

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, December 7, 2017

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

Ms. De Luca was not in attendance.

Minutes: Regular 11/9/2017:

On a motion by Ms. Durrance, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the Regular minutes of 11/9/2017 with noted changes.

Schedule of Payments:

Circulated for signatures.

MCAS Presentation:

Crissy Pruitt, Assistant Superintendent, presented the MCAS Assessment and Accountability Results from the Spring 2017. Ms. Pruitt discussed the District Accountability Information, she gave an overview of the Next Generation MCAS 2.0, the Comparative Results, preparing the high school for the Next Generation MCAS and School Reports and Analysis. She noted that this year is the district's benchmark year. The Next Generation MCAS is an updated version of the 20 year old MCAS assessment. She continued to state that the new assessment focuses on students' critical thinking abilities, application of knowledge, and ability to make connections between reading and writing. She said that it gives a clearer signal of readiness for the next grade level or college and career and it is designed to be given on a computer. The Next Generation MCAS will eventually replace all older, "legacy", MCAS tests in grades 3 through 10. Grades 3 through 8 students will continue to take the Next Generation MCAS in ELA and Math in the Spring of 2018. Grades 5 and 8 Science/Technology and Engineering will be assessed on the computer in the Spring 2018 for the first time. However, the Grade 9 Physics, Grade 10 ELA and Grade 10 Math will remain the Legacy MCAS Assessments. Students currently in Grade 9 this fall will be the first class to take the Next Generation MCAS in ELA and Math in the Spring of 2019 and the Next Generation High School Science tests will be administered for the first time in the Spring of 2020. Ms. Pruitt said that grade 10 students in the Commonwealth will participate in a field test in ELA or Math

for Grade 10. She said that only 25% of the students are required to participate. The testing timeline will be April 23 through May 11.

Ms. Pruitt presented google slides comparing the MCAS results by grade and subject to state and local/neighborhood towns.

Wes Paul, Principal of Oliver Ames High School presented a powerpoint on the MCAS results for the high school.

A question and answer period took place following the presentation.

Mr. Paul thanked the School Committee, Dr. Cabral and Ms. Pruitt for their support.

Chris Getchell, Interim Principal of Richardson Olmsted School presented a powerpoint on the MCAS results for Richardson Olmsted School. Mr. Getchell said that he has been at Richardson Olmsted School for about a month as the Interim Principal and that it has been a pleasure to work with the staff and students.

A question and answer period took place following the presentation.

Luke Carroll, Principal of Easton Middle School presented a powerpoint on the MCAS results for the middle school.

A question and answer period took place following the presentation.

Vote on Foreign Exchange Students at Easton Middle School:

Dr. Cabral said that Dr. Lee Chen was in the audience. Easton has had a wonderful partnership with Dr. Chen and Bostonwise and two interesting programs have been offered to Easton. One program being implemented is an immersion program at the Richardson Olmsted School where the children will have an opportunity to explore the Chinese language. Secondly, the middle school will engage in a program where they will have 10 middle school students from China attend school and live with host families February 12th through the 16th.

Mr. Carroll said that he met with Dr. Chen and that this is a tremendous opportunity for the students at Easton Middle School.

Dr. Chen said that the program will begin with 10 students. He said that he is hopeful that in the next year they can add more students coming to Easton with the potential of more Easton students going to China overall.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Durrance, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the proposal to have 10 foreign exchange students from China attend Easton Middle School during February 12 - 16, 2018.

Possible Vote of Food Service Performance bond:

Dr. Cabral reminded the Committee that at the last meeting Marilyn Gordon, Director of Finance, made a recommendation to the Committee to remove the performance bond

from the food service contract as she felt that it was not necessary at this time. She said it requires a vote should the Committee want to remove it from the contract.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee agreed to remove the performance bond on the Whitsons contract.

Personnel Change: Retirement - EMS Guidance Secretary

Dr. Cabral said that Evelyn Dupont, middle school Guidance Secretary, has submitted her letter of intent to retire January 5th. She said that Ms. Dupont is currently our number one senior person in the district. She has been with the district for forty-seven years and it will be a great loss to the district when she retires.

Chair Weisman read the letter.

Ms. Martin said that Ms. Dupont should be commended for being with the district for so long through so many changes.

