

Attleboro Public Schools
Attleboro, Massachusetts
School Committee Meeting
Monday, November 7, 2011 @ 7:00 p.m.
School Committee Conference Room – Attleboro High School

Present: Raymond DiCiaccio (At Large), Chairman; Melissa Cook (Ward I), Vice-Chairperson; James Stors (Ward II), Secretary; Bob Hill (Ward III), Brenda Furtado (Ward IV); Frances Zito (Ward V); Michael Levinson (Ward VI), and Helen Johnson (At Large)

Absent: Teri Enegren (At Large)

Also Present: Pia Durkin, Ph.D., Superintendent, Nancy Sprague, Director for Teaching & Learning Excellence, and Judy Nelson, Recording Secretary.

Meeting called to order at 7:11 p.m.

Salute to the Flag: Mr. DiCiaccio led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence: Dr. Durkin asked that we observe a moment of silence in honor of Terry Troiano a payroll clerk who passed away recently and will be sorely missed.

Notice of Electronic Recording: Chairman DiCiaccio noted the meeting was being electronically recorded.

Student Representative, Taylor Beland updated the committee on the upcoming events (see attached Power Point presentation attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Consent Agenda:

Donations:

Mr. DiCiaccio acknowledged Connie Train and Cindy Ficichy representatives from the Class of 1961. He thanked the Class of 1961 for their continued generosity to Attleboro Public Schools.

Vote to accept a donation of the book Butterflies in My Belly written by a former Hyman Fine student and her father: Kayla and David Johnson:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$85.50 from Kiducation to be deposited in the gifts/donation fund for the elementary schools:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$17.36 from the Coca Cola Company for deposit in the gifts/donation fund for the Hill-Roberts Elementary School:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$322.45 from Targets Take Charge of Education for deposit in the gifts/donation fund for the Hill-Roberts Elementary School:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$185.27 from Target Take Charge of Education for deposit in the gifts/donation fund for the Wamsutta Middle School:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$1,500 from Jeff Newman to the Attleboro Evening Diploma Program for Attleboro High School:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$2,050 from the Class of 1961 for deposit in the gifts/donation fund for Attleboro High School:

Vote to accept a donation in the amount of \$52.62 from the Coca Cola Company for deposit in the gifts/donation fund for Attleboro High School:

A motion was made to accept the above-referenced donations: Discussion: None. Vote: 8-0
Mr. DiCiaccio again thanked the Class of 1961. He also thanked Mr. Newman and all others for their donations.

Ms. Beland asked that someone explain what the student donations line fund was for.

Mr. Furtado explained that this is a revolving account (sort of like a bank account) that unlike the regular school budget amounts; this can be carried over from year to year. Typically groups, individuals, or entities make a donation to schools sometimes directed or otherwise to be used by the school principals at their discretion to support the needs of the students for example the purchase of books or perhaps a bench for the common area at the high school.

Field Trip Study Proposal from Attleboro High School for the approval of a Field Trip Proposal for seven (7) Grade 10-12 students to attend the Fall State Leadership Conference for Skills USA Leadership Competition on 11/20/11 to 11/22/11 in Marlborough Massachusetts: Funding Source: Parents/Fundraiser: A motion was made to approve: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

Minutes: 06-8-11

A motion was made to approve the Minutes for the June 8, 2011 Meeting. Discussion: Please note the word "no" on page 9 under Curriculum and Instruction, second sentence it should state Mr. Levinson stated there were no more meetings. Remove the word "not". Mr. DiCiaccio noted that when it states Mr. DiCiaccio commended Mr. Bosch. The name is spelled incorrectly. Please change. Motion was made to approve the minutes with the corrections: Vote: 8-0. Motion passes.

Unfinished Business:

MSBA: Mr. Furtado noted a close out meeting will be held on December 7. The project s came in on time and on budget. He noted there are a few ladders that remain to be installed. The roof manufacture has signed off on all warranties.

Coelho Roof: Mr. Furtado stated with the three significant rain storms we experienced, no new leaks were incurred. As explained before we have eliminated all leaks and will continue to monitor. Mr. Furtado reminded the committee we still have a liability in the areas that have not been repaired, but those areas have not been leaking. We did identify the area that was leaking, repaired it the way it should have been, and have eliminated all the leaks in the building as of now. Mr. Furtado noted we suspect it may go again, but now we know how to deal with and approach it. The building is tight.

Update to the Committee on the X2 Implementation – Marc Furtado, Business Manager (Administration Report): Mr. Furtado explained that we have initiated a "train the trainer program". We will bring in Aspen support who will address the I-Forms which are constructing forms to meet the need of the district. A small contingent of clerical staff will be brought in; to receive that training, then distribute to the clerical staff and out to the buildings.

Mrs. Furtado asked if this was something we had to pay for or was it part of the X2 Proposal they gave us.

Mr. Furtado explained we will provide the clerical staff involved with a stipend. This is within the training from X2, but is an added burden to our clerical staff. Two or three clerks will receive a stipend for acting as trainers.

Ms. Sprague stated this training would be part of the X2 process.

Mrs. Furtado stated the stipends to the clerks who will go to the schools. So now it is costing the district money because we were not planning on this expenditure.

Mr. Furtado explained there is a training component to the Aspen budget that we are still tapping into, as we have not expended this yet. The money that will be paid to the clerical staff is part of the sift component of the Race to the Top. That is not coming directly out of our district budget. He noted this was a very small amount of money (less than \$1,000).

Dr. Durkin noted it is very important. We have very hard working clerical staff. This will serve to build our internal capacity. We have sharp well-seasoned clerks who have learned X2. This will allow those clerks to help train their colleagues. They are currently doing this through phone calls. We are formalizing this process so we can have the accountability to ensure this training happens.

Mr. DiCiaccio stated if he understood it properly is that we want to make sure that we some expertise in-house. He stated there are various struggles with people digesting the program. Mr. DiCiaccio stated we have to be sensitive. We have made a

commitment to bring this program in. He noted how imperative it is that people get the proper training. Mr. DiCiaccio stated from his experience the needs can vary from the initial plan, but the bottom line is we have to get the system working.

Mr. Furtado stated we are trying to do this the most effective way possible. As the committee knows, we brought Aspen people into the schools to provide the "hands on" day-to-day experience to see what issues we have. This was very effective and now we are addressing the forms issue.

Open Forum: Mr. DiCiaccio explained the Open Forum Guidelines. There no participants.

New Business:

Adams Scholarship: Dr. Durkin noted the committee was provided with a list. This list consists of 25% of the class. That is the maximum amount of students the state allows. These are students who will be provided no expense paid tuition at anyone of the state universities. This includes community colleges as well as four year colleges. Every year she and Mr. Newman send out a letter to the recipients and their parents/guardians.

Whole School Improvement Plan: Attleboro High School (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). Dr. Durkin explained the background to this report. She introduced Mr. Newman and his team members. Dr. Durkin stated we have worked hard to streamline the WSIP and she noted in the back of the document is the Executive Summary. The high school is like a small city. She noted this is a very difficult plan to manage. Dr. Durkin noted Mr. Newman would be providing the key parts of where Attleboro High School has been and where it is working towards.

Mr. Newman introduced his administrative staff: He began with the newest member: Sue Edmonds who is the Interim Director of Career and Technical Education; David Sawyer, Assistant Principal to Curriculum and Supervision, Tim Richmond who is the Director of the Network Program, and Ms. Elizabeth York, Assistant Principal for Supports Services which would include Guidance, Special Education, English Language Learners, medical, and counseling support, etc.

