

Attleboro, Massachusetts
School Committee Meeting
Monday, June 3, 2013
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, William Larson, (Ward II), Christopher O'Neil, (Ward III), Frances Zito, (Ward V), Kenneth Parent, (Ward VI), and David Murphy, (At Large)

Absent: Teri Enegren, (Ward I)

Also Present: Pia Durkin, Ph.D., Superintendent, Tom Rose, Business Manager, Marisa McCarthy, Director of Special Education and Student Support Services, Keith Drucker, Student Representative, and Judy Nelson, Recording Secretary.

Meeting was called to Order at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

Chairman's Recognitions:

Chairman Tyler recognized the incoming Superintendent Kenneth Sheehan.

Coach Kevin Deschenes: Ms. Furtado summarized Coach Deschenes 25 years of coaching services. Mr. Deschenes thanked the committee for the honor. He thanked his wife along with all the coaches and players over the years. Mr. Deschenes still remains with the system in a teaching capacity.

Student Representatives: Keith Drucker and Analia Cuevas-Ferreras: Mr. Murphy gave a brief dissertation and each representation. Ms. Cuevas-Ferreras outlined for the committee their accomplishments for this year and hopes for the incoming representatives. Ms. Cuevas-Ferreras introduced the student representatives for the next school year 2013-14: Max Lancaster and Brandon Clark. Each student spoke briefly.

Chairman Tyler welcomed the new student representatives and explained the importance of their input in this process.

Community Update: School Sponsored Events: Student Representative, Analia Cuevas-Ferreras updated the committee on the school sponsored events (attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Open Forum: Mr. Tyler explained the guidelines of Open Forum. There were no participants.

Minutes:

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the meeting held on 04-02-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the meeting held on 04-08-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the meeting held on 04-22-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 6-0-2 (Craw, Tyler)

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the meeting held on 05-06-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the meeting held on 05-20-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the Minutes from the Public Hearing held on 05-20-13 as presented: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

Consent Agenda:

A motion was made to accept the donation in the amount of \$3,896.10 from Lifetouch to Attleboro High School for the Yearbook to be deposited in the gifts/donation line: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the donation of two gift cards from Office Depot in the amount of \$75.00 each from Melissa Bassler and her students who were awarded these cards for their efforts in the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Pennies for Patients Drive this past Spring to be used for supplies at Hill-Roberts: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

A motion was made to accept the donation of 45 Science Lab Timers with a total value of \$270 and 24 AAA batteries valued at \$20 from the Sensata Corporation to Brennan Middle School Science Department: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

New Business:

School Choice: Request for Vote regarding School Year 2013-14: Pia Durkin, Ph.D., Superintendent: The Public Hearing was held earlier this evening wherein the following was discussed:

Superintendent Durkin recommended that the Attleboro Public Schools *not* participate in School Choice program for the 2013-2014 School Year due to the challenging budgetary times.

1. The FY 14 Preliminary Budget will not accommodate the costs for additional staff associated with School Choice.
2. Historical data indicates that the limited availability of seats in the Career and Technical (CTE) program yielded minimum interest.
3. The Attleboro Public Schools could risk financial exposure in that once a student is accepted under School Choice s/he remains a student throughout his/her entire school career, thereby incurring additional costs to the district for all mandated special education and/or other services that may be deemed appropriate for the student.

A motion was made that the Attleboro Public Schools *will not* participate in the School Choice program for the 2013-2014 School Year: Discussion:

Mr. Murphy asked how many communities participated in the program and what if any benefits were there.

The Superintendent explained the process and emphasized the financial implications and in the tough economical times this would not benefit Attleboro.