Ms. O'Neill noted how the job has evolved over the years and applauded Ms. Dupont for her forty-seven years.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. Martin, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee accepted Ms. Dupont's letter to retire with regret.

Approval and Vote on Donation to Moreau Hall:

Dr. Cabral said that parents from Moreau Hall School, who have chosen to remain anonymous, would like to donate \$5,000.00 to Moreau Hall. Dr. Cabral said that this is a very generous donation. The parents met with Tom Higgins, Principal of Moreau Hall and collaboratively decided to invest the money in the Library Makerspace and chromebooks for Moreau Hall.

Ms. Martin thanked the anonymous donors.

On a motion by Ms. Martin, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee accepted the \$5,000.00 donation to Moreau Hall School to be used for the Library Makerspace and chromebooks.

Vote on Adding Members to the Policy Subcommittee:

Chair Weisman said that she and Ms. Martin, who are currently on the Policy Subcommittee, attended a Policy Subcommittee meeting. She also stated that most of the School Committee members attended. She would like to add Ms. De Luca, Ms. Durrance and Ms. O'Neill to the Policy Subcommittee.

Dr. Cabral said she spoke with legal counsel about the policy manual and at some point the entire policy manual should be reviewed by legal counsel. She said because we are going into contract negotiations, legal counsel suggested reviewing the entire policy

manual over the summer. Dr. Cabral said that the policy manual was reviewed by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and she noted that some policies from the older manual, perhaps intentionally or not, were omitted from the revised policy manual. Those policies that have been omitted should be reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee. She also stated that any policies that the subcommittee feels are timely or have legal implications can be sent to legal counsel for review, such as the two listed on the agenda.

Chair Weisman said that a parent called her asking for the Religious Holidays policy. Chair Weisman noted that the policy was omitted and Mr. Hardy, from the MASC, said it was his understanding that it was to be omitted and combined with the School Ceremonies and Religious Observances policy; however, this is not the case as it is two separate policies. She noted that the Virtual High School Policy was also omitted. Chair Weisman noted that she would like to vote on adding these policies back into the Policy Manual.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee agreed to add Ms. De Luca, Ms. O'Neill and Ms. Durrance to the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. Durrance, with a 4-0, the Committee agreed to add Religious Holidays Policy File IMK and Virtual High School Policy File IMJ back into the School Committee Policy Manual.

Vote to Amend Policy Manual to Include Policies IMK (Religious Holidays) and IMJ (Virtual High School) - Inadvertently Omitted by Consultant from Massachusetts Association of School Committees:

Chair Weisman noted that this was discussed during the prior conversation.

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

Dr. Cabral said that she spoke with legal counsel and the updated language for Physical Restraint of Students Policy (JKAA), recommended from legal counsel, is in the packets. The Committee reviewed the policy.

Ms. Martin suggested adding the appropriate revised and adoption dates at the bottom of the policy.

Discussion of Policy FFA - Naming of Facilities and Grounds (first reading):

Chair Weisman noted that the Subcommittee feels the need to have more time to discuss and review the Naming of Facilities and Grounds policy.

Ms. Martin suggested adding number 5 under policy to read: *"5. Any granting of naming rights for a space which is associated with a previously established Campaign for*

Naming Rights must adhere to the guidelines and fee structure associated with that Campaign.”

Ms. O’Neill said the revision is excellent.

Chair Weisman suggested removing the “number 5”. The Committee agreed.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Revise the Description of School Committee Workshop Meetings Listed on School Committee Calendar:

Chair Weisman noted that as she has been reviewing the Policy Manual she came across the policy that refers to School Committee Meetings and School Committee Workshops. She continued that a “Regular Meeting” is defined in the policy as *“the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly”* and the “Workshop Meeting” is defined as *“an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics”*. She said that the meeting schedule is prepared a year in advance and they are regular not specific topics; therefore, the workshop meetings are not true workshop meetings. Chair Weisman said that she would like to suggest changing the description of “workshop” meetings on the Schedule of School Committee Meetings to all “Regular Meetings” and they will add workshop meetings when needed.

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. O’Neill, with a 4-0 vote, the Committee agreed on changing the description on the Schedule of School Committee Meetings for 2017-2018 to all read “Regular Meetings”.

