



Framingham Public Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Adam Freudberg, Chair • Gloria Pascual, Vice Chair • Tracey Bryant, Clerk
Noval Alexander • Geoffrey Epstein • Richard A. Finlay
Beverly Hugo • Tiffanie Maskell • Scott Wadland
Yvonne M. Spicer, Mayor
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Telephone: 508-626-9121 Fax: 508-877-4240

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: April 24, 2019 at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Framingham High School - Room

MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Adam Freudberg

PRESENT: Noval Alexander
Tracey Bryant
Geoffrey Epstein
Richard A. Finlay
Adam Freudberg
Beverly Hugo
Tiffanie Maskell
Mayor Yvonne Spicer

ABSENT: Gloria Pascual
Scott Wadland

ALSO PRESENT: Nicholas Small, Chair of Student Advisory Committee
Dr. Tremblay, Superintendent
Lincoln Lynch, Director of Finance and Operations
Judy Styer, Director of Health and Wellness
Amy Bright, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education
Dr. Sam Wong, Framingham Director of Public Board of Health
Casey Bell, Manager of Secondary Out of School Time
Reyhada Shad, Framingham High School Out of School
Time Coordinator

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

46 Call to Order

47 The Chair announced that this meeting was being broadcast live on local cable, as well as for
48 later playback, and on Facebook Live. He said that the Committee met earlier in executive
49 session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation at a request from
50 an employee to hear a grievance, to discuss the status of the lease for the Farley and Perini
51 Buildings, and to review previous executive session minutes to be in compliance with reviewing
52 the minutes at reasonable intervals to determine if the provisions of the subsection warrant
53 continued non-disclosure, as well as to approve recent executive session minutes. He added
54 that members Scott Wadland and Gloria Pascual will be absent from the meeting due to prior
55 commitments.

56

57 Public Comment

58 Brendan Murray started by saying that he works for Stand for Children, which he said is a non-
59 profit organization that is focused on early literacy and high school success. He said he is here
60 to give an opportunity to the people in the community to be able to organize for themselves,
61 for different bills that are coming through the State House, regarding fair funding. He said that
62 in this district 62% of students are not reading at grade level by the third grade; and that
63 students stop learning to read at the third grade, and begin reading to learn. He said he wants
64 to make sure this (the reading lag) is decreased for Framingham and throughout the entire
65 state. He said that one of the ways to do so is to focus on making sure we are getting equitable
66 money in the budget for each district. He added that Boston seems to get the most, but that he
67 wants to make sure that a gateway city such as Framingham, receives the money it deserves, to
68 make sure we are all getting the same equitable education. He said that Stand for Children is
69 holding an information session regarding the upcoming bills, and would love to pair with the
70 School District and Committee to make sure as many people as possible are invited. He added
71 that there is no time and date yet, but that he wants to work in conjunction with the District, so
72 all the residents have the information they need. He said he will also share information for
73 taking action right now, including templates of letters that can be sent and a phone line to be
74 able to call in and leave any messages they would like to leave when it comes to fair funding.
75 He said that they are going to present to state leadership, which will be an opportunity to show
76 that all the voices combined will matter more than just one phone call, which may not get the
77 same kind of play that their organization pumping out the messages would. He said that they
78 are a member organization and want to make sure that they are listening to their members,
79 and their members have said that this is the number one issue.

80

81 Gerry Bloomfield did a recitation that included the following lines: ...I tried a sanctuary city and
82 found it no comfort there. I looked for America and saw eight dealers and hustlers, hands full of
83 marijuana and dripping in blood... I saw islands of plastic debris floating in our oceans, I saw
84 emotionally stressed out people everywhere, I saw vigils for troubled teens staying in school,
85 40% of them their lives were already in turmoil. Families fighting to keep together what
86 paranoia, can we still pray can we?

87

88 Sarah McKeon said she is a former PTO President and a current kindergarten teacher, and is
89 here to focus on students as they are what matters most, and she has serious concerns about
90 the Mayor's decision to lower the budget number. She said that she sat on the negotiating

