

*Filed subject to approval*

Easton Board of Education  
Meeting  
November 18, 2014  
Minutes

Attendance:

Board of Education: Bobroske, Hicks, Horowitz, Parker, Peskay (7:50 pm)

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

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

Mr. Parker opened the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept the minutes of the October 14, 2014 meeting as corrected. Bobroske, Horowitz. Approved. 3-0-1. Mr. Horowitz abstained.**

Corrections: motions on pages 3 & 4 were not seconded by Mr. Horowitz, but by Mr. Hicks and Dr. Peskay.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Amy Zima, Delaware Road: Mrs. Zima explained a newly formed group, Children's Health Education & Wellness (The Chew Crew) that has a goal of uniting, informing and empowering Samuel Staples Elementary School teachers, staff, board of education members, students and families to make health choices that support the well-being and academic success of students. CHEW seeks to support the District's overall curriculum and the goals outlined in the District Wellness Policy and provide parent involvement, feedback and support whenever possible to achieve and/or exceed these goals.

Sarah Ledberger, Kachele Street: Mrs. Ledberger addressed the board with more information about the goals of the Chew Crew. She spoke of the importance of what the children are eating for lunch, as well as the source of the food.

Dr. Peskay arrived, 7:50 pm, during the presentation below.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

Dr. Josefsberg and the administrators provided a presentation on the School Improvement Plans.

*Tri-District Goal: create engaging and reflective learning environments for students and staff that include methods of disciplined inquiry leading to the construction of deep knowledge that holds value beyond the immediate school/work context.*

Ongoing initiatives for literacy, numeracy, STEM, World Language, professional evaluation, Special Education, performance assessment, summer work, re-visioning library media were covered in the presentation.

DISCUSSION OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

Mr. Hicks and Mrs. Bobroske will represent the Easton Board of Education on the Tri-District Search Committee. Mr. Hicks reported that the Committee has set March 1, 2015 as a tentative deadline for a decision, with various milestones between now and then. The group selected a consultant, Gary Richards, to assist with the candidate search. The search will include the establishment of a criteria, input from the Easton/Redding communities, focus group sessions and discussions at town meetings.

#### DISCUSSION OF ENROLLMENT DECLINE COMMITTEE

Mrs. Bobroske reported the name of the committee has changed to Long Range Planning Committee. The Committee consists of herself as Chair, Mr. Horowitz, Dr. Peskay, Dr. Josefsberg, Dr. McMorran, and, representing the community, Bettina Grob and Gabriel Rossi.

The charge is to identify options that will address the projected enrollment decline in the Easton schools over the next 5 to 10 years that will preserve or enhance the regional educational quality at an acceptable cost, and to be flexible/reversible in response to prospective enrollment rebound.

The Committee has met with the Redding counterpart committee to review Redding's work on this issue, and has had preliminary discussions with Dr. McMorran and Mrs. Pierson Ugol on K-12 continuum and future of education. The committee's goal is to present a list of options and recommendations for next steps to the Easton Board of Education at their March or April, 2015 meeting.

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON 2015 MEETING SCHEDULE

The meeting dates for 2015 were reviewed. Action on the schedule was deferred to the next meeting.

#### AGENDA ADDITION

**Motion: move to add to the agenda Discussion and Possible Action on Board Policy 0200: District Goals and Beliefs. Horowitz, Hicks. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON POLICIES

Policy 0200: District Goals and Beliefs, a new policy

Dr. Josefsberg advised deferring this policy, pending further review

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education defer action on Board Policy 0200 at the present time. Peskay, Horowitz. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept Board Policy 3543.31: Electronic Communications Use and Retention for a second and final reading. Horowitz, Bobroske. Approved. Unanimous.**

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education accept Board Policy 5118.2: Children of Non-resident Teachers for a second and final reading. Horowitz, Bobroske. Approved. Unanimous.**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Samuel Staples Elementary School: Mrs. Fox-Santora provided examples of the use of SLOs and school goals, and how they are incorporated in the classroom. She also reported that a new resident with children in the school, a retired army officer, spoke with the students on Veteran's Day. She noted that the session was very inspirational.

