



DRACUT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING Minutes

DATE: August 8, 2011

LOCATION: Harmony Hall

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Bonita Elie, Chairperson

Mr. Matthew Sheehan, 1st Vice Chairperson (Mr. Sheehan entered the meeting at 6:15 p.m.)

Mr. Ronald Mercier

Dr. Michael McNamara

ABSENT:

Mr. Michael Miles, 2nd Vice Chairperson

SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Stacy Scott, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Thomas Rose, School Business Administrator

Attorney Edward Morris

Cynthia Curtis, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

The Regular Session Meeting of the School Committee was called to order by Chairperson Bonita Elie at Harmony Hall at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of entering into Executive Session.

Chairperson Elie read into the record the purpose for entering into Executive Session was for an update on negotiations that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect and to discuss Safety and Security Issues.

1. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Dr. McNamara to enter into Executive Session for the reasons stated.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Mercier Yes

Dr. McNamara Yes

Mrs. Elie Yes

The regular session meeting was recessed at 6:00 p.m.

The regular session meeting was reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Chairperson Elie called for the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence for Billy McCabe, brother of Paula McCabe-Murphy, high school teacher.

COMMUNITY INPUT:

Richard Balbot, 20 Blueberry Hill Road, was present to express his concerns about increased class sizes at Campbell Elementary School. Mr. Balbot read a letter that he had submitted to the

Principal regarding a concern of a teacher at the Campbell School indicating a need for smaller class size.

Kim Tyler, 88 Sesame Street, was present to express her concerns about increased class size at the Campbell Elementary School, specifically the 3rd grade class size.

Mr. Tom Friberg, 7 Bernard Road was also present to express his concerns about class size at the Campbell Elementary School. Mr. Friberg had concern that no notice is being sent home to parents.

SUPERINTENDENT'S INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

Projected Enrollments

Dr. Scott indicated that three positions were eliminated with the reduction in the budget. Two positions eliminated were at Campbell School and one at Greenmont Avenue. The class size will increase; however, the numbers are not finalized and could fluctuate. Dr. Scott noted that a class size of 25 or 26 students is not unusual. Dr. Scott noted that administration will continue to look at ways to reduce class size and proposals will be made to the board if necessary.

Mrs. Elie noted that the classrooms at Greenmont and Parker Avenue are smaller in size and need to have a lower enrollment.

Dr. McNamara noted his time as a school Principal and understands the class size concern. Dr. McNamara noted to parents that you cannot pinpoint the enrollment until school begins to determine if students arrive. Many of the larger classes have a Paraprofessional assigned to that classroom. The district will look at redistricting if necessary. Dr. McNamara also noted that full day Kindergarten throughout the district has been a priority for the Board for many years.

Dr. Scott noted that information regarding enrollment will be placed on the website and a letter to parents if necessary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to approve the June 27, 2011 school committee meeting minutes.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

3. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to approve the June 27, 2011 executive session meeting minutes.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Attorney Morris noted that no items are to be released at this time.

4. Motion by Dr. McNamara, seconded by Mr. Sheehan to approve the July 22, 2011 special school committee meeting minutes.

Motion passes 3-1 with one abstention.

Mr. Mercier abstained from voting as he was not present at the July 22nd meeting.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND PAYROLLS:

Bills and Payrolls were signed as follows:

Warrant 2012001 by Mr. Mercier, Mr. Sheehan and Dr. McNamara

Warrant 2012002 by Mr. Mercier, Mr. Sheehan and Dr. McNamara

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance sub-Committee Update:

Mr. Sheehan gave an update on the Finance Sub-Committee meeting that was held on August 8th prior to the regular meeting. Discussion at that meeting included, but not limited to, revolving accounts, end of the year process, organization chart and status reports. Dr. McNamara also reported that any balances in the revolving accounts including school choice, transportation, cafeteria and athletics will be carried over to start the new school year.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 24th Junior High grade 7 orientation
August 25th Englesby Grade 5 Scavenger Hunt
August 30th Orientation for new teachers

SUPERINTENDENT’S INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Staffing Announcements

Dr. Scott indicated that proposals for new positions were presented to the Finance Sub-Committee. Dr. McNamara stated that these positions were reviewed at the Finance meeting and are being recommended to the full Board.

It Director and Consulting Support:

This position will provide instructional technology support in collaboration with the Town.

Choice Program Supervisor and Behavior Management Specialist:

This position is needed to oversee the programs at Dracut High and Lakeview Junior High.

District Wide Vice Principal:

This position will support our current administrative staff including elementary schools. This will eliminate the part time substitute vice principal.

Dracut High Nurse:

This position will allow for a more reasonable nurse to student ratio.

Teaching Intern – Parker Avenue School:

This position will allow the district to create opportunities for Paraprofessionals who may obtain their teaching certificate. They will observe and assist teachers.

Teaching Vice Principal – Parker Avenue School:

This position is being created to replace the part time principal at this school and will be supported by the teaching intern.

Guidance Supervisor:

This position will oversee the guidance department at the high school and junior high school.

Owners Project Manager:

As required for the high school renovation project, the district is to have a licensed Owners Project Manager; this position will supervise all aspects of the high school renovation project. This OPM will be required to work beyond the normal workday to attend meetings with architects and engineers.

Discussion was held regarding these positions and the proposed stipend positions. Positions that are required to be posted will be posted according to policies and contracts.

5. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Dr. McNamara to approve the request for new positions as presented by Superintendent Scott.

Discussion was held regarding job descriptions. Job descriptions will be created for each of these positions. Mr. Mercier inquired if the OPM salary could be part of the high school project. Dr. Scott replied that this position is the obligation of the district to have an internal project manager.

Mr. Mercier inquired about classroom teacher positions being created. Dr. Scott noted that as the needs approach the proposals will be brought before the Committee.

Dr. McNamara asked that with the anticipation of the end of the summer and the issue with student enrollment, that streets involved with redistricting be reviewed. Dr. Scott and Mr. Rose will review this request.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Mercier	Yes
Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes
Mrs. Elie	Yes

Strategic Plan:

Dr. Scott presented a Strategic Plan to the Committee for their review and commented on the following initiatives: Aligned curriculum management system, support excellence in performance of educators, support excellence in performance of administrators, build information management and technology infrastructure, and streamline and restructure to support organizational learning and decision making.

After review from the Committee this plan will be placed on the website. Dr. McNamara suggested the continuation of visits with the PTOs. Mr. Sheehan suggested sending a letter to the PTOs letting them know that the Board is available to answer any questions with the start of the new school year. Mrs. Elie suggested that Dr. Diaz and Janet Barry be part of those meetings.

End of the Year Report:

Dr. Scott presented the Board with an End of the Year Report. This report includes a summary of the level three findings, defines where challenges are, speaks to recommendations, and plans to resolve challenges. This report will also be placed on the website after review by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

Dracut High Renovation Project Update:

Dr. Scott noted that the project is in the design phase and budgets have been solidified. The groundbreaking for the high school has been moved up. The furnishings and equipment needed for the high school is being reviewed.

MASBO Transportation Operations Review:

Mr. Rose briefed the committee on the report provided by MASBO. The plan makes recommendations such as an increase in fees, a reduction of two buses and the consolidation of bus stops. The district will do what we can to implement recommendations.

Dr. McNamara commented on some of the suggestions to look at smaller buses, the fuel escalation clause, a decrease in the number of buses, the consolidation of bus stops and the need for cameras on each school bus.

Mr. Sheehan suggested future budget workshops to review the two plans from MASBO and have an open discussion regarding the recommendations from both documents. Dr. Scott will create a device to monitor the recommendations.

MASBO Finance Review:

Mr. Rose briefed the committee on the report provided by MASBO. Many interviews and conversations were held with all staff. The district will review and implement plans where we can. Student activities, job descriptions and written procedures will be reviewed.

Dr. McNamara commented on some areas that need to be reviewed including the transfer of funds, audits, internal audits and policy review.

Dr. McNamara inquired about the technology report that was completed. Dr. Scott noted that this was done for free by a prospective partner and not the same type of audit. This report gave an assessment of the district's current program and initial plan for technology.

Superintendent's Evaluation:

Dr. Scott received an overall rating of 3.58. Mr. Sheehan thanked MASC for their help with providing an evaluation tool and with the hiring process for a Superintendent. All committee members recognized Dr. Scott for his job performance during high first year as Superintendent and all look forward to working with Dr. Scott in the future. Dr. Scott thanked the Committee and valued the partnerships with the Board and looks to move forward to next year.

OLD BUSINESS:

6. Motion by Mr. Mercier, seconded by Mr. Sheehan to suspend the bylaws and reconsider having the second meeting in August to be held on August 22nd.

Mr. Mercier indicated that with the start of school and upcoming events that the Committee should schedule the second meeting in August.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Mercier	Yes
Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes
Mrs. Elie	Yes

NEW BUSINESS:

Junior High School trip to Washington:

7. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to approve the junior high school trip request to Washington, DC pending review of the insurance documents by legal counsel.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

Junior High School trip to Gettysburg:

8. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to approve the junior high school trip request to Gettysburg pending review of the insurance documents by legal counsel.

Vote: Unanimously Approved

The Committee recognized Ms. Duda for always providing accurate information for her trip requests. Mr. Sheehan asked Dr. Scott to reach out to Ms. Duda and thank her on behalf of the board.

Mr. Sheehan noted the quote at the bottom of the agenda that other items not listed on the agenda may be brought up for discussion. Mr. Sheehan requested that with the recent issue of missing funds at the high school that this item be placed on the agenda for the next school meeting.

Mr. Mercier requested information on the bids for custodial supplies. Mr. Rose indicated that he had not seen any documents and he will follow up on this inquiry.

Mr. Mercier inquired about the contract for the School Business Administrator as it is due to expire. This should be discussed at a future meeting.

Mr. Mercier provided the Board with information regarding Global Green contests. Schools could win up to \$65,000 to help renovate a school. Administration will review this document.

9. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to recess the regular session meeting and reenter into the recessed Executive Session meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Mercier	Yes
Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes
Mrs. Elie	Yes

The regular session meeting was recessed at 9:05 p.m. for purpose of entering into a recessed executive session meeting and will be reconvened for the purposes of adjournment only.

The regular session meeting was reconvened at 9:42 for the purpose of adjournment only.

ADJOURNMENT:

10. Motion by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Mercier to adjourn the regular session meeting of the Dracut School Committee.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Mercier	Yes
Dr. McNamara	Yes
Mr. Sheehan	Yes
Mrs. Elie	Yes

The regular session meeting of the Dracut School Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Curtis
Recording Secretary

List of documents and exhibits:

1. School Committee agenda packet