91 team , and for months they bargained in good faith, came to agreements, and voted through a
92 new contract; the whole time people on both sides of the table were transparent, open to
93 questions and suggestions, and in the end thought the numbers were workable. She said she
94 does not understand the “trimming the fat” as it’s been referred to online, and that she thinks
95 the public school budget is not the fat that we want to trim. She said that we hear over and
96 over again that we must do what’s best for our students and asked when we are actually going
97 to follow practicing what we preach, because taking away from an already strapped system is
98 not going to help, it’s going to hurt and we are already hurting. . She said that smaller classes
99 are a huge need, as well as more interventionists to support our struggling students, and
100 guidance counselors and social workers for the ever increasing social and emotional needs of
101 our students. She said that throughout the Mayor’s campaign her history as an educator was
102 touted as a strength, and that she is hoping that the Mayor and her staff will truly reflect on
103 that, and consider what is needed to help the system and not harm it. She said that she
104 implores the Mayor to commit to the Superintendent's budget, as it is based on information
105 that he, his staff, and those in the schools who truly experience the needs and challenges on a
106 daily basis, have provided, and their word is the one that should be trusted and our students
107 are the ones who should be reaping the rewards of the system that is properly supported and
108 budgeted.

109
110 Framingham Teachers’ Association (FTA) President Christine Mulroney said that she is here to
111 voice the FTA’s support for the Promise Act which she said provides the best path towards fully
112 funding public education in the State, and the one that fully meets the goals outlined by the
113 Foundation Budget Review Commission Report. She said that with the Promise Act, the
114 increase over the baseline of Chapter 70 aid from the State in fiscal year 2020 is \$181 million,
115 while Governor Baker’s bill in comparison increases it by \$43 million. She said that Governor
116 Baker’s education bill gives the Commissioner of Education the power to withhold funds from
117 districts deemed low performing, adding that this means more bureaucracy, more testing and
118 less time on authentic teaching. She said that the FTA also supports the Promise Act because
119 3/4 of the new funding would go to 20% of the districts with the largest percentage of low
120 income enrollment. She said that Stand for Children has recently re-entered Massachusetts
121 amid the school funding debate. She said that this organization has been active in promoting
122 charter school growth and derives much of its national funding from the same sources that
123 supported Question 2, and the attempted charter school expansion in 2016 - and that they
124 cannot be considered a pro-public education group given their history of support for
125 privatization of public schools. She said that FTA members are headed to a rally on Boston
126 Common on May 16th to advocate for the the Promise Act. She said that today the Mayor,
127 although a former teacher, released her budget number for the School Department with only a
128 3.1% increase from the FY19 Budget despite the reduced number the Superintendent
129 forwarded which was 5.6%. She said that School Committee members eventually settled on
130 supporting a 4.57% over FY19 which will provide for some of what the District leadership had
131 asked for, however even this reduction would have a limited support of initiatives and
132 expansion programs and services for our students. She said that she thinks that the Mayor’s
133 budget proposal is a slap in the face to the hard work the educators do every day; not only will
134 it not provide what our students need to be successful, it will take away necessary positions
135 from being added, and in fact it more likely means the reduction of positions. She said now

136 good teachers, who will be cut, will begin to look elsewhere for jobs; Framingham trained them
137 and other districts will benefit from the preparation we provided. She said that she appeals to
138 Mayor Spicer to reconsider and return the budget to a number where it should be; one where
139 the schools can provide the high quality instruction and implementation of programs to support
140 our students needs and to support the fine educators that work hard everyday to provide a
141 positive learning environment.

142
143 Brian Fanous said he is a PTO Officer, but is speaking on behalf of himself. He said that he
144 wants to strongly voice his support for the School Committee approved budget and hopes that
145 the Mayor will seriously reconsider her proposed budget of a 3.1% increase. He said that
146 because he is on the PTO he is inside the building almost every day, and sees the amazing work
147 the teachers are doing, and the diminished resources they have and sees the effect that the
148 support staff have to ensure every child gets what they need to succeed,. He asked how it is
149 possible that the Mayor is proposing a budget that could require cuts to staff while at same
150 time proclaiming to be pro-education. He said that we are not at the point in the District where
151 we can slow down, and we need to increase spending to ensure equity across the district He
152 said this is not a “we want”, it is a “we need” these things and the students need these things. .
153 He said a budget is an indication of one’s values, and being pro-education is something more
154 than you stick on a campaign flyer, and he said that this budget proposal is not a pro-education
155 budget and he, and parents, are disappointed. He said he would like to see the City Council and
156 the Mayor back the School Committee budget of a 4.57% increase.

157
158 Former School Committee member C. Patrick Dunn says he does not want to see us reverse the
159 progress that we are starting to make with the new Superintendent and School Committee. He
160 said that the City is a system, and all parts have to be functioning; the school is your brain and
161 your growth power, and the City is the heart, and the funding comes from the heart. He said
162 that if the funding doesn't get to the brain, it’s just like us, our brain cells die pretty quickly
163 when we are not getting sufficient energy and oxygen. He said he thinks that we are at a
164 critical moment now - where we go forward and keep the path to improve, or we go
165 backwards. He said it is a lot harder to put things back together again than it is to let them drift
166 apart. He said that we cannot rely on the State to make up the difference. t. He said that the
167 the worth of our houses are directly related to the school performance perception, and once
168 we start the downhill path, younger people are going to leave the town, you are not going to
169 attract new buyers, and older people are going to be stuck with increasing values.

