



Framingham Public Schools

Robert A. Tremblay, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Heather A. Connolly, Chair • Jim Kelly, Vice Chair • Richard A. Finlay, Clerk
Michelle Brosnahan • Cheryl Gordon • Beverly Hugo • Scott Wadland
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SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE: September 5, 2017

LOCATION: Desmarais Room, King Elementary School

MEETING CALLED BY: Chair, Heather A. Connolly @ 7:01 PM

PRESENT: Richard A. Finlay
Michelle Brosnahan
Cheryl Gordon
Beverly Hugo
Scott Wadland
Jim Kelly

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent
Dr. Edward J. Gotgart, Executive Director of Business Operations
Ms. Inna Kantor London, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Dr. Frank Tiano, Assistant Superintendent for Community Development & Engagement
Mr. Jerry Bloomfield, Member of the Public
Mr. Dick Weader, Member of the Public
Mr. Bob Bowles, Member of the Public

MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC

Mr. Bloomfield shared that Framingham is in the bottom third of the Boston Magazine School ratings, and he shared that affordability is the top criteria for families when choosing school district. He stated that that the school budget is in conflict with the affordability criteria. He requested that budget issues be communicated clearly to the community, especially around the building development and moves. He shared that there is an upcoming meeting on October 24th at the Fuller Middle School with the MA School Building Authority, and he requested that the School Committee communicate this to the community.

FY18 BUDGET UPDATE BY MARY ELLEN KELLEY, CFO

DOCUMENT:
FY18 Budget Update

Ms. Connolly shared that on July 25th Mary Ellen Kelley presented a FY18 agenda update to the School Committee. At the July 25th meeting the Committee requested that Mary Ellen come back and present at the first regular meeting of the 2017-2018 school year.

Ms. Kelley, Framingham Chief Financial Officer, explained the reasons for budget adjustments at the Fall Town Meeting. She shared that Chapter 70 Aid is lower than expected this year due to being at full support, and because Framingham economics improved by 8% which changed the formula. She explained a proposal for covering the shortfall through shifting funds in the School budget, Circuit Breaker and the reserve budget. She shared that ultimately the bottom line will not be impacted by these shifts in funds. She explained that by covering the shortfall this way Framingham avoids an increase to the currently 2% levy. She shared that this plan allows the town to keep the tax burden reserve steady. Ms. Kelley shared that this proposal is preventing a large burden on the tax payers. She explained the appropriation of funds for the upcoming change in government.

The Committee asked how this shifting of funds within the School Budget will impact the budget base for the FY19 budget. Ms. Kelley explained that this will be taken into consideration for the FY19 budget. The Committee requested additional details regarding Special Education costs and how shifting funds impacts the Special Education budget. Questions and discussion followed.

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

Dr. Tremblay welcomed everyone back to school for the 2017-2018 school year. Dr. Tremblay acknowledged and thanked Ms. Brosnahan for reaching out to the State Auditor's office to seek relief. He welcomed Ms. Inna London, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources to the table.

Dr. Tremblay shared that the Resiliency for Life (RFL) program has made some great strides and that there have been several meetings including principals and the RFL Board to discuss how to best meet the needs of the students. He shared that the district in collecting data on the use of RFL services after school and the reason for the use of services. Dr. Tremblay shared that a key item that is being discussed is the responsibility of the RFL Board now that the district has assumed responsibility for the costs of the program. The Committee asked if the RFL Program is currently in Fuller, and Dr. Tremblay shared that the goal is to have the program up and running in Fuller by the end of this school year.

Dr. Tremblay provided an updated of the SAGE (Gifted and Talented) Program by sharing that Dr. Diaz has taken over the leadership of the SAGE program. He also thanked the SAGE teachers for the curriculum development, and stated that he is looking forward to seeing the specific curriculum. Dr. Tremblay shared that some of the key questions are: who is the program serving, and is there consistency in programming. Dr. Tremblay shared that 10% of the Framingham student population is participating in the SAGE program. He shared that one of the goals is to make the program accessible to all of the students in Framingham. Dr. Tremblay shared that while there is a Department Head position for SAGE that is funded, but that there is not currently anyone in the position. The Committee asked if there will be any changes to the SAGE program expected in the FY19 budget. Dr. Tremblay stated that he cannot answer that at this time. He stated that the goal is equality of programs across the district.