Mr. Newman explained the Attleboro High School Whole School Improvement Plan for this coming school year is broken down into five (5) main goals which is what we did last year and there are a number of expectations (9) that we will be working on during the course of the year. This summarizes what we are trying to accomplish through the WSIP. Mr. Newman will reference a one page summary (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

The first two goals deal primarily with achievement in English Language Arts and Math and how it plays out through MCAS and other achievement that we measure in the school. This will be handled by Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Richmond as there is a particular component that involves the Network Program. Ms. York will discuss Goals 3 and 4 which addresses the various support services in the school. For Goal 5 which deals mainly with our reform efforts at the school, that will be discussed by Mr. Sawyer and Ms. Edmonds. Mr. Newman noted when we get to the Expectations, the first four expectations which deal mainly with curriculum and instruction; this will be discussed by Mr. Sawyer, as well as the 7th expectation which deals with our Advanced Placement Goal. Mr. Newman will discuss Expectation 5, 6, 8 and 9 which are more general and deal with the community.

Goal One: Dave Sawyer and Tim Richmond: Mr. Sawyer noted Goals one and two address increasing proficiency in English and Math. Last year, there were concerns in English in particular in the writing. A lot of time was spent with the English Department devising a plan to address our concerns and improve what we are doing. Mr. Sawyer stated they were pleased to see the results in the MCAS scores this year in ELA. The Goal for English this year is to maintain/sustain the effort made last year and to continue those gains forward. This is the year for math. We are going to take many of the same approaches that were used in English and apply them in Math. He noted they are two very different subjects. The broad approaches we used will be used again in finding a way to target individual students and also find ways to connect math across the school to make it a school wide initiative. Mr. Sawyer noted the Network has a role to play in both of these.

Mr. Richmond noted in the past we celebrated when we just passed the MCAS. The proficiency rate has now become a major focus. As Mr. Sawyer noted last year we saw some significant improvements. One thing we did was form a Network specific data team to look at the areas that we need to target. In addition, we have had volunteers, and we have a grant that provided a tutor who is able to provide MCAS support groups at the end of the day, this tutor works with students on specific target areas, and as Mr. Sawyer noted the Math Open Response was an area of concern. He noted when some students see a blank page, given the "test anxiety" that some students already experience, in the past some students would walk away, this has been a main focus. This is done two to three times per week. We bring in an open response problem and imbed it into the math class. The focus is the first time tenth grade test takers in addition to ensuring that everyone who begins their senior year this year will graduate.

Goal 3: Elizabeth York noted the graduation rate at Attleboro High School has maintained excellent progress over the past few years. We are very proud of that. She noted that this year's graduation rate has not been made official this year. We are positive and hopeful that our trend will continue. Ms. York noted data is analyzed very carefully at the high school. A couple of subgroup areas graduation rate could be improved upon and needs further analysis. Two initiatives that will be taken as part of the Whole School Improvement Plan are: (1) assessment of the imbedded model that is the model that we use for over 90% of the special education students at the high school who take general education classes with general education teachers; we will be reviewing the data to make sure they are achieving at a level that we think they are; we would like to see this proven with numbers and will be digging into their graduation and success rate; a lot of different factors will be reviewed; She noted another subgroup that does not appear to be graduating where we would like them to be is the English Language Learner subgroup. We have created a goal to increase the number of staff who are trained in the specific strategies to meet the needs of the English Language Learners. Last year we had 50 staff members trained. The hope is to get another 25 members through another level of training this year and increase the AHS faculty; who possess some very effective strategies, to help English Language Learners.

Dr. Durkin made a comment. She noted the graduation rate, the committee may recall, is determined by the number of students who graduate within four years. We want to be able to help our students manage the goal of four year. She noted many students come in, particularly, English Language Learners with less schooling and require more. We are trying to accelerate that and allow these students to keep up with their peers.

Mr. Hill applauded the tutoring efforts that are being made. They have been very effective. Mr. Hill asked if the science tutoring was grant funded as well.

Mr. Newman noted there are some resources to support the science tutoring. Some is done within the department, but a lot of it, we will be able to do some science tutoring. He noted that would be primarily aimed at older students within the school who have yet to pass their Science MCAS test which is necessary for graduation. Mr. Newman noted some students are "picked up along the way" and some are from out-of-state who come during their junior or senior year. These students still have to pass the Science MCAS test. We have to make sure they have what they need to be successful.

Mr. Stors asked if it were the 10th Grade students who take the science test.

Mr. Newman noted it was 9th Grade.

Mr. Stors asked what the percentage of the 9th Graders taking the tests annually who do not meet the requirements.

Mr. Newman stated at this time, the first time pass rate is up over 90%. These freshmen take the Applied Physics test and pass it the first time around. He noted because the way the science test is constructed at the state level, the student might take the physics or they might take the biology test. The second year, we are encouraging more and more students to get involved in Biology. We provide very heavy involved coursework in Biology the second year. By the time we get to the senior year, there is a very small percentage who have not yet passed the science MCAS.

Mr. Stors noted in 9th Grade the freshman would take Physics, and in the 10th Grade they take Biology. He asked if they didn't pass the Physics MCAS to they automatically take the Biology MCAS.

Mr. Newman stated not necessarily, it would depend on the student. There are cases when we feel it is in the best interest of the student to retake the Physics. He noted we have students who pass Physics, but have not passed the MCAS Physics; they might have just fallen short. Mr. Newman noted then the decision is made that best suits that student.

Dr. Durkin noted motivation is an important factor. If the student just missed the Physics, the student might not want to take Physics again, when they could be learning Biology. These are very important factors and are individualized decisions. This involves the science staff, guidance counselors, and the students.

Mr. Stors noted once they pass one, they are all set.

Mr. Newman confirmed once a student passes any science- MCAS test, they are covered for graduation.

Goal 5: School-wide reform effort: Mr. Sawyer noted for Attleboro High School to continue to make improvement year in and year out, especially with the increasing economic challenges and increased expectations, we need to always reflect upon what we are doing and how we are doing it. He stressed the need to focus on how we are organized and how to move forward. A reform effort is a way to stay ahead of issues rather than "chasing your tails". Mr. Sawyer noted we will continue with this thinking, making

changes where they are needed, and continue with these efforts. He noted this is done through a Steering Committee. This committee consists of teachers from most departments in the building. This also involves community and parent involvement. We take the long view on things and make recommendations where needed. They are not a decision making body, they are simply managing the effort to make sure we are involving as many voices as possible.

Ms. Edmonds noted as this pertains to Career and Technical Education we are expanding the number of students who will be able to participate in the freshman exploratory. This is a time where students explore career opportunities. There are currently about 260 freshmen who go through this program. We want to expand this to as many more as possible. Students explore careers in three different areas. The service, technology, and construction cluster. She noted next year we are looking to add some other courses to that so that we can accommodate more students. Technical drawing will expand our construction cluster. Modified versions of communications courses that are already being taught in the school will complement our design and graphic design and graphic communication programs. We are hoping to add a banking experience for students and also there will be a guidance component that will really give directed consideration to career options for them in an effort to get students to make a more informed decision about coming into the exploratory program. The bridges, interest and ability profiler which is currently given in the 9th Grade will be given in the 8th Grade. Together with their teachers and information they will gain from these inventories, students will be helped to make better informed decisions when they choose which of the clusters they want to explore.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted it was great that this need was recognized. He noted this makes a lot of sense to begin this process in 8th Grade rather than 9th Grade.

Mr. Newman stated they felt this would better prepare freshman coming in having already explored these options. There are high hopes that we will expand the exploratory experience for 9th Grade students. The next four expectation areas deal with curriculum and supervision. Mr. Sawyer will discuss these items.

Mr. Sawyer noted the next expectation deals specifically with supervision. We use supervision as a means of pursuing our instructional agenda with teachers. Expectation one deals specifically with writing instruction, building wide to use writing as an instructional tool. This will not only benefit the students as writers, but will help students to be better students in the content areas because if you can explain your thinking in writing in any subject area you are probably going to have a better understanding of what you are talking about in that subject matter. We have also been using supervision to make sure that all staff members have a goal that aligns with our team goals. He noted we are also using the ILT to increase access to our learning walks which is another part of supervision. Teachers really benefit from the opportunity to see what other teachers are doing to take a wider view of their practice by seeing how other people are approaching it. We are trying to get more people involved in that process.