170
171 MTA Staff Member Barbara Connery said she has reservations regarding Stand for Children’s
172 recent re-emerging in Massachusetts. She says she fears that it may be cloaked in a push for
173 more school funding, but worries if it suggests a new assault on pressing for more privatization,
174 coupled with the attack on educators. She said that Stand for Children is part of a new coalition
175 with the Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership (M.E.E.P.) whose members include
176 groups that have been hostile to the Massachusetts Teachers Association (M.T.A) and many of
177 the local affiliates across the country. She said that now these groups are seeking to take over
178 the education funding debate; arguing that the lack of resources and that students reading
179 abilities are compounded by poor quality teachers, and she says that she thinks that they will
180 offer a fix that is likely to include more charters and curb public schools. She said that Stand for

181 Children and the new coalition rely on some of the largest supporters of charters, and many of
182 these donors also support anti-teacher and anti-union groups. She said that with a history of
183 anti-teacher organization, it's hard for her to believe that this coalition is interested in a pro-
184 public education agenda. She said that Stand fo Children has challenged collective bargaining
185 and M.E.EP. members and seek to work as alternatives to the M.T.A. and local affiliate unions,
186 where they have tried to speak for teachers and support education privatization. She said that
187 she urges everyone to consider who they are engaging with and doing business with, and
188 consider using your best resources - your educators, your teachers, and let's continue to work
189 to develop a strong public school system in Framingham.

190

191 Dhruva Sen said there is a saying of "don't touch the third line", and in this case the third line
192 would be the children's center, women's center, senior center and the public schools. He said
193 as a previous speaker alluded to, the budget is a value statement and he fully support the
194 School Committee budget. He said in regards to the agenda item on sustainability, he thinks
195 the students and schools can help out by planning tree planting events.

196

197 City Councilor Michael Cannon said that we have made so much progress with the strong
198 leadership we have now - and the educators in our schools, we should be growing and not
199 taking away from. He said that he has spoken before on saving money in our community, and
200 he could see if all the fat on the City side had been trimmed; if the Mayor was not proposing
201 any new positions, or any new spending, maybe he could see coming around to the minimum
202 number Dr. Tremblay got to in previous meetings. He said that he doesn't understand being
203 blindsided by 2% after all of those meetings and no meaningful input from the Mayor, to arrive
204 at that number and then to get a press release talking about an increase of 3.1%. He said that
205 there is too much of a delta and he doesn't see that the work that has been done by the
206 administration to squeeze every penny, and sharpen every pencil, to arrive at that number. He
207 said that he is worried that we are getting so close to the absolutely drop dead deadline for the
208 budget, that there will be no time for the administration and the Mayor to find out how to
209 provide our children, and the legacy of Framingham, with resources that they need especially
210 now. He said he does agree with something the Mayor said in a previous meeting, where she
211 referenced that the funding increases every year for the schools are unsustainable, but he said
212 that we are not going to be adding an entire new grade level at King every year, or similar major
213 additions, and that this is just not the year to do this and he doesn't know how you can
214 meaningfully pay attention to the debate that has been going on this budget cycle over the past
215 year plus and come to these numbers.

216

217 Robert Bolles said that he was at the last School Committee meeting when the Mayor
218 questioned the increase of the school budget over the past few years, which he questions
219 himself. He said that she has to help the overburdened taxpayers, and there are ways the
220 School Committee and Superintendent can save money and keep the Budget within the range
221 of the 3.1% increase.

222

223 Announcements from the Chair

224 The Chair said that it is Denim Day - a day within Sexual Violence Awareness Month where
225 wearing jeans or denim is a visible stance against the misconception about sexual violence, as

226 well as supporting survivors. He thanked the new Domestic Violence Task Force for bringing
227 the day to members attention.

228

229 Upon Request of Mayor Spicer, an Invitation to Join the City Pride Month Proclamation and
230 Pride Flag Raising Ceremony

231 Mayor Spicer said that diversity comes in many forms, and it is our duty as community leaders
232 to make sure everyone feels safe and welcome in our city. She said that at the March 7th
233 Community Conversation About Diversity and Inclusion, the community discussed the
234 importance of embracing our differences, encouraging inclusion, and respecting each other.
235 She said that this Pride Proclamation does exactly that. She said that June 28, 2019 marks the
236 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, which is widely acknowledged as the defining event
237 in LGBTQ+ Rights mMovement. She said that on Saturday, June 1st at 11:30 a.m., at the
238 Memorial Plaza at City Hall, they will commemorate this anniversary by raising the Rainbow
239 Flag. She asks that the Superintendent, School Committee, and City Councilors join her in
240 honoring our LGBTQ+ community and has a proclamation for everyone to be able to sign.

241 **Motion:** To join the Mayor in signing this proclamation, as well as lending the School
242 Committee name as a cosponsor to the Pride Flag Raising Ceremony on June 1, 2019.

243 **Moved:** Mr. Finlay

Seconded: Ms. Hugo

244 **Discussion:** Ms. Bryant asked if the raising of the flag would occur solely at the Memorial
245 Building or also at schools. Mayor Spicer said the flag will be raised at Memorial Plaza.

246

247 Health and Wellness and Department of Health Report on Vaping

248 Health and Wellness Director Judy Styer, Dr. Sam Wong, Director of the Framingham Public
249 Board of Health, Secondary Out of School Time Manager Casey Bell, and Framingham High
250 School Out of School Time Coordinator Reyhad Shad presented on vaping - who it impacts, the
251 current efforts that the District and community have been doing, including getting a grant to
252 start a local 84 Chapter which is a statewide movement of youth fighting tobacco in
253 Massachusetts.

254 **Discussion:** Mr. Freudberg said there is a need for a whole government approach; he said that
255 this is a state, local, and national issue and is a public health crisis. He said he asked two
256 assistant district attorney generals what school communities can do - they said if anyone knows
257 online vendors, they are required to have a two factor ID to confirm ages, if they are not doing
258 so please contact the District or the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. Mr. Alexander
259 asked if the Department of Health is coordinating with any neighboring towns to synergize and
260 all be on the same page, because students could just go to the next town over and get the
261 products. Dr. Wong said Framingham is one of the founding municipalities of the Metrowest
262 Tobacco Control District. He said that when they passed the regulation last year, it was
263 consistent across the entire district - 9 communities roughly around the same time, and they
264 are hoping to do the same with the restriction regarding menthol and mint tobacco products.
265 Mr. Small said that he appreciates what they are doing because it really is an epidemic, and it's
266 not only bad for students who are using it, but also for students who don't want to use the
267 bathroom because they don't want to see students vaping or be in the same room as them, and
268 this causes restrictions. He said that he really likes the idea of a student focus group, as
269 students will really listen to other students. Mr. Epstein wondered which grades are affected at
270 the moment and how many students are vaping in the school system. Ms. Styer said that it is a

271 big problem at the high school, but they've also seen it in the middle schools, and have had a
272 couple of incidents in the fifth grade at the elementary schools. She said that when the
273 MetroWest health data is released on Friday, they will be able to show what it looks like, and
274 how it grows throughout the grades. Mr. Epstein asked for the report to be distributed to the
275 Committee when made available. Mr. Bell said that they recognize that the younger students
276 are impressionable, so part of the conversation they are having with older students, is how are
277 they bringing the work and message they are doing to the younger grades. He added that
278 something else to look at is how are we collecting data and how are we categorizing things; if
279 we are not categorizing the same way, the data will be skewed. Ms. Hugo said that a few years
280 ago there were public service announcements on tobacco use with pretty vivid graphic images,
281 which reduced smoking for a while, and asked if something similar could be done for vaping,
282 and what are the worst things that vaping causes? Dr. Wong said that nicotine usage on
283 adolescent brains primes the brain to be more susceptible to addiction to other substances
284 later in life. He added that parents should talk to kids about it without judgement, since it is an
285 addiction, a neurological disease. Ms. Styer said that the most challenging part is the lack of
286 understanding there is about how quickly someone can become addicted to nicotine using
287 these devices: One expert said that addiction could start after three weeks of use, and vaping is
288 so much easier to do and seems so harmless. Mr. Shah said that parents need to be more
289 aware of that the devices come in different sizes and shapes. Mr. Finlay said there is a need to
290 educate parents and students, and he would like to see health education classes and have it
291 within the curriculum. He said that after the Student Advisory Committee's presentation, he
292 thinks the Committee should work with administration to figure out a way for kids to feel safe
293 in schools, including using the bathrooms, and work on enforcing the problem we are having.
294 Ms. Bryant asked what the consequence is at the middle school level for a student who has a
295 vaping device. Dr. Tremblay said it is in the handbook and language is made more clear within
296 the high school handbook. He said that the worry is it being a punitive measure for someone
297 who is struggling with addiction, as it is viewed as a health problem. Ms. Bryant asked about
298 the frequency of vaping in the middle schools vs the high school, and if there is a policy or
299 would one recommend the same techniques for both levels. Ms. Styer said it is a conduct issue
300 so there is a need to have consequences, but at higher grades you will see more addiction, and
301 we need to figure out how are we going to address that. Ms. Styer said that in addition to
302 determining consequences, they are looking at second offenses being hooked up with a
303 counselor or nurses for an assessment. Mr. Freudberg said that there has been a 78% increase
304 in vaping in high schools nationally in recent years.

