

**Ipswich School Committee Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2019
Middle/High School Ensemble Room**

Meeting