



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: January 29, 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 & Operations
Joel Seeley, Owner's Project Manager
David Miles, Co-Chair School Building Committee
Jonathan Levi, Architect, Fuller Building Project
Christian Riordan, Consigli Construction
Laura Spear, Director of Special Education
Ildefonso Arrellano, Assistant Director of Special Education

44
45 The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. He noted that this meeting was being
46 broadcast live on local cable, as well as for later playback, and on Facebook Live.

47
48 Public Comment

49 Dhana Bianco said that she is a Durham bus driver and is speaking about the unsafe driving
50 practices due to the lack of support of the schools and the City with the behaviors of some of
51 the students on busses. She said this has been spoken about by teachers and bus drivers ad
52 nauseum with no clear plan to fix it. She gave examples of behaviors that she said are showing
53 how the City is minimizing the behaviors on the school busses. She said that if students are not
54 being held accountable for their actions, or the parents not held accountable for their child's
55 actions, then the school department should be held accountable for their inaction. She asked
56 for follow up.

57
58 Nicole Atchison said that the Stapleton PTO Board would like to thank Dr. Tremblay and senior
59 leadership for the amicable meeting held this week. She said that they are feeling more
60 optimistic about future plans, but remain concerned about the behaviors of today and
61 tomorrow.

62
63 Robert Conroy said that he is a parent at Stapleton that has been affected by the environment.
64 He said to keep in mind, when hearing the update tonight on data on classroom evacuations, to
65 remember what this means for elementary age kids; it is hard for kids to compartmentalize and
66 to continue learning, and the data is also only on events that are so bad that the classroom had
67 to be evacuated. He said there have been significant injuries leading to students being sent to
68 the nurse; 38 student injuries in 36 school days. He said it is easy to distance oneself from the
69 data, but you need to remember that this is happening to children as young as five years old.
70 He said the data does not tell the full story as it doesn't include bullying that is not caught by
71 adults or disruptions that are not evacuated.

72
73 Zev Rieser said that he is a former Stapleton parent, and talked about his child's experience at
74 Stapleton, which ultimately ended up in them leaving the Framingham Public Schools. He said
75 that it was due to a lack of action from administration after parents and teachers have been
76 asking for help, including at meetings and at the forum. He said that teachers have been
77 needing support and no tangible changes have been made. He said that additional supports
78 have not been brought to the school, but additional students have been enrolled when the
79 school is already at a critical mass. He said that inaccurate data is being put out, and incidents
80 are still happening.

81
82 Rebecca Reiner said that she is reading a letter from a parent in order to protect the student's
83 identity. The letter shared their experience about reaching out to the central administration
84 and the School Committee about two incidents that occurred in a bathroom to the child by an
85 older student. The letter said that the parent made specific requests that a written safety plan
86 be put in place, and a more effective plan to monitor hallways and bathrooms, and is
87 disappointed it took three incidents to make it happen. The letter states that the data report
88 did not capture behaviors such as these incidents, nor the emotional effects of any incidents.

89 The letter said that the school is supposed to respond promptly and compassionately when
90 problems are reported by students and parents.

91
92 Anne Sullivan asked for information regarding the identification requirement that will be
93 implemented, such as: who came up with this new security policy, what the reasoning is, if
94 there was a problem beforehand with the check in system, what data shows that this
95 identification plan has improved security in other schools, what the district is allowed to do
96 with this identification and data that is entered into the system. She said she thinks this will
97 cause more fear and confusion in the immigrant community, and could cause parents to not
98 trust school administration as it could send a message that they cannot easily see their children.
99 She submitted a copy of her comment to the Superintendent.

100
101 FTA President Chris Mulroney said that students won a huge victory when the Student
102 Opportunity Act was signed, and it is critically important that this money is spent on resources
103 for children. She said that the FTA and Fund our Future have been advocates for this. She said
104 that the FTA has been working with district leaders on what their needs are, and are also
105 planning on having a public forum to get feedback from the public. She also invited the public
106 to email her with any feedback at ftassoc@gmail.com.

