

Attleboro Public Schools
Attleboro, Massachusetts
School Committee Meeting
September 8, 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; Joan DeAngelis, Director of Student Services, Marisa McCarthy, Director of Special Education and Student Support Services; Marc Furtado, Director of Finance and Controller; Tom Rose, Business; 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.

Student Advisory Council Report was presented by Jack Flynn and Tyler Stowe, SAC Representatives to the School Committee. The representatives gave an overview of the Student Advisory Council's Goals for the 2014 – 2015 School Year. The students announced the opening events stating how beneficial these were to parents and students. The Upcoming Events were announced (see attached PowerPoint).

Special Announcements: The Chairman gave an overview of the Big Read and turned the floor over Joan Pilkington-Smyth. Ms. Smyth gave an overview of the upcoming event encouraging the community to participate in this event by reading. When the Emperor was Divine. The Committee will participate in a book discussion on October 2nd. The time to be determined.

Chairman Murphy gave an overview of the upcoming planned *School Committee Spotlight Series*. Spotlight Events to-date: 10-02-14 1ABC Big Read; 10-03-14: Technology in the Schools; and 12-15-14: Community Service/Student Leadership.

Announcement of statutorily required review of executive session minutes: Mr. Murphy read into record a letter (see attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). The Chairman has determined that the purposes under M.G.L. Chapter 30A Subsection 22(f) and therefore the continued confidentiality of these records is appropriate.

Director of Special Education and Support Services - Leadership Transition: Recommendation by the Superintendent to appoint Chris Cullinan, currently a consultant to the Attleboro School District, as the interim leader of the Special Education Department: Mr. Sheehan briefed the Committee on the process that would take place and the qualifications of Mr. Cullinan.

The Committee inquired if the District would meet the legal requirements and be in compliance with this Interim Appointment.

Mr. Sheehan explained the MA DESE had been consulted and the District would be in compliance. Mr. Cullinan is familiar with the District and would provide the necessary leadership until the permanent appointment occurred.

A motion was made to confirm the Superintendent to appoint Chris Cullinan to the position of Interim Director of Special Education pending resolution of any licensure and/or certification issues until the permanent appointment occurs: Vote: 9-0

Mr. Cullinan thanked the Committee for the opportunity.

Ms. Scales questioned the Insights programs at Willett and Thacher. Mr. Cullinan will review and report back to the Committee.

New Business:

Report on the opening of the 2014-2015 academic year: Kenneth Sheehan, Superintendent: Superintendent Sheehan reported that with a new principal and the 300+ new students, the opening went as smooth. Superintendent Sheehan noted it was unfortunate that the "transportation difficulties" overshadowed the opening to the new school year.

Transportation Services: Kenneth Sheehan, Superintendent; Marc Furtado, Director of Finance/Controller: The Chairman addressed the transportation issues (see attached Power Point). The inconsistent communication and fee-for-service process need to be reviewed. The changing of bus routes was addressed.

The bus stop change reasoning and process was discussed. The Superintendent has met with Bloom and Officer MacDonald to ascertain the situation. The historical background was discussed. The timeline for completion will be as soon as possible. The administration will review with Officer MacDonald the safety concerns. This should be done before the end of next week. Safety is the first concern.

The private school bus stop changes were discussed. It was noted that by law these students are treated as an Attleboro Public School student. These re-routes were redone. This involved 200+ students.

The bus routes for kindergarten students were addressed. Principal input has been sought. Aspen has been updated.

Special Education bus assignments are being reviewed for accuracy and Aspen is being updated. By the week's end this will be complete.

The Committee reiterated the fact that the amount of money requested for transportation was denied by City Council, the budget line was level-funded, and it was noted level-funded below what was encumbered during the last fiscal year. There was never enough money to cover the contractual obligation.

Mr. Sheehan explained there were 475 fee-for-service applications being processed; this process is ongoing.

A motion was made to direct the Central Administration to resolve the issues related to transportation services responsibly and expeditiously: Vote: 9-0

Enrollment and Registration: David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent; Joan DeAngelis, Director of Student Services: There were 295+ students that registered this year. Last year there were 217. There were 142 elementary school students; 62 middle school students; and 61 high school students to enroll. The enrollment is ongoing. The enrollment numbers are particularly high for Grades K, 6, and 7.

Mr. Sheehan noted the consistency in the registration process and policy in place to ensure residency has assisted the process. The administration discussed the enrollment numbers have dictated the need to reassign students to other schools because of the large class sizes. The administration discussed the need to hire an additional teacher. The enrollment numbers justify the need at Hill-Roberts. Students who have been relocated will be first to fill the open slots at Hill-Roberts.

Motion was made to endorse the hiring of a kindergarten teacher for Hill-Roberts Elementary School due to concerns over class sizes at that grade level across the district: Vote: 9-0

Mr. Sawyer voiced concern regarding the Kindergarten registration. The process included early outreach. In the past the Lottery Process provided a timeline. The numbers are important for planning the number of classes, teachers, and assignments. This process will be reviewed and the outreach will continue.

Communication Initiatives: Chairman Murphy explained the purpose of Scan Notes. These were done in the past and will again be sent out the morning after a School Committee Meeting.

Mr. Sawyer explained the current social media sources being utilized. The importance of communication was stressed.

A motion was made to approve the various communication initiatives including the reinstatement of School Committee Action Notes, School Committee website revamping to include: videos of previous meetings, periodic office hours with members and administrators, and an Ad Hoc Committee to examine electronic platforms, specifically social media: Vote: 9-0.

Envisioning 2020: Chairman Murphy noted the School Committee's Strategic Planning Initiative will be co-chaired by Lori Scales, Vice Chairperson; and David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent: It was noted that dozens of community members and staff members have volunteered to participate in this process. The project will be discussed in greater detail during the School Committee Meeting scheduled for Monday, September 22nd.

Open Forum: The Chairman read the guidelines into record.

Ann Collins: St. Johns parent expressed her concerns about the length of the bus routes and lack of communication.

Julie Bradley: St. Johns parent stated the time her child was picked up and the length of time on the bus both in the morning and on the ride home.

Open Forum was closed.

Infrastructure and Facilities: Mr. Tyler briefed the committee on the meeting held on August 19th. The subcommittee meetings will be held throughout the district for a "firsthand look" of the infrastructures. The next meeting is scheduled for October 15th @ 6:30 p.m.; and it is planned to be held at Coelho Middle School.

Upcoming Subcommittee Schedule: The Chairman noted the following meeting dates: Finance and Budget – September 9, 2014; Policy – September 15, 2014; and Curriculum and Instruction – September 23, 2014

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Larson, Secretary

Attachments:

- Agenda
- Power Point 09-08-14
- Memo – Statutory Mandated Review of ES Minutes
- AACS Disc – 09-08-14