School Committee Minutes

Upstairs of the Town Hall

Monday, February 27, 2017

6:00 p.m.

Members attending: SusanMary Redinger, Mary Traphagen, Jon Green, Nancy Lancellotti, Maureen Babcock, Linda Dwight. Absent: Patty Wenger and Peter Rowe

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

SusanMary Redinger read the Vision Statement.

**Open to Interested Citizens’ Commentary**

None

**Special Education Report** – Tabled

**Grant Approval –**

The following gifts were presented for approval:

Parent donation to Robotics Club - $780.76

PTO Grant to The Bromfield School teachers - $2,879.65

Fanfare Gift – All State Educator Fees - $591.27

Fanfare Gift – Tuba Case - $574.00

Mary Traphagen made the motion and Nancy Lancellotti seconded to approve the gifts as presented.

VOTE: 4/0

SusanMary Redinger asked Dr. Dwight to extend the School Committee’s appreciation for the generous gifts.

**Student Report**

Chloe Cushing reported that The Bromfield School held the Snowball dance a few weeks ago. It was well attended and very fun. The photo booth was a hit and provided students a picture to have as a dance keepsake. Winter sports have ended. Today was students first day back after winter break and teachers were great debriefing students to get them on track for learning new material. Spring sports tryouts are coming up soon.

**Superintendent Report**

Dr. Dwight reported on the following:

* Arrowstreet and their educational consultant held two of three 3.5 hour workshops with members of the Visioning Committee. The end goal of these workshops is to inform the Educational Plan required by MSBA. The focus has been on defining the Vision for education that will be supported by the design of the building project.
* Members involved with the Building Committee and Visioning Committee visited two new schools in Haverhill and Concord to gain ideas and take pictures.
* The School Building Committee met on February 2nd to hear preliminary reports of the HES building envelope and to approve the site testing costs.
* An invitation was put in the Harvard Press through “Chalk Talk” inviting community members to attend a Hildreth Elementary Building Project Informational Forum on March 2nd at 7 PM at Volunteers Hall.
* The Inclusion Committee divided into different groups as interest in the work drew many new community members. After the January town-wide meeting, the Inclusion Committee created a small Steering Committee to help move discussions into action. The Steering Committee met on February 8th and progress is being made. Look for events to be advertised and held in the near future.
* Mary Traphagen, Peter Rowe and Dr. Dwight met with the Finance Committee on Saturday, January 28th to review the schools’ budget. They shared the responses to their questions and provided additional information. They then contacted SusanMary Redinger and asked that the school reduce their budget by $65,000.
* Scott Hoffman and Dr. Dwight enjoyed attending the annual Worcester County Scholar’s Lunch event with William Zhao and students from neighboring districts.
* Besides sports events, dances and other experiences, the students at Bromfield participated in the Ludo Festival of Cultures and the Winter Band Concert. Both events were well organized and gave students a chance to demonstrate their talents and diverse interests.

**Update on the Building Project**

Dr. Dwight updated the Committee on the progress being made in the feasibility stage of the project. Arrowstreet has been assessing the current state of the kindergarten wing as well as the rest of the building. There are basically three options being investigated at this point. (1) take down and replace the kindergarten wing and bring the rest of the building up to code (2) a more robust renovation which could include replacing the gym, moving classrooms around, adding a wing and changing the design of the building (3) building a new school on the field next to the current school and then tear down current school after the new school is finished. There is also discussion about the possibility of moving sixth grade and the administration offices into a new building and how that could be beneficial. The cost and energy efficiencies will be considered into the decision. The preferred solution will need to be determined by June. The School Committee will need to give an update to the town on the building project at the Annual Town Meeting.

**Calendar change for April half-day**

Due to the town election being held on Tuesday, April 4th the Committee discussed changing the scheduled half day from Wednesday, April 5th to Tuesday, April 4th.

Nancy Lancellotti made a motion and Jon Green seconded to move to switch our scheduled PD half day from Wednesday April 5th to Tuesday, April 4th to accommodate town elections.

VOTE 4/0

**Student Advisory topics**

The Committee came up with the following topics to discuss at the Student Advisory meeting on March 10th.

Bathroom/Locker room updates, Course catalog – descriptions, Homework, Prom bus, Youth Risk Survey data – guest speaker ideas, Sixth grade move to HES.

**District Improvement Plan – mid-year review**

Dr. Dwight presented the 2016 mid-year update to the Harvard Public Schools District Improvement Plan. The presentation identified each Core Value (Student Achievement, Personal Growth, Partnership, Resources and School Climate). The majority of the goals are 100% complete. Expanding parent involvement is 75% complete and Student Data Management is 60% complete.

The Committee discussed future initiatives for the next three year District Improve Plan including restructuring professional development, using technology as an integrated learning tool, attendance, differentiated instruction, SAMR model, student support, PowerSchool integration and dashboard expansion. Dr. Dwight along with Leadership team will take feedback and work to develop goals that will be presented in a Draft District Improvement Plan to the School Committee at a future meeting.

**Review meeting minutes**

SusanMary made the motion with no objection to approve the minutes of the January 23rd meeting as amended.

VOTE 4/0

**Report out from Liaisons**

Maureen Babcock reported that closings for 10 of the 18 homes at the Devens Emerson Green Development have occurred. There are two school aged children who will enter the district. The next phase is scheduled to break ground this spring. DEAC is scheduled to meet on March 7th.

Nancy Lancellotti reported that the restarted Health Fair will be held this year at Bromfield. Multiple grades will participate in the fair. The School Council has divided into two subcommittees; one will be focusing on climate and the other on handbook for the next few meetings.

Jon Green – No update for HCTV. SEPAC has sent out their survey and are collecting response.

SusanMary reported that the Budget Subcommittee needs to meet to make a recommendation on the budget cuts. Also the Committee needs to get back to Brian from HEAC with regard to the capital requests. Our understanding was that none of the projects would move forward without approval of the grant, but Brian’s understanding is that there are items that are considered maintenance items that would not be covered by the grant. It is too late to get those items approved by CPIC so we will need to find funding or ask Brian if this can wait a year.

Town resident, Nate Finch sent SusanMary Redinger an email seeking the stance the schools were taking on the issue of transgender bathrooms given that President Trump rescinded the directive. We would like to get information out to reassure people that transgender youth are protected by state law. Massachusetts state law allows students to choose which bathroom they will use based on the gender they identify with. They also can meet with principals for special accommodations. The School Committee will craft a letter in support of the Massachusetts state law that protects transgender youth to send to State Senator Benson and/or Eldridge.

Mary Traphagen - Meetings tomorrow and next week that have already been talked about.

**Future Agenda Item**

School Committee Self-Assessment

Recommendation regarding Athletic user fees

Approve school calendar for 2017/2018

Public Hearing on the budget

Budget book

Special Education Report

Parent Survey

Youth at Risk Survey

**Open to Interested Citizens’ and School Committee Commentary**

Marty Green, Old Littleton Road - can the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) be incorporated into our existing budget for 2017/2018.

**Closing Commentary**

Dr. Dwight reminded everyone that the Science Fair will be held this Friday.

Mary Traphagen – looking forward to judging

Nancy Lancellotti – happy to help Mary judge

SusanMary Redinger reminded everyone that the Hildreth Elementary School public forum will be held Thursday at 7:00 at Volunteers Hall. There will be babysitting available at HES in the Bridges room.

SusanMary Redinger made a motion and Mary Traphagen seconded to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Harvard Teacher’s Association.

Roll call vote

Green (Aye), Lancellotti (Aye) Redinger (Aye) and Traphagen (Aye)

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Zadroga