305

306 Elementary School Improvement Plans Votes and Handbook Vote

307 Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education Amy Bright and Dr. Tremblay presented a
308 performance report on the elementary schools and their progress on School Improvement
309 Plans, as well as data showing progress. Dr. Tremblay said with iReady they now have
310 empirical data that is predictive for MCAS, and can see how to adjust in real time, such as
311 meeting with students and classrooms who are at a deficit. He said he visits a school almost
312 every morning and starts those meetings off by talking about any problems or topics with the
313 principals, such as staffing, budget conversations, anything that they need to discuss. He said
314 he is then joined by senior leaders, or assistant superintendents, and they go over the student
315 performance data, attendance data, and social emotional learning data. He said the last hour

316 is experiencing it on the ground - visiting classrooms and observing how kids are learning. He
317 said that this is a way to monitor investments, the use of technology, and how the technology is
318 being used, or if it is being overused. The budget was built from first hand experience and
319 talking with principals, and how students are doing and how we know. The data in the reports
320 shows that from fall to winter all schools have decreased the amount of students in Level 3 and
321 increased the amount of students at Level 1.

322 **Questions.** Ms. Bryant asked how the amount of students in Level 3 in math can be addressed
323 across the grades. Ms. Bright said this is the first year they are using this system in grades K-5
324 for the instructional path, and for ELL students they use Imagine Learning which is comparative.
325 She said that they look at it from a curriculum lens on a regular basis, and last year it was tested
326 on grades 3-5. She said this should be able to show where students are, and can help predict
327 how they will do in the future. Mr. Epstein asked if the three times a year are sufficient enough
328 to see growth. Dr. Tremblay said he believes so, and there are other ongoing formal
329 assessments that teachers will do that will give them feedback in real time; any more
330 assessments, coupled with MCAS would be too much. Mr. Epstein said once they are alerted a
331 student is behind, what happens, and how are they able to identify an individual student that
332 may be having trouble. Ms. Bright said i-Ready is used as a diagnostic, that gives an overview
333 and starting point to have a conversation, which may then trigger a conversation to look at a
334 student's scores on other assessments, and then lead to questions on why a student is
335 achieving at that level - such as if it's due to being an online assessment, is the task not
336 sufficient that's given in class, a look at the student's instructional path, and then determine the
337 best way to teach the student. Ms. Bright said they look at individual kids through the data,
338 and can see who is having trouble; they go over this with principals in the visits, along with the
339 absenteeism list, as well. She added that this also helps with the relationship piece. She added
340 that they also want to be able to talk about subgroups across schools, trends, and if our
341 curriculum is matching the needs of those children. Dr. Tremblay said that previous to this, it
342 was hard to see how schools were making progress and how money was being used as all
343 schools as they were working autonomously. Ms. Bright said that teachers are still doing the
344 work, the iReady is just an assessment in order to get a snapshot of where kids are in that
345 moment. Ms. Hugo asked what role speed and agility of the students play in some of these
346 scores, since they are on the computer. Ms. Bright said that last year they invested in iReady
347 because it aligned with tools and functionality that they will see on an online test like MCAS.
348 She said that additionally they purchased Type to Learn for all students in elementary school so
349 they have time to practice typing skills and they are currently revisiting and reviewing the data
350 to see if it's the best one for an intentional investment in a typing program. Mr. Epstein asked
351 about the Portuguese Two-Way programs and if they will be increasing next year. Dr. Tremblay
352 said they are looking to expand Spanish at Brophy Elementary and looking to expand
353 Portuguese to Wilson; so four schools in the district would have dual language programs. Ms.
354 Hugo said within the handbook most schools talked about kids riding bikes to school, but not all
355 said helmets are necessary. She said that the handbook lists 5 absences as being the amount
356 where a student can be withdrawn, but Mass General Law says ten days; are we allowed to
357 make that distinction, she asked She also asked if the numbers listed in case of a snow day or
358 an emergency includes the Portuguese speaking station, and that the important phone
359 numbers listed should include the Title IV Coordinator and the SAGE Program. Dr. Tremblay
360 said Principal Rothwell put together this unified handbook, and that it is searchable and has

