



Framingham Public Schools

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

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Adam Freudberg, Chair • Tiffanie Maskell, Vice Chair • Priscila Sousa, Clerk
Jessica Barnhill • Karen Dempsey • Geoffrey Epstein
Beverly Hugo • William LaBarge • Scott Wadland
Yvonne M. Spicer, Mayor

73 Mount Wayte Avenue, Second Floor, Framingham, MA 01702
Telephone: 508-626-9121 Fax: 508-877-4240

SCHOOL COMMITTEE: OPEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE AND TIME: February 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Memorial Building-Blumer Room
150 Concord Street, Framingham

MEETING CALLED BY: Chair Adam Freudberg

PRESENT: Jessica Barnhill
Karen Dempsey*
Geoffrey Epstein
Adam Freudberg
Beverly Hugo
William LaBarge
Tiffanie Maskell
Priscila Sousa
Scott Wadland
Mayor Yvonne Spicer

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Robert Tremblay, Superintendent
Nicholas Small, Student Advisory Committee Chair
Lincoln Lynch, Executive Director of Finance and Operations
Anne Ludes, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
Joseph Corazinni, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Diversity

and

Community Development
Stephen Schmuck, Durham Senior Vice President
R. J. Castagno, Durham Regional Manager for New England

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. He noted that this meeting was being broadcast live on local cable, as well as for later playback, and on Facebook Live. He noted that the committee met in executive session earlier for approval of Executive Session minutes pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) and G.L. c. 30A, s. 22(g)(1), specifically January 15, 2020, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(2); Specifically for a grievance hearing on a personnel issue filed pursuant to Article 3 of the Committee's collective bargaining agreement with the Unit A Framingham Teachers Association related to teacher's preparation time and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declared pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3); specifically for Units A, S, and T. He announced that the committee has gone to paperless packets, so members will be using devices during the meeting. He said that the Mayor will be joining in progress, and some items will be moved on the agenda, as well as there may be a recess due to calendar being updated tonight and to give members time to review before discussion.

Public Comment

FTA President Christine Mulroney said that on March 3rd there will be a Professional Development Day with workshops taught by FTA members and spoke about different workshops that are being offered. She gave many thanks to Anne Ludes who helped with the schedule, and Joseph Corazinni who brought in some very valuable workshops. She also thanked the dedicated staff members who are sharing their expertise. She said a link will be sent on February 7th to sign up.

Anne Fernandes said she is a Stapleton parent, and the past three School Committee meetings have been filled with Stapleton families with heartbreaking stories pleading on behalf of children, and the problems still persist. She said that Stapleton requires strong leadership and significant resources now, and they remain united for a better Stapleton.

Gerry Bloomfield said that the country is going through difficulties and so is Framingham. He said that we have a lot of problems and issues that need to be resolved in a timely matter. He said that 65% of the City Budget goes to schools and in return the public expects excellence. He said that to ensure success all parts need to be properly functioning; day to day and long term. He suggested that the committee address high impact matters first on their agendas, and those that have the most impact on the community.

Sarah McKeon said that teachers are participating in data chats to discuss their student's progress, and have to gather as much information as they can, and try and explain why I-ready data doesn't match classroom assessments, which seems to fall on deaf ears. She said that they put together a lot of information on what describes their students, their needs, and what they have done to support their learning. She asked why questions on students' social emotional concerns are not the first questions in the meetings, instead of academic scores that do not define their students. She said that younger students are building their foundation for learning and for living, and each school has children with individual needs. She said that we are losing

staff, but are also losing students who are more than a score, and besides just measuring the academics we need to start measuring the whole student.

Announcements from the Chair

The Chair announced subcommittee appointments and liaisons, and said they are all listed on the website. He said that the Mayor and members of the Student Advisory Committee are welcome to join any subcommittee at any time.

Remarks from FPS Student Advisory Committee

Nicholas Small said that there is a new Poetry Out Loud Competition where individual classrooms held individual competitions, and selected one student to perform in the school wide competition, and then select students are sent to the State Competition. He said that in coordination with the League of Women Voters there is a new campaign to register students to vote so they can vote in the primaries. He said that the next Student Advisory Committee presentation will be on February 26th and will be a followup on the survey on safety and security from last year, where they had students complete surveys and conducted interviews.