Mr. Newman for the benefit of the home viewer, ILT stands for Instructional Learning Team which is a group of teachers who have leadership roles in the school environment in instruction and learning.

Dr. Durkin noted there is an ILT in every school.

Mr. Newman noted the fifth expectation deals with culture at the high school. He noted every few years it is good practice for a school to look at its culture and to begin to solicit information from the staff as to what they perceive as to what is working, what is not working; and their suggestions. We need to communicate with each as to how we can better advance our culture. He noted we have been doing this on an ongoing basis with our students through the advisory program soliciting their opinions and their ideas. This is an opportunity for us to stop, take a breath, and look at what we are doing right and what we are not doing right and let the teachers become a part of the discussion in a more concentrated way. Mr. Newman noted they will be developing a school culture assessment for ourselves.

The sixth expectation deals with the whole idea of assessment. He noted on page three and four, we reflected on how we made out last year with our Whole School Improvement Plan. All of the expectations were met last year except for the formative assessment. We started it last year. Formative assessment is that periodic, continuous kind of assessment that teachers should be doing in the classrooms, to figure out where their students are at periodic times, so that we are not waiting until the warning, final, or quarterly period to find out where the students are. There is training that needs to be done along those lines and work that needs to be done so that teachers feel good along those lines. How one uses formative assessment. How one uses it to reform the practice. How you would use it to go back and address some issues in the classroom where the students might not have picked up by way of various skills and concepts within the unit one might be teaching. This has been set as a distinct goal so that we can give this area more attention.

Mr. Sawyer noted expectation seven is about meeting the targets set for MMSI. MMSI is the five year initiative. As part of that grant we have targets of qualifying scores. A qualifying score is three or higher on the Advanced Placement exam in a math, science, or English subject. We had a target of 173 which we met. The target for next year is 190. We will do everything we can; part of the battle is enrollment. Once we get the students in the classes, we need to make sure they are taught so that they are successful on the exam.

Mr. Stors asked Mr. Sawyer to refresh the memory as to how many students will be taking Advanced Placement courses.

Mr. Sawyer noted the number he has off the top of his head is the number of total students with history is about 430 students.

Mr. Stors noted history does not count.

Mr. Sawyer noted not for MMSI.

Mr. Stors asked what the number was without history students.

Mr. Sawyer stated you could remove about 60 or 70 students. This would be approximately 360 students.

Mr. Stors noted in summary what we are saying is 190 students out of the 360 will be getting a qualifying score of 3 or better.

Mr. Sawyer noted the goal is on the number of qualifying scores. It is not about a percentage. It is about a total number.

Mr. Stors asked if one student takes more than one Advanced Placement course, and they pass two classes, does that count double.

Mr. Sawyer confirmed it did. He noted these are not students, these are seeds.

Mr. Newman noted expectation eight deals with two goals that we have been working on for a while and need to put some renewed focus to these areas. One is to improve our parent night opportunities for families. Over the past few years the parent participation has not been what we believe it should be. A parent's night committee has been created to research and discuss what needs to be done. We have been researching surrounding towns and other parts of the country. Our parents group has been involved as well. The plan will be put in place this year and we hope to see some results next year. The baseline was set; we reviewed the recent parent's night to get a baseline of the percentage of parents attending. We are somewhere in the 25 to 30% range. We would like to increase that by a significant amount, but this is a process, we will develop the plan that will hopefully show results next year.

The Blue Pride event has been a wonderful and exciting event. We feel it needs some reinvigoration and expansion so that it becomes more of a Blue Pride Open House kind of event. Blue Pride in the past primarily focused on activity events and on sports. We will continue this, but want to open more information about all the different career tech education, arts, and academic offerings. We feel we have a great deal to offer. We want to make sure that the families in our community that are sending their students to the high school understand all the offerings. This is a process. We have just completed three different brochures for parents for career and tech ed; advanced placement, and the high school offerings in general. We just considered an in-house video that will be edited and shown on parents' night. We are doing some expansion in the other areas for the Blue Pride night that were mentioned earlier. We hope to have a bigger event this year. He asked 7th and 8th Grade parents listening this evening to plan to attend.

The ninth expectation is one that is very close to Mr. Newman's heart and he has heard a lot about it. This is to increase the capacity and ability to communicate more directly with modern technology to communicate directly with families and to allow families to be able to access things such as grade books online. Both parents and students should be able to access grade books online. The Aspen program has that capability. It will take a little bit of time to get the technology in place. There is some training that needs to be done both technologically and training in working with the teachers. Once we go live we need to ensure all teachers have the capabilities and understanding as to what has to be done to make sure the records are kept up-to-date. We want to really improve that two-way communication through the media of choice which has been identified in national and local polling of our own, shows that parents want to be communicated through technology. That is their top choice.

Mr. DiCiaccio asked about training. He noted the discussions to-date have involved training for the clerks. Mr. DiCiaccio asked how the staff is doing. He noted this is a tough process. How are the staff members doing. Is this something we are attacking at a school level? He again noted how difficult this was, but wanted to be sure we are giving the staff the assistance they need to meet this goal.

Mr. Newman noted he would speak to what is being done at the high school. He noted Ms. York and Mr. Sawyer will address this as they have taken on the task of marshaling the resources necessary to make sure that staff are able to do the things they need to do and yes every step of the way, the things we used to do under Rediker very easily as a matter of habit, under Aspen has become a process. The staff members have been terrific. Departments are working together to share knowledge. There have been some deliberate steps as far as well that Ms. York and Mr. Sawyer will address.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted eventually X2 will become habit as well.

Ms. York noted there have been some deliberate meetings during department times rather than around tables, we have met in computer labs where one person who has expertise has taken on the task of sharing that expertise with others. The departments have celebrated some "eureka moments". This ability then flows from one person to a group of people.

Mr. Newman noted the school has had to marshal there time for example when progress reports needed to go out or now where we need to get our grades out. Those are the times when we have to get together through our leadership teams to figure out how the staff will have the capability to complete such as task.

Mr. Sawyer noted on top of the three workshops we have offered our staff, we are also running a help center this week. Teachers have their grades due this week and have to submit them. There is a place they can go and someone who knows how to do this and can help them. They are there all day long to help them answer questions. They are there to check their work as well as answer any questions before the grades are sent in it. We are providing the support they need.

Dr. Durkin noted the high school has set up a very good model similar to what we plan to do with the clerks to build an internal capacity. This says a lot about our staff. She noted it would be much better for someone to talk to their English colleague about how to enter the grades. This is the model we are trying to build for models of support so that we can really become the experts in doing this. The high school has attempted to do this in a short period of time because some great people have come forward to get their arms around it and conquer it.

Mr. Newman stated it is our teachers who are getting this done. It is teachers teaching other teachers. He noted a core of about 12 to 20 people who are phenomenal in technology who just take it on and carry the ball and help us get the word out to others.

Dr. Durkin stated this is what we hope to do with the three clerks, a similar process. She noted it is easier to discuss a problem you are having with a colleague. This person understands the job rather than someone just coming in from the technology field.

Ms. Sprague noted a high school staff member, Glenn Winder, actually went to the middle school and trained some of the middle school teachers who then went back and trained their peers. It really has been a peer-to-peer collaborative effort. She noted at the elementary level it is really only the clerks that are using it at this time. The report cards are not online at this time. At the middle school each school did a pilot on how to run the progress report and the report cards that are due in a couple of weeks. We are figuring out the "bugs" of that system at this time. There has been some cross level assistance that has been provided.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted the reason he was asking is that he wanted to make sure that the administration feels that they have what they need to make this transition work. Mr. DiCiaccio stated he felt it was their responsibility to make sure everyone had what they needed. Mr. DiCiaccio acknowledged the huge undertaking.

Mr. Newman noted expectation nine, the one that was just described is a huge undertaking, but is so critically important to make those technological connections between the schools and the families. It is so important and noted families are clamoring for it. We will really work toward that goal as it is quite important to us.

