

Attleboro Public Schools  
Attleboro, Massachusetts  
School Committee Meeting  
June 25, 2014

School Committee Conference Room - Attleboro High School

Present: David Murphy, Chairman (At-Large); Lori Scales, Vice Chairperson (Ward IV); William Larson, Secretary (Ward II), Dianne Sawyer (Ward I); Stephen Withers, Jr. (Ward III); Frances Zito (Ward V); Michael Tyler (Ward VI); Julienne Singer (At-Large); James Stors (At-Large).

Administration Present: Kenneth Sheehan, Superintendent; David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent; Tom Rose, Business; Marisa McCarthy, Director of Special Education and Student Support Services; Joan DeAngelis, Director of Student Service; and Judy Nelson, Recording Secretary.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Chairman led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and noted the meeting was being electronically recorded.

Thacher Concerns: Superintendent Sheehan discussed the concerns voiced during the previous school committee meeting regarding Thacher Elementary School. Mr. Sheehan clarified the following: transportation and the relocation of special education programs throughout the district. The transportation was not a global issue. There are monthly Transportation meetings to ensure all logistical aspects are being monitored. In October an additional bus was added to address the tardiness.

Breakfast Program: Mr. Sheehan confirmed meets the regulation profile; and the committee was assured all free and reduced meals are being provided.

Special Education Programs: Dr. McCarthy addressed this subject noting a plan has been in place. Principals and Administration met on several occasions to discuss this plan and address any concerns. Willett Elementary did not have the space to house the insights/autistic programs. This information was provided during parent's nights. There is a new assistant principal on board to assist with the building management and to ensure programs will run smoothly. The classroom space utilization was explained.

The Committee noted that this was a two-year phase plan. This year eight students were involved and next year there will be approximately five students. This does not involve a large number of students. The plan was well planned and worked through. The timeline was articulated to the staff. The Committee thanked the administration for these clarifications.

NEASC Accreditation Timeline: Superintendent Sheehan explained the accreditation process and need to update the process. Principal Runey and Assistant Principal Connor were present to explain the reason for requesting the postponement of the self-study process for a year and the implications if any. NEASC is in the process of rolling out a new procedure. The administration values the self-study process, but noted no repercussions to the postponement.

The Committee voiced concerns with regard to college applications. The Administration noted the district would still remain accredited. The Committee inquired as to who oversees NEASC. It was noted NEASC is self-governed; and that there are National Advisory Boards in place.

The Committee inquired as to costs. It was noted this is a \$25,000 line item. This item should be placed in the Budget for the next Fiscal Year for planning purposes.

Motion was made to endorse the administration's recommendation to suspend the NEASC process for one (1) year: Vote: 9-0

School Year Calendar: Mr. Sawyer summarized the regulations with regard to planning for five (5) snow days. The administration wishes to withdraw the previously approved June 12<sup>th</sup> Graduation Date and asks that the Committee approve a June 5<sup>th</sup> Graduation date for the Class of 2015.

Motion was made to approve the Class of 2015 Graduation date for Friday, June 5, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. at Tozier-Cassidy Field (weather permitting): Vote: 9-0

Motion was made to approve the School Year Calendar as presented (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof): Vote: 9-0

Elementary Schedule: Assistant Superintendent Sawyer and the Director of Student Services, Joan DeAngelis gave an overview of the three changes to the elementary schools that are planned for implementation this fall. (Memo attached hereto and

therefore made a part hereof). In March our elementary principals reviewed the current elementary schedule. General concerns from the specialists along with the need to revise the specials schedule in light of the decision to remove library from the rotation prompted the need for this review.

The subsequent process produced two recommendations for next year. First, that the schools change from a Monday to Friday schedule, where the special is determined by the day of the week, to a five-day rotating schedule where the special is tied to a specific day (A-E) that revolves evenly regardless of the day of the week. This guards against the impact of holidays, snow days, and other missed days, and furthermore ensures even access to all curricula for our students.

The second recommendation was to add additional recess time. We currently run a single recess that is attached to lunch. A second break in the day will provide students with the opportunity to enhance their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development, as well as heighten alertness and engagement in classroom instruction.

The third change planned for next year relates to the assignments of the specialists. Currently we have many of our teachers splitting time between buildings. In the reconfigured schedule for next year, each school will have four full-time specialists (visual arts, music, technology, and physical education) assigned to the building. These dedicated staff will improve their effectiveness and further integrate their work into the fabric of our elementary schools.

This month the principals unanimously agreed to embrace these three changes. The specials schedules are being built around four full-time specialists delivering their curricula on a five-day rotation. The necessary personnel moves to accommodate this change are also in process. The elementary schedule is also being developed to provide the second recess. All of these changes will be communicated to parents this summer in anticipation of the opening of school in September.

The Committee asked that the rotation be explained in more depth. Ms. DeAngelis explained the rotation process. It was noted studies have shown the additional recess would be beneficial to the learning process. The Superintendent noted Whitsons has been involved and will work to ensure students are getting their lunches in a timely manner.

The Committee inquired as to the length of time of the second recess. It was noted that 15 minutes in the morning. The Committee questioned the colder months. Ms. DeAngelis noted there are plans being put in place to engage students with perhaps "brain jam" games.

Motion was made to support and endorse the process as presented: Vote: 9-0

Personnel Report: Mr. Sawyer reported two (2) retirements; three (3) resignations; and two (2) appointments (see attached Personnel Report).

The Chairman thanked the members for their assistance with the presentations of the Citations.

Thacher Principal: Superintendent Sheehan explained the hiring process and timeline involved. Ms. DeAngelis will chair the hiring committee for this position.

PARCC: Mr. Sawyer noted the state requires a decision by June 30<sup>th</sup> (Memorandum attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was requiring districts to select the Massachusetts state assessments they would administer for the 2015 testing year. The choice is between the familiar MCAS and the new assessment created by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). There are several components of this decision. The following four (4) questions need to be addressed: Do we register our decision by the June 30 to guarantee our selection?; Do we administer MCAS or PARCC for Grades 3-8? (District wide choice; all or nothing); Do we administer PARCC for Grades 9 and/or 11 for either or both ELA and Math?; and in each building using PARCC, will we administer the computer or paper-based test?

MCAS is the only option available to districts for Grade 10 in ELA and Math, as well as all science and alternative assessments. After several rounds of discussion, it is the opinion of the administration that Attleboro should opt to administer PARCC in 2015. As it is perceived to be the likely outcome that Massachusetts will permanently switch to PARCC for the 2016 testing year, the sooner Attleboro makes this transition, the better prepared our teachers and students will be for the eventual adoption. We believe that we should declare our intention before June 30 to guarantee our selection. We also would like to administer the Grade 9 PARCC in both ELA and Math, but not in Grade 11. This would provide valuable data to teachers that could be used in instruction in preparation for the Grade 10 MCAS. If we do in fact opt for the PARCC, the decision regarding computer or paper will be made on a school-by-school basis after a thorough evaluation of each school's PARCC readiness. The high school and elementary schools potentially have the capacity for the computer-based assessment. The middle schools are likely to need to opt for the paper-based assessment.

The administration makes this recommendation cautiously. There are strong reasons to consider both options. The DESE reports that 60% of the districts that have already registered have chosen PARCC. We believe this narrow margin reflects how closely matched the options truly are. While some other communities have shifted their dialogue on this issue from an educational decision to a concern about authority, Attleboro need not distract itself with such a debate.

The Committee inquired as to the number of test days involved with MCAS versus PARCC. It was noted that MCAS is four days; PARCC is nine days.

The Committee noted MCAS data is available. PARCC data would be withheld.

The Administration noted a lot of "unknown" areas. Administering the PARCC test would alleviate some of those unknown areas. The PARCC is also based on the new frameworks.

Mr. Stors noted an article on the MASC website; and read this into record.

Motion was made to support the Administration's decision to administer PARCC to Grades 3-8: Vote: 7-2 (Stors; Sawyer).

Motion was made to support the Administration's decision to administer the PARCC Math and ELA test to Grade 9: Discussion:

The Committee voiced concern that the Class of 2018 would still be required to pass the MCAS exam: Vote: 7-2 (Stors; Sawyer).

Motion was made to support the Administration's decision to decline to administer PARCC to Grade 11 students: Vote: 9-0

FY15 School Budget – Final Vote: The administration reviewed the timeline to-date. (Power Point attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). The budget presented is student-based. The administration reiterated the level-funding of the transportation line by City Council. The numbers were explained and concerns re-voiced.

The Committee as a whole voiced concerns noting that transportation is the responsibility of the City. The district has been forthcoming and honest. The rising numbers are factual. Homeless numbers are on the rise. The numbers have been reported quarterly to City Hall. The transportation line was underfunded. The Committee will not approve the use of net school spending for transportation costs.

Motion was made to approve the FY15 Budget for net school spending in the amount of: \$64,109,386: Vote: 9-0

Motion was made to approve the FY15 Budget Transportation line in the amount of: \$3,083,347: Vote: 9-0

Motion was made to approve the part-time Thacher Elementary School Assistant Principal in the amount of \$95,000: Vote: 9-0

Motion was made to have the Chairman issue correspondence to City Council stating that the FY15 Budget amount is insufficient to meet the needs of the students: Vote: 9-0.

Ad Hoc Committee: Chairman Murphy explained what the sub-committees would be comprised of and the different responsibilities of each sub-committee.

Concession Stand: Mr. Tyler updated the Committee on the timeline for the concession stand. He thanked all those volunteers and donors; S.L. Constantine for donating the crane; HELP for the donation of fire alarm installation; the Clam Shack for providing food; and BJ's Wholesale for their food donation.

#### Consent Agenda:

Motion to accept a donation in the amount of \$3,000 from the Rotary Club of Attleboro to support the renovations of the Blue Bistro Café at Attleboro High School: Vote: 9-0

Motion to accept a donation in the amount of \$200 from the Attleboro Police Association to support the renovations of the Blue Bistro Café at Attleboro High School: Vote: 9-0

Motion to accept a donation in the amount of \$10,000 from Sodexo to support the renovations of the Blue Bistro Café:

Vote: 9-0

Motion to accept a \$75 VISA Gift card for supplies for both Mrs. DeChristopher's and Mrs. Caouette's Kindergarten classes at Willett: Vote: 9-0

Pursuant to MGL 53A ½ a motion to accept and forward to City Council for approval the following tangible property item from Rigid Tools to the Plumbing program at AHS:

- One (1) Pipe Threader valued at \$5500

Vote: 9-0

Policy Sub-Committee: the following policies were removed from the table are now enforceable:

- JF: Residency Policy: remove from table for finalization
- JF-E1: Proof of Residency Requirements: remove from table for finalization

A motion was made to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with regard to negotiations with union personnel. The Committee will reconvene in Open Session.

Julienne Singer:	Yes
Frances Zito:	Yes
Michael Tyler	Yes
William Larson	Yes
David Murphy	Yes
Lori Scales	Yes
Dianne Sawyer	Yes
Stephen Withers	Yes
James Stors	Yes

Vote: 9-0: Motion passes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Larson, Secretary

Attachments:

- Agenda
- School Committee Personnel Report: June 25, 2014
- NEASC Accreditation Process Information
- PARCC Memorandum: 06-12-14
- Blue Pride Weight Room Information
- AACIS Disc – 06-25-14