

Attleboro Public Schools  
Attleboro, Massachusetts  
School Committee Meeting  
Monday, August 20, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.  
School Committee Conference Room - Attleboro High School  
Minutes

Present: Michael Tyler, (At Large), Chairman, Brenda Furtado, (Ward IV), Vice Chairperson, Barbara Craw (At Large), Secretary, Teri Enegren, (Ward I), William Larson, (Ward II), Christopher O'Neil (Ward III), Frances Zito, (Ward V), Kenneth Parent, (Ward VI), David Murphy, (At Large)

Also Present: Pia Durkin, Ph.D., Superintendent, Dave Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent, Tom Rose, Business Manager, and Judy Nelson, Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

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

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

Mr. Tyler welcomed Mayor Dumas. Mayor Dumas briefed the committee on the proposed capital project to upgrade the multi-sport field, stadium at Attleboro High School. A new concession stand and bathroom area will be paid for with private donations. The Mayor is putting together a fundraising plan for that along with school and community officials. The Mayor will be presenting this to City Council tomorrow and welcomed members to attend that meeting for more information.

The Chairman acknowledged Dennis Walsh, Bill Runey, and Mark Houle for their work regarding this project.

The Mayor also noted his conversation with the current Director of the CTE program. He explained the process that will be used for surplus items such as a police cruisers and a Cushman vehicle. The city will be donating those types of vehicles to the CTE program at Attleboro High School to provide the hands on training for students.

Minutes: The Minutes for 05-21-12; 06-04-12; and 06-18-12 were approved as presented: **Vote: 9-0**

Chairman's Statement: Mr. Tyler explained the purpose and guidelines for Open Forum. The Chairman read into record the guidelines (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). There were no participants.

Consent Agenda:

A motion was made to accept a donation from Bristol County Savings Bank in the amount of \$75.00 to the Attleboro High School gifts/donation line: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept a donation from Ahold Financial Services in the amount of \$709.29 to the Attleboro High School gifts/donation line: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept a donation from the Coca Cola Company in the amount of \$23.04 to the Attleboro High School gifts/donation line: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept a donation from Stop & Shop School Rewards Program in the amount of \$508.56 to the Wamsutta Middle School gifts/donation line: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept a donation from Follett Educational Services in the amount of \$166.50 to the Willett gifts/donation line: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept the donation of 17 file cabinets and eight (8) office chairs from Jeffrey Allison to the Wamsutta Middle School the value to be determined: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to accept the donation of three (3) easels from School Committee member, David Murphy, for the use at Wamsutta, Brennan, and Coelho Middle Schools in the social studies classes valued at \$25.00 per easel: **Vote: 9-0**

Mr. Tyler thanked Mr. Murphy for this donation.

A motion was made to declare 158 hardcover Silver Burdett music books dated 1956 at Thacher Elementary School as surplus as they are antiquated and no longer being used: **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made to declare a Canon 6230 Copy Machine located at Project Connect as surplus: **Vote: 9-0**

#### New Business:

2011-12 District/Superintendent Goals Update: The Superintendent referenced the update members received in their packets (Power Point attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof). Both the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent summarized the three (3) keys points: improved achievement, improved practices, and meeting new and continued challenges.

Improved achievement: Over the past five years the district sustained the trajectory for achieving for all students in all grades within Attleboro Public Schools. The 2012 information is embargoed until the Commissioner authorizes the release. Preliminary data has been received and principals are working with this information to formulate their 2012 Goals. Progress is being made to narrow the achievement gap in particular for the high needs students (low income, limited English Language Learners, Hispanic, and special education). The challenges continue to be there for our special education students. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has put forward a new accountability system that will effect how both districts and schools are evaluated. This is a result of the replacement of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This will be explained when 2012 data is released to the committee.

The Superintendent noted Mr. Sawyer would be highlighting the improved practices that resulted in the improved achievements. Mr. Sawyer stated there were several areas of improved results. The English Language Learner (ELL) instruction has been improved immensely by the number of teachers who have been category trained. The transition plan from Grades 4 to 5 identified as an area of need last year. A plan was developed and implemented to provide a smoother transition for students from Grades 4 to 5. The Pre-Algebra curriculum and instruction was reviewed. Better materials were provided to prepare students to be able to do Algebra in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. A District Data and Analysis Team was established and convened to create a plan for better use of the data with our instructional practices. Curriculum Committee worked on aligning Attleboro's curriculum with the new state frameworks in English and Math. Attleboro is a leader in this regard. Some of the units developed in Attleboro are being piloted by the state as sample units. The creation of lead teachers for science and social studies will allow the necessary emphasis on social studies and science and bring the much needed support in these areas.

The Superintendent referenced an upcoming meeting with the Curriculum Instruction Sub-Committee Chairman at which time the topics for the Curriculum Sub-Committee Meetings will be determined. One topic of suggestion would be the Advanced Placement data from high school to elementary.