Mr. Stors noted that many were at a recent event where they heard something he had never heard before and wanted to give the high the opportunity to dispel the rumor that we were looking to diminish the quantity of honors courses being offered at the high school or even do away with them. It seemed far-fetched but he wanted to inform the staff that the rumor was out there.

Mr. Newman thanked the committee for the opportunity to dispel the rumor. This is not true. Mr. Newman stated this might have come from the fact that, last year and this year there were a couple, or a few honors courses that were eliminated because the Advanced Placement program was so strong in that area for example: physics. The teachers and the department head involved with that really looked at it closely, brought it to us, and we examined it carefully. It was determined that the AP clearly overshadowed this course and the relatively low number of students who wanted this offering. Many of the honors students opted to take the AP and did excellent in terms of the qualifying scores. There are a couple of situations where this might

happen, but generally speaking the building as a whole will offer a full range of honor courses. The exceptions will be determined in the department with the teachers and department heads by looking at the enrollments and how it plays out.

Mr. DiCiaccio thanked Mr. Newman for clearing this up. The impression was that we were going in and slashing the honors courses. He noted it sounds to be a more enrollment based decision.

Mr. Newman noted it was more enrollment based and in a very selective way. It is not like we are going in wholesale and clearing out tons of honors courses, this simply is not true.

SAT/Advance Placement Data: Dr. Durkin noted we have the SAT/AP Report which is somewhat a part of the Whole School Improvement Plan, but she noted the committee was interested in this data(see the attached PowerPoint presentation attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Mr. Newman introduced: David Sawyer, Mrs. Izzi, the Math Department Head; and Mr. Gorman, the English Department Head. Mr. Newman explained that we have been tracking the Advanced Placement and SAT progress for Attleboro High School for decades. We are especially pleased with the progress that we have made over the last four or five years in the general trend and general direction we are going. Mr. Newman turned the presentation over to Mr. Sawyer, Mr. Gorman, and Ms. Izzi who also have some commentary about the Math and English scores in SAT as well as the AP program.

Mr. Sawyer noted he will let the experts speak about their subject matters. He wanted to speak briefly about the bigger picture issue which is the SAT scores which sometimes stymie our attempts to make sense of them sometimes. That is because each year's scores represent a different group of students rather than the same group of kids. He noted the participation number also varies from year to year. Different groups of kids, along with different numbers of participants leads to different scores year in and year out. He noted that is why the College Board themselves recognize this when they send us their SAT data. They give us five (5) years of data every year. Their point is that any one year's worth of information has to be taken with a certain "grain of salt". What really matters is how you are doing over a longer period of time and what kind of trends that data says. What we have done this evening is put our SAT results in the form of a five year trend. For each of the three subgroups, this is how it will be displayed.

Mr. Sawyer noted the first area was Critical Reading. The state is in orange, the nation in green, and Attleboro is in blue and the trend line which represents the AHS data is in black. He asked Mr. Gorman to speak to this subject area.

Mr. Gorman noted it is pretty straight forward looking at the numbers. The one year gain from 2010 to 2011 was minimal. We went up an average of one point. The good news is that we are going up against the national average that trended downward and that is some good news. Over the five year period, you will see that we have increased by approximately 15 to 16 points. There are some things that we are currently doing to further improve upon these scores. For example one of the things that we are going to do this year is to work more often with the middle school teachers to make this a Grade 7 through 10 initiative, as opposed to just a high school initiative. We believe we can use the middle schools help to improve our scores. We will tap into that resource and we are also looking at the new common core frameworks; which puts emphasis on critical reading strategies that we will incorporate into our curriculum for the years to come.

Mr. Sawyer noted next were the Mathematic SAT information which Ms. Izzi will address.

Ms. Izzi noted she sat in this spot last year basking in the results knowing it might be short lived. We had a huge gain from 2009 to 2010 of 25 points. She noted yes they did go down, but in reviewing 2009-2011 there is still an increase. We are still above 500 and for many years below 500 was the norm. We are one point below the national average. We certainly would like to be above. As Mr. Sawyer noted, every year is different. We had more students take the SAT test this year. Any time you have an increase you never quite know what the results will show. We hope to see the turnaround again with 2012 results. We cannot analyze SAT questions the same way we can analyze PSAT questions. A lot of data is received on the PSATs. We have analyzed those questions to make sure we are teaching the students what they need to know to be prepared for the test. We know if they go through our normal college prep courses: Algebra I/Geometry and Algebra II they are prepared to take SATs. Obviously the higher the Math they take, the better they usually do. We have more students taking the advanced math courses such as the honors courses and AP courses. This is why we see the trend above 500. We hope that this year is just an anomaly and we will go back up in the other direction next year.

Mr. Newman asked Mr. Sawyer to define the meaning of the trend line.

Mr. Sawyer noted he had Microsoft Excel figure the trend line out with the data information. It basically calculates what the average curve would look like according to the data over the give time period. He also noted that these reports represent College

Board information. They only provide the data on how the seniors did. They provide the best scores whether they took it junior year or senior year. When we look at data, we are basically looking at kids who graduated last June. Many times we are talking about classes they took that had the impact (the test is taken either in the Spring of their Junior year or the fall of their senior year). A lot of times it represents their junior year. We are reviewing things that happened in the high school two years ago. He explained the things we are doing this year, we will not see the results for another two years down the line.

Dr. Durkin commented that all three trend lines are all going in a positive direction of upward. The committee needs to recognize this despite what the numbers show.

Mr. Gorman noted the writing SAT scores echo a lot of the remarks that Ms. Izzi just made. We had a big leap from 2009 to 2010 and came back a little bit this year. Mr. Gorman noted being an optimist, he would look at the good news that we are still ahead of where we were two years ago and certainly ahead of where we were five years ago. He noted last year we incorporated a new approach to writing in the high school where we did as a department kind of looked at both the formative and summative assessment and reconfigured our approach to writing within the department and in the school. As we talked about writing across the curriculum earlier, that initiative really seemed to pay dividends when we received our MCAS writing scores back this year. We will not see the results of that program here, but we are hoping that by the time those students are seniors, that writing program and some of the strategies employed there will again get us a little bit higher than we are now. Mr. Gorman noted perhaps in another few years we will be hovering around the 515 to 520 range.

Mr. DiCiaccio asked for an example of how we put that to practice meaning writing across the curriculum.

Mr. Gorman noted last year they gave a pre-test at the beginning of the year to gauge on how students were doing with the writing. We assessed various categories from topic development, diction, syntax, to organization. Write Traits is sometimes the term that is used. Based on the initial data from the pretest, we noticed where the weaknesses were. Those weaknesses seemed to be in the area of topic development and organization. This matched the data we had received from MCAS test scores. We geared our writing assessments to those particular areas of weakness. For example he noted we were doing well in conventions, we do not need to spend a lot of time focusing on the punctuations. Our teacher feedback was geared more toward the topic development. For example what is wrong with your argument and how are you using the evidence. This has been a Paradigm shift for us in the department. As a school we made writing across the curriculum an initiative where being a component of the more you write the better you will get at it. Writing across the curriculum we did not ask science or math teachers to worry about the conventions, worry about the topic development. Worry about is the student really answering the question. Are we using evidence appropriately and can you explain that evidence in a way that supports your thesis statement. Vanquishing the responsibility of grammar usage and mechanics to non-ELA teachers were liberating to those teachers. The English department will focus on the mechanics involved with writing.

Mr. Stors noted asked with regard to the SATs is it only the seniors who take it.

Mr. Sawyer noted many juniors take the SATs. The way the College Board reports is they wait until the student graduates and use the higher of the two scores if taken more than once.

Dr. Durkin noted the information is provided by the College Boards.

Mr. Sawyer noted there are tests in March, May and June, then again in October, November and December.

Mr. Stors noted if a junior were to take it in March, we would not see those scores until when.

Mr. Sawyer noted they report those scores each time, but do not give us a whole report on how the cohort did until the end.

Mr. Stors asked what information we were seeing this evening.

Mr. Sawyer noted this is the scores of the seniors who graduated in 2011.