107
108 Glenda Cohen said that she is an ESL teacher at the high school and here to speak about the
109 visitor management policy. She said she appreciates recent efforts to make everyone safe, but
110 wonders about the effect on immigrant families when asking for photo ids, especially at this
111 time, and if the possible effect on them feeling safe. She said that the protocols also need to be
112 specified on what will happen for people without picture ids.

113
114 The Chair asked that the concerns regarding the visitor management policy be referred to the
115 Security Department as it is not a School Committee policy.

116
117 Gloria Pascual said that she spoke during Public Comment on September 18, 2018, as the
118 School Committee Vice Chair, regarding accusations about her and her conduct as a member
119 which she says were false. She asked for follow up, as well as for this to be recorded in meeting
120 minutes. She said that the State Ethics Commission found no substantiation to the complaints
121 and closed the case, and they do not require any further action. She said that she knew there
122 was no basis for these accusations, and at the time was running for City Council, and those
123 within the School Committee and Central Office who went forward with these claims put
124 themselves in the election process.

125
126 City Councilor Cesar Stewart-Morales said that he is here to speak for his district's constituents,
127 many of whom attend Stapleton. He said there is a need to prioritize finding solutions to the
128 problem being raised, both in the short and long term, as well as to communicate these plans,
129 and asks that the short term plan be done so by next week.

130
131 Robert Bolles said parents should continue to attend School Committee meetings like he has, a
132 lot of the time he is here by himself and one other member of the public. He said that they

133 should show up to School Committee and City Council meetings to find out what's going on and
134 to get something done.

135

136 Announcements from the Chair

137 The Chair said that he went to the most recent President's PTO meeting where he spoke about
138 the School Committee Long Term Agenda, went over the public comment rules, and
139 encouraged anyone to provide feedback as part of the FY21 and Student Opportunity Act
140 development processes.

141

142 Update from the School Building Committee on the Fuller Middle School Building Project

143 Fuller Middle School Building Owner's Project Manager Joel Seeley, Co-Chair of the School
144 Building Committee David Miles, Architect for the Fuller Building Project Jonathan Levi and
145 Christian Riordan from Consigli Construction went over the design overview of the project,
146 including the total project budget summary of costs and showing how it is under budget, the
147 milestone schedule, and the construction update. David Miles said that all updates are on the
148 Fuller Middle School Building Project website, including aerial pictures from the drones.

149 **Questions.** Mr. Wadland said items that are listed as being alternate costs were actually
150 originally approved by the City, and were added due to other items coming in under bid. Mr.
151 Epstein asked if they are going to be putting in a heat pump for HVAC, and if not if it would be
152 easy to swap out from gas in the future. Mr. Levi said that for Fuller they studied over six
153 technologies for HVAC, and that if the choice was fossil free the District would be paying a large
154 amount of capital costs, and also operating costs, and it would be millions more than the high
155 efficiency HVAC system that was chosen. He said that in the future if there is a need to switch,
156 it would be a new plant system but not a new distribution system. Mr. Seeley said that LEED
157 certification is part of the MSBA process; schools have to achieve at least 40 credit points within
158 metrics, and be 20 percent more energy efficient than code. He said that the HVAC system that
159 was chosen is 38 percent better performing than code. Mayor Spicer asked if they found any
160 surprises during construction they did not anticipate. Mr. Riordan said they did find a surprise
161 within the soil, but reacted to that and still remained on schedule. Mr. Miles added that they
162 found an old oil tank buried in the front that was removed with no problem. Ms. Sousa asked if
163 the furniture fixtures and equipment listed in the budget are custom made for the building.
164 Mr. Seeley said this category includes anything not attached to walls or floors, down to the
165 level of pots and pans in the kitchen, and cleaning machines, and they are procured through
166 manufacture standard furniture. He said it will be quite a process to be looking over all the
167 items that are available, and the amount in this section was determined in the schematic design
168 phase. Ms. Dempsey said she looks forward to the Disability Commission discussing
169 accessibility at their next meeting with School Building Committee officials.