The final area of the presentation provides how "we" met new and continuing challenges. This continues to be a team effort. One of the biggest challenges was the review of the new teacher evaluation tool. Attleboro being an Early Adopter Districts (one of ten districts designated) was able to procure through that process a grant of \$10,000. A great deal of time went in to this process and these funds assisted with the review of the current evaluation system which determined the necessary changes. Attleboro was fortunate in that the current system was very much aligned with the new regulations. Attleboro was a key voice in terms of how those regulations would be changed and adopted. The key part was that we were able to bring to a close in June successful negotiations with the Attleboro Education Association (AEA) which allows Attleboro to move forward with the training of our administrators who are very familiar with the new evaluation tool as well as our teachers. This will be a key part of convocation and our first professional development day. Attleboro is one of a handful of districts (25 out of 365). Mr. Tyler attended some of those negotiation sessions. Mr. Sawyer was the point person with president of the union. Adeline Bee. There were many people involved both principals and teachers.

Full Day Kindergarten will go to full implementation. Families will be updated through a school connect message that will be translated for Spanish speaking families. The bus routes will be published in the Sun Chronicle on Wednesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Information will be available on our website beginning Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. The Superintendent encouraged members to instruct constituents to contact their schools and/or the central office with any questions.

The Superintendent commented on the significant budgetary challenges the district has faced and the increase of Chapter 70 funds, but referenced the lack of a full-time business manager for the second part of the school year. The district closed in the black with an estimated \$111,000 that needs to be certified the City. This generally is returned to the district. The Superintendent commented on the six bargaining units and the civil and amicable dealings. The Superintendent has met with the President of the AEA and resolved issues before they become serious issues. Partnership relationships have been developed within and outside of Attleboro and sustained. The two major grants are the Bay State Reading Institute (BSRI) as well as the Human Resource Development Grant that continues to have outside partners, as well as Bristol County Savings Bank. We will continue this work.

One of the biggest challenges was attracting, recruiting, and hiring administrators to fill nine (9) vacancies which represents over 50% of our administrative team. Attleboro's Agenda has been the reason for this success.

Mr. Murphy referenced the state embargoed information. Mr. Murphy commented on the proficiency rates and asked if the district would be provided the DESE projected goals for the upcoming year.

In 2011 Attleboro had 71% of students that were proficient or advanced in ELA which has consistently increased since 2008. In Math, Attleboro is at 63% having gone up approximately 11% from 52% in 2008. The Superintendent noted the importance of looking at the trajectory that continues to go up, is how we compare to the state average. This information is provided for all grades and individual grades. We have not received the comparative information from the state at this time. The state requires that we narrow our achievement gap in the areas of LEP, low income, and special education. The state would like these gaps cut in half by 2017. In many areas we are making good progress, in some areas we have our challenges. These areas will be reviewed to determine what needs to be done for improvement. There are specific goals set for narrowing the achievement gaps. There are not goals set for advanced and proficient. The state average provides a barometer for this.

When the information is released, the committee will receive the information and the comparison to the state. The Superintendent stressed the importance of the DART information. This contains the information of the ten districts that are most like Attleboro. Last year we were number one in both growth and achievement in Math and in ELA we were number four and six. The goal is to be in the top three. These communities live with the same demographics as Attleboro. This information will most likely be released in October.

Mr. Murphy asked when the numbers are released in September, does this include all the subgroup information in terms of the gaps.

The Superintendent confirmed generally it does and explained the process for the release of this information.

Mr. Murphy noted the committee could expect subgroups and proficiency rates released in September and DART comparisons in October.

The Superintendent noted currently the district has preliminary data until the embargo is lifted.

Mr. Murphy noted the 71 and 63 percent from 2011 are district-wide.

The Superintendent confirmed this. Students in all grades noting MCAS covers students in Grades 3 through 10. Those are all students who have reached proficient or advanced. These two numbers are combined which is what the state generally does as well. We want needs improvement and warning level numbers to go down and advanced/proficient going up. Students in warning should move up to needs improvement, and needs improvement to move up to proficient, and proficient to move to advanced.

Slide 6: Instruction & Learning: Continue to increase the number of staff who are ELL trained which went from 258 teachers to 312. Mr. Murphy asked if there was a forecast or number the district was striving for.

The state is now changing the process. The category trainings are being eliminated. There will be another process and once revealed the committee will be briefed on this change.

Mr. Murphy asked if anyone would lose certification.

This unknown and Attleboro hopes the process is a fair one. There is a question as to what will be acceptable at this time.

Mr. Murphy asked the time frame.

The timeline is 2014. The future requirements regarding English Language Learners were explained. The state will make this decision and inform the districts.

Mr. Murphy commented on the concentration on the Grade 4 to Grade 5 transition and asked if there were corresponding efforts to communicate the challenges of that transition. He noted the importance of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teachers communicating through this transition. Mr. Murphy asked what was being done to communicate this process with parents/teachers.

Dr. Durkin noted a concerted effort has been made for parents to understand what is different about middle school. More needs to be done and we are currently working on this process. Over the past year we have worked on the staff concerns and informed families about this, but are still working on this process.

Mr. Murphy asked if there were corresponding communication with regard to the Grade 8 to Grade 9 transition.

Dr. Durkin noted historically Attleboro has done better at the Grade 8 to Grade 9 level.

The Superintendent stressed the importance of the Freshman Orientation on August 29<sup>th</sup>. There will be two sessions (6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.) Mr. Runey will be providing a great deal of information for parents.

Mr. Murphy questioned the DDAT reference asking if this was a relatively new project.

The Superintendent noted this began over this past year and was headed up by Michelle Roy and herself.

Mr. Murphy asked if the DDAT would review data information regarding students' subsequent plans after graduation and/or could we use this as a tool to compile this information. This is a challenge a lot of districts face.

Mr. Sawyer noted this is a data point that will be discussed. The Guidance Department at the High School currently does a senior survey to compile information.

Mr. Murphy stated this is one of the reasons for DDAT, to collect difficult information.

The administration is currently focusing on systemic data. Currently there is no manpower to go beyond this as this is a very time consuming process. The high school is embarking on a new guidance system this year and this will be a key part of the new college and career readiness with the new Massachusetts Standards. There are a number of items going on that may contribute to discussions perhaps at the Curriculum & Instruction Sub-Committee meetings.

Mr. Sawyer noted this is a very valid point. If we are preparing students for college and career readiness, we should know how our 12<sup>th</sup> Grade students respond to preparedness.

Mr. Larsen noted there was a great deal of positive information about Attleboro. He thanked those involved in the presentation.

The Superintendent noted the next year goals coming forward to the committee will include a summary of the new evaluation system for teachers, administrators, and superintendents. This involves setting an achievement goal and professional practice goal. The number of goals will be much smaller, but much deeper with a rubric of how to evaluate. This will be a similar format, but smaller in length and depth.

Mr. Tyler commented on the work the administration and the AEA did with regard to teacher evaluation tool. This relates to the working conditions of 400+ teachers and staff members. Mr. Tyler commended the work between the administration and union.

### Upcoming Events:

Sodexo Back-to-School-Bash will be held on Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Studley Elementary School. Families were encouraged to attend.

High School Freshman Orientation will be held on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>: one beginning at 6:00 p.m. and one beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Bray Auditorium.

Mr. Tyler stated concerns regarding school supplies for high school students.

Mr. Runey noted this is not a standard list. Teachers would be providing this to the students during the first week of school and would be flexible.

Mr. Tyler asked if it were possible in the future to provide this information earlier to parents.

Mr. Runey will review this process.

Budget Transfers: Mr. Rose briefed the committee on transfers that were processed during the months of June and July in conjunction with the closeout of Fiscal Year 12 (see the Memorandum dated 08-10-12 from the Business attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Motion was made to accept the end of the year budget transfers as outlined in the August 10, 2012 Memorandum from the Business Manager: **Vote: 9-0**

Personnel Report: Mr. Sawyer reported: one (1) retirement; nine (9) resignations; and 18 appointments (see the attached Personnel Report dated 08-20-12 attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Calendar Adjustment: David Sawyer, Assistant Superintendent: Mr. Sawyer noted the need to adjust the calendar. The current calendar reflects an early release/professional day that was scheduled on Yom Kippur. This has been changed to September 19<sup>th</sup>. A message will be sent to parent's this week informing them of this change. The calendar will be updated on the district website.

### Committee Reports

#### Finance, Facilities and Procurement Sub-Committee

Mr. Parent reported on meeting held on 08-15-12. The following motions were made:

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the full School Committee to approve to repair the High School Parking Lot not to exceed the cost of \$25,000.00 and to be started as soon as feasible. **Vote: 9-0**

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the full School Committee to award the contract for the maintenance of grounds and athletic fields to the lowest bidder, E.D. Liston Landscaping, Inc.: **Vote: 9-0**

Mr. Murphy thanked staff members who provided these services during the bid process.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the full School Committee to increase lunch prices at the elementary, middle, and high school and the breakfast prices by \$0.10 for the 2012-2013 School Year : Discussion:

Ms. Craw stated with the economic times an increase to parents did not seem warranted. She noted the revolving account monies.

Mr. Rose stated at this point there was approximately \$331,420 in the school lunch revolving account. Mr. Rose explained this amount was a little less than what would be needed to cover approximately two-months of encumbered fees. Mr. Rose noted no increase in lunch prices for 2012-13 will result in an even higher lunch price increase in 2013-14.