361 hyperlinks to additional information. Dr. Tremblay said they are still working on adding the
362 additional 15 minutes to the school schedule listed in the handbook that was added in the
363 elementary school day, that was agreed upon in negotiations; this will have to be amended in
364 the handbooks once it's decided if it's going to be at the beginning of the day or end, or
365 splitting the difference. Mr. Freudberg said in the future, handbooks do not require a vote for
366 each non-material amendment, and the Committee can just be informed.

367 **Motion:** To accept the Elementary School Improvement Plans and approve the handbooks
368 with caveats that Chair mentioned.

369 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo

Seconded: Ms. Bryant

370 **Discussion:** Ms. Bryant said Framingham's scores look good compared to national averages,
371 but asked how are we doing compared to State scores. Ms. Bright said that MCAS will show
372 this, but with iReady there is not a way to show the individual communities that use that
373 assessment. Ms. Bryant asked for information regarding what makes up a responsive
374 classroom. Ms. Bright said they are moving towards all 9 schools using responsive classrooms;
375 which helps with social skills, zones of regulations and strategies. Ms. Bryant asked what
376 strategies were being used to address absenteeism. Dr. Tremblay said they continue to
377 reinforce the messaging of the importance of attendance in three languages, principals are
378 encouraging that, and it is a matter of getting the messaging out that vacations should be taken
379 during vacation times and not school days. Ms. Bryant said that a community member
380 suggested letting parents know the consequences that could occur should they go over the
381 amount of allowable absences. Dr. Tremblay said this is provided by principals on a case by
382 case basis in order to work with families and try to find the root cause of the absences and how
383 can we help; using the idea of engagement and to help kids feel involved, as well as figuring out
384 how we can address them possibly feeling disenfranchised and not wanting to come to school.
385 Ms. Bryant said she would encourage at least blanket messaging to show the need of attending
386 - how it will help the child with regulation and education every year, even at the early years.
387 Mr. Alexander asked what the requirements are for academic coaching. Ms. Bright said literacy
388 and math coaches are interviewed, they have a specific job description, and they may not
389 necessarily be the most senior person, but someone who has the qualifications, including
390 licenses. She added that they receive additional trainings each month, and are creating a
391 format for then training teachers with the same calibrated model across all nine schools. Mr.
392 Alexander asked if there is data on communication between the schools and home, and
393 requested some information on this as he thinks it is very integral to improve communication to
394 parents. Dr. Tremblay said they can work on getting this data using the Blackboard system, but
395 can only see if messaging has been sent and not if it has been read. Mr. Alexander asked if
396 there was any feedback from parents on PBIS and Restorative Justice practices. Ms. Bright said
397 that Responsive Classroom just started this year and is in the implementation process in some
398 of the schools, at this point. She added that the Panorama Survey does give some data points,
399 such as the connection students feel to the school and how safe the students feel in school.

400

401 Policy Subcommittee

402 **Motion:** To take as a consent agenda item all policies with changes to align with contract
403 negotiations.

404 **Moved:** Ms. Bryant

Seconded: Mr. Finlay All in agreement.

405 **Motion:** To approve policies GBD, GBE, GBH, GBI, GBJ, GBJA, GBJA-R, GBJA-E, GBCAAA, GCEB,
406 GCF, GCI, GCJ, GCJA, GCL-R, GCO, GCQD, GCV/GDV, GDD, and GDO for first readings.

407 **Moved:** Ms. Bryant **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell

408 **Motion:** To approve Policy BEDJA for a first reading.

409 **Moved:** Mr. Finlay **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo

410 **Motion:** To refer a policy regarding the student activity account audit process to the Policy
411 Subcommittee for formal action.

412 **Moved:** Mr. Finlay **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein

413 **Discussion:** Ms. Hugo requested that this policy should include wording that the School
414 Committee will meet with the auditor before and after the audit, as well as include district
415 guidelines for raising and depositing funds.

