

SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HULL, MA 02045

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2006

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

James Canavan, Chair
Kevin Richardson, Vice Chair
Catherine Bowes, Secretary
Kristen Evans, Member
Stephanie Peters, Member

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Paula Delaney, Superintendent of Schools
David Twombly, Director of Operations
Maureen Robishaw, Secretary to the Superintendent

1.0 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by James Canavan at 7:04 p.m. at Hull High School Second Floor Exhibition Room, 180 Main Street with the Salute to the Flag.

James Canavan stated that the primary objective of the meeting was to look at the location of Jacobs School classrooms.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: Catherine Bowes **Second:** Stephanie Peters

Moved to approve the School Committee agenda with requested change

Vote: 5-0-0

3.0 Input from Public on Agenda Items

Dayle Dickinson, grandmother of a pre-school student, voiced her concerns about moving the pre-school students to the high school.

4.0 Location of Jacobs School Classrooms 2007 – 2008

James Canavan stated that eight classrooms would be needed for next year due to the construction project at the Jacobs School. The following are the options currently available:

- Move preschool students to the exhibition room at Hull High School to create three classrooms. Process a change order with TLT Construction Co. to remove a wall in an area on the second floor of the Jacobs School new addition to create one classroom.
- Keep the fifth grade students at the Memorial School (four classrooms). Four additional classrooms would be needed.
- Divide the new gymnasium at the Jacobs in half and reconfigure one-half of the gym into classrooms. The cost of this would be approximately \$114,000.
- Reconfigure the high school library into classroom space for pre-school students. This option would include sharing bathrooms with high school students.
- Move central office staff to the exhibition room and several other rooms at the high school. Move the pre-school classrooms into the Hadassah Way location.
- Move the central office staff to the modular classrooms at Jacobs School and move the pre-school classrooms to 7 Hadassah Way. 7 Hadassah Way is not handicap accessible and has possible air quality issues.

- Rent classrooms on the second floor of the Hebrew School. The town would be responsible for installing a handicap lift at a cost of \$6,000 - \$10,000. Concerns are the number of days this location would be closed for Jewish holidays and only kosher food may be brought into this building.
- Fourth grade students would be placed at the Middle School and seventh grade students would be placed at Hull High School.

School Committee discussed the following areas:

- TLT Construction Company taking over the modular classrooms
- DOE standards regarding pre-school at the high school
- Using accordion walls as room dividers in the high school exhibition room
- Remediation in the fifth grade classrooms at Memorial School
- Classroom square footage required per student

Kristen Evans asked if a decision had to be made at that meeting regarding three classrooms. She requested Dr. Rizzi meet with preschool parents and teachers to discuss what is needed to accommodate preschool students if they were moved to the exhibition room at the high school or move to Hadassah Way. She also requested that Dr. Rizzi be present at the January 8th School Committee meeting. Kevin Richardson also expressed concern of rushing into making a decision about placement of students.

Motion: Kevin Richardson

Second: Stephanie Peters

Moved that the School Department is releasing its interest in the use of the modulars for classroom purposes. School Committee supports the proposal by the School Building Committee to have the modular classrooms utilized by TLT Construction Company under the terms approved by the School Building Committee and that some offset and remediation would take place for the relocation of classrooms.

Vote: 5-0-0

James Canavan asked about a deadline for making the decision on classroom space for next school year. After discussion by the Committee it was decided that a decision on the location of Jacobs School classrooms would be completed by January 31, 2007.

Charles Ryder, School Building Committee Member stated that the only other issue the School Building Committee might be interested in would be the temporary classrooms in the Jacobs School gymnasium.

Motion: Catherine Bowes

Second: Kristen Evans

Moved that utilizing the gymnasium in the new Jacobs School addition would not be a consideration before School Committee.

Vote: 5-0-0

The following parents spoke about moving the pre-school students to Hull High School:

- Eileen Lynch asked how the square footage per student is decided. Mr. Canavan replied that the 35 square foot per child is a DOE requirement.
- Emily Rosado requested that the air quality at Hadassah Way be tested. She also requested that whatever decision is made that the location should not be a noisy environment.
- Christopher Kearns asked what would the number of first grade classes be for next year. Mr. Canavan responded that the expectation is to remain the same as this year. Mr. Kearns also noted that the preschool was previously located at Hull High School, but was moved to the Jacobs School

because of regulations pertaining to where they could be housed. Dr. Delaney responded that there are no regulations regarding the placement of pre-school students at this time.

