said that she is working on the Easton University flyer for professional development as well as the Easton Community and these offerings will be out in the next couple of weeks. She said it is in the plan for the winter that she will be continuing Math professional development for staff. Lastly, she noted that you can follow her on Twitter @asstsupeaston and Dr. Cabral @supeaston and you can find that on the Easton website.

School Committee Notes:

Ms. O'Neill asked about the new Raptor program at Oliver Ames High School. She continued that she learned about this through Facebook and perhaps this is something that the School Committee should have known about to discuss. She continued she understands from the letter that was posted that the purpose of the program is to vet anyone from entering the school to some degree and that licenses are scanned then checked with a data base. Ms. O'Neill said she did have questions about the storage issues with licenses, data breaches and security issues.

Dr. Cabral said in a world of technology and having information right away, if people have a question to please send it to her and give them a twenty four hour turnaround. She continued that a Frequently Asked Question form will be going out tomorrow. She continued that the easiest way to describe it is that when a parent went into a school, there is a book that they would sign their name in, this system is essentially that book, it is just a way for us to keep track. Dr. Cabral said the purpose of the book is to know who is in the schools and when they leave but having it electronically. She said the benefits are, if there were an evacuation in a building she would have access on her phone who has signed out and who is still in the building so she could tell first responders. She continued, she would not have access to the physical book. Dr. Cabral, in terms of sliding the license, we have information that is provided to us on registered sex offenders and the general public have access to that as well. She said the Raptor system has the sex offender data base where in the past we would have to go to another system to check on every individual for sex offenders. She continued that if the person is a sex offender, they just change their decision making process, we just make sure they are not

in the building unattended. The system allows us to scan the license and it prints out their picture for the lanyard. She said she hopes this system will act as a deterrent. We are only using Raptor to keep track of who is in the building, when they leave, print visitor passes, to screen for registered sex offenders and it was paid for through the money that was allocated from the Town. Dr. Cabral said it prints their name and picture, not their license number.

Ms. O'Neill asked about the people who do not have driver's licenses.

Dr. Cabral said because those cases are so rare, they will handle those cases as they happen.

Ms. Durrance asked how often the system is updated.

Dr. Cabral said that we are using this system because it is updated daily and we are using this to access the sex offenders registry.

Ms. Martin said that this purchase was made from capital money years ago and she asked for an update how the security money was allocated.

Dr. Cabral said that it is on the draft of the October agenda.

Ms. Martin said that parents should reach out to the administrators and ask them questions.

Dr. Cabral said we were getting phone calls all afternoon, which we don't mind, and there were questions about Alice Training in the district and she wanted to clarify that we are not having Alice Training. Dr. Cabral asked to presume good intent until confirmed otherwise, would be helpful.

Ms. O'Neill said that the announcement had very few details and she saw the Alice Training comment and she would like to go on record to say that the Alice Training is a widely discredited program and that child psychologists are appalled that it exists.

Ms. Martin said that we go to lengths keeping our buildings secure and it is one of the safest places for our children.

Chair Weisman said the security training that was offered in Easton last year wasn't about devices, it was about your own personal behavior and how you can help.

Dr. Cabral said, we talked about this so much, she presented it at the Budget Subcommittee and that we have been talking about it for about a year and a half that we may have forgotten to follow up and that they will do that tomorrow.

Ms. De Luca said thank you for the community calendar that they received in their packets and the speaker that was given out to all staff. She said she was at the opening day with Ms. O'Neill and it was wonderful seeing everyone. She said when you asked the current hires to five years to stand up, it was overwhelming, the tides are changing. She said Dr. Cabral and Ms. Pruitt did a good job and thanked them.

Ms. O'Neill said she loved the speeches by Dr. Cabral, Ms. Pruitt and Ms. De Luca.

Executive Session: RE: Contract Negotiations:

Chair Weisman made a motion to enter into Executive Session not to return to Open Session, for purpose of discussing strategy with respect to contract negotiations which, in her opinion having this discussion in public would be detrimental to the position of the

School Committee, Ms. Durrance seconded the motion, with a 5-0 roll call vote, the Committee entered Executive Session at 7:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisha Cabral".

Lisha Cabral, Ed.D.

Secretary