

TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC RECORD

OF

THE METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WORKSHOP SESSION

OF

NOVEMBER 24, 2014

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

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METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
WORKSHOP SESSION
November 24, 2014

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

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Stephen Zanni, Chairperson
Ms. Lynne Hajjar Kumm, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Mary Jean Fawcett, Secretary
Mr. Dennis D.J. Deeb
Ms. Jana DiNatale
Mr. Bryan P. Sweet
Mr. Robert F. Vogler

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. Judith Scannell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Brandi Kwong, Assistant Superintendent
Ms. Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Edward Lussier, Instructional Technology Director
Kerri Stoffel, Instructional Technology Specialist, MHS
Anne Marie Krusell, English 7-12 Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE:

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

Agenda-Mayor Zanni entertained a motion to accept the agenda for this meeting.

Motion- Dennis D.J. Deeb made a motion to accept the agenda. Lynne Hajjar Kumm seconded.

Vote-7-0-0

Overview of Methuen High School and District Wide Technology

Superintendent-Edward Lussier, our Director of Technology is here with us this evening to introduce us to the new Instructional Technology Specialist at Methuen High School Kerri Stoffel. They will be giving us an Overview of our Technology Department.

Mr. Lussier-Thanked the Committee for having them this evening they have been looking forward to coming to a meeting and to give their Presentation.

He introduced Kerri Stoffel and said she has been doing an outstanding job at Methuen High School as the Instructional Technology Specialist. They will present a slide show that will be a snapshot as to what is going on in our schools here in Methuen.

Ms. Stoffel-It is an honor and a privilege to work in this community.

Slide 1 Questions:

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Are all the staff emails up on the school website?

Mr. Lussier-The school secretaries are in charge of updating the websites. They have all been updated with the staff email information.

Mr. Vogler-Is the high school auditorium going to have wireless access?

Mr. Lussier-We will do the field house next. The auditorium will be a difficult project to install wireless but we will get it done pending funding.

Superintendent-This is a budget item and right now we are putting a plan in place. We have completed the wireless in the cafeteria. We have many workshop, professional development with the staff as well as staff and student meetings in this area and that is why the cafeteria needed to be done first.

Ms. Krusell-Many times we want the students to get the same message so we have meetings in the cafeteria. We use the cafeteria for class meetings and clubs. The students and staff need to use their iPads during these meetings.

Superintendent-We also have different groups in the city that use our building for registrations. They use iPads to register the students.

Mr. Lussier-Our in-house technology staff just completed the installation of wireless in our fitness studio. The iPads are used for different fitness activities.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Why was the installation of the wireless in these areas not covered by the budget for the renovation of the high school?

Superintendent-The Mayor can answer that question.

Mayor-It was not in the Scope of the work. With a project of this magnitude some things are left out. There will be money left over from the renovation budget and we are looking into using this for these upgrades.

Slide 2 Questions:

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-She asked Mr. Lussier to expand on the iPad challenges he is having at the high school.

Mr. Lussier-The enrollment increased at the beginning of the school year and he needed to pull iPads from the carts in different programs to have enough for each student to have an iPad.

Ms. Fawcett-In the elementary schools are grades K-8 using the Chrome Books?

Mr. Lussier-Grades 3-8 are using Chrome Books.

Ms. Fawcett-Do the students adjust well transitioning from Chrome Books to iPads when they go to the high school?

Mr. Lussier-Yes they do a great job.

Superintendent-If the Commissioner of Education makes the decision to do the P.A.R.K testing the Chrome Books will be used.

Dr. Kwong-The Chrome Books and iPads are PARCC ready. There is a day in December that Mr. Lussier and I will be going to a PARCC Seminar. We are in a better place with the Chrome Book Carts and wish we had more.

Mr. Lussier-We added 700 Chrome Books. We did the PARCC trial in grade 8 last year and we do Benchmark Assessments. The Chrome Books were used for both.

Superintendent-If we do switch to PARCC it will be a large line item in our budget to purchase Chrome Books.

Slide 3 Questions:

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Talk about the iPad agreement with the students. What is the student down time when their iPad is shipped out for repair?

Mr. Lussier-The students and their parents came to the high school over the summer to review and sign our iPad Policy. Methuen Public Schools does carry insurance on all iPads. There is a deductible of \$35.00 that is paid by the student. We do not have any extra iPads that can be issued to the students as a replacement until theirs is returned. The turn-around time for repairs is about 1 week.