170

171 Special Education Department Program Update and Annual Report on ACCEPT and TEC

172 Collaboratives

173 Director of Special Education Laura Spear and Assistant Director of Special Education Ildefonso
174 Arellano gave an overview of Accept and TEC Collaboratives, including the amount of students
175 and the financial benefit of being part of the collaboratives. They went over a Special Education
176 update including the population and characteristics of all the different special education
177 programs, and an update on the Special Education Audit. They said the number of students in

178 the Sensory Hearing TLC Program is higher than other districts due to families moving to be
179 closer to The Learning Center for the Deaf. They spoke about the Special Education Program
180 Strand Committee that was started last year and what they have been working on, including
181 the feeder school pattern. Ms. Spear said that programs were originally put where there was
182 space available, and were not thinking of relationships, connections, and feeder patterns. She
183 said the district has saved money by keeping students in district through the multi program
184 expansion, and it is also in the best interest for the students. She went over the trends they are
185 seeing in BLOCKS with an increase of special education students, and how this will affect the
186 elementary schools.

187 **Questions.** Ms. Sousa asked how transportation will be effected with the trend of more high
188 need preschoolers. Ms. Spear said that in elementary schools this will require additional
189 monitors on a smaller reduced capacity vehicle. Mr. Epstein asked about facilities and space,
190 and what changes need to be made to correct the feeder system. Ms. Spear said they have to
191 find the best space for students; this could include bathrooms being altered, access and air
192 conditioning need to be thought of, among other items, while still trying to give opportunity to
193 be with their peers. Mr. Epstein asked how to address the higher amount that is spent on out
194 of district students compared to other districts within the budget. Ms. Spear said she would
195 love to create more internal programs, but this requires location and space. She said that the
196 priority would be at the high school level, such as an internal program for students with high
197 anxiety, school phobia, and an emotional piece. Mr. LaBarge asked about all the behaviors that
198 have been recently discussed at Stapleton. Ms. Spear said that while the Emotional Disability
199 Program is at Stapleton, not all of the behaviors that we are seeing in the school involve
200 students within that program. She said that a lot of resources that were for the program have
201 been used and pulled in other directions, and they need to figure out if tightening that up, and
202 seeing if it will create more concerns on the other side for students not in the program. Ms.
203 Hugo said it is important for as many children as possible to attend preschool, and asked if any
204 students are accepted and turned away due to space. Ms. Spear said the concern would be
205 space in order to continue to add special education classrooms. Mr. Freudberg said the district
206 and School Committee members are working with Framingham Special Education Parent
207 Advisory Council to schedule a public information forum on special education.

208

209 Superintendent's Update

210 Dr. Tremblay said there have been a lot of meetings at **Stapleton** looking for root causes. He
211 said some changes that have been made include tracking data to see if improving or not, adding
212 staff and three new behaviors support specialists, midterm realigning programming staff to
213 make sure they are in the right places, in addition to setting expectations around behavioral
214 expectations for bathroom use, for consequences for inappropriate behaviors, and in the longer
215 term getting classes set in the right way and making sure the Emotional Disability classroom has
216 supports in the fall. He added that with the attempt to get more accurate data, it's likely that
217 the data will get worse with better collection practices in place. He said he is looking to create
218 a survey for bus drivers to give feedback on behaviors they are seeing, working on developing a
219 code of conduct to have everyone be involved in what expectations are for behaviors in school.

220 **Questions.** Members spoke about needing to have faster action and the seriousness of the
221 problem and behaviors. Dr. Tremblay said the data is not to look at what to do about staffing,
222 the data is to see if the staff that are added are making a difference, and if additional or

223 redeployed staff are needed. Mr. Epstein asked about looking at the program to see if students
224 who are in the inclusive program, perhaps should be in the substantially different program. Dr.
225 Tremblay said they have looked at that, and some students in the program did not probably
226 need to be; there is a mindset in the district that if a student has behavioral challenges should
227 go to Stapleton, and trying to shift that mindset. Mr. Freudberg said that School Improvement
228 Plans are within the committee's purview, and asked for update on the status on where things
229 are going right and where they aren't within Stapleton's previously approved plan. Mr.
230 Freudberg added that Mr. Epstein has also asked about the correlation between arrivals at
231 Stapleton and student behavior; the longest bus rides tend to have more behavior, are there
232 specific Stapleton busses that should have monitors that don't currently have them.

233
234 Mr. Freudberg said that due to time, and the fact that at the meeting next week Durham will be
235 in attendance due to the letter sent regarding the breach of contract, there will be no
236 transportation update tonight.