Dr. Tiano presented a brief update on the progress of the Level 3 schools. He shared that the support is provided by DSAC who has helped the district identify strength and resources. He shared that the district has entered into a proactive turn-around program provided by the state for Level 3 schools. He shared that Wilson, Brophy and McCarthy volunteered to enter into this turnaround program, and that the state is a willing partner in this program. He shared

that the three schools have been connected with other districts in the state to network and learn. The Committee asked when DSAC began working with the district, and Dr. Tiano shared that they began in 2010. Dr. Tremblay shared that the needle has not moved in the Level 3 Schools and in the District in the past seven years, and that is why the process is changing this year, and why he did not sign the initial turnaround plan. Dr. Tremblay stated that he feels confident in the updated turnaround plan will move the needle. Questions and discussion followed.

Dr. Gotgart spoke about the 3 million dollar surplus and reminded the Committee that 2.5 million dollars was carried over from 2016, making the surplus actually \$800,000. He shared that there has been a conscious effort on the part of the administration to be as frugal and economical as possible without sacrificing or compromising on student services. The Committee requested that the district make all of the financial terms and activity clear to the public by defining terms such as Circuit Breaker and Chapter 70. The Committee requested that the technology line item for the district be addressed in the FY19 Budget. Questions and discussion followed.

Dr. Gotgart shared that the Framingham Board of Health has requested the use of the previously occupied Vision Center space at the Fuller School. The Committee requested that this be placed on an upcoming agenda.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

DOCUMENTS:

Superintendent Mid-Year Evaluation

School Committee Year-Long Agenda

School Committee Goals – Draft

July 25, 2017 School Committee Workshop Minutes

August 23, 2017 School Committee Workshop Minutes

SUPERINTENDENT MID-YEAR EVALUATION:

Ms. Connolly directed the committee to look at the Superintendent Mid-Year Evaluation that was developed during the August 23rd School Committee Workshop. The Committee requested that the data provided for the evaluation is clear and concise, and that the data include the development and progress of the District Strategic Plan.

Motion: Mr. Wadland

Second: Ms. Brosnahan

Vote: 7-0-0 to accept the Superintendent Mid-Year Evaluation.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE YEAR-LONG AGENDA:

Ms. Connolly shared that there was a great deal of research conducted over the summer on how surrounding towns handle their year-long School Committee agenda handling. She shared that based on this research Jodi has put together the calendar for the 2017-2018 school year, along with all of the details behind the calendar including the presentation schedule.

Motion: Mr. Finlay

Second: Mr. Wadland

Vote: 7-0-0 to accept the School Committee Year-Long Agenda.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE GOALS (SEPTEMBER- DECEMBER 31, 2017):

Ms. Connolly shared that during the workshop on August 23, 2017 with Tony Bent, the School Committee drafted goals for September through December 31st. The Committee requested an addition to goal number 3 to include current district policies.

Motion: Ms. Hugo

Second: Mr. Finlay

Vote: 7-0-0 to accept the School Committee Goals as amended for the period of September 6 – December 31, 2017.

MOVE OR CANCEL THE 9/19 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING:

Ms. Connolly shared that it has come to the Committee's attention that the Framingham High School Open House directly conflicts with our scheduled School Committee meeting on September 19th. As many members have children attending the High School and we do not want the public to have to choose between the School Committee meeting or the Open House she requested that the Committee discuss and vote on how to handle this meeting.

Ms. Connolly presented two options; cancel the meeting all together and move any items to the October 3rd meeting or to move the meeting to Monday, September 18, which Dr. Tremblay is unable to attend. She shared that her recommendation is that we cancel the meeting on September 19th.

Motion: Mr. Finlay

Second: Ms. Hugo

Vote: 7-0-0 to cancel the September 19, 2017 School Committee Meeting due to a conflict with the Framingham High School Open House.

MEETING MINUTES:

Motion: Mr. Kelly

Second: Mr. Finlay

Vote: 7-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes from the July 25, 2017 School Committee Workshop.

Motion: Mr. Finlay

Second: Mr. Kelly

Vote: 7-0-0 to approve the meeting minutes from the August 23, 2017 School Committee Workshop.

BILLS AND PAYROLL

For the record, Ms. Hugo read the warrants that were signed on August 29, 2017.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Epstein asked if any supporting documents from the meeting can be posted, and commented on leveling all of the schools, not just the Level 3 schools. He asked if there are any other options for using the surplus, such as technology. Dr. Gotgart responded that capital items cannot be purchased using the surplus funds. He shared that the School District is not allowed to buy any items that are for the following fiscal year.

Mr. Bowles stated that he was happy to hear about the Level 3 schools and that the legislature should adjust measurements and regulations around ESL learns.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Mr. Finlay
Second: Ms. Hugo
Vote: 7-0-0 to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 PM

These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee at the October 3, 2017 School Committee Meeting.

These minutes were sent to the Town of Framingham for posting on October 6, 2017.