Dr. Kwong-They can also use their computer at home.

Ms. Fawcett-How many iPads needed to be repaired last year?

Mr. Lussier-About 20%. We issued 1,900 iPads last year.

Mayor-What is the process when they break their iPad?

Mr. Lussier-They come to the help desk in the media center and we complete an online form. We collect the money and ship the iPad to the repair vendor.

Mr. Sweet-What is the life expectancy of the iPads?

Mr. Lussier-We hope they will last 3-4 years. We have already started to have talks about what to do with the iPads at that time. We have a finance contract for 3 years so we will own the iPads out-right at the end of the contract.

Ms. Fawcett-She knows someone in Maine she will call them and find out what they do to recycle their iPads.

Mr. Lussier-There is a lot of information and resources out there that we have been looking at about recycling iPads.

Ms. DiNatale-Why did we go with iPads and not Chrome Books at the high school?

Mr. Lussier-When Chrome Books came around we had already invested time and money into training our high school teachers on iPads. The iPads are so much better than the Chrome Books and have more benefits for our students. Our 1/1 initiative has leveled the playing field with our students. The Chrome Book is wifi dependent but the iPad can be used without wireless. Our students that do not have a wireless connection at home would still be able to use their iPad.

Slide 4 Questions:

Mr. Lussier-Kerri Stoffel created a Professional Development plan called the Amazing Race. It involved the entire teaching staff at the high school. It was amazing. (a short video was shown about the race). Kerri has done amazing things with the teachers at the high school. She has organized workshops and does a Sunday Check-In which is a weekly news letter emailed to the teachers.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-When are these workshops?

Ms. Stoffel-Before and After School. The teacher's email me and make an appointment for me to come to their classroom on their own time to show them different apps they can use on their iPads for their classroom.

Ms. Kwong-Kerri is offering this help on her own time and the teachers are also doing these workshops on their own time.

Ms. Krusell-It was so great she had a teacher that used the concept of the race in her classroom with her students. Kerri makes herself very available. She goes to staff and department meetings and helps the teachers with different apps and how to use them with their students. All the teachers have had an opportunity to get to know her.

Slide 5 Questions:

None

Slide 6 Questions:

Mr. Lussier-He commends the School Committee and the Superintendent for allowing the Technology Department to grow for teachers and students.

Ms. Stoffel-Our students are able to share their work with their teachers as well as sharing lab reports with students in other school districts.

Slide 7 Questions:

None

Slide 8 Questions:

None

Slide 9 Questions:

None

Other Comments:

Mr. Vogler-He asked Jane Sigillo how the iPads are helping students in her ELL program.

Ms. Sigillo-It has been fantastic for them to use this technology for their learning. We have smart ELL students and beginner learning students. This has leveled the playing field for ELL students. Our final day of the ELL Summer Program was phenomenal. The students displayed great work.

Mayor-Did you find that the students were more advanced than the teachers with the iPads?

Mr. Lussier-No. Our sophomore teachers had a bit of a learning curve. Their students used the iPads their freshman year. It has been smooth so far.

Superintendent: The number of students and staff that stay after school is incredible. They love it and want to learn more. We are very proud of this.

Mr. Lussier-The staff is very happy with their new building and new technology.

Ms. Krusell-When you see the excitement in this school it is incredible. I see it every day.

Mayor-Thank you for this evening. He asked Mr. Deeb how Methuen High School compares to Reading High School.

Mr. Deeb-It is about the same except every student at Reading High School does not have an iPad. They do have wireless and Smart Boards.

Superintendent-After the meeting she offered to show the School Committee around the high school.

Ms. Hajjar Kumm-Would you please have an organizational chart for the next Technology Update?

Mr. Lussier-I did include the network operator job descriptions in your packet. He asked the Committee to reach out to him if they ever have any questions.

Ms. Fawcett-Do the network operators support the teachers in each building?

Mr. Lussier-There is 1 technician in every building. They are responsible for everything that is plugged in. They do a fantastic job. They have also donated their time in the past.

Superintendent-They also set up all the electronics for meetings and professional days in their buildings. She thanked Mr. Lussier and Ms. Stoffel for their presentation. It was great!

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 7:57PM.

MOTION: Robert Vogler moved to adjourn the Workshop at 7:57PM.
Lynne Hajjar Kumm seconded.

VOTE: 7-0-0 UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Sirois, Public Recorder
Methuen Public Schools