

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 11, 2016
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Nylen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: C. Whitten, J. Bauman, and B. Hopping. Also present was Superintendent Hart.

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy in collective bargaining with IEA and to discuss the deployment of security personnel, devices, or strategies with response thereto, after we will return to Open Session. Roll call IN FAVOR- Bauman, Whitten, Nylen, Hopping.

II. OPEN SESSION

Mr. Nylen called for Open Session to resume at 7:07 p.m. with Whitten, Bauman, and Hopping present along with Reed Dolan and Supt. Hart.

MISSION STATEMENT

Reed read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Nylen read the following announcements:

Environmental Club will hold a movie night on February 12, 7 p.m., Dolan Performing Arts Center, donation to help the Club purchase a water bottle refilling station

February vacation will begin on Feb. 15 and school will resume February 22

HS Orientation for 8th graders in the Dolan PAC, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m.

HS Parent Curriculum Night, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.

Movie "Most Likely to Succeed" at Dolan PAC, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.

Parent meeting with Dr. Hart, March 1, Winthrop School Cafeteria, 5:15 p.m.

Open to all parents within the district

Policy Subcommittee will meet at 7 p.m., March 1, Payne School

Public Hearing on the FY17 Budget will take place at 7 p.m., March 3, MS/HS Ensemble Room as part of the regular School Committee meeting

Budget Subcommittee will meet on March 7, 7:30 p.m., Payne School

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Nicole Dziadose had budget comments regarding the cutting in the FY17 budget of 10 teacher assistants and her fear along with several other parents for the negative impact for those children on IEPs.

Beth Meyer, ICAM Executive Director, explaining that the PAC is severely lacking in audio setup, said that they would like to set up a system that can do every

single thing that is needed without a wired system. They are willing to upgrade the PAC up to \$30,000. The control room is located at the rear of the PAC and kept locked. In discussion, Ms. Meyer said the gyms, town meetings, and meetings in the Ensemble Room will improve in audio quality following the two-week installation and subsequent training in the summer for which she needs permission.

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to accept the donation of the ICAM proposal, not to exceed \$30,000, to upgrade the Dolan PAC sound system to wireless. UNANIMOUS.

The School Committee extended its thanks and appreciation for the taping of their meetings.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Hart gave kudos and appreciation to the Middle School teachers who went through their first Learning Cycle, a very worthy process of risk-taking activities.

Mr. Hopping, Karen Langlais, and Tracy Wagner judged at the high-school sponsored Poetry Out Loud final. The entire school of students and staff attended this phenomenal experience as each finalist recited two poems. Over 500 students sitting there stood up—an event that impressed him greatly. Tina Gillette, the winner, will attend a presentation in Boston on March 5. Dr. Hart remarked that the four to five meetings held before this day with Becky Slawson, English teacher, brought the critical-thinking theme to life. Reed Dolan commented that it was definitely an unbelievable experience in English class.

Mrs. Bauman experienced a concert with the band and Julien Colville, 8th grader, whose composition called “Hangs in the Balance” was heard.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Reed congratulated the drama group for their professional performance of “Almost Maine” and will perform “Fiddler on the Roof” in May. The band spent the “snow day” with Rhode Island College last Friday. Spring sports are now ramping up. Track teams’ Athletes of the Year Josh Brown and Michaela Hedderman were named. Also, Ipswich teams were Sportsmanship winners, a fact Dr. Hart felt is a pinnacle for him that the athletic programs have been recognized multiple times in his short tenure.

A. SUPERINTENDENT’S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Hart reported on a meeting with Tracy Wagner on monitoring student achievement data with a company that sells the software. Having determined that the software has great potential, he intends to invite the company to a School Committee meeting to demonstrate its potential.

NEBiolabs hosted a recent day-long STEAM workshop. The district-wide team worked on STEAM Goal action planning. A Feb. 1 district parent meeting at

the High School provided the opportunity to get parent questions answered, let him update them, and get feedback from them.

MSBA members at Winthrop helped “Kick Off” the elementary school building project feasibility study.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

B. SC APPOINTMENT TO FEOFFEES

Mr. Nylen named the three applicants to fill Tracey Filosa’s spot on the Feoffees Board. Decision was made to hold interviews on March 3 before the Open Hearing on the FY17 budget.