Transportation Update

Lincoln Lynch said that due to uncovered bus routes a letter of a Breach of Contract was sent to Durham on December 18, 2019, and since that letter most routes have been covered. He said that the continued communication has been huge between Durham and the District, including daily reports from Durham for times every bus gets to every school, to track if they are on time or not. He said that they are working on getting bus numbers matched, which will help with the bus route app for parents to be able to track their child's bus. Durham Senior Vice President Stephen Schmuck and the Regional Manager for New England R.J. Castagno said that they acknowledge that they had less than stellar service, and worked quickly to change market competitiveness with retention opportunities, incentives, and paid training. They said that they have 81 drivers on the roster as of today, 3 more coming in, 4 in the pipeline in the classroom, and 7 are entering the hiring process. He said that they are trying to help support behaviors on the bus, and work with the schools with routes.

Questions. Mr. Wadland said that even if they are doing better than in the fall, even two uncovered routes are around 100 kids that aren't able to start their day off in a way we want them to be able to. He asked how many driver absences amount to two routes uncovered, including spare drivers. Mr. Schmuck said it would be about 10 percent; 5 to 7 drivers. Mr. Epstein asked why it took so long to get daily in and out reports on the bus timing. Mr. Schmuck said there is an EID number for a GPS device which gets installed into a vehicle, and they had to pair that with the asset number which is where the complexity lies, as they have to take part of the dashboard apart, and then it has to be recalibrated and fixed to make sure they match up correctly. Ms. Dempsey asked about the feedback from drivers regarding student behaviors. Mr. Castagno said student behaviors have been a challenge, last week they had a safety meeting, and found that even if drivers are reporting behaviors, they are not hearing what the response is, so communication in that area would help. Dr. Tremblay said that they are working on an initiative on managing student behaviors including on busses, and he would like to propose a survey to be sent to bus drivers. He said that he wants to work in partnership with Durham to be able to help retain and gain drivers. Mr. Wadland asked about the problem with drivers being given two different instructions, as Durham provides the bus and driver, and

the District provides routes and dispatch. Mr. Schmuck said this has been better with the increased communication, and it is a unique situation. Members thanked Durham for their hard work and better driver coverage, but also expressed concern that there is still a need for improvement, as well as the length of time it took to improve, and how it seemed that it took the letter for them to make the changes. Mr. Freudberg expressed frustration that the GPS app has been talked about since November, and the rollout has been delayed twice. Mr. Lynch recommends sending out a letter that was drafted with the City Solicitor to Durham, which was shared with members, noting that there will be no financial penalties or termination at this time, but that their performance will continue to be monitored and if it reverts back, the District will take action. Mr. Wadland said he is leery about taking the back charge off the table. Mr. Lynch said a financial penalty is a huge deal for a vendor and for a district to enforce. He said that he also wants to recognize the promising improvements, and maintain the relationship with Durham. City Solicitor Chris Petrini said this action would still reserve the right in future months for financial penalty if problems should occur. Mr. Freudberg noted that this letter was reviewed in the Finance and Operations Subcommittee with no concerns expressed.

Motion: To accept Mr. Lynch's recommendations of no financial penalties or termination at this time, but to continue to monitor uncovered routes on a daily basis and timeliness of busses at all schools, and if reverts back District will take swift action, and also send the City Solicitor's letter to Durham with this information included.

Moved: Ms. Dempsey **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Vote:** 8-1-0
(Yes: Hugo, Dempsey, Freudberg, Sousa, Epstein, Maskell, Barnhill, LaBarge. No: Wadland)

Superintendent's Update

Dr. Tremblay gave a **Stapleton** update including a change in leadership status - Principal Diaz has stepped down for health concerns, and Ms. Brenda Mauraio will be serving as principal from now through the end of next school year. He added that she would be happy to come give an update at the next meeting. He said that they are looking to take some students off one of the busses and on to smaller vans, as well as have a new full time monitor riding another bus. He said there is a new support protocol about tracking data, as well as for monitoring bathrooms, and now have bathrooms for each grade. He said that staff from the Explorers Program will be joining several recesses to get feedback from staff, observe student interactions, and then design a plan. He said that Stapleton is now participating in the Doc Wayne Program, and have also started a series of parent workshops through the Office of Equity, Diversity and Community Development.