416

417 Superintendent's Update

418 **FY20** Dr. Tremblay gave an overview of the budget process and different percentages that were
419 looked at as outlined in his memo, from the "all in" percentage of 12.69%, to his
420 recommendation of 5.66%, to the 4.57% that the School Committee voted on and approved..
421 He said that the Mayor original gave an original proposal of a 2% increase but this has been
422 increased to 3.1%, this does not close the gap but is an important increase. Dr. Tremblay said
423 the District needs to honor what has been done in good faith with the unions and the FTA; he
424 said he knows it's a big year for salary increases, but what comes along with that is a lot of
425 things increased for kids and benefits for both sides of the table. He said that if we get too far
426 below the proposed percentages that there will likely have to be prioritization reductions,
427 which will likely impact personnel and operational expenses. He added that the operational
428 expenses also includes stormwater management costs, transportation costs including homeless
429 students, and a bunch of other unfunded mandates that had to be absorbed in the budget. Mr.
430 Freudberg said the Committee already voted, but per the charter can vote again, but he feels
431 that the Committee's proposed percentage has already been submitted and it is now the
432 Mayor's time to review it and bring it to the City Council. Mayor Spicer said the most important
433 part of a budget is the classroom teachers, and that is why she voted for the increase in Unit A
434 negotiations. She added that she also has to look at what requirements are for the City; such as
435 stormwater management, other fixed requirements, and what we need to maintain such as
436 public safety. She said the schools receive approximately 46% of the current budget, and her
437 team is looking at how they can better distribute funding to all departments and still maintain
438 excellence. She said that the proposal is just a proposal, and conversations are still continuing;
439 but she is deeply troubled to be categorized as not caring about education. Mr. Finlay said that
440 we need to live within our means, and the City has been generous; we need to work with what
441 can we survive on.

442 **Motion:** To send a non-binding resolution to the City Council for a 3.75% increase for the
443 School Budget.

444 **Moved:** Mr. Finlay **Seconded:** Ms. Bryant

445 **Discussion:** Ms. Bryant said she would be satisfied if the District can get the elementary and
446 middle schools programming funded She said that if she could be assured that we will receive
447 the 3.75%, she will respect that recommendation. She added that she would expect the City to
448 give extra support should the need arise. Ms. Maskell said that we are not moving the needle
449 ahead with a 3.75% increase; we are not getting the staff we need and she is not willing to

450 compromise children's education. She added that the Committee did not vote for this number,
451 they voted for 4.57%, which even then is less than the Superintendent's first recommendation.
452 Mr. Epstein said that the process is clear; the Committee voted for the budget and then the
453 process unfolds. He added that tonight that the Committee also does not have all the members
454 who voted originally on the budget, and this would not be fair. He added that the City Council
455 has the ability to increase the school budget as long as it doesn't go over the tax rate. Ms Hugo
456 said this new budget request would be cutting it by 8.96% from where it started, and we still do
457 not have details of what would be cut out if we went with the 3.75%. She said that with this, it
458 looks like we would not be able to hire a lot of staff that are needed to raise the achievement
459 level, and we need to invest in the kids now; with an over 50% poverty rate and rated as a Level
460 3 district with the old DESE rating. She said that we do not know what amount of funds we will
461 be getting from the state and federal at this point. Mr. Alexander said we should try to find a
462 balance between not alienating taxpayers, but also advocating for the kids. Mr. Freudberg said
463 this budget has realistic drivers - such as paying for extended time and adding a grade level at
464 King. He would like to know if free cash has been looked at, why it can or cannot work, and
465 what other options there are. Mr. Finlay said it would have been nice to have the City's CFO
466 attend a meeting and explain the reasoning for the percentage they are giving. He added that
467 he thinks the City should start with a zero-based budget, like the school district has. Ms. Bryant
468 said that 12% should not be referred to as a starting point, as this was never a realistic number.
469 Mr. Finlay said he **withdraws his motion** reluctantly but is listening to the full Committee.

470
471 **FY19** Mr. Lynch said a question came up regarding the FY19 Year-to-Date Report on why some
472 responsibility centers are at 50/60 percent. He said this was due to not encumbering salaries;
473 everything that is showing as encumbered are expenses. He said that he will look at this for
474 next year to see if he can change that. Mr. Lynch said that the **Food Service Negative Balance**
475 has steadily declined over the past couple of reports, and has declined about \$2,000 from the
476 start of the pilot program on March 1, 2019. He said that the response rate has not been great
477 at all, but they do see the balances going down. Ms. Bryant asked how the problem with
478 transportation has been going. Mr. Lynch said they're receiving a lot less calls and are working
479 to split and double up runs to get students to school on time. He said that a data set was sent
480 out to show the number of late busses and how it has decreased significantly. He said that they
481 are in the middle of the Bell and Routing Study with the a routing software vendor and trying to
482 create efficiencies for next year. Dr. Tremblay said he wanted to thank Resiliency for Life for
483 sponsoring a training on calm and compassionate teaching for staff, which was a \$10,000
484 investment. Mr. Freudberg said that all of the School Improvement Plan updates will be
485 complete after the next meeting, and going forward the Superintendent is proposing a student
486 achievement update section as a recurring agenda item.