Ms. Crow stated with the surplus an increase could not be justified.

Mr. Rose reiterated that we were moving into FY12 with less than two months in the account. This amount carries the district into the next fiscal year. Attleboro needs to take action on the .10 increase.

Mr. Parent did not like the increase, but stated his concern with Attleboro being non-compliant.

Ms. Furtado stated Attleboro would not be non-compliant if the difference of \$19,500 was paid.

Mr. Parent stated the proposed lunch fee was mandated by the government.

Ms. Furtado questioned if there would be a violation if the fee were paid.

Mr. Rose stated the government would like the district to follow their guidance. If we do not increase the fee we are delaying the inevitable increase to meet the regulated price.

Ms. Enegren commented on the \$19,500 fee. She questioned how the breakfast cost falls into this calculation.

Mr. Rose explained the lunch fee is calculated by using the USDA lunch equity calculator. The breakfast fee has no bearing on this cost. Mr. Rose explained the price increase does not affect the free-and-reduced lunch program.

Mr. Murphy commented on the requirements and the escalating costs of food prices. The goal is to provide a well-balanced choice for our students at a reasonable cost.

Ms. Crow commented on legal counsel's opinion regarding this matter.

Mr. Tyler stated Attleboro is responsible to pay the difference in funds. This is a requirement.

Mr. Rose explained the government will review Attleboro's accounts and realize Attleboro did not increase the fee and subsidized the funds through a revolving account.

Mr. Tyler commented on the nutritional value standards.

Ms. Enegren commented on the two month surplus monies.

Mr. Rose noted there is less than the amount necessary for two months.

Mr. Murphy cautioned the use of the term "surplus".

Ms. Crow stated the district was awaiting funds from the free and reduced program from the government.

Mr. Rose explained the free and reduced applications are completed, processed, and submitted to the government. The district does not expect receipt of these fees until the first or second week in October when these funds are certified by the state. **Vote:** 7-2 (Crow, Furtado)

A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the full School Committee the request to bid for athletic trainer services and to approve that the Administration award the bid to the best bidder : Discussion:

Ms. Crow asked where the RFP was for this request.

Mr. Parent noted this was included in the Finance packet. Mr. Parent elaborated on the background of this request.

Mr. Rose stated the bid opening would be held on August 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 a.m.

Mr. Parent noted Mr. Larsen will attend to represent the Finance Committee.

Ms. Craw stated the importance of members having this information in a timely fashion to review.

Ms. Furtado questioned the contract process and why this was different. She inquired if the funding was coming out of the athletic fund.

Mr. Rose noted in late July early August the Athletic Director brought this need to his attention. The funding for this position will come out of the athletic fund as it has in the past. **Vote:** 9-0

Notification of bills and warrants was provided.

Warrant: 5BS049: 06-13-12:	\$ 443,604.24
Warrant: 5JX050: 06-15-12:	\$ 24,357.00
Warrant: 5TES050: 06-15-12:	\$ 58,600.00
Warrant: 5BS050: 06-20-12:	\$ 510,918.54
Warrant: 5BS051: 06-27-12:	\$ 149,552.91
Warrant: 5CS001: 07-01-12:	\$1,006,116.00
Warrant: 5BS052: 07-13-12:	\$1,318,372.25
Warrant: 5CS002: 07-18-12:	\$ 1,090.68
Warrant: 5CS003: 07-25-12:	\$ 9,675.38
Warrant: 5CS004: 08-01-12:	\$ 519,240.36
Warrant: 5CS005: 08-08-12:	\$ 353,081.66
Warrant: 5CS006: 08-15-12:	\$ 171,892.17

The next meeting will be held on 09-19-12 @ 7:00 p.m.

Curriculum and Instruction Sub-Committee: The next meeting will be held on 10-16-12 @ 6:30 p.m.

Policy Sub-Committee: The next meeting will be held on 09-17-12 @ 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Craw, Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda dated 08-20-12
2. Draft Minutes: 05-21-12
3. Draft Minutes: 06-04-12
4. Draft Minutes: 06-18-12
5. 2011-12 District/Superintendent Goals Update
6. Budget Transfer Memorandum 08-10-12
7. Personnel Report dated 08-20-12
8. Warrant: 5BS049: 06-13-12
9. Warrant: 5JX050: 06-15-12
10. Warrant: 5TES050: 06-15-12
11. Warrant: 5BS050: 06-20-12
12. Warrant: 5BS051: 06-27-12
13. Warrant: 5CS001: 07-01-12
14. Warrant: 5BS052: 07-13-12
15. Warrant: 5CS002: 07-18-12
16. Warrant: 5CS003: 07-25-12
17. Warrant: 5CS004: 08-01-12
18. Warrant: 5CS005: 08-08-12
19. Warrant: 5CS006: 08-15-12