C. BUDGET PRESENTATION REVIEW

Mr. Nylen’s first business was to respond to Mrs. Dziadosze’s concern regarding TA attrition. He acknowledged that IEPs require services by law. Long-standing discussion around delivery services has taken place and the Operational Audit recommended the level of staffing for the services which Ipswich delivers relative to those of other places in the State. Dr. Hart and the SPED team have been recommending that, while there has been staffing in teaching assistants, Ipswich was understaffed in professionals. The bottom line is there is a bigger investment in SPED than currently. The reallocation and addition of resources is toward SPED. Licensed professionals working with students have a more significant impact if that is financially possible. He explained the co-teaching model and, thus, Ipswich is moving to more support rather than moving away.

Mr. Hopping asked if the reductions simply took away two TAs from each school. Was it based on numbers of students on IEPs? Has this prompted a change in the way that ed plans are written? Has grouping now changed in terms of students with special needs? Have we moved away from the pull-outs? Dr. Hart’s response was that the shift (TA reduction of 2 at Doyon, 1.97 at Winthrop, 2 at Middle School, and 2.5 at High School) reflects on a fairly significant study and, beyond the audit, research saying that a licensed staff adds impact to the program. Dr. Hegedus is knowledgeable and, while there is work to do next year, Dr. Hegedus and Hart will follow best practice.

Mr. Hopping commented that if this is a trend, it will force the Department to change the way IEPs are put together.

Mr. Nylen asked that the SC hear about these adjustments for this coming year and for a multi-year view. What will the balance of staffing be? the service delivery model be? Dr. Hart said the changes will be made sitting around the administrators’ table while adhering to the audit. He has been pushing the agenda and, in collaboration with Dr. Hegedus, is confident that it will work.

Mr. Hopping commented that he would like to think that these recommendations were made with a thoughtful view of the numbers and would like to hear of what “co-teaching” entitles at some later date. After further discussion, Mr. Hopping asked for a bigger discussion around the hiring process of additional teachers.

Dr. O’Flynn joined the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

D. SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT: BIRTH TO 3, CENTRAL OFFICE

Mr. Nylen and the School Committee reviewed the numbers for whether or not investigation or consideration be made to include space for Birth to 3 and Central Office within the Winthrop elementary building project. Additional costs will be incurred.

Birth to 3 currently rents space at \$750/mo. The cost for a 25-year bond would be \$1.2 million or \$3500/mo. for 2500 sq. ft. Dr. Hart opined that this expense cannot be substantiated, there are other ways, and would want to remove the consideration. Dr. O’Flynn asked and Mr. Murphy replied that preschool is included in the school building project.

For the Central Office, there is a \$1.8 million cost for 3500 sq. ft. for space and furnishings. Dr. Hart stated that they might be asking the community to invest in upgrading the Payne building which would be nowhere near the \$1.8 million and recommends that it be pulled out.

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mr. Whitten, to support the administration recommendation to remove the Birth to 3 and the Central Office from inclusion in the school building project. Mr. Nylen and Mrs. Bauman spoke for the support that the SC gives to the Birth to 3 program but cannot support this obligation which would go to the taxpayers. UNANIMOUS.

E. SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECT: GRADE CONFIGURATION

Mr. Nylen introduced David Stephen of New Vista Design and Robert Bell of Perkins Eastman who identified grade configuration implications as follows:

- K-5 - 775 new building K-3 - 490 Winthrop
- K-2 - 355 Winthrop K-5 - 420 Winthrop

Following discussion, School Committee members offered comments re the school-building project as follows:

- Whitten: Important for K-5 in the Ipswich community
Walkability and positive effect with siblings in K-5 setting
- Hopping: High-quality environment for teaching and learning
District education plan and related plans for both general and
specialized with teachers collaborating
Transportation
Danger of too much transitioning of children
Concern of parental involvement with students in two schools;
whole parental piece is compromised
The sooner we can bring the students together prior to MS the better
- Reed Dolan: Disagreed as a student because he felt that not knowing half of the
students was good for team building in Grade 6, and
getting to know them helped him

Bauman: Concern that, following just one forum where Doyon School parents were under represented on 2/10, there may be other community members heavily favoring certain ideas not already expressed