487
488 Subcommittee Reports

489 **Finance and Operations.** Mr. Epstein said that four warrants were signed. He said that the
490 subcommittee met last week and discussed the Student Activity Account Audit, and they are
491 looking to have a meeting with the auditor as a next step as there is a feeling that the audit was
492 incomplete, had mistakes and did not comply to the DESE guidelines and needs to be redone.
493 He said he would recommend that the Committee recommend to the City Council that they do
494 not pay the auditor until it is a complete audit that everyone is satisfied with. Mr. Freudberg

495 said the City Council met today and voted to delegate to the Finance and Operations
496 Subcommittee and full School Committee to take over the rest of the Student Activity Account
497 Audit process.

498 **Motion:** The School Committee requests the City Council holds off payment to the auditor that
499 is due for the Student Activity Account Audit for FY16, FY17 and FY18 until those audits are
500 complete and acceptable to the School Committee.

501 **Moved:** Mr. Epstein **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo
502 (Yes: Hugo, Freudberg, Alexander, Epstein, Maskell. No: Finlay, Bryant)

503 **Discussion:** Mr. Finlay said he doesn't feel comfortable telling another body to not pay a bill
504 which they contracted out for, and if a more in depth audit was wanted we could contract for
505 that and use money somehow in the budget. Mr. Freudberg said that he read the contract and
506 the auditor is not following the contract. Mr. Epstein said it is a request, the Council can still go
507 ahead and pay them, but he feels that once they are paid we lose leverage and the auditor can
508 just walk away.

509

510 Approval of Grants/Gifts/Field Trips

511 **Motion:** To approve all the gifts and scholarships listed on the agenda.

512 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Finlay

513 **Discussion:** Ms. Hugo said that the second scholarship states that the donor will pick the
514 recipient, and wants to know if there are guidelines in place regarding privacy and equity. She
515 added that the Scholarship Committee was created to reduce inequities within scholarships.
516 Mr. Lynch said that he can find out this information. Mr. Freudberg said that the School
517 Committee's role is to just approve the creation of the City accounts for the scholarships.

518 **Motion:** To accept the March 19, 2019 Joint Session and March 20, 2019 Open Session meeting
519 minutes.

520 **Moved:** Ms. Bryant **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein

521 **Motion:** To approve the Executive Session minutes from February 6, 2019 and Feb 27, 2019 as
522 approved in Executive Session.

523 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Alexander

524 **Motion:** To approve the Executive Session minutes from the previous School Committee from
525 years 2015-2017 with various dates as approved in Executive Session to comply with the
526 periodic review of redactions of the minutes.

527 **Moved:** Mr. Finlay **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell
528 (Yes: Hugo, Finlay, Freudberg, Alexander, Epstein, Maskell. Abstained: Bryant)

529 *Ms. Maskell and Mr. Finlay recused themselves

530 **Motion:** To approve the March 12, 2019 Executive Session minutes as approved in Executive
531 Session.

532 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein

533

534 Adjournment

535 **Motion:** To adjourn.

536 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein

537 Meeting adjourned at 10:54 p.m.

538

539 Meeting Materials

540 Agenda
541 City Pride Month Proclamation
542 The State of Vaping Presentation
543 Elementary School School Improvement Plans Presentation
544 i-Ready Fall to Winter District Data Update
545 Barbieri SIPS Update
546 Brophy SIPS Update
547 Dunning SIPS Update
548 Hemenway SIPS Update
549 Kings SIPS Update
550 McCarthy SIPS Update
551 Potter Road SIPS Update
552 Stapleton SIPS Update
553 Woodrow Wilson SIPS Update
554 Elementary School Collective Handbook
555 Policy Summary
556 First Reading of Policies Referred for Contract Alignment
557 First Reading of Policy BEDG
558 FY19 YTD Budget
559 FY19 Food Services Negative Balance
560 Pilot Program Food Services Update
561 Memo re: Gift from Exxon Mobil
562 Mark L and Eric R Cohn Scholarship
563 Ralph and Rosalie Kowalski Memorial Scholarship
564 Christopher Beatrice Memorial Scholarship
565 March 19, 2019 Joint Session Draft Minutes
566 March 20, 2019 Open Session Draft Minutes
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