

*Filed subject to approval*

Easton Board of Education  
Meeting  
October 14, 2014  
Minutes

Attendance:

Board of Education: Bobroske, Hicks, Parker, Peskay (7:42 pm)

Administration: Josefsberg, Sullivan, Pierson Ugol, Friedlander, Freeston, Fox-Santora, Brownstein, Kaplan

Others: eight members of the staff and community, and a representative of the Easton Courier

Mr. Parker opened the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. A quorum was not present and those present heard the administrative reports.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Samuel Staples Elementary School: Mrs. Fox Santora provided a summary of the results of the informal questionnaire/survey of parents. The goal of the survey was to learn more about each student. Mrs. Fox Santora and the new teaching staff attended a HOTS School orientation that was exciting. The new math program was presented to two well attended sessions for parents. Another session is planned for December. The school Kindness Club recognized the custodians of the building and the work they do to make the school a good place to be. On the October 10 Professional Development Day, the staff worked on school and student goals.

Dr. Peskay arrived, 7:42 pm, during the following discussion.

Helen Keller Middle School: Mrs. Kaplan reported on the recent student government elections and a student outreach visit to serve dinner at a Bridgeport church. She thanked the PTA for bringing author Tim Green to the school for an assembly presentation that focused on discipline, hard work and the importance of family. On the recent professional development day, staff worked on schools goals and had training in the new math program. Mrs. Kaplan thanked ELF (Easton Learning Foundation) for sponsoring a project that involved an art teacher and a science teacher working together with students on comics and life science. The project concluded with a trip to New York City for ComicCom.

Easton Special Education: Mrs. Friedlander reported she and Mrs. Freeston have been working on staff training to unite the general education and special education staffs of Easton and Redding. In addition, BASES training is moving forward with the staff. At the recent professional day, special education staff worked on the new math program. They are also working on training/refreshing the staff on the writing of IEPs and writing goals.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Mrs. Pierson Ugol provided a written report and noted that the Curriculum Steering Committee has been reorganized to include a focus on K-12 vertical alignment. The Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) created collegial inquiry project for teachers to respond to Request for Proposals. These are now under review.

Director of Finance and Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported health claims for September are tracking with the budget. The Transfer Report was provided. The largest transfer, \$9,000, was to move funds based on the State's definition of supplies. The October 1 enrollment was 585 for SSES, 15 more than projected, and 323 for HKMS, right on the projection. Enrollment data has been forwarded to Dr. Prowda and the enrollment projection report is expected mid-November.

Superintendent: Dr. Josefsberg commented on staff “out of the classroom” participation in professional development activities/in-district meetings. He provided a listing of curriculum and instruction initiatives for 2013-2014. He noted that average for staff members to participate in professional development or in-district meetings was 6.97 days/year. He added that this is comparable to Redding’s number. Board members expressed a concern about the number of days the teachers are out of the classroom. Dr. Josefsberg stressed the importance of good quality lesson plans for the substitute teacher.

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Parker called the October 14, 2014 meeting to order at 7:55 pm

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept the minutes of the September 9, 2014 meeting as submitted. Bobroske, Hicks. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept the minutes of the Special Meeting of September 15, 2014 as submitted. Hicks, Bobroske. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Adam Dunsby: Mr. Dunsby commented that he attended the math night and the presentation was very informative. He questioned a change in a policy on tonight’s agenda for revision, specifically the policy regarding the tuition rate for students of non-resident teachers. He questioned the reduction in tuition from 25% to 15%.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Dr. Peskay asked if any additional Project Choice children were admitted to Samuel Staples Elementary School since the last meeting. Dr. Josefsberg indicated an offer was made to a family, but they declined. He noted that action on this should have been taken when the additional section of Kindergarten was added in late August.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

Mrs. Sullivan reported the board approved establishment of a capital reserve fund is on the Easton Board of Finance agenda for their November 4 meeting. That meeting will begin earlier than normal, to allow Dr. Josefsberg and Mrs. Sullivan to attend, prior to going to the regularly scheduled Redding Board of Education meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON KELLER SEPTIC ISSUE

