

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING—October 14, 2009
Town Hall, Lower Conference Room

PRESENT

Dave Roberts, Chair
Margaret Connolly, Vice Chair
Thomas Ryan
Tracy Driscoll
John Healy
Kevin Coughlin
Joe Heisler

ADMINISTRATION

June M. Doe, Superintendent
Cynthia Kelly, Asst. Superintendent
Michael La Francesca, Business Manager

Convened: 7:00 PM

Adjourned: 10:35 PM

Chairman Roberts opened the meeting saying there would be an adjustment in the agenda due to the lengthy presentations scheduled.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

tabled

CHAIR'S UPDATE

tabled

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

tabled

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ACTION ITEMS

tabled

REPORTS

MCAS data was reviewed by each school, beginning with the elementary schools. The principals presented data for each grade. Power Point presentation was conducted with handouts given to the School Committee members. The Chair asked the Board and audience to please hold all questions until the end of the elementary presentation.

Grade 3 ELL District-wide results:

19% scored Advanced, 47% scored Proficient, 25% scored Needs Improvement, 9% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 3 Math District-wide results:

21% scored Advanced, 48% scored Proficient, 21% scored Needs Improvement, 10% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 4 ELL District-wide results:

9% scored Advanced, 53% scored Proficient, 33% scored Needs Improvement, 4% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 4 Math District-wide results:

13% scored Advanced, 36% scored Proficient, 45% scored Needs Improvement, 6% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 5 ELL District-wide results:

19% scored Advanced, 54% scored Proficient, 22% scored Needs Improvement, 5% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 5 Math District-wide results:

27% scored Advanced, 39% scored Proficient, 25% scored Needs Improvement, 9% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 5 Science and Technology District-wide results:

35% scored Advanced, 37% scored Proficient, 24% scored Needs Improvement, 5% scored Warning/Fail

Presentation provided further break out of results in a three year comparison by school, by subject.

Discussion and questions:

Congratulations to Riverdale and Oakdale on their excellent results. Question was asked if we were leaving YPP because this new program is better. Ms. Clements responded by saying they listened to the concerns of the teachers. This program serves goals of the program better – common assessments and predictability with MCAS. Have there been successful results in different districts? Mr. Langenhorst

spoke about Acuity and the studies show it is research proven effective with students. It allows less testing throughout the year. Testing was getting done but teachers were not able to get to the exercises. Acuity is available at home and school. The website has links to the research data. Question was asked about the after-school graduate course? Ms. Clements is working with Endicott College to develop the program. The cost is \$85 per credit hour. What is an Individual Student Success Plan (ISSP), what goes into it and what is the end result? Ms. Doe said it identifies the student's weak areas with the end result being improvement. The committee asked to explain how alternate assessment is scored with IEP students – by taking the alternate assessment; they are automatically put in the warning category. Discussion was held on the open response scores and what is being done to improve the scores. The problem seems to be a common one throughout the state.

Middle School MCAS scores were presented by Principal Gately.

Grade 6 ELA results:

15% scored Advanced, 61% scored Proficient, 18% scored Needs Improvement, 6% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 6 Math results:

25% scored Advanced, 38% scored Proficient, 27% scored Needs Improvement, 10% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 7 ELA results:

8% scored Advanced, 64% scored Proficient, 26% scored Needs Improvement, 3% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 7 Math results:

8% scored Advanced, 31% scored Proficient, 44% scored Needs Improvement, 16% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 8 ELA results:

17% scored Advanced, 67% scored Proficient, 13% scored Needs Improvement, 3% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 8 Math results:

22% scored Advanced, 38% scored Proficient, 26% scored Needs Improvement, 14% scored Warning/Fail

Grade 8 Science and Technology results:

2% scored Advanced, 26% scored Proficient, 43% scored Needs Improvement, 19% scored Warning/Fail

Principal Gately also presented a handout to members describing a new program being implemented

“Writing with Colors” which is focused writing program which was developed at Waltham High School.