Mr. Stors noted even if they took the test their junior year.

Mr. Sawyer confirmed that.

Mr. Newman noted we do encourage students to take it in the spring of their junior year and again in the fall of their senior year.

Mr. Stors asked if it were only the higher score that would be reported.

Mr. Newman confirmed this. He noted it does make a difference for most students when they take it that second time.

Mr. Sawyer noted the last slide shows the results in a different way. If we compared this year's scores to last year's scores we might be tempted to say that might be disappointing, but when you look at the scores over that five year period you will see that over that five year period, the nation has seen a steady decline. The state has been a little uneven, zero\ growth in reading over that time period, less than a five percent growth in math, and some negative growth in writing. In that same five year period, these scores represent growth of anywhere from 15 to 20% for Attleboro High School. There is still a lot to be proud of even if last year's fantastic scores were not captured again this year.

Advanced Placement:

Mr. Sawyer noted when we talk about Advanced Placement. The advanced placement scored on a scale of one to five and a 3, 4, or five is a qualifying score. That is how we measure how many qualifying scores we have. We will look at targets and what the College Board refers to as AP Excellence.

He noted the three lines here (see the attached Power Point attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). The orange line represents Attleboro High School's MMSI subjects (Math, Science, and English); He noted you can see where we were in 84 and 90 before we got involved with the grant with MMSI and then it jumps as a result of our participation with this program. The green line represents the goals over this period. We were just a little bit short of our goal last year, exceeded the goal this year, and 190 is the goal we discussed earlier in the whole school improvement plan. Blue was included to show all subjects just to show that there was some concern when we got involved with this program that history might suffer as a result of the focus on Math, Science, and English. This line shows that history has been able to maintain its numbers even though we have increased the numbers overall. He noted this is the number of qualifying scores, not the number of students.

In 2009 it was 90 in the Math, Science, and English and last year was 180. We have doubled the number of students who are achieving.

Mr. Stors noted for example with 2010 to 2011 it jumped by 30 for the MMSI subjects, but without reporting the number of students that we increased taking the AP courses, it seems like we only have half the picture. He asked what was the increase in student participation between 2010 to 2011.

Mr. Sawyer noted it was certainly significant. He noted to get to 30 that is one of the strategies we use with participation in the program to increase the number of qualifying scores. One of the basic premises of the grant is that the barriers to the entrance to the Advanced Placement (AP) program is one of the things that gets in the way of our student success. That by opening and giving access to students, by giving access to more students we will have more students achieving because we no longer tell them they are not AP material. This just is not true. He noted the next slide would explain.

The AP Equity and Excellence measure is something that the College Boards puts out. It is based on a very simple premise. If you agree that a qualifying score, and the College Board has done a lot of research to back up this premise with their data. If you believe that students who have earned a qualifying score while in high school are more likely to succeed in college. He noted again their data shows they are more likely to have a high GPA in their freshman year and are more likely to graduate in four years. They are more likely to do better. If you agree that a qualifying score in high school is the best way to ensure success in college, then the way we should measure how we are doing is to have as many of our college bound students have a qualifying score. The more of our students that we graduate with a qualifying score, the better job we are doing preparing all students for college. They give us the AP equity and excellence measure which is the percentage of seniors who earned a three or higher on at least one AP exam. So how many of our kids did we send off into the world prepared for college because they got that qualifying score and in our old program the number was 9.1% and 13.6% well below the national and state average. This last year we jumped up to 26.7%. The state and national data will not be available until February. We will be happy to come back and tell you how we did. Based on where their lines were headed, Mr. Sawyer would like to believe that we exceeded and will continue to exceed. He noted we are very excited because the AP Equity and Excellence number, that 26.7 captures both the equity, how many kids are we getting to and excellence because it is of qualifying scores. An AP program that has a very high average score, so none of our kids get less than a three and the average score is a four or higher, and that is what many of our AP scores looked like years ago when there were only 15 kids in the room and they all got a three or better. Yes you have excellence in that room, but the equity is substandard. You are only giving that to a couple of kids. If you give it to everyone, but no one does well, you are handling the equity, but lost the excellence. The equity and excellence is a way of measuring how well we are doing both at getting to everyone or as many kids as we possibly can, and how are we doing at making sure they are actually achieving because again, these are students who had that qualifying score. The higher the number goes; the better job we are doing in preparing kids.

Mr. Stors noted again the piece that is missing is when it was 2009 and it was 9.1 what was the percentage of our seniors that had taken an AP class. In 2005 it went up to 13.6 and again what was the increase in students taking the exam or the AP Class. He noted the big jump which was great, but what was the increase in student participation and that is the other piece that is missing.

Dr. Durkin noted we have talked about the number of increases, it is huge.

Mr. Stors noted presentation-wise, this is a great and understand how valuable this is, but want to see the other component with it so that we could compare. Did we have to increase our participation 100% to get a so-called 10% increase; he noted this was just an example of a possible scenario.

Mr. Sawyer noted you are asking how kids did we have to give access to; to get those numbers to that height.

Mr. Stors noted we have definitely increased the participation.

Mr. Sawyer noted which would be the crux of the philosophical issue which is it is it better to limit the number of kids in the room to ensure that now the percentage of kids that are doing goes up or do we increase the number of kids in the room to ensure that the number of kids that have a chance to succeed goes up. At the high school we have chosen to go the other way. We did it one way before and now we are going the other way.

Dr. Durkin emphasized that the data is very clearly states that students who take an AP course, even if they get a one, do better in college than those who do not. She noted the focus, noting we have had this discussion several times, and Dr. Durkin noted she wondered what Mr. Stors' view was on AP courses. She noted the number of students in Attleboro High School who need to take those courses should be given the opportunity to do that. Prior to this grant, there were a few select students, and she was not downing anyone in that category, and if you were in that group, you took it and if you were not, it was never considered. Dr. Durkin noted the number of students who have said to her, that they never thought they could take an AP course. She commended the teachers and people at this table who have said they believed they could do it, and making sure that kids have the opportunity to do that. Denying opportunity is denying equity and denying equity is denying excellence. Dr. Durkin stated she would like to think that we expanded that opportunity to give a sense of confidence to kids that is probably better than many other schools she knows of in the regional area in comparison with MMSI to other schools, in terms of the other 30 schools across the state.

Mr. DiCiccio noted in fairness to Mr. Stors, he did not believe he was talking about denying. He was just really trying to understand.

Mr. Stors stated he believed in Advanced Placement, but noted the Chairman, said at an event recently that are definitely students that are taking advanced placement who are not ready for it.

Dr. Durkin noted that is anecdotal and she would really like to talk more about that. How do you determine who is not ready. She noted not ready is an equity issue. Are we saying not ready for perhaps kids who do not have as many books at home, for kids who might be English Language Learners, for kids who might look different than you or I. Are we saying not ready and denying them the access to it. She disagreed.

Mr. DiCiccio noted in fairness we were asked questions. He noted his response had to do at the time, he coaches baseball, and some of the kids stated that they felt the course was a little bit harder than they anticipated it being, but noted it is kind of like we really need to put the goal there too. He noted his comment was not a scientific response. Mr. DiCiccio noted in a perfect world we could look at it two ways, if we had kids that were capable of doing it and they were not given the opportunity or we have kids that are striving to reach that or may be encouraged to reach that. Perhaps we need to fine tune it a little bit.

Dr. Durkin noted the way English courses looked, AP, they were filled with girls, maybe one or two boys, and they all looked like her. There was not one student of color or students with different languages. Now we looked at gender, income, color, and throughout. She noted perhaps there was a need to do a student survey to look at AP is and maybe look at it prospectively in terms of students who have taken the course and are now in college and also look at it comparing to that.