Mrs. Sullivan reported that as a part of the annual inspection of the building for the capital plan, an inspection of the Keller septic system uncovered problems with the effluent pumps. Public works has been consulted and are in agreement that the issue needs to be corrected. The quote for the fix is approximately \$14,900, but could be more if additional problems are uncovered.. Mrs. Sullivan stated that the board has two options to fund the repair: 1) request an additional appropriation from the Board of Finance, or 2) transfer the funds internally until the total cost is known, and then request an appropriation from the Board of Finance.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education permit the internal transfer of funds to allow the work on the Helen Keller septic system repair to move forward and request an appropriation from the Board of Finance when the project is complete. Peskay, Hicks. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON KELLER OUTSIDE SOFFIT REPAIR

Mr. Parker noted that the soffits, especially at the front of the building are damaged and need repairs. Mrs. Sullivan reported the paint was tested and found to be non-lead based. The estimated cost to prime, paint, repair, etc. is \$12,000. She noted that this project would be included in the 2014-15 budget request. No action was needed at this time.

#### DISCUSSION OF ENROLLMENT DECLINE COMMITTEE

Mr. Parker appointed Mrs. Bobroske to chair the Enrollment Decline Committee. Other board members serving on the committee include Dr. Peskay and Mr. Horowitz. The goal of the committee is to review the enrollment and population trends and prepare options for the board, Town and community to consider further. The committee will involve and engage the community in discussions and exploration of options.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON DECEMBER MEETING DATE

Mr. Parker asked that the December meeting date be changed due to a business commitment.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education change the date of the December 9, 2014 meeting to December 15, 2014. Hicks, Bobroske. Approved. 3-1. Dr. Peskay voted against the motion.**

#### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CELL PHONE SERVICE

Mr. Hicks questioned the availability of cell phone service at both schools and adjacent grounds. Mrs. Fox Santora commented that cell phone service is a problem at SSES and only available at one section of the building. Mrs. Kaplan commented that at Helen Keller the classrooms do not have outside-service phones, only intercoms, but that cell phone coverage is a problem.

Mrs. Sullivan was asked to check further on availability of satellite phone coverage or other options that might be available for the schools and grounds.

#### DISCUSSION OF HELEN KELLER SIGN

The new Helen Keller Middle School sign, funded by the PTA, will be installed on October 24, 2014. The PTA was thanked for this donation.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION, SSES

Mrs. Fox Santora reported a parent has offered a donation of \$500 in honor of her mother, a former Spanish teacher. The donation is for Spanish language books for the "Spanish library."

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept with gratitude the anonymous donation of \$500 for Spanish language library books. Peskay, Horowitz. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION OF DONATION, HKMS

Mrs. Kaplan reported that a parent has offered a donation of \$500 to be used for student enrichment programs.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept with gratitude the donation of \$500 from a parent to be used for student enrichment programs. Bobroske, Peskay. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON POLICIES

Three policies were presented for a first reading:

Policy 0200: District Goals and Beliefs, a new policy

Policy 3543.31: Electronic Communications Use and Retention, update of current policy

Policy 5118.2: Children of Non-resident Teachers: change in policy to reflect contract negotiations

These policies were accepted for a first reading.

#### CONTRACT NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE

Mr. Parker noted that agreement was reached on the certified staff three-year contract. That contract will be ratified in November.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Champagne: Mrs. Champagne suggested the parents be included in the discussions of declining enrollment. Mr. Parker noted that parental input and community input would be considered.

Suzanne Chiaramonte: Mrs. Chiaramonte would consider being a part of a focus group or discussion with parents sharing their thoughts on the topic of how to address the declining enrollment.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hicks asked if the board members could review teacher goals. Dr. Josefsberg indicated that samples of those could be shared with board members.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Motion: move to recess to executive session for a discussion of paraprofessional contract negotiation strategy. Hicks, Peskay. Approved. Unanimous.**

Dr. Josefsberg and Mrs. Sullivan were invited to be present.

The meeting recessed at 9:18 pm

#### RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 9:32PM

**Motion: To approve the wage increase for Easton Paraprofessionals for the 2014-15 school year of 2.25%. Bobroske, Peskay. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education adjourn the meeting. Hicks, Horowitz. Approved. Unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35PM

Submitted by Regina Bobroske, Board of Education Secretary

Recorded by Mary Maday