237
238 Dr. Tremblay said that for the **Student Achievement Update** he wanted to talk about some
239 items at Woodrow Wilson. He said they have developed a Student Council Ambassador
240 Program, where two students per classroom in 5th grade are elected to promote student
241 agency. He said that 5th grade students started a school wide fundraiser for animals affected
242 by fires in Australia. He said that they have moved away from a PTO model to a community
243 gathering model, and they have over 200 attendees each month where they provide meals,
244 homework help, and with community partner Jewish Family Services provide many other
245 resources.

246
247 Dr. Tremblay presented the **2020-2021 School Calendar** for a first reading. He said that some
248 items they discussed were taking away a February or April vacation and starting before or after
249 Labor Day, all which could come with complications. He said that by law districts cannot end
250 the school year after the end of June, so if they have to make up days due to snow days, they
251 have to take away from other places, such as vacations or Saturday school. He said they are
252 looking for feedback from the public.

253 **Questions.** Mr. Wadland suggested that in the future the calendar is addressed earlier in the
254 year to help parents figure out summer programming and childcare. There was discussion
255 about encouraging feedback from parents and teachers, working on no homework days being
256 regulated, and if professional development days could be more beneficial to the students
257 throughout the year instead of towards the end of the year. Mr. Freudberg asked about the
258 decision of December 23rd being a full day instead of a half day. Dr. Tremblay said the 23rd has
259 never been a half day on 23rd in his tenure, but many years ago it was, the 24th is a full day off
260 and want to avoid playing favorites to one holiday or celebration over another.

261 **Motion:** To approve a first reading of the 2020/2021 school year calendar.

262 **Moved:** Mr. Wadland **Seconded:** Ms. Barnhill **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

263 Mr. Freudberg noted that the vote to finalize the calendar is listed for February 5, 2020.

264
265 Mr. Lynch said that the **FY20 Budget** is just under 55% spent or encumbered. Ms. Maskell
266 asked what occupational education includes, and why it is at 112%. Mr. Lynch said that line is
267 for high school students who want to go into a vocational field that is not offered at Keefe Tech,

268 the district has to provide transportation and pay tuition for that school. He said that they
269 project the amount based on previous years trends, and they were off 2 or 3 students this year.
270 He said that the Negative Food Balance is at \$60,727.10 which is a little below where it was last
271 year, he said part of this is likely due to the fact that Woodrow Wilson this year is part of the
272 Community Eligibility Program, which means all students get free breakfast and lunch. Mr.
273 Freudberg said they will be looking to get public feedback for the Student Opportunity Act,
274 including a public forum which is being planned.

275
276 Dr. Tremblay said that the Mayor and City Solicitor have followed up since the City Council
277 voted on the Perini lease, and no action is required from the committee tonight. He said that
278 next week the Department of Environmental Protection is having a community forum on the
279 remediation efforts of the cleanup of the general chemical site adjacent to the Woodrow
280 Wilson school, and they are working on offering childcare and translation so families can
281 attend. He said information on the school security visitor sign in process was issued this
282 afternoon, there is information available on the website, this was the initiative the Director of
283 Safety and Security identified and presented on in the summer to the committee, as well as has
284 been in place at high school since the beginning of the school year. He said that this is not
285 linked to any immigration status, stressed that no information is shared outside of the school,
286 except with the solely localized system that does cross checks on the National Sex Offender
287 Registry. He said that there are protocols in place for visitors without photo id. Ms. Maskell
288 asked who is responsible for this new implementation staff wise and said she is concerned
289 about how it was rolled out to parents, there is a need to follow up on thoughtfulness and
290 reassurance to families. Ms. Barnhill said she appreciates that this is being done with student
291 safety in mind, and is the reality of the situation we are all in now.

