

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP SESSION

OF

October 26, 2015

SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF:

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

AND

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

“AN OPEN MEETING ADVANTAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY OF METHUEN”

RECORDED BY:

MARTHA SIROIS, PUBLIC RECORDER

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD
METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WORKSHOP SESSION
October 26, 2015

This Workshop of the Methuen School Committee was held in the Media Center, Marsh Grammar School, and was posted for 6:30 PM.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Stephen Zanni
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett, Secretary
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb
Mr. Rober F. Vogler

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Jana DiNatale
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Gina Bozek, Student Services Director
Mr. Christopher Reeve, Comprehensive Grammar School Supervising Principal
Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Marsh Grammar School Supervising Principal
Ms. Mary Beth Donovan-Grassi, Tenney Grammar School Supervising Principal
Mr. Timothy Miller, Donald P. Timony Grammar School Supervising Principal
Mr. Richard Barden, Methuen High School Supervising Principal
Ms. Martha Sirois, Public Recorder

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Zanni called this Workshop to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance, and listed above.

Other Business:

2015 Performance Data Review and District and School Improvement Plans

Superintendent-This evening we will be reviewing the District and School Improvement Plans. Dr. Kwong will also be reviewing the Performance Data from D.E.S.E.

Dr. Kwong presented the Performance Data:

Dr. Kwong-Tonight we will be reviewing the Performance Data. She has not yet received the Accountability Levels from D.E.S.E. We will not receive these Levels until the end of November. When released, the Accountability Levels will be embargoed until December. The Commissioner will let the Superintendent know when the embargo has been lifted.

Mayor-We are aware that the reason this information has not been released is that they are waiting for the P.A.R.C.C. vote to be taken. It is not right that this vote is causing this information to not be released.

Mayor-How many students do we currently have in Grade 3?

Dr. Kwong-550-600

Mayor-If we look at the figures on page 5 of the packet we have about 300 students transition between Grade 3 to Grade 10. What happened to the other 300 students?

Dr. Kwong-That is the number of students that transfer in and out of the system.

Mr. Deeb-What is the definition of Economically Disadvantaged?

Dr. Kwong-Any family or student that receives State Assistance.

Superintendent-This is a new way for the State to come up with the Economically Disadvantaged numbers. They will no longer be using our free lunch numbers.

Ms Hajjar Kumm-Page 11 states that we had no in-house and outside suspensions. Is that accurate?

Superintendent-No this is a mistake by the State. Dr. Kwong will ask the State why this information is not on the report.

Dr. Kwong presented the District Action Plan:

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-What do you mean when you say underperforming students?

Dr. Kwong-These are the students who are failing or in warning.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Do we also have parallels for students who we would like to see go from proficient to advanced, not just for warning and failing students?

Dr. Kwong-Yes

Mayor-Will the curriculum ever be in-line with the Frameworks?

Dr. Kwong-It is always a work in progress.

Mayor-The MCAS Test is untimed. What happens to the students that do not finish the test when most of the classroom has completed the test?

Mr. Reeve-We secure the tests and move the students to a different location so they can complete the test.

Mr. Vogler-When did the Math Frameworks change?

Dr. Kwong-They changed in 2011. In 2014 the MCAS was aligned with the Frameworks. The teachers are familiar with the standards but now we have given them the resources that match the standards.

Mr. Vogler-He would like to see the Educational Channel be utilized more often. He would like to see the evening parent presentations recorded and played back on the channel.

Superintendent distributed a P.B.I.S. information packet.

Mayor-How many Professional Days do the teachers have each year?

Superintendent-They have five ½ days and one full day.

Mayor-He would like to see after school Professional Development for teachers in place of the ½ and full day Professional Development.

Mr. Deeb-This is a good idea but you can't require teachers to stay an extra 2 hours a day.

Mayor-The teachers need Professional Development hours for their licensure. He thinks they may like this idea for that reason.

Dr. Kwong-Contractually we are required to offer Professional Development during the school day.

Mr. Deeb-He thinks that programs like P.B.I.S. takes away from our mission. We are not mental health professionals.

Mr. Vogler-He likes the Mayor's idea. If you offer after school Professional Development and give the teachers credits, the teachers will be interested.

Superintendent-Two years ago our District Review stated that they wanted us to offer more Professional Development to our teachers. Professional Development after school is a collective bargaining piece. It will also significantly affect the Budget.

Dr. Kwong-We have a Professional Development Council in place and we have been exploring these areas. We are sending a survey to the teachers to get their input.

Mayor-We should reach out to the Cities and Towns that are doing well on the MCAS in Science and ask them if our teachers can come to their schools and view their Science Programs.

Mr. Reeve presented the Comprehensive Grammar School Improvement Plan

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Why do you think the numbers jumped in science?

Dr. Kwong-The science teachers at the C.G.S. are part of our Science Grant and are taking the advanced Science Courses.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-We have great science teachers in our own schools. They do not need to go to other Cities and Towns to be trained. We can train our own teachers. On Page 42 how are the teachers pushing the advanced students?

Mr. Reeve-We are focusing on those students and it will show in our scores.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-On page 43 how are you drawing-in the whole school community?

Mr. Reeve-We have parent meetings. We are going out into the Community, and we have our upcoming Road Race.

Mr. Seirpina presented the Marsh Grammar School Improvement Plan

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-On page 65 she likes the activities on this page. She would like to see these activities uniform through the schools. She hopes the administrators are getting together and sharing what they do in their buildings.

Mayor-On page 63 how does the State get to the numbers on this page?

Dr. Kwong-She will get the answer for him.

Ms. Mary Beth Donovan-Grassi presented the Tenney Grammar School Improvement Plan

Mr. Vogler-He commends her. The Tenney Student Growth Percentile across the board looks great.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-How are the parents reacting to the Saturday Detention?

Ms. Donovan Grassi-They are fine with it.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-The eighth grade Pilot Plan is terrific. She hopes the other schools will do this as well.

Mayor-Are the teachers that teach grades sixth seventh and eighth certified in the subject matter that they teach?

Dr. Kwong-Most of the seventh and eighth grade teachers are certified in the subject matter.

Mayor-Do the sixth seventh and eighth grade students have a science class every day?

Dr. Kwong-Yes.

Mr. Miller presented the Donald P. Timony Grammar School Improvement Plan

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Do the Jr. R.O.T.C. students still mentor the students in your school?

Mr. Miller-Yes. We also have Methuen High School students coming after school to tutor some of our students.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-How have the parents embraced the P.B.I.S. Program?

Mr. Miller-Most parents are pleased with the program.

Dr. Kwong-Kerry Calobrisi is the Dean of Students at the Timony. She is doing a presentation at D.E.S.E. Wednesday on P.B.I.S.

Mr. Richard Barden presented the Methuen High School Improvement Plan

Mr. Vogler-He thanked the Principals for their presentations.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-She is seeing some great things for students. She would like to see the middle school students more involved with seeing what happens at the high school. She feels it would make them excited about attending MHS.

Mr. Barden-He would like to organize some middle school visits in the spring.

Mayor-We could promote science to the elementary students by inviting them to the high school Science Fair. He thanked the Principals for their presentations. He is seeing improvements across the board. He likes seeing the collaboration between the schools. He feels that is very important.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATIONS: No

***ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business to discuss at this Workshop Session, Mayor Zanni entertained a motion to conclude the Workshop Session for the evening at 8:56 PM.

MOTION: Mr. Vogler moved to adjourn the Workshop at 8:56 PM.
Ms. Hajjar-Kumm seconded.

VOTE: 5-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools