

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING— November 5, 2008
Selectmen's Chambers

PRESENT

Tracy Driscoll, Chair
Margaret Matthews, Vice Chair
David Roberts
Thomas Ryan
Margaret Connolly
Joanne Flatley
John Healy

ADMINISTRATION

Cynthia Kelly, Asst. Superintendent
Michael La Francesca, Business Manager

Convened: 7:00 PM

Adjourned: 8:24 PM

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Filling in for Superintendent Doe is Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Kelly:

Congratulations to DHS marching band crowned NESBA Div. 2 NE Champions last Sunday, Nov. 2nd in Quincy. The HS hosted a very successful open house for parents and family of class of 2013 also on Sunday, Nov. 2nd. Well over 60 parents and 45 incoming freshmen attended and were presented an overview of HS athletics, academics, extra curricular activities and a tour of the building. Thanks to all the department chairs, staff, coaches, students, and DHS Parents Association and all the attendees. Biology teacher Fred Springer will be the advisor to the newly formed – Tia Kwan Do club which currently has 12 members. Principal Santamaria announces that there are 45 recipients of the 2009 John and Abigail Adams scholarship. Merit based, state supported undergraduate tuition waivers to students who score in the top 25% on grade 10 MCAS. Letters will be sent home this week and will hold a brief ceremony this Friday to congratulate the students. Football team had an impressive win over Weymouth on Saturday 25-7. Girls and boys soccer will be in the MIAA tournament. Field Hockey lost to Bellingham.

Student Representative Milo Carpenter Update:

Seniors are promoting school unity. Demonstrate the power of student voice by creating positive changes in the school.. Academy students and parents have both been very positive about the Academy. Winter sports meeting tomorrow and have noticed a high involvement from the freshmen class.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The School Committee would like to congratulate HS on a successful open house and recognize Gabbie Iarrobino, Kevin Hutchinson and the staff for all their work. Update to selectmen tomorrow has been postponed. Veterans Day assembly will be held on Friday, November 7th at the Middle School. Two presentations will be at 8:30 and 9:30.

Mr. Ryan suggested we invite the band – for recognition. Also wanted to know the schedule for Boys and Girls soccer. Mr. Santamaria reported the following: Girls soccer is scheduled for Friday November 7th game in Hingham at 2:30p.m. Boys soccer is scheduled for Saturday, November 8th game at Bishop Feehan at 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Celata wanted to report on two teachers from Avery School who did a terrific job holding signs on High Street. He appreciates their work on their own time and he enjoyed working with them.

AGENDA

Capital Budget Update: Mr. La Francesca

The budget Subcommittee met today to go over capital requests for 2010. Recommend for 2010 for the third year education and technology program, MS, HS library books, Boiler replacement for Oakdale and Dexter schools, roof replacement for Dexter, replacement of Auditorium steps at the HS, some equipment and renovation to HS and Elementary cafeterias. Mr. Roberts questioned whether the steps were done last year. Mr. La Francesca replied they were only patched and this would be a replacement of the entire stairs. Originally wasn't going to be done until 2011. Amount on technology program has increased \$275 to \$375. We took a look at the operating budget that is a capital expense and want to maximize our dollars. Mr. Roberts asked for a clarification – HS Café – it actually includes all the schools. Mr. La Francesca replied we were recently cited at elementary school for not having correct refrigeration. Will have backup and some quotes at next meeting. Ms. Matthews asked on educational technology figure going up. 2011 and 2012 move up as well. More details to follow at next meeting.

MS Awards for Read, Write, Win Summer Reading Program: (6th, 7th and 8th grades)

Principal Ruggere. It is nice to recognize efforts of students. Goal of summer reading program to keep students reading throughout the summer by encouraging them to select books for pleasurable reading. The program was funded by a generous grant through the Dedham Education Foundation.

Award winners:

Elizabeth Doherty – Grade 6, is a member of the tiger team. Enjoys action books and she has read all seven books in the Harry Potter series. She enjoys skiing, rock climbing and playing on the computer. Last year she won a sportsman award for swimming. Top choices for college: Penn State. She is interested in pursuing a career as an Astronaut.

Own McGuire – Grade 7. His grandfather Mickey McGuire, a former principal of Dedham MS. His Aunt often read to him when he was young. He enjoys fantasy and fiction. He is a member of the Lions team. For the 2nd year top winner in the Read, Write, Win Program. He enjoys video games, gym, and having lunch with friends. Top choices for college: BC, Harvard. He is interested in becoming an astronaut, CEO, Police officer.

Hannah Zengale – Grade 8. She has a 19 year old brother and a pet fish. She is a member of the Patriots team. She enjoys fantasy and science fiction and loves to read. She enjoys riding, spending time with friends, and playing guitar for 9 years. She is interested in pursuing a career as a reporter, author. Top two college choices are BC and Berklee School of Music.

All three are described as attentive conscientious, pleasant students who strive to succeed and are respected by team members and teachers.

Congratulations – each will receive a \$25.00 cash award Dedham Education Foundation.

Elementary School Update: Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Kelly

ECEC – Pre-K and Kindergarten registration on the way for 2009-2010. Applications must be postmarked by November 14th to be eligible for Pre-K lottery held on November 25th. Full day Kindergarten lottery will be held in January.

Avery – student council elections were held in October. Two representatives were elected for each classroom. November Reading Incentive Program is beginning. Students will be voting on their favorite books.

Greenlodge – Celebrating Family Literacy Month – students are reading books and finding exciting parts to read to a family member. Student Council is running a food drive for the Dedham food pantry.

Oakdale – the after school enrichment program is in full swing. There are 14 classes running. 200 students are participating in the program. The Student Council is organizing Thanksgiving baskets for needy families. They are collecting items for Thanksgiving dinners to donate.

Riverdale -Math Hall of Fame began in October – 10 students have made it to the Hall of Fame already. Welcome to Ms. Shawn Wood who replaced Ms. Debra Branting in the substantially separate program.

National Education week is November 16th to the 21st.

Master Plan Update – Don Walter – Dore and Whittier

Process has been ongoing since last spring in updating the 2003 master plan study 5 years ago. Look at enrollment projections, space needs and develop educational specs – go back into buildings and determine needs 5 years later. Develop some options, specifically Avery and Dexter as the next step in fulfilling master plan desires. The Avery School is an approved project through MSBA.

Findings: enrollment projections show a drop overall in # of students in school district.

Factors: Newer housing projects may affect numbers somewhat, but overall the trend is on the decline.

Space needs and education specs: Looked at classroom sizes – especially at Avery and Oakdale – undersized as relating to new MSBA standards as a funding partner. Regular elementary education classroom the standard is 950 sq.ft. in a classroom new standard in all grade levels.

ECEC – the standard for Kindergarten and Pre-K is 1200 sq.ft. classrooms. Determined a continued need for music and art classrooms in all schools as well as cafeterias vs. eating in classrooms. Pre-K and K locations – in Curran – code issue NFPA they are required to have at grade access – on the first floor. (if built today)

Physical needs of buildings in terms of energy: windows-single pane, doors, roofs, walls-masonry, old – not extremely efficient.

HP accessibility – would be part of a major renovation. HVAC systems are original – updated and upgraded over time, but have served their useful life. Electrical service upgrades to achieve proper lighting levels. Plumbing – low flow toilets, hot water. Fire protection – no sprinklered buildings. These findings are not new – consistent with past findings. The school department does a super job in keeping buildings maintained. We looked at Avery and Dexter in particular. Avery – being an approved project and Dexter as a potential Early Childhood Center. There are restrictions on Dexter site with wetlands and buffer zones. Maintenance and code upgrades to the buildings.

Thanks to Brian Lynch – he spent a lot of time with Dore and Whittier gathering data, touring buildings. He is a wealth of information as well as the Principals.

Outcome:

Updated Master Plan recommendations. Desire to maintain is to maintain current grade configuration and annual maintenance program.

Phase I is complete years 1-5. Construction of MS and relocation of district offices to HS.

Phase II is construction of new East Dedham Elementary School. Repurpose of old (Avery) building site.

Phase III in 6-10 years see Dexter developed into ECEC and renovation/addition to Oakdale school.

Phase IV in 11-15 years – renovations/additions to Riverdale and Greenlodge.

Phase V in 16-20 years– repurposing Curran – utilized for “swing space” for renovating and adding on to Oakdale and Greenlodge for temporary locations.

Discussion held:

Ms. Driscoll said that the past master plan it was decided to do a K-5. I have not found formal vote on that, but when we voted on the submit for the Avery a grade 1-5 was voted. The other change – Greenlodge was originally before Riverdale, and Dexter was going to be the swing space.

Questions: We’re not necessarily putting additions on due to enrollment projections – but renovations on class size may need to be done.

Ms. Matthews - should we be considering k-5 due to loss of population? Ms. Matthews said this question was brought up in the budget-sub meeting this morning and Supt. Doe answered it as that educationally having an ECEC is best for the community and we would need to find a place for the Pre-K. Data on population decline, based on regional trends the movement is noted throughout the northeast.

Mr. Lawlor – SBRC – chair. Committee hasn’t had a chance to look at update. Observation: In 2002 – come up with education programs and we’ll come up with plan to suited to those programs. Three grade MS, campus between MS and HS to share dept. heads and other resources. Before designing Avery – directly or indirectly take a vote to ratify the educational model from 2003. Independent of the master plan or amend.

Ms. Driscoll interrupted to state cannot find any data to support vote taken by SC on an educational model. Found three options on Master Plan on feasibility study in 2003 and one option was chosen. It was not an adoption of a model of education – an adoption of how to proceed with the building. Mr. Lawlor recollects the model included full day kindergarten. He is suggesting before adopting master plan – need to get in black and white are we including k-5 or 1-5. Mr. Walter – showed concept site plans.

MINUTES

Mr. Ryan moved, seconded by Ms. Connolly, to approve the October 22, 2008 minutes.

Approved: Unanimous

DONATIONS

NE Patriots Alumni Club – \$500.00 donation to be used toward the purchase of equipment for HS football.

Ms. Connolly made a motion to accept with grateful appreciation, seconded by Ms. Matthews, and it was Approved: Unanimous

George Glass Foundation: donated five Stop & Shop \$20.00 gift cards.

Mr. Healy made a motion to accept with grateful appreciation, seconded by Mr. Ryan, and it was Approved: Unanimous

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

none

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Middle School Athletic Team Update Report

HS league update Mr. Arria

PTO's and Community groups – next meeting and December meeting.

December – reception for John and Abigail Adams recipients – December 10th. Parents and Students at Middle School – in Cafeteria prior to SC Meeting

Ms. Connolly asked how are MS athletic teams picked? Thought the program was initially introduced as a feeder pool for the High School. Does Mr. Arria have a philosophy? Keep interest in 8th grade. Seems to be turning out differently. Revisit how it functions. What do we need to do if it's not functioning?

Invite drum majors and color guard captains and Joe Brogan to next meeting.

Executive Session:

Entertain a motion to go into executive session for the purposes of negotiations under exemption three. We will not be returning to open session.

Mr. Roberts so moved, seconded by Mr. Ryan, and it was voted by roll call: Mr. Roberts, yes; Mr. Ryan, yes; Mr. Healy, yes; Ms. Flatly, yes; Ms. Matthews, yes; Ms. Driscoll, yes; Ms. Connolly, yes; to go into executive session.