Mr. Sawyer noted the concern is a thorough one. We certainly do not want to wish by increasing access to water down the strength of our program. We continue to greatly increase the number of kids who are achieving and this does demonstrate that. Mr. Sawyer noted he could come back and show evidence to challenge the notion that by opening access we have diluted it. He believes there is good data to answer this question and put that concern to rest because when we first got involved with this, that

was one of the main questions that if we started to open up our AP classes to more than the 15 kids that we know will succeed and get us great scores, what is going to happen. We have the evidence to show that it is good news.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted on the flip side of what we were discussing, he noted his son was a great example. He was encouraged to take an AP course, debated, took it, and received a score of a four. He recently was in a speech contest where you had to write about someone who had a significant impact on him. He spoke about his AP teacher and the impact that the AP course had on him because he never would have thought he could handle that AP course. Thanks to the effort of that teacher, he succeeded.

Mr. Stors noted as Mr. Hill had stated we do not want it to be AP in name only, but at the same time we do not want to be putting some students who may be borderline ready into a position where they are being put into a class that they are not able to succeed. Mr. Stors noted he understood challenges. He stated the scoring is the only way that we can quantify which students are achieving and which students are not. That is really the only thing we have to go on.

Mr. Sawyer noted the only thing he could say is that the evidence suggests that preparedness means much less than commitment. He stated the kids that are committed to this are successful.

Mr. Stors asked how many students start an AP course and do not end in that course.

Mr. Sawyer noted this could be counted on one hand.

Dr. Durkin noted it is very rare, which is an indicator of attrition. If we did have that, this would be a cause for alarm that we would not be allowing that expertise to happen. The other part is there was a study done where kids had to opt for taking something after the summer. It was the same in every other school in the MMSI, kids dropped out knowing what it was like, and not in Attleboro who stuck with it. Part of it is, knowing, they are going to get the support from the teachers and the incredible instructional tasks the teachers do take. We look very carefully at the data that teachers are showing in terms of how students are doing and what is the support they are getting to be able to support those kids.

Mr. Newman stated he believes this slide is a very important slide. If you were to extend back to 2008; further back, you would see that less than 10% of Attleboro seniors got a qualifying score on AP and that frankly was a source of shame for us. That is the word he heard from colleges, this is shameful. We have now tripled the percentage of students in the senior class who are getting qualifying scores beyond the state average, beyond the national average. We were way behind these folks. Mr. Newman really believes what we are doing is the right thing.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted it is a key to getting our kids into the best possible colleges. Colleges put a lot of value on the number of AP courses a student takes. They put a higher value on that and he has heard this time and time again.

Mr. Newman noted to do this; we need to open the access to allow our students to do this.

Mrs. Zito noted how important it is to challenge our students because if we don't we will not get anything. If we raise the bar, they find they can actually compete and get there. She noted how important this was. Mrs. Zito stated Attleboro is doing a good job of doing this.

Mr. Stors asked if colleges see the standardized AP tests scores, they only see the grade in class.

Mr. Sawyer noted they would see the senior AP grade and the scores if a student took an AP course in their junior year; if the students would opt to provide that information.

Mr. Stors asked if colleges would frown upon a student who is not willing to give the standardized test score information.

Mr. Sawyer stated he was not sure this would be a real issue. It is important that they see the student has participated in AP courses. This matters a lot to them.

Mr. DiCiaccio stated he did not recall the colleges being concerned about how his sons did in the AP courses, it was the fact that they participated in those courses.

Mr. Sawyer stated the scores could lead to credits and/or placement.

Mr. Levinson noted the college would look at a score if a student wanted to opt out of a science requirement in general studies or to get your college credits.

Mr. Stors noted most colleges if a student does not exceed a three, the college will not forego the college requirement.

Dr. Durkin noted it depends on the school. Harvard would not even take a five. Again, it depends on the school. She reiterated what the chairman stated; it gets you in the right bin.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted in the case of his son, Brian, he was allowed to leave school six months early because of the AP courses he took here in Attleboro. The scores were viewed high enough to be accepted. He noted when his son, Ray went to Dartmouth, they had a different, higher standard. It all depends on the school.

District/Superintendent Goals: Dr. Durkin noted she would not be going through her goals, but wanted to thank the committee in terms of the feedback (a copy of which is attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). She noted on page 6 there is a goal to work with the leadership of the paraprofessionals bargaining unit and to ensure more input in particular to professional development and an effective working relationship.

Goal 18 was expanded to include the appropriate benchmarks to ensure that we are reflecting effective and full use of X2.

Goal 21 with regard to feedback; she did hear from some parents and the chairman regarding issues with regard to start and end times particularly for the elementary schools. It was timely in hearing this as last week she presented to the Studley PTO. She noted tomorrow night she is at Thacher and Hill-Roberts and on Thursday she will be at Willett. She will broach with families and possibly have further meetings on looking at the start and end time.

We began with staggered days where we had some earlier than others. The first thing we did was make a uniform start time by adjusting a little bit earlier and a little bit later end times. We then added the 20 minutes to ensure we were in compliance with the DESE standards. We now have ten minutes at the beginning and ten minutes at the end. There have been some changes over the last few years.

In speaking with the Studley PTO it was interesting to hear that families were not finding it difficult and transportation had improved, but noted as we start the day a bit earlier and end a bit later, and what kind of accommodations are we going to make. There were some parents new to Studley who did not know any different and felt there was no big change for their child.

She understands there have been changes and wants to hear from families. It was brought up how about flipping high school with elementary. However it was brought up at times, the high school staff is needed to supervise their younger siblings. There are a lot of things on the table as we look at the ten minutes at the beginning and ten minutes at the end of the day. We are also at 90% capacity in our buses. It was asked do we change buses and have a different fleet for elementary and high school. We do not and most schools do not. The expense would be exorbitant if we had two fleets.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted he believed the concern was that with the day ending later, students are getting home later which has a ripple effect on the community. It had a lot of effects on programs such as CCD, the programs through the YMCA, all things that were not anticipated. Parents are also saying with kids getting home so late that in the fall, there is no time to be kids to play before it gets dark. The day is shorter. We need to have a discussion to understand the needs and concerns, to see what the solution might be.

Dr. Durkin noted she will gain input from the PTO groups. Perhaps we could have some regional meetings as well.

Mrs. Furtado noted also with the bussing that we are discussing. We do not have any late busses for the middle schools. Because of the changing of the times for the elementary schools, there are no late buses for the middle school. She noted any kind of intramural sports or clubs, there is no bus transportation. Some parents have the option to car pool, but others do not have that option.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted some parents have contacted him regarding the late start. He noted what Mrs. Furtado just presented was another good point. The point is let's feed this information back to the administration as they are very much interested in trying to figure out what will be a good plan.

Mr. Furtado noted with regard to the late buses, we did run into an unanticipated issue where the buses were not coming back in time to head back out to accommodate a late pick up for the middle schools. We have been working on plans. We own two full size buses. One of those full sized buses goes to Tri County. We are required to transport the students back and forth to Tri County. The other bus is a 1990's vintage, not terribly reliable, and use it in case of emergencies. Our office has been looking for a driver that requires a special license. They are in high demand. That was on avenue we were exploring. We did get quotes

from vendors for a late bus service. It is approximately double what the current transportation contract calls for so what we had told the middle school principals that we could afford at the beginning of the year would have been about half going to another provider. Our current provider has worked something out with essentially a substitute driver using one of the spare buses. Because the late bus accommodates a variety of students living across the middle school districts, we will take the substitute driver put him on a regular route which is more predictable, and have the experienced driver run the late bus routes which would be three late bus runs for the middle schools starting next week.

Ms. Furtado noted per school twice a week or how would that work.

Mr. Furtado noted at the beginning of the year we informed the principals that they would be allowed 60 runs and they could expend those as they deemed necessary.

Dr. Durkin noted the principals will make that determination.

Mr. Furtado noted we gave them a number of runs which they would base their after school programs around. He noted this how we have always done this in the past. They were given a number and mapped out how they would run their programs.