Public Comment:

None

Superintendent Notes:

Dr. Cabral thanked the Committee for their continued support on the initiatives taking place in the district. She continued that one initiative that she has been starting to see really take hold and show progress is the data meetings and the work from Dr. Parker. Dr. Parker no longer goes to the PK-2 schools as those schools run their data meetings independently. RO is also running data meetings on their own as well. The middle school just started with Dr. Parker last year. She said that it was great to see the teachers take on this level of responsibility and really be invested in what the data is showing. They are also transferring that knowledge to their instructional practice, which is great. She thanked the educators for all their hard work every day. Dr. Cabral said that she is receiving a lot of feedback about the new Math program, Bridges. She commended the teachers for all their efforts in implementing the program. She stated that due to the process where the teachers chose this program, they are truly vested and are seeing remarkable results. Dr. Cabral stated that, although this is not a formal announcement, the district has been working to put together a loaner program of

technology for students. The district does not have enough computers in our district right now for our aspirations of what we need to do with our students but there are enough recycled computers that are appropriate for loaners. John Sousa, Director of Technology, is working on refurbishing these computers. He is also working on a program that allows families that don't have access to the internet at home a price reduction to obtain the needed services. Mr. Sousa is also looking into offering loaner hot-spots which is similar to the program at the Ames Free Public Library. She said that the details for the program are still being worked out and that the School Committee and families will be notified as soon as we are ready to begin. This program is the result of donations received to replace the older devices as well as the hard work of our technology department.

Assistant Superintendent Notes:

Ms. Pruitt invited the School Committee to the January 16th professional development day in the district. She said it will be focused on Social Emotional Learning and the keynote speaker will be Jessica Minahan, she co-authored *The Behavior Code* and *The Behavior Code Companion*. She said that last week she attended the CACE, Title I, Conference. She informed the committee that while ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act, is bringing about exciting opportunities for the district to use Title I funding that provides flexibility, that we are anticipating over the next two years a significant decrease in funding or complete elimination of Title I funding from the government. She said the government is looking to reallocate resources including providing more funding opportunities for Charter Schools. She said that she will relay any additional information she receives to the Committee. In anticipating of this cut, it was suggested at the conference that districts who rely on the Title I grant for staffing try to get those positions into their operating budget.

Dr. Cabral said that the positions that are paid out of the Title I grant are the interventionists who are so critical to the district's progress.

Ms. Pruitt said it is very discouraging to have these grants cut.

Dr. Cabral said that the Title I grant was in the \$200,000 range and was cut over \$100,000 over the last two years and is now just over \$103,000. She stated that it would be devastating to lose another \$100,000.

School Committee Notes:

Ms. Martin said she wanted to publicly thank everyone who voted at the Town Meeting and that the warrant article School Feasibility Study passed unanimously. She thanked the members of the community who voted in favor and thanked Dr. Cabral for the work done in the district behind the scenes. Ms. Martin said from the time Easton was invited into the MSBA through now, a tremendous amount of work has been done. She also thanked David Twombly, Crissy Pruitt and Marilyn Gordon.

Dr. Cabral said that the School Planning Committee, in which Ms. Martin is the Chair, is a true team effort and a great model of community.

Ms. Martin said that she and Ms. De Luca attended the Honor Society Induction Program. She stated that it was a wonderful evening and that she truly enjoyed hearing the students honor their.

Chair Weisman noted that Ms. De Luca was one of those teachers honored.

Ms. Durrance said on Saturday the OA Marching Band is hosting their Annual Craft Fair. She shared that this year they have 47 vendors, which is a great increase from the 22 vendors they had last year. She said that if anyone would like a picture with Santa they can donate money or a gift and that all proceeds will go to "My Brother's Keeper".

Ms. Martin said that the Handel's Messiah is on December 21st.

Ms. Durrance said the winter concert is December 14th. She congratulated the boys soccer team for their accomplishments this year.

Executive Session RE: For Purpose to Discuss Strategy with Respect to Ongoing Litigation Against School Employee

On a motion by Chair Weisman, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a 4-0 roll call vote, the Committee entered into Executive Session for the purpose to discuss strategy with respect to ongoing litigation against a school employee not to return to open session at 9:12 p.m.

Minutes Recorded by,
Lynn Souza

Respectfully submitted,



Lisha Cabral
Secretary