Mr. Freudberg noted that the Mayor brought a five year lease proposal to the City Council for the Central Office lease at the Perini Building, and the City Council voted to refer this to the School Committee. Dr. Tremblay said that according to **Perini** the Central Office Lease expired on January 31st and the district is currently a tenant in sufferance. Ms. Dempsey asked what the process was, as far as other locations being looked at. Mr. Freudberg said that a RFP went out for a long term lease last Fall and Perini was the only bidder. He said that the challenge is that when the five year lease proposal was submitted to the City the School Committee did not receive or review it. Members spoke about how great it has been to be at Perini for communication and having a lot of staff all in one place, and how Perini has been a good landlord for the past five years. Ms. Barnhill said that she does not feel that a five year lease or

buying the building is a responsible decision when there are four underperforming schools, a need for a new southside school, bus monitors, and other items, and instead should be putting dollars to students. She asked if there is a district wide utilization plan that could show space throughout the whole district, and provide some options for the 61 employees that are at Perini. Dr. Tremblay said the space utilization study is for the high school specifically; for student population forecasting and to look at relocating the technology space. He said he is not aware of available space for employees anywhere else in the existing school facilities. Mr. Freudberg suggested that the five year lease proposal should be looked at further before a vote, as it is an increase in price, as well as he suggests not losing sight of the one year lease extension option.

Motion: To refer the five year lease with Perini, as referred to the School Committee by the City Council, to the Building and Grounds Subcommittee.

Moved: Mr. Epstein **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell

Discussion: Mr. Wadland suggested that the subcommittee also look retroactively at how it got to this point, the procurement process and the committee's role in it, to improve the process in the future to achieve educational goals.

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

City Solicitor Chris Perini said that the City's legal position is that the District does have a one year lease extension by virtue of Dr. Tremblay's October 30, 2019 memo, although Perini disagrees. Members spoke about how it would be beneficial to have all involved - the City Council, Mayor, School Committee and City Solicitor - meet with Perini to help resolve this.

Motion: To request that the Mayor request a meeting with Perini with the City Solicitor, a member of City Council, a member of the School Committee and the Superintendent or his designee, with the purpose of exploring a settlement to the current lease issue.

Moved: Mr. Wadland **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa

Discussion: Mayor Spicer noted that she will reach out, but all parties need to be open to have this meeting. Discussion on who should be included from the City Council and School Committee, and friendly amendment to the motion accepted stating that the representative from both will be chosen by the Chair of the City Council and Chair of the School Committee, if the Chairs themselves cannot attend.

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

The Chair asked for a ten minute recess for members to review the updated calendar that was submitted before the meeting individually, all in agreement.

The Chair announced the meeting recessed at 8:31 p.m.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 8:41 p.m.

Dr. Tremblay said there was a quick turnaround after first reading on the calendar, they considered a lot of public feedback - 162 responses from the community. He said some of the changes included pushing the start date back, and some changes to professional development days and observance of some holidays. He said that in the future they will start on the calendar earlier, and it will be a two year calendar to be submitted in the fall. Mr. Wadland asked if lunch is available on half days, and suggested that the calendar list where additional snow days would be taken from if needed, as had been done in the past. Ms. Hugo suggested that programs be put into place on half days when parents may have a hard time looking for childcare.

Motion: To approve the 2020-2021 School Calendar as presented, with November 25th and the last day of school to be early release days rather than half days, contingent upon Dr. Tremblay making sure lunch can be served to students.

Moved: Mr. Epstein **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge

Discussion: Mr. Wadland asked for a friendly amendment for November 25th and whatever the last day of school is to be early release days rather than half days, contingent upon Dr. Tremblay making sure lunch can be served to students. No objection. Ms. Ludes said only elementary is served lunch on early release days, and not middle or high schools at this point.

Vote: Unanimous (9-0-0)

Student Achievement Update: Dr. Tremblay recognized counselors for National Counselor Week. He recognized Framingham for Engineering by Design which involved performing arts and physics where students showed samples of toys that they developed. He said that there was a Resiliency for Life Gala where great student successes were shared, and the program is thriving. He said that Fuller held a Multicultural Night which was a great community event.

Director of Equity, Diversity and Community Development Joseph Corazzini gave an update from his department. Updates included that the Adult ESL program has 800 students currently enrolled and the need is growing, at BLOCKS 47% of students are special education students, the Explorers Program has over 50 clubs with 230 students and an additional 500 at the middle school level, among other updates. He said that they have had conversations with families regarding the recent shootings at Pelham Apartments, and there is a lot of concern, fear, and trauma. He said that there is a need to be conscientious to create access and supports for all, and it is important to think critically of individuals who are part of this process. He said that there is an Equity Reporting Form online, where if anyone has an issue they can enter it in the form and it will open up conversation or investigation. He said that this is a means for those who do not feel comfortable calling, or to provide easy access. He said that there is an Equity Audit and a Title IX audit currently in process.

Questions. Ms. Sousa asked how long the Equity Reporting Form has been available and what engagement has been like. Mr. Corazinni said it has been around since September, they are hoping to market it more, and have had probably 50 forms submitted. Mr. Epstein asked how they determine what priorities are and what investments are needed for budget decisions. Mr. Corazinni said that the costs are hard to predict, and if they are not creating flexibility in the process they are not going to be able to be responsive to the need. He added that the Equity Audit should be able to help as well. Mr. Epstein suggested items that could be discussed further in the Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Subcommittee such as booster clubs, girls in math and science, and internet access. Ms. Dempsey asked if along with the early college program, if any vocational programs are being looked at. Mr. Corazinni said they need to find resources and partnerships, and they are hoping to build a technical arm with a built in certification.

Mr. Lynch said that the FY20 YTD Budget is under 55 percent encumbered or spent. He said that the next meeting will be focusing on the FY21 budget.

Mayors Report

Mayor Spicer said that the coalitions of youth service workers met this morning to make sure residents are aware of the services that are geared towards youth. She said that she spent the

afternoon as part of the climate change initiatives occurring in the state, and added that Framingham received a study grant for Walnut Street with how to mitigate flooding. She said that the library is showing the movie Harriet for Black History Month on February 12th. She said that the voter registration deadline is coming up, and encourages residents to get registered to vote. She said that the Census Committee has been meeting for many months working with all local service providers such as BRACE, and working on everyone that is usually hard to be counted, such as the elderly and homeless, be counted. She said that she read at Woodrow Wilson with police officers and it was wonderful for students to see police in a different venue and develop trusting relationships with them. She said that boards and commissions and appointed seats are at a 95% fill rate right now, looking at another round opening up and will be looking for districts 7, 8, and 9 as there usually are not many applicants from those districts. She said that on Thursday there will be a General Chemical meeting at Woodrow Wilson to address site cleanup in that area.

School Committee Goals and Objectives

Mr. Freudberg said members can discuss how they want to develop goals and objectives. He said the previous term they had unofficial goals such as getting Fuller Project funding approved, finalizing union contracts, and for meetings to be no more than three hours. Mr. Wadland suggested that they be developed in a workshop with a facilitator. The Executive Assistant will reach out to MASC and coordinate.

*Ms. Dempsey left the meeting at 9:54 pm.

Subcommittee Reports

Mr. Epstein said that one warrant was signed.

Approval of Minutes, Gifts, and Scholarships

Motion: To approve the Open Session minutes of January 15, 2020.

Moved: Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa **Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

Motion: To approve the January 15, 2020 Executive Session minutes as approved previously in Executive Session.

Moved: Ms. Sousa **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

Motion to accept \$500.00 donation approved from the Exxon Mobil Corporation Educational Alliance Program to support Math and/or Science at the High School and a \$309.00 donation check from Wellesley College for the Out of School Time Department.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. LaBarge **Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

Motion: To approve the creation of an account for \$500.00 for a Marilyn (Maggie) Kelber Memorial Scholarship.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Epstein. **Vote:** Unanimous (8-0-0)

Adjournment

Mr. Freudberg said that there are two upcoming events: February 27th at Cameron there will be a special education discussion with F-SEPAC and the Special Education Department, and on February 13th there will be a new center named after Representative Chris Walsh at Framingham State. He noted that tomorrow was the Superintendent's birthday and noted there was dessert available to all.

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Ms. Barnhill

Seconded: Mr. LaBarge

Vote: Unanimous (8-0-0)

Meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

Durham Breach of Contract Letter

Letter from Durham

Durham Provided Update

Spreadsheet on Driver Shortage

Letter Sent to Durham 02.11.20

Draft 2020-2021 School Year Calendar for Vote

Update from the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Community Development

FY20 YTD Budget

Food Services Negative Balance Report

Tutor Perini Executed Lease

Letter to City of Framingham from Perini

Notice of Lessee Intentions and Potential Holdover Tenancy from Perini

Notice of Tenant at Sufferance from Perini

MASC School Committee Goal Slides

Warrants

Draft January 15, 2020 Open Session Minutes

Gift Forms from Exxon and Wellesley College

Marilyn (Maggie) Kelber Memorial Scholarship Form

These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee in Open Session on February 26, 2020.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on March 4, 2020.