Mr. Stors noted 60 runs based on six or seven months left. It would factor out to almost two a week. Mr. Stors noted his question had to deal with the presentation last year of all elementary schools beginning at 8:50. He noted previously two or three were starting at 8:40 and the others were starting at 9:00 a.m. The reason we chose the 8:50 is we split the difference. It was indicated there was no reason we could not all start at the same time. There were enough buses and drivers to accommodate this. Would it be feasible next year for all elementary to start at 8:40 next year. He noted then the 20 minutes extra is prior.

Dr. Durkin stated she would need to hear from parents on that.

Mr. Furtado noted you need approximately 50 to 55 minutes between the start of the high school start and the middle school start and at least 50 to 55 minutes between the middle to the elementary school. He noted the high school goes out and all comes in to one school. The middle school branches out to three different districts so there are three systems as opposed to the one morning system at the high school. That is multiplied again at the elementary schools where there are five systems rather than three systems. Each level gets a little more complex in terms of level loading buses then the previous. What we ran into last year was the difficulty in leveling the system out to avoid the chronic late buses. This was exacerbated by the fact that we did not have the 55 minutes. He noted 55 minutes works between the elementary and middle school levels so whatever you want to do to accommodate the elementary school start time, you would have to push with the 55 minute fixed time in between back to the middle school and possibly back into the high school. Depending on what the gaps are.

Dr. Durkin noted we do not want late students and we did have problems last year with kids arriving, 10, 15, sometimes 20 minutes late. She noted if you have read the Globe you can see Boston is grappling with that.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted the point of bringing this up tonight was that the superintendent is going to spend time, and he noted the question by Mr. Stors and Mrs. Furtado will allow the administration to deal with these parent questions. He stated it was important for parents to understand that we are listening and the administration is also listening. The superintendent will gather information so we can figure out a good solution.

Dr. Durkin stated what we do not want to do is make a change that will result in everyone being late. Nobody wants that. There is nothing more frustrating when you have a scheduled time as a working parent and we do not want students missing instruction. We need to find a balance.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted this is what we are looking for. He noted some parents questioned in their minds the value of the 20 minutes versus what they were giving up. They understand there is an instructional cost, but feel there are other costs. He asked as the administration to be aware of this, talk about it, and this is something we can deal with in the near future.

Mrs. Furtado stated where the superintendent is going to put something together. She had a question about the districting. How does the school department district. For example: I live right next to the school why am I being sent 20 minutes across town. How is this devised?

Mr. Furtado noted in his time here, they have not re-districted. The lines are as they have been and how they were arrived at, he did not know.

Mrs. Furtado noted this would be something that does affect the bussing.

Enrollment Information: The Superintendent noted that the committee could see that been growing in the area of our English Language Proficient Students. Just for a point of information FLNE stands for "first language not English". This is what we ask our families to complete a home language survey so that we can understand the language that is spoken in the home. This was updated on October 12th. The Superintendent welcomed questions.

The Title I numbers will be explained by Ms. Sprague as we do have Title I Schools. The state has requested that we report this differently.

Ms. Sprague noted we used to report every student that was eligible to receive Title I services. What the state is asking now is that we report only the students who are receiving Title I services. The district is allocated a certain amount of money based on free and reduced lunch and each school is allocated a portion of that money based on their population of Title I population. The state calculates that percentage. So you look at all the students who might be eligible for Title I services. They are rank ordered by achievement looking at scores like DIBELS or other fluency assessments. We have some online assessments that we use. Star Reader which is part of Accelerated Reader. There are a number of data sources. Students are ranked by need. If students have special need services. They may not qualify for Title I because you would provide the special need service first. You would not take away special needs and put in Title I. If a student is receiving special education services in reading for example and they also have a need in Math, they might get Title I in Math. You go up the list and provide services to as many students as you can. The number of students you provide services to is not exactly the same as the number that are eligible. That is why you see a change here. Last year it was every student that was eligible was reported and this year the state is asking us just to report those students who receive services.

Dr. Durkin noted it is important to note that our population is not dramatically declining. If anything it may be flat. We have not lost a lot of the population as a great deal of districts across the state have experienced. She also called attention to the number of limited English proficient students is significantly up from 278 to 345 and the number of low income students we are servicing from 1805 to 2125. This just gives you a sense of who we are.

Mr. Hill posed a question about that because total enrollment increase is less than 100, but the low income is close to a gross 400. Do you think it is better reporting or what?

She noted more families are taking advantage of the free and reduced lunch as that is exactly the designation of the free and reduced lunch. More families are applying and receiving that benefit. That is a function of our economy and the needs of our families to be able to take advantage of that. They should and we encourage that.

Ms. Sprague noted we have a new school that is a Title I School. Hyman Fine had not been a Title I School in the past, but they have qualified because of the increased percentage of students that are free and reduced lunch. As the Superintendent noted the numbers have actually increased.

Mr. Stors asked if Mr. Furtado could speculate on the reason why they might be asking for the difference in reporting from students who are eligible to students who are actually receiving Title I services. Could that lead to a change in funding.

Ms. Sprague stated no. It has to do with MCAS reporting. They report out on MCAS on students that are low income, they want to be sure that they also report out students receiving Title I, so it is related back to how scores are reported by subgroups.

Mr. Furtado noted they would not change the base and keep the rules.

Personnel Report: Nancy Sprague, Director for Teaching and Learning Excellence (Administration Report): Ms. Sprague reported one (1) resignation and two (2) appointments (see Personnel Report dated 11-07-11 attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Committee Reports

Finance, Facilities and Procurement Sub-Committee

Bills and Warrants:

Notification of Bills and Warrants:

5BS015 – 10-19-11 - \$131,312.50

5BS016 – 10-26-11 - \$745,829.32

5BS017 - 11-02-11 - \$280,558.61

Ms. Cook gave an overview of the meeting that was held on October 19, 2011 (see attached "draft" minutes attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). The budget reports were reviewed. The unexpended came in below, but the circuit breaker came in a little higher. Overall this resulted in a net gain. The health insurance is right on tract. The last report that was reviewed closely was the utility report and we will need to manage the costs closely. The second item was the parking lot at the high school. Mr. Furtado has met with members of the DPW and the City has committed to doing the work, but it will not be done this season. It is expected that the RFP will come before the Finance Sub-Committee in the Spring. The next item leaned toward capital improvements and we discussed improvements to the old high school, the Finberg School and basically it was decided the need to address typical maintenance problems is necessary i.e. problems such as potholes or window repairs, we will look at any kind of structural needs at those buildings along with any other buildings that the schools rent. We will put any possible capital improvements on a five-year projection plan which is something the finance subcommittee reviews on an annual basis. The last item that was discussed was the length of the vendor contracts. Additional discussing or a rehashing of discussion was done and the final decision was to place this on the next month's agenda. The next meeting will be held on 11-19-11 @ 6:30 p.m.

Curriculum and Instruction Sub-Committee:

Mr. Levinson gave a summary of the meeting that was held on 10-18-11 (see attached "draft" minutes attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). They received a recommendation to accept the Mass Core Requirements. The committee received these in their packets. These came out a few years ago as part of the state's efforts to increase the expectations for the high school students. We were ahead of the curve at first, but the RTTT Project 4A required improvement in the number of students and part of that was to adopt these Mass Core Requirements.

A study was done in 2010 that found 85.6% of our students had met these standards and these requirements. One troubling requirement we found was that the high does not have a foreign language requirement to graduate. What this proposal would do would be to adopt the Mass Core Recommendation to include a two year requirement for a foreign language, also add a requirement for Algebra II, and Chemistry (currently neither one are required), another change would make it be a year's requirement as opposed to credit requirement. An example would be the math where we would have a 20 credit requirement. Students might load up in Math in their junior year and not take Math their senior year. This would require a Math course and an English course all four years as being able to front load your credits. The proposed requirements are in the far right column (a copy of which is attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). It shows what the Mass Core Recommendation is and what the current requirements are for graduation from the high school. We confirmed that this would not require realignment or hiring of additional staff for this change. We will not have to add staff to make these requirements. It was approved at the sub-committee level with a vote of 3-0. It is now being brought before the full committee for approval.