- Lisa Whitman stated that moving the pre-school to the high school is a bad idea, the move could set students back and voiced her concerns about safety issues. She also asked where the summer programs would take place next summer. Dr. Delaney responded that the summer school issue will be looked into and addressed.
- Jen Olivieri, voiced concern about bathroom issues and the noise from bells ringing if preschool was moved to the high school. She also asked when the Jacobs School would be turned over to TLT Construction Company? Mr. Canavan replied that six classrooms have been turned over to TLT Construction Company and the remainder of Jacobs School would be turned over to TLT Construction Company on June 30th. Ms. Olivieri also asked about having a cafeteria at Jacobs School next year. Catherine Bowes responded that when the high school was under construction food was prepared at another school and brought to the high school, which is probable what will happen at Jacobs School. Jim Canavan assured Ms. Oliveri that breakfast and lunch would be served at Jacobs School next year.
- Sherry Kearns asked where is the Jacobs School summer program going to be. Dr. Delaney responded that a decision would have to be made on this issue.
- Nicole Thomas asked the following questions:
 - Would high school students be using the bathroom outside the exhibition room?
 - Where would recess for pre-school students take place? David Twombly responded that possibly the courtyard at the high school would be used.
 - How would pre-school students get up and down the stairs in an emergency? Mr. Canavan responded that appropriate plans would be put in place.

The following staff members spoke:

- Jo-Anne Trubia, Jacobs School Paraprofessional asked if there would be five first grade classes next year. She stated that there are only four this school year. Dr. Delaney responded that it is premature to decide on the number of classrooms at this time.
- Anne Connelly, Jacobs School Teacher, requested having only two pre-school classrooms in the high school exhibition room and finding two additional classrooms somewhere in the high school.

School Committee requested the following information:

- Additional bus costs regardless of what decision is made by School Committee
- An emergency evacuation plan for pre-school students going up and down the stairs outside the exhibition room.
- Principals be in attendance at the January 8th School Committee meeting
- Dr. Rizzi present pre-school parents and teachers concerns at the January 8th meeting
- Cost to reconfigure space for central office to move to the high school
- Any available space at Hull High School to designate for a classroom
- Configure full folding partitions for high school exhibition room
- Cost to reconfigure Hadassah Way location for pre-school students
- What types of mats around food tables should be used in the exhibition room
- Cost for mats that would be used in the exhibition room at Hull High School

Motion: James Canavan

Second: Stephanie Peters

Moved to take a five-minute recess at 8:12 p.m.

Vote: 5-0-0

Meeting reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

5.0 Follow-up to Jacobs School Health and Safety Meeting of December 12, 2006

A meeting on January 3, 2007 at Hull High School Auditorium will take place to answer any questions and alleviate concerns regarding the health and safety issues at Jacobs School.

Dr. Delaney stated that she was unable to attend the Jacobs School Health and Safety Committee meeting on December 12th, but she did receive some questions that came out of the meeting and she would be responding to them. The following is Dr. Delaney's responses to some of the questions.

Removal of asbestos tiles: Last summer, during the mold abatement, several cracked tiles were noted at different parts of the building. Tiles have been replaced as well as some tiles that came loose from recent water infiltration on the first floor. All standard safety procedures are being used when the tiles are replaced and air quality is monitored throughout the procedure.

Determination of the safety of a building: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is the agency that deems whether or not a building is safe. Dr. Delaney stated that Hull Public Schools has been in constant contact with the MA Dept. of Public Health and they are satisfied with our implementation of their recommendations.

Relationship between certain health symptoms and the condition of Jacobs School: Dr. Delaney has been in touch with an allergist from Children's Hospital, who will attend the January 3rd meeting to provide an overview of the research on health as it relates to air quality. Student and staff attendance has been monitored and no change from attendance this year to previous years has been seen.

