

School Committee Minutes
Town Hall Meeting Room
Monday, March 15, 2010
7:30 p.m.

Members attending: Keith Cheveralls, Stu Sklar, Patty Wenger, Piali De, Maureen Babcock, Thomas Jefferson, Lorraine Leonard and Virginia Justicz (attended to vote on the budget items only)

Chairman Cheveralls called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Stu Sklar made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded seeking to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2010 meeting as amended.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Patty Wenger made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded seeking to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2010 meeting as amended.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

2010/11 Calendar SC deliberations and Vote

Stu Sklar made a motion and Piali De seconded to not make any changes to the school calendar, as proposed by Dr. Jefferson, for 2010-11, relative to days off for religious holidays, and to form a committee, comprised of School Committee members, the public, administration and teachers, to thoroughly examine this issue starting in May and reporting back to the school committee by the end of June with a recommendation as to how to handle religious holidays.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

The Chair opened the meeting up to Interested Citizen's Commentary for which there were several students and parents who spoke in favor of having the Jewish holidays recognized as "no school days". The committee agreed that the school calendar needs to be discussed as a community issue and that a committee be formed to come up with the best situation for Harvard regarding all religious holidays and how they should be recognized.

Student Report

Molly O'Rourke Friel reported that the Student Council enjoyed meeting with the School Committee and discussing classes the students would like to add to the course list at The Bromfield School. Molly also thanked the students who spoke in support of recognizing

the Jewish holidays by having no school. Brian Holmes reported that the drama club participated in this year's Drama Festival and will advance to the State Finals to be held March 25, 26 and 27 in Boston. The Fed Challenge team competed in Boston and did well. Gavin Arnold reported that spring sports have started

Subcommittee Report

Stu Sklar reported that the The Bromfield School 9th graders trip to Washington DC was a fantastic success. The MCAS testing will begin March 23rd. The last day of school is scheduled for June 18th. The Bromfield School is in the process of forming committees to participate in the NEASC accreditation process. Any community members or students interested in joining a committee should contact Mr. O'Shea. The NEASC team will visit The Bromfield School in either the spring or fall of 2012.

Keith Cheveralls gave a big thanks to the Harvard PTO for the tremendous effort put forth to host the Festival of Cultures event held at the Hildreth Elementary School. There were 21 cultures represented and the entire evening was fabulous.

Patty Wenger reported the HES school council parent survey will be going out sometime around April vacation. The playground committee is moving forwarding, looking at fund raising options and soliciting play structure information.

Maureen Babcock reported on the DEAC meeting of March 2, 2010 that the committee has approved a survey to go out in May to all Deven's parents pertaining to education. Maureen also reported that there are two housing development projects that have been approved at Devens. The development of 20 green homes to be completed in approximately 18 month. Reconstruction of Vicksburg Square which will not begin until at least 2011.

Superintendent Report

Thomas Jefferson reported that the HES Festival of Cultures was a great community experience met with tremendous energy and great enthusiasm. Tom also reported on the national issues in education and that Massachusetts has been out front with state standards.

Recognition and Gifts

Harvard Schools Trust – Clean Team project

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded seeking to accept \$1,837 from the Harvard Schools Trust for the Clean Team Project.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Budget Final SC Deliberations and Votes

Chairman Cheveralls started by withdrawing the tabled motion (from the meeting held March 1, 2010) to reinstate the Foreign Language Department Leader at Bromfield. The committee then discussed the need for a fourth kindergarten section making three full day section and one half day section.

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to create a fourth kindergarten section, which will be a half day program, funded through additional revenues received by the third full day program.

Stu Sklar amended the motion to include taking 5 choice students to help fund the half day program. The motion did not receive a second. Piali stated that we should see what happens with enrollment over the summer before making a decision to add more choice students in kindergarten.

VOTED (3/1) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Nay), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Piali De made a motion and Stu Sklar seconded authorizing the Harvard School Committee to continue to participate in the school choice program.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Stu Sklar made a motion and Piali De seconded authorizing the superintendent to fill school choice slots as noted for the 2010-2011 school year.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

School Choice slots for the 2010/2011 school year are available in Grades 2, 4, 7 and 9.

The committee discussed the athletic user fee override of \$107,000 being contingent upon identifying a funding source from the school budget of \$31,000.

Stu Sklar made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to appropriate the money from the Deven's Revolving Account to put toward the Athletic user fees requirement.

VOTED (3/2) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Nay), Piali De (Nay).

Patty Wenger made a motion and Piali De seconded to move to approve the Harvard Public Schools omnibus budget for 2011 as specified in the FY 2011 budget book date December 22, 2009 and all other sources of revenue and expenses reviewed as part of the FY2011 operating budget

VOTED (5/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Virginia Justicz (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

The budget public hearing will be April 12, 2010, it will be announced to the community so that those interested can attend. The budget hearing will be scheduled to occur before the regular scheduled school committee meeting on April 12.

Superintendent Performance Evaluation

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded that the School Committee enter into executive session, as authorized by Chapter 39, Section 23B of the Massachusetts General Laws, at a meeting for which 48 hours notice has been given, for the purpose of discussing;

1. Non union personnel contract matters related to performance review processes.

Following the executive session, the Committee will reconvene into open session

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

The Committee reconvened from executive sessions to report that the committee will reconvene at a time to be determined in the near future to discuss the process and procedure to implement the Superintendent's evaluation.

Future Agenda Items

Curriculum discussion – curriculum review process.

Piali De made a motion and Patty Wenger seconded to move to adjourn.

VOTED (4/0) to accept the motion. Stu Sklar (Yes), Patty Wenger (Yes), Keith Cheveralls (Yes), Piali De (Yes).

Minutes submitted,

Mary Zadroga
Recording Secretary