Mr. Stors noted there seems to be three areas that do not match with the Mass Core Requirements. For example science, the Mass Core recommendation is three years of a lab science and ours is four year requirement with physics, biology, and chemistry. Could you elaborate on that area. That was one and the other was history.

Mr. Sawyer noted we currently have four year equivalent requirements in our current graduation requirements. We have a twenty credit history requirement and a 20 credit science requirement. In a discussion about how we would want to reorder our graduation requirements; it was noted just because the state says we do not have to have a four year requirement, doesn't mean that we do not think we should have one. We decided to maintain those four year equivalencies.

Mr. Stors asked about the World History piece. Do we have that right now.

Mr. Sawyer noted, yes, in 9th Grade.

Mr. Levinson noted there is one other issue. The CTE exemption, these students can exempt out of certain requirements; obviously because of their technical course load. It would be difficult for them to meet it all.

Mr. Stors noted the Mass Core recommendation is that they can opt out of foreign language and art. Currently they could opt out of art. What we are saying out of ten credits of any of the following. Does that mean any CTE student would have to do these as well. He stated he was a little confused.

Mr. Levinson noted if he were correct the ten credits would be you could chose a total of ten credits for example: we require a four year science, a CTE student could go down to the three year recommendation. This would be the same thing with the history requirement, foreign language, or opt out of the art requirement.

Mr. Stors noted when it says up to ten credits of any requirement, it effectively says you can opt out of ten credits.

Mr. Levinson stated he believed ten credits would be two courses.

Mr. Sawyer confirmed that.

Mrs. Furtado asked what the burden was on the students at this time. If they had three years of lab science and now we are requiring four.

Mr. Levinson noted currently we require four years of lab science and we require it to be credit-based. Technically a student could take two lab sciences their junior year and not take science their senior year. This would require science be taken all four years.

Mrs. Furtado asked what is the purpose of that and why can't they just double up if they so choose.

Mr. Sawyer noted the state has increased its requirements to get into state schools. They are requiring that our students take chemistry, take Algebra II, and that they are taking especially Math in their senior year. Many of our students are on an EPP because they did not get a 240 in Math in the 8th Grade. As part of that EPP (Education Proficiency Plan) they have to take Math in their junior and senior year. With our current requirement, we have some students that have met the 20 credit requirement, but have to take a 25 requirement in Math because they are on an EPP. They shouldn't have doubled it up. They should have spread it out. Now they have to take a fifth year in their fourth year because they doubled earlier hoping to get out of it. This helps put us in line with what kids actually need to be in line to apply for college.

Dr. Durkin noted it also puts us in the same vantage as a kid taking an AP course or giving our students the most advantage for being able to obtain the college requirements. Most colleges are requiring four years.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted state colleges, and this is a byproduct of the economy, the enrollment and applicants have gone through the roof. As a result they can be pickier in choosing students; this ties into what the state trying to do to challenge our students more. In looking how we want to require our students to take four years, we are challenging our students more.

Mr. Levinson noted he found many of these things as being very beneficial with the addition of the Algebra II and the Chemistry. He was very shocked we did not have a foreign language requirement to graduate high school. He noted twelve years ago when he went to high school, there was a requirement. It is good that Attleboro is getting where it needs to be.

Mr. DiCiaccio noted colleges mandate how many years of foreign language are required. In general our guidance departments were guiding our students appropriately. Even though the requirement was not there, it was expected to go on to college.

Mr. Stors asked aren't there certain languages colleges are looking for. Some looking for three if not more and there are some languages we do not have three years offered.

Mr. Sawyer noted the ones that are being run this year offers French and Spanish at this point. He noted some languages go up to five years. On the books we have Portuguese and Latin, but have not run them in a long time.

Mr. Stors asked with the physical education 2.5 credits. That is a half year requirement. With regard to class time, is that twice a week, what does that break down to.

Mr. Sawyer noted it depends on the schedule. The requirements were created for the anticipated trimester schedule. He noted 2.5 credits would be a 60 day trimester course (1) meet Mass Core requirements; (2) align with the State Frameworks that have come out in English and Math; (3) improve college and career readiness; and (4) a couple of historical issues we wanted to iron out like foreign language and physical education. We tried to review everything and fix everything at once.

Mr. Stors noted with physical education isn't there a benefit to have it a year-long course. So you are not being affected seasonally and things like that. For example a student who takes it during the winter will be stuck in most of the time and stuff like that. He commented that he thought most high schools had it as a year-long course.

Mr. Newman noted the primary focus with the frameworks that we work with, the state frameworks and standards focus on wellness and a healthy lifestyle. Health education of various subjects depending upon the age. He noted a lot of the wellness curriculum does not really matter whether you are outside or inside. You are dealing with healthy lifestyle and how to stay fit. Our kids spend a lot of time using the weight room, the exercise room, they use the pool. It really does not matter what season. It is nice in the fall and spring to be able to go outside on the field, but as far as the curriculum is concerned, it really would not matter in terms of meeting the standards that are expected.

Vote: 8-0 – Motion passes.

Mr. Levinson noted another presentation was done on the ELL program. He noted this will come forward eventually.

Dr. Durkin noted this presentation showed the steps we take to education our English Language Learners. She noted this would be a good presentation for all to hear.

Mr. Levinson noted it was a very complex and comprehensive presentation. Mr. Levinson noted the steps that were taken and the levels of students and how they are designated to a school.

Policy Sub-Committee

Mr. Stors noted there was a meeting held on October 24th. There were three areas: our sub-committee policy and it has been something we have held off on, but it is a recommendation from MASC. He noted you have the chairman who is considered ex facto officio member of all sub-committees. That is standard and per Roberts Rules. We have four standing members on our sub-committee. When you take those five members and all five members have the right to vote, and effectively make decisions, you end up with a quorum of the full committee member of the body. MASC believes that is a concern. We are actually looking at making three standing members with the chairperson as well and this is something we will be talking about at the next meeting. We would not want this to go into effect until the new school committee comes on. That would be the appropriate time.

Full Day Kindergarten Lottery: we understand that the superintendent at the next meeting will be doing a presentation per the recommendation of Mr. Hill about a few months back about trying to do full day kindergarten in September of next year. We will still have to go through the lottery process. We listened to parents last year. Many of the issues were brought forward. The timeframe of when we do the lottery itself, the process of the lottery and the committee will be looking at those things trying to do it earlier and maybe doing it in a more public setting. It has always been an open process, but doing it in an earlier time frame and location for the families. Something that we are looking at and we are trying to vet how we can do that maybe through different timings for different schools. There are different things we will be talking about at our next meeting. The timeframe that we are hoping to be able to do that for would be the January/February time frame from the initial conversations we had, but at the next meeting we will be able to discuss these items.

The last one is safety and communication. It was originally a protocol and we are now looking to make it into a policy. There are a couple of policies in there now that are Memorandum of Agreements between the Police Department and the Attleboro Public Schools. This seems so in line with that, which this is what we are having the superintendent ultimately bring that to our Chief of Police looking for the signatures as the MOAs that are in there now. The committee has some questions about what the parents should be made aware of when there are issues and what kind of things the committee should be made aware of. We are reaching out to the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and we may want to touch base with our legal counsel as we proceed, as well as other committee in the commonwealth, and we will be discussing that at our next meeting. At this time we have nothing specific to bring forward.

The next meeting will be held on November 14th at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Stors, Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda dated 11-07-11
2. School Sponsored Events dated 11-07-11
3. Draft Minutes dated June 8, 2011
4. Attleboro Public Schools AYP – Power Point dated 09-26-11
5. School Committee Memorandum – MCAS Achievement 2011 Part 2 – 09-29-11
6. School Committee Memorandum – Early Adopter/Adapter Endorsement for the Teacher Regulations – 09-29-11
7. Personnel Report dated 10-03-11
8. Policy JJIB-A – Head Injury and Concussion Policy
9. Policy BEC – Executive Sessions
10. Handout – Contact Information PTO
11. Grade 6 Open Response Example

DRAFT