Vote: 8-0

Attleboro High School 2014 Graduation at Tozier/Cassidy Field – June 6, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.: Bill Runey, Principal – Attleboro High School: Mr. Runey spoke briefly with the Committee: (correspondence attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof)

A motion was made to approve the proposed date for Attleboro High School 2014 Graduation at Tozier/Cassidy Field for June 6, 2014 @ 6:00 p.m.: Discussion: None: Vote: 8-0

Technology Advisory Committee Update: Tobey Reed, Attleboro High School; Kimberly Janssen, Willett Elementary School: Dr. Durkin briefed the Committee on the history of the Technology Advisory Council (TAC). Mr. Reed and Ms. Janssen reiterated the mission of the Technology Advisory Committee which was: develop a plan for increasing technology literacy and proficiency and maximize the use of existing resources; standardize the district's selection and use of technology resources K-12 to reduce discrepancies in the curriculum; and establish partnerships for the purpose of promoting reasonable digital citizens through improved communication and shared responsibility. The action steps for each was discussed (Instructional Technology Plan Document attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

The committee inquired how many years was Attleboro technologically behind and what can be done to assist with this process.

Most districts share the same frustration with the infrastructure connectivity. Aspen has not been utilized to its full potential at this time and training is important. The parent portal is open at the High School level and will be open at the Middle School level by September. The infrastructure connectivity is crucial in moving the district forward.

Ms. Furtado stated in order to have students bring their own devices; infrastructure is important and commented on the IT Department and the importance of using what we have within rather than outside sources.

The competitive in house grant procedure was explained. Local sources were used and not received from an outside source. The BYOD (bring your own device) is a wonderful idea, but Attleboro does not have the infrastructure support at this time.

The Responsibility Policy was explained. The current Acceptable Use Policy has been in place for 10-15 years and does not cover the guidelines needed for responsible use. This policy would apply to both teachers and students. Attleboro now has a twitter account which is easily accessible and up-to-date.

Mr. Parent asked if the infrastructure affects the needs of our special education students.

Ms. McCarthy stated it does not. When a student's IEP calls for certain technology this is always provided.

RETELL Initiative: Rethinking Equity in the Teaching of English Language Learners: Pia Durkin, Superintendent; Sonia Walmsley ELL Coordinator: Dr. Durkin and Ms. Walmsley gave an overview of the RETELL changes in instruction for English Language Learners (ELL) students. The focus on equity in education was discussed. By preparing educators to be serve the multi-faceted needs of the ELL population the goals, closing proficiency gaps and ensuring all students are college ready, can be met. The importance of strengthening the collaboration was discussed. The impact of RETELL was discussed. ELL enrollment has been increased statewide by 64% since 2000. The academic achievement gaps were discussed. The importance of RETELL was reviewed and the options were explained. (Power Point attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

Richardson Building Plans for Special Education: Marisa McCarthy, Director of Special Education & Student Support Services explained that Attleboro Public Schools in collaboration with the Attleboro School to Career Partnership have received a support grant which would allow the district to provide summer programming for students who meet the guidelines of both the 597 academic grant and the WIA-eligible In-School Youth Grant.

Under the direct supervision of CTE staff, the program would be able to make the following aesthetic updates to the outside of the building and grounds: provide plant maintenance, pruning, flowerbed design; building of walls, walkways, and/or gardens for beautifying purposes, not structural; and in addition to the great work experience this project would provide the students, it would also provide students with the opportunity to take pride in beautifying their neighborhood.

A similar program is also being scheduled for this summer, titled Project Grow, which will involve building and placing flower pots around the community, in an effort to develop soft skills, basic manual skills, and team-building skills. This project is being funded through an Attleboro Cultural Counsel Grant. Ms. McCarthy will keep the committee updated.

Transportation: Tom Rose, Business Manager, explained the purpose is to seek authorization to the School Department to cover the entire projected deficit which the School Department accrued in FY 13. There were four reasons stated: under-budgeted salary lines; an increase in the number of homeless students; an increase in number of out-of-district special education students; and the shortfall in funds for the Bloom contract. Mr. Rose noted better communication will be utilized going forward noting the city has no funds at this time to assist with this shortfall.

Mr. Tyler explained Municipal Council voted last week on the final budget numbers. Mr. Tyler spoke with the Mayor who noted there are no funds at this time to cover this deficit. If the School Committee does not direct the School Department to cover the entire projected transportation deficit, then the City could halt transportation services before the end of school year. The Auditor is responsible for ensuring that each department has sufficient funds to meet contractual obligations.

