

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: June 10, 2009

Present: Ms. Brady-Pojani, Chairperson, Mr. Clawson, Vice Chairperson, Mr. Corey, Mr. Borowski, Mrs. Vigneau, Dr. Reese, Mrs. Swenson, High School Principal, Mrs. Bolton, Shaw Elementary School Principal, Mrs. Frederick, Elmwood Street School Principal, Mr. Bedard, Business Administrator, and Mrs. Hitchcock, Superintendent

Location: High School Media Center

Time: 7:00 pm

Approval of Regular Minutes

Ms. Brady-Pojani asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on May 5, 2009. Mr. Corey made a motion and Mrs. Vigneau seconded the motion. All approved (5-0).

Ms. Brady-Pojani asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on May 13, 2009. Mr. Corey made a motion and Mr. Clawson seconded the motion. All approved (5-0).

Student Advisory Council Report

Eric Boll reported that on June 1, 2009 a new council was elected. He was elected Vice President. Also present at the meeting was Nicole Wright.

Presentation of School Improvement Plans

Elmwood Street School:

Mrs. Fredrick presented her School Improvement Plan for the Elmwood Street School. She began by stating that they had accomplished some of the 2008 - 2009 goals and some were ongoing and they were continuing to build upon. Mrs. Frederick stated that the students had published books so that other students may read. An MCAS information night and a Title I information night was held for parents. The Power Standards and a math intervention program were completed and will be implemented this year. There will be an increase use of technology and data analysis to help students in math. There has been an increase of writing and math time included in the school day. The before school Math Club will continue next year. An information Math Night was held with Shaw Elementary for students and parents. They had received several Community Service Learning Grants this year such as Culture Night, Recycling Team and the students will be

putting on plays at the Senior Center about gardening. They will apply for more grants next year to work with high school students. Elmwood has received their NAEYC certification. A Mix It Up Day has been created during lunches, where the students change seats and sit beside students that they don't know in order to foster new friendships. The students will be given conversation starters from their teachers. They will coordinate with the Shaw School to make the transition for students as smooth as possible.

R. E. Shaw Elementary School:

Mrs. Bolton presented her School Improvement Plan for the Shaw Elementary School. She stated that there was an improvement in the English Language Arts and Math programs. Mrs. Cusick, Reading Specialist, has helped the teachers do their weekly planning and also helped facilitate the flexible groupings. Lesson studies and model lessons for teachers were greatly received by the staff. The staff worked on the Power Standards for both English/Language Arts and Math. The Shaw School had MCAS tutoring for students after school, as well as forty minutes of intervention was built into student schedules. Some students received extra English/Language Arts teaching periods while other students participated in an Enrichment Program which included, computers, art, music, PE, and Second Steps. Next year's schedule has increased the English/Language block to 100 minutes. There are nine Responsive Classrooms this year and two specialist classrooms. The PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) Committee members have been trained this year and will implement the program next year at the Shaw School. There will be a "Kick Off" on the first day of school and will continue through the year. The Parent Council created the parent survey this year. The Student Council created their survey and the students took it very seriously. There will be a Transition Night for parents of grade 3 students in June rather than in August. A Math Program which parallels the Everyday Math Program will be used this year in conjunction with the Everyday Math Program to help students that have reading difficulties. The WPI Assessment Program is a pilot program consisting of a group of students from WPI that have created MCAS questions for students to answer on line. There is immediate feedback for the teacher to determine how, if the student got the wrong answer, many hints the student needed to find the correct answer. The Classroom Imagine classroom will be expanded this summer by the Maintenance Department.

Millbury Jr./Sr. High School:

Mrs. Swenson presented her School Improvement plan for the Millbury Junior Senior High School. Mrs. Swenson stated she would begin by listing the school's accomplishments. An informational program regarding student's texting on their cell phones was held. The Police Department presented a program to graduating girls on future risks that they could encounter. Anti-bullying leaders mentor other students on what is appropriate behavior. The students are learning to accept diversity in other students. Second Steps will continue in the Junior High and High School. The Community Band will have concerts at the Asa Waters Mansion throughout the summer. The Summer Reading Program has continued. MCAS tutoring for ELA and Math was provided after school. A new math program has been initiated with grant money. The

assessment tools have received good reviews from teachers. The Power standards were honed into critical skills. We are making the reading program in grades 7th and 8th more consistent. We are testing 32 grade 6 students at Shaw scoring 2 years or more below grade level reading to see which students will be included in the Reading Mastery Program. The high school will be offering more elective English courses such as: journalism and public speaking. We will not be using TestWiz to analyze MCAS scores next year we will be using a new program Warehouse. Warehouse allows us to provide direct instruction to students with the lowest test scores. We will provide interdisciplinary planning time in the junior high and high school, which will connect subjects for global learning. The High School will begin using a new technology program called Student Response System using clicker cards. Teachers put MCAS type questions on the television and students get to pick there answers and immediately find out if they are right or wrong. Mrs. Swenson stated that this summer she would have to write a two year follow-up report for NEASC. Parents of the 8th grade students that were part of the Wheelabrator symposium requested that a freshman honors engineering class be offered next year. The junior high school will be implementing PBIS next year which reinforces positive behavior. We would like to use X2 and increase parents access to their child's attendance and discipline reports. Freshman Academy will continue next year. Mrs. Swenson also stated that every student in the 2010 class has currently passed the MCAS test.

Mrs. Allison Uccello from the Parents Club asked what power standards are? Mrs. Hitchcock stated that they are essential skills based on the frameworks that a student would need to go on to the next grade level.

Report of the Administration

Review of High School Schedule

Ms. Brady-Pojani stated that the School Committee wanted to review class sizes now rather than in the fall when it would be too late to drop a course due to small attendance. A discussion took place regarding courses with small numbers of students.

Mrs. Hitchcock gave an update on the Curriculum Director position. She stated that she expected the entire process to be completed by July 1st.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that at the present time there are 134 kindergarten students registered for fall. She also stated that she would be making a decision regarding the possibility of laying off a kindergarten teacher in mid to late July.

Budget

Mr. Bedard stated that Probuilt will begin the playgrounds in July. The funds not used from the \$40,000 warrant article will be returned to the town.

Mr. Bedard stated that the Student Activity Accounts are established under the Massachusetts General Law. Our policy from 1997 set up maximum balances for the accounts. Mr. Bedard stated that with the increase in costs and the amounts of field trips he would ask that the School Committee approve a higher maximum balance amount. Mr. Borowski made a motion to increase the Student Activity Accounts balances (to \$5,000 for the two elementary schools and \$20,000 for the high school) and Mr. Clawson seconded the motion. All approved. (5-0)

A discussion regarding the loss of Chapter 70 funds and potential for additional state revenue took place.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that the school department anticipated \$141,000 in savings from the health insurance vote. It was confirmed today with the Town Manager that the savings for the school department was \$174,511 and with this increase in savings the school department is restoring the three Elmwood classroom teachers, the position of the Elmwood media specialist and a .5 grounds keeper position.

Mr. Corey stated that due to the fact that the school department did not have as many lay offs as anticipated he asked about the amount of money that was put aside to cover lay off expenses. Mr. Bedard stated that he would get the figures to the School Committee but felt that we would not need addition unemployment funding at this time.

Budget Process Reflection

This matter has been deferred to the July meeting.

Old Business

The faulty pole at Windle Field has been removed. The Windle Field Committee will be meeting on June 16, 2009. Ms. Brady-Pojani asked that a Windle Field update be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Also damage caused by the hail storm will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

New Business

It was stated that student Government Day did not take place this year. Mrs. Hitchcock stated that this was somewhat deliberate and student Government Day would be held in fall when things are not as hectic and the day could be more enjoyable.

Mrs. Hitchcock stated that she would check with the new principal of Shaw School to see if she could attend the next meeting, which is June 24th.

Ms. Brady-Pojani adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Lane

Approved:

Richard Loney
John
James