Initially, 17 teachers have been trained. This is a low cost, highly effective program.

High School MCAS scores were presented by Assistant Principal Murray.

Mr. Murray acknowledged the Department Chairs who were in attendance and stated improving the MCAS scores is a school-wide initiative.

Grade 10 ELA results:

23% scored Advanced, 59% scored Proficient, 16% scored Needs Improvement, 2% scored Warning/Fail
(208 total students)

Grade 10 Math results:

56% scored Advanced, 33% scored Proficient, 11% scored Needs Improvement, 1% scored Warning/Fail
(210 total students)

Grade 10 Biology results:

31% scored Advanced, 54% scored Proficient, 12% scored Needs Improvement, 2% scored Warning/Fail

Avery School Presentation: Andy Lawlor, chairperson of School Building Rehab Committee and Don Walter, Lead Architect from Dore and Whittier.

Mr. Coughlin addressed the Chair that he would be observing the presentation only and abstaining from any votes. A Power Point presentation was presented by Mr. Lawlor. All committee members were given handouts to follow along.

Discussion and questions:

The Superintendent commented that this building is not an educational facility for 21st century education. We have an opportunity to work with MSBA to provide a facility that will not only serve the Avery students but will benefit the district for the district programs that we have. Mrs. Doe encourages anyone who has any questions on classroom size to visit the existing Avery School to get a look at the current conditions. MSBA standards allow for 950sq.ft. per classroom. Projected opening of the new Avery is March 2012.

The Superintendent made a recommendation to the School Committee to endorse/ accept the proposed project MSBA grant of \$11,086,460.00 to build a new Avery School. Motion made on the Superintendent's recommendation by Mr. Heisler and seconded by Mr. Healy: Approved: Majority with 1 abstention.

Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, Mike Butler and School Committee member, Tom Ryan presented slides on the renovation of the track and field facility. A handout was provided to all committee members. Due to the overall age and condition of the HS facilities and the substandard field a renovation is needed and long overdue. The proposal presented to the School Committee included renovations to the bleachers, concession stand, bathroom facilities and installation of man-made turf field with a new track built to MIAA standards. In addition, a new scoreboard, lighting and a PA system, two (2) tennis courts and renovated parking areas. It is advantageous to incorporate this project with the Avery School project to dovetail design work and unite the two campuses. The entire project is estimated to be approximately \$4.3M. Discussion was held on tweaking the number to present to the Finance Committee. Should the tennis courts be removed? The menu has been presented, should we pick and choose what to include in the final number. Members felt the costs are what they are and the entire package should be presented as is. Bleachers and restrooms would have to be addressed if the fields are renovated. There is a cause and effect relationship.

Motion made by Mr. Heisler and seconded by Ms. Connolly to endorse athletic field project and give preliminary approval on the concept and costs presented with a clear understanding there could be a further reduction in the final costs. The School Committee endorsed the project total of \$4, 294,713. Approved: majority with 1 abstention

MINUTES

Approval of the minutes from the September 23, 2009 has been tabled to make corrections.

DONATIONS

none

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by Ms. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Healy to approve the revised TEC agreement with the addition of Millis as a new member. Approved: Unanimous

A motion was made by Ms. Driscoll and seconded by Mr. Heisler to approve the annual High School ski trips as presented in a handout to SC members by Ms. Barbara Smith and Mr. Doug Simon for January 24, 2010 and March 7, 2010. Approved: Unanimous, with the condition the HS will obtain a copy of the certificate of insurance for the bus company to be kept on file.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

The Chair announced that the next meeting will be held on November 4, 2009.

Presentation HS guidance dept.Steps involved in the college search process.

Safety Presentation

The Chair announced the need to enter into Executive Session:

Motion made Mr. Coughlin and seconded by Mr. Healy : Vote conducted by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Heisler-yes, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes.

Open meeting adjourned at: 10:35 p.m.