Helen Keller Middle School: Mrs. Kaplan also related the use of SLOs and school goals. In addition, she reported that the septic issues at the school have been resolved. A leak in a classroom and custodial closet has also been fixed. The hot water heater also developed a leak and is being replaced.

Easton Special Education: Mrs. Friedlander reported on the incorporation of the SLOs and school goals by the Special Education staff. Paraprofessionals are continuing to receive training by the Center for Children with Special Needs. She added that a group of the students has organized a food drive. They are working in partnership with a like group from John Read Middle School. They are doing all the organization, including posters, advertising and collection of non-perishable food products.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction: Mrs. Pierson Ugol provided a written report. She noted that she chaired the first meeting of the year for the Wellness Committee. The committee is working on revisions of the current policy and is inviting input from the parent and student community.

Director of Finance and Operations: Mrs. Sullivan reported health claims for October were higher than the typical October. Overall the account is in good shape.

Transfer report: Mrs. Sullivan requested approval for the transfer of funds to cover the Non-Certified Staff contract agreement. Money to cover the increase was included in the budget in the Health Insurance Reserve Expense Account pending final agreement on the contract.

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education approve the transfer of funds from Health Insurance Reserve Expense Account to the Non-Certified Salary account, for \$37,350. Hicks, Horowitz. Approved. Unanimous.**

Enrollment Projection Study: The Prowda Enrollment Projection Report was distributed. It was noted that the decline in enrollment is slowing down.

Electricity costs: The district is partnering with the Town of Easton to purchase electricity at a good rate. This will have no impact on the current budget.

Bus taxation with Bethel issue: Mrs. Sullivan reported the trial has been completed, the attorneys have 30 days to file briefs, and then the judge will make a decision.

Solar Panels: Mr. Parker reported he met with First Selectmen Dunsby to discuss the issue. The Town is continuing to pursue the installation of panels, but not on the roof of SSES. The panels will likely be placed behind the back parking area on town-owned land, not on the school property.

Superintendent: Dr. Josefsberg commended the principals and teachers for their work on the school goals and SLOs. He also reported that the search consultant, Gary Richards is finalizing a community survey and working on a timeline and schedule for focus group sessions in December.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Parker reported that he, Dr. Josefsberg and Mrs. Sullivan met with the Board of Finance to request the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Finance determined that the current process of making requests when needed is one they are most comfortable with.

Mr. Hicks commented on feedback he has gotten from other parents regarding the differentiation and the need to address the needs of the more gifted and talented children. He suggested that more information be provided on how the schools are addressing those specific needs. Dr. Josefsberg and the administrators responded to the concerns, specifically with how the individual SLOs are addressing the specific needs of each child. The current focus is on personalized learning and setting goals, and matching content and process to the goal. Mrs. Bobroske suggested that the information be shared with parents.

Mr. Hicks asked if there was any news on improving cell phone coverage in the schools. Mrs. Sullivan did not have that information.

Mr. Parker commented on how professional development has changed and the improvements in the work being done. Dr. Josefsberg thanked Mrs. Pierson Ugol, the administrators and the teacher leadership for their work.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Motion: move to recess to executive session for a discussion of teacher contract negotiation strategy.**

**Hicks, Peskay. Approved. Unanimous.**

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

The meeting recessed at 10:15 pm

RECONVENE

The Chair reconvened the meeting in public session at 10:25PM

ACTION

**Motion: Move to accept the agreement between the Board of Education of the town of Easton and the Easton Education Association for the years of 2015 – 2018.**

**Hicks, Peskay. Approved. Unanimous.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30PM

Submitted by Regina Bobroske

Recorded by Mary Maday