292
293 Rules and Administration Subcommittee Presentation and Vote on the Report

294 Mr. Wadland went over the rules report on what is being recommended to change on items
295 such as the meetings schedule, subcommittees, liaisons, and agenda framework. There was
296 discussion about how liaisons for PTOs would provide better connection with the community.
297 Mr. Freudberg recommended lowering it to one member per PTO, and not with the expectation
298 that they attend every month, so members do not overextend themselves, and as some PTO
299 meetings don't expect external guests. Ms. Hugo said that the Delegate Taskforce was not
300 discontinued by the MASC, it was put together by the committee to write resolutions. She
301 would recommend that the MASC Legislative Liaison can oversee the writing of the resolutions.
302 Mr. Wadland said that the Wellness Committee is in the process of reconstituting this year, so
303 he recommends that once they have an updated mission it will be included in the report. Mr.
304 Freudberg said there are other potential future liaisons by ordinance or Mayor policy, as there
305 are two already; the Welcoming Immigrants Taskforce and the Census Complete Count
306 Committee. Members discussed the naming of the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee
307 versus Student Achievement and Accountability, and what the subcommittee achieved and
308 focused on in the last term. Mr. Freudberg recommended adding a line at the end of the
309 description "with a focus on student achievement and accountability", no objections. Mayor
310 Spicer suggested adding Inclusion to the title for the Equity and Diversity Subcommittee. There
311 was discussion on removing racial from the subcommittee title and the reasoning for it,
312 including to be inclusive of more types of equity and what effect that has. Mayor Spicer also

313 added Inclusion needs to be added in the description of the performance for the
314 subcommittee, no objections on either suggestion. Mr. Freudberg asked if the Health and
315 Wellness subcommittee will be looking at how much time students get for recess. Mr.
316 Wadland said that the descriptions for subcommittees were meant to be general for scoping
317 out the broad frame, not meant to be exclusive of anything. Ms. Hugo suggests that within the
318 Equity, Inclusion and Diversity description it list out including but not limited to race, LGBTQ,
319 socioeconomic, etc. Mr. Small said he is in support of the student advisory update being added
320 to the agenda; this will let members know what they are working on and what to expect
321 between presentations, as well as it is good to hear student voice. Mayor Spicer said she
322 attends almost every School Committee meeting, and happy to give the Mayor's Update as
323 listed on the agenda to keep members informed.

324 **Motion:** To approve the Rules and Administration Report with the changes discussed.

325 **Moved:** Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

326 Mr. Freudberg highlighted that how the public can get accommodations to attend meetings is
327 now listed on the agenda, and that the School Committee has gone paperless. He said that
328 members will be getting future communication on appointments to subcommittee and liaisons.

329

330 Subcommittee Reports

331 Mr Epstein said that three warrants were signed.

332

333 Approval of Minutes, Gifts, and Scholarships

334 **Motion:** To approve the Open Session minutes of December 18, 2019.

335 **Moved:** Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

336 **Motion:** To accept the \$1,000 gift from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care to The Community
337 Resource Development Office for non-curriculum classroom supplies

338 **Moved:** Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Sousa **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

339

340 Second Round of Public Comment

341 Robert Bolles said that he is confused about changing the name of subcommittees to Building
342 and Grounds. Mr. Freudberg clarified that there are two different subcommittees: Building and
343 Grounds and Teaching and Learning.

344

345 Adjournment

346 Mr. Freudberg said that he has public records information regarding one of the issues that was
347 discussed at public comment, and it will be added to the packet.

348 **Motion:** To adjourn.

349 **Moved:** Mr. LaBarge **Seconded:** Ms. Maskell **Vote:** Unanimous (9-0-0)

350 Meeting adjourned at 10:52 p.m.

351

352 Meeting Materials

353 Agenda

354 Memo on the Fuller Middle School Building Project

355 Fuller Middle School Project Slides

356 Special Education Department Program Update

357 ACCEPT and TEC Membership Analysis

- 358 ACCEPT Annual Report
- 359 TEC Annual Report
- 360 Draft 2020-2021 FPS School Year Calendar
- 361 Stapleton Elementary School Update
- 362 FY20 YTD Budget
- 363 Food Services Negative Balance Report
- 364 Food Services Negative Balance Notification Memo
- 365 Rules and Administration Subcommittee Draft Report
- 366 Warrants
- 367 Draft December 18, 2019 Open Session Minutes
- 368 \$1,000 Gift from Harvard Pilgrim
- 369 Public Comment Submissions
- 370
- 371 *These minutes were approved by the Framingham School Committee in Open Session on .*
- 372 *These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on.*

DRAFT