Communication on Friday, December 8th: The Jacobs School had to be evacuated because of a sewerage problem. The intention was to notify parents about an early dismissal, and then deliver students home if their parent was waiting. The remaining students were to be brought to the middle school. The Connect-Ed Communication service failed and confirmation of the system will be done before the students are dismissed in the future.

Dr. Delaney also stated that a letter was recently sent out to parents / guardians following the discovery of a diesel smell. Keeping parents informed has been somewhat difficult due to the amount of misinformation (while perhaps not intentional) and speculation that has been circulating about the condition of the Jacobs School. In an effort to provide accurate, factual information, a meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, January 3rd.

Jim Canavan reiterated what Dr. Delaney said regarding a protocol for emergency early dismissal for students.

- Parents are notified by Connect-Ed
- Students will be placed on buses
- Buses will proceed on regular bus route
- Students will not be released from bus if a parent is not at bus stop
- Students who are still on a bus will be taken back to Memorial School
- Parents / guardians can pick up student at Memorial School
- Buses will again proceed at regular dismissal time.

Christine Donahue, Parent, asked how pre-school students who don't take the bus would be contacted? Dr. Delaney responded that parents would be contacted to let them know where the child would be taken.

Matt Montefusco, President, Oasis Environmental Contracting Services, Inc, presented the following overview:

- Have done all testing at Jacobs School and Memorial School since the discovery of carpet mold problems at Jacobs School and water infiltration at Memorial School
- There are indications that some people aren't confident with testing and the results and Mr. Montefusco stated he would like to clarify some areas
- Mold is necessary to our environment and mold is everywhere
- Allergies cause allergic reactions
- Some people react to mold spores
- Mold spores are very small – one hair strand can have seven mold spores
- When testing began there were 90,000 spores per cubic meter of air in the area
- When carpet was removed and the water stopped 90% of the problem stopped
- Non viable testing was done
- Non viable testing is when samples are taken from the air and sent to a lab to be read
- Non viable testing tells how many mold spores are in that sample
- A report is given that includes a rank and order table
- Rank and order table compares how many mold spores in a sample to the rest of the samples
- An outside control tells what mold spores are floating around outside
- Interior control tells what can be expected from a normal building
- Then measure spores in the area with concern, compare all areas, color code them and put numbers on them
- Viable side of testing shows how many mold spores are really active
- Viable testing came up constantly low
- Mold has physical presence and can be wiped out with an air cleaner

Kristen Evans asked what types of environmental controls can be put in place. Mr. Montefusco responded that controlling the humidity needs to be done. The two most important environmental controls are dehumidification and humidification. Dehumidification is when you have humidity greater than 55% in a space. Humidification is if you have levels in a space below 35%. Humidification levels are too dry and skin will crack allowing germs and bacteria to get in. Over 55% humidity allows mold to grow. Using air cleaners will help control humidity. There are many different types of air filters and ratings.

Daniel Obrzut, Universal Environmental Consultants, discussed air quality sampling that was done by his company back in August and the recommendations that were in the August report. He stated that the tests come back within the acceptable range excluding mold in the library. He also said that the same testing would be done again on December 20th.

Susan Ovens, Hull Times Editor, asked if both companies (Oasis Environmental Contracting Services and Universal Environmental Consultants) performed testing at the Jacobs School. David Twombly responded that Universal Environmental Consultants works for the construction project and it was just coincidental that they were doing testing during the mold project testing.

Deborah McCarthy, HTA President, asked Matt Montefusco:

If he had the baseline report from August; if he knew in addition to the total volatile organic compounds and the identification of the library that there was an odor in the modular unit office; and that the crawlspace of the office unit should have been inspected for microbial growth? Mr. Montefusco responded yes to her questions. Ms. McCarthy quoted many reports and dates and then asked if work had been done on the modular classrooms prior to the start of school. Mr. Montefusco responded that work was done and he would have to check on dates. Ms. McCarthy then asked who did the abatement. Mr. Montefusco responded that Hazardous Abatement did the ceiling tiles and some other work was done by the school custodians. Ms. McCarthy then spoke about information she got from the EMSL Laboratory Website regarding mold spores over 1000 spores M³ and asked

if this information was true. Mr. Montefusco responded that she was looking at different sampling such as surface sampling vs. bulk sampling vs. air sampling information and that is why viable testing is done to show if mold spores are really active.

Anne Connolly, Jacobs School Teacher, asked if all areas in the Jacobs would be tested on December 20th. Dan Obrzut, Universal Environmental Consultants, responded that certain tests would be done in every room but not all tests in every room.

A person in the second row of the audience who did not identify herself asked if the schools were buying air quality meters for janitors to carry. James Griffin, Facilities Manager responded that the air quality meters would be bought.

Jodi Trubia, Jacobs School Paraprofessional, asked if the air quality testing regarding the Jacobs School sewer back up had been received. Mr. Montefusco explained the testing process that was done after the sewer spill. David Twombly explained the clean-up process and stated that a draft report had been received. After Kevin O'Brien, Board of Health reviews and comments on the report, it will be released.

Stephanie Peters asked Matt Montefusco and Dan Obrzut if the Jacobs School is safe for children excluding the modular classrooms and the six classrooms that have been turned over to the construction company. Mr. Montefusco responded that mold is a snap shot in time. He stated that at the time the Jacobs School was cleaned it was as clean and safe as any other building. Dan Obrzut responded that looking at the testing that was done the building is safe for people to be in the building. However, mold affects people differently.

James Lampke, Town Counsel, asked if other environmental factors such as perfume or second hand smoke could cause a reaction such as coughing, sneezing, etc. Mr. Obrzut responded many things such as dust, food, and mothballs to name a few can cause reactions in people. Attorney Lampke asked if a high reading of "X" in a test result indicates that mold is present. Both Mr. Montefusco and Mr. Obrzut responded that there is no regulation for the limit of mold spores. It changes from the environment outside because that air comes inside.

Lisa Chenette, Parent, asked about the testing that will be done on December 20th. Dan Obrzut responded that it would be the same baseline testing that was done in August. James Canavan inquired if there is a standard for testing in the industry. Mr. Obrzut responded that his company suggests having testing done two times a year. Some school systems test four times a year, some test once a year and some do not test at all. It depends on the needs of the school system.

A person in the second row who did not identify herself asked who removes the asbestos tiles. She said tiles were being removed in a classroom and requested a copy of the report on this. David Twombly responded that the six classrooms turned over to TLT Construction Company have hired a company to work on those rooms. Hazardous Abatement was hired to replace tiles that came up due to the sewer back up. Another question was asked about notification to parents. A discussion followed about regulations, permits and responsibility of notifying parents. Dan Obrzut noted he would check the regulations. Mr. Canavan requested Dave Twombly to follow-up with Hazardous Abatement regarding requirements and reports.

Lisa Whitman said that during the high school construction alarms would go off when air quality was bad. Kevin Richardson noted that he would look into this issue.

6.0 Update on Budget Subcommittee

Stephanie Peters stated that the Budget Subcommittee had met on December 15th and voiced her concern about having enough money in FY06 budget until the end of the school year. She requested having a budget workshop in January 2007 to look at FY06 budget. Dr. Delaney stated that she was meeting with her administrators on December 20th and would go over the current budget with them. James Canavan requested Stephanie to give some January dates to Maureen Robishaw regarding setting up a budget workshop.

7.0 Approval of Warrants

Motion: Kevin Richardson

Second: Catherine Bowes

Moved to approve school warrants as presented.

Vote: 5-0-0

Kevin Richardson requested the Jacobs School Principal to notify police department about the Jacobs School concert on December 19th. In the past cars parking on both sides of Harborview Road and blocking driveways has been a problem.

A parent in the audience requested that communication be sent home in the weekly blue notes regarding School Committee agenda items.

James Canavan requested the Jacobs School Principal have monthly question and answer meetings with parents on construction issues.

8.0 Adjournment

9.0 Executive Session

Motion: Kevin Richardson

Second: Catherine Bowes

Moved to go into Executive Session at 9:55 p.m. for the purpose of strategy of litigation and not to return to Open Session.

Roll Call Vote: Catherine Bowes, Kristen Evans, James Canavan, Kevin Richardson, and Stephanie Peters.