Mr. Rose explained that in FY 14, a Monthly Transportation Report will first go to the Finance Committee, then to the full School Committee, to the Mayor, and then to City Council.

Ms. Crow stated transportation cost is the responsibility of the City. To incur these costs on top of the 1.2 Million Dollar difference; which is what the district needs to provide our students with the necessary support and the figure granted by the Mayor is unfair to the school department. Ms. Crow did not appreciate the fact that the school was being given no option.

A motion was made to authorize the school administration to utilize the net school spending fund to cover the total deficit costs that exist in the FY13 Transportation line: Discussion:

Mr. Parent noted \$75,000 incurred was due to the increase in McKinney Vento costs and felt it would be fair to contemplate the splitting of the transportation cost. The following amended motion was made and seconded:

A motion was made to authorize the school administration to utilize the net school spending fund to cover the total or partial deficit costs that exist in the FY13 Transportation line: Discussion:

Mr. Murphy noted the City Council vote last week. The City has no money to cover the deficit. He commended Mr. Rose for assuming responsibility for this mistake.

Mr. Tyler reiterated that there were no funds at this time. The school needs to move forward and ensure this mistake is not repeated in the future.

Mr. Parent asked if the transportation amount budgeted for the FY14 Transportation costs was going to be sufficient.

Mr. Rose stated the FY14 figures were accurate.

Mr. O'Neil commented the State was supposed to cover the McKinney-Vento costs through a circuit breaker line.

Mr. Rose explained the process and the amounts provided by the City.

A motion was made to authorize the school administration to utilize the net school spending fund to cover the total or partial deficit costs that exist in the FY13 Transportation line: Vote: 6 – 2 (Crow; Furtado). Motion passes.

Mr. Tyler repeated the first motion: A motion was made to authorize the school administration to utilize the net school spending fund to cover the total deficit costs that exist in the FY13 Transportation line: Vote: 0-8 Motion fails

Personnel Report: Dr. Durkin reported: one (1) retirement; one (1) resignation; and two (2) appointments (see Personnel Report attached hereto and therefore made a part hereof).

FY14 Budget: Chairman Tyler gave an overview of the FY14 process. There is no leeway or funds available from the city-side. Mr. Tyler stated the committee will have to revisit the budget and make some very difficult decisions.

Superintendent Durkin gave an overview of the FY14 Budget and explained the staff requests and reasons. The information was based on real numbers; needs of the schools for example: Hyman Fine and Hill-Roberts need for an adjustment counselor to deal with behavioral needs; and at Willett the increase in autism students requires the expertise of a board certified behavioral analyst.

Chairman Tyler noted the upcoming NEASC re-accreditation process and the need for increased staff in certain areas to meet this accreditation.

Mr. Parent re-iterated the majority of the budget covers the contractual obligations of the district and an increase in healthcare costs. He encouraged community members to contact their city council representatives to stress the importance of staffing the classrooms to meet the needs of our children.

Ms. Crow noted the feeling of being pressured stating there should be other avenues. The Mayor makes the final decision on the budget brought forward to City Council. Ms. Crow stated our children are the cornerstone of this community. Ms. Crow encouraged parents to speak out for their children.

Mr. Rose noted the administration appears before City Council on June 12 at 7:10 p.m. to explain our needs.

Mr. Murphy noted the budget process is a year long process. The schools rely on the financial support of the different partnerships.

Ms. Furtado stressed the importance of collaboration between the city and the schools.

Committee Reports

Finance, Facilities and Procurement Sub-Committee

Notification of bills and warrants:

Warrant 5CS046	05-22-13	\$533,517.79
Warrant 5CS047	05-29-13	\$505,350.68

The next meeting will be held on 06-05-13 @ 7:00 p.m.

Policy Sub-Committee: The next meeting will be held on 06-10-13 @ 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crow,
Secretary

Attachments:

1. Agenda dated June 3, 2013
2. School Sponsored Events
3. Personnel Report dated 06-03-13
4. RETELL Initiative: Rethinking Equity in the Teaching of English Language Learners Power Point
5. 5CS046 – 5-22-13
6. 5CS047 – 5-29-13
7. Transportation Memorandum
8. Richardson Building Plan Memorandum