O'Flynn: Equity
Socio-economic backgrounds affect performance
Consistency in school attendance would mean performance when students reach the Middle School
Walkability is a limiting factor on the performance issue
Class-size balance issues between two elementary schools
Struggle with communication within grade level with curriculum within the two buildings (horizontal alignment)
Gray zoning alignment – parents choosing to put their children in the “other school”

Whitten: Questioning the theme of “right-sizing” between 770 vs. 490
In re the socio-economic level, the larger the school, the less attention the disadvantaged kids have

The question of making a large facility “feel small” was asked. David Stephen explained that the large schools function as small communities because the teachers and students are cohorted in small groups. Amherst school system, in a very similar situation to Ipswich, is choosing a larger school with separate entries and separate principals with shared auditorium.

Robert Bell spoke of the recently built Essex Regional Tech School now housing 1400 students, when it had been 360, in three sections. Citing statistics, he presented school populations in the last 5 years at 13% (250-400 students), 15% (400-500), 49% (500-700), and 25% (700 + up).

Principal McAdams: Found that MSBA did not have an educational plan and suggested having a questionnaire set up for MSBA
Scheduling at the elementary level is different when looking for collaboration between teachers
For the specialist teachers, would there be 2 music rooms, 4 gyms, 2 cafeterias? What is allowable in a twin setup?
Now that we have data about what works and what doesn't, have we asked about the challenges?

Nylen: Strongly emphasized that flexibility should be of uppermost consideration within the building

Dr. Hart: The school culture here needs reasonable play space for extra curriculum.

- Whitten: Questioned the financial price tag for 775 students @ \$60 million.
- Murphy: The MSBA and the building design team gave us no help on cost of the building. Construction costs have skyrocketed.
- Bell: Having looked at what MSBA would allow, the budget can fall within the \$33-50 million range
- Murphy: In the discussion about hardware (construction costs) and software, if one were to turn the building upside down, the software items would fall out.
- Bell: A lot of items are not reimbursable. MSBA will “claw back” items spent on the Winthrop School up to 20 years back if they are not used again, such as a boiler curriculum.

Whitten and Bell then had discussion around daylight orientation in indoor/outdoor spaces. Whitten is interested in technology in outside spaces beyond the walls of the school.

From the audience came a concern about the finality of it and passage at Town Meeting. Will it get the support of the public? Suggests public meetings for people to state their priorities.

In the matter of site selection, Mr. Bell is collecting information. School Committee members informed him of the water situation under the Winthrop School acreage. There is a site analysis subcommittee.

Mrs. Bauman asked for the percentage of walkers at Doyon and was told that Doyon has one walker and Winthrop has 56 out of 420 total students.

Mr. Whitten, making reference to Mr. Craft’s comment about the physical beauty of the Town, gave benefits of the intimacy of the Winthrop site to the community.

Mr. Bell spoke of the next steps, going back and forth with the School Building Committee, the School Committee, and the community working group. The recommendation for configuration is supposed to be made by March 23.

The School Committee will have another workshop when the date can be arranged.

IV. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. VOUCHERS/BILLS
- B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS
 - 1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE
 - 2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE – March 7 meeting

3. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE – Mr. Hopping thanked Mrs. Bauman for her work on the Feoffee celebration.

4. GRANT COMMITTEES – Mrs. Bauman announced that there will be a joint meeting of the two committees on March 10. Mini-grant Committee will meet on February 12.

5. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE - Need to meet for mid-cycle review w/Supt.

6. POLICY – Mr. Hopping reviewed policies on safety, acceptable use, turf field rates for rental, and meeting to be held on March 1

7. TURF FIELD SUBCOMMITTEE – Dr. O’Flynn announced that bids are coming back after vacation and a meeting will be held on the weekend of the 25th.

8. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE – Mr. Hopping visited Lexington; Mrs. Bauman would like to see more on trends; Dr. Hart suggested a list of “must-dos”, then to narrow it down; Dr. O’Flynn suggests putting down aspirational aspects, then working backward.

9. NEW BUSINESS

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Nylén moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the Consent Agenda as follows:

Acceptance of Minutes of February 4, 2016, Open Session

UNANIMOUS.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Whitten moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to adjourn at 10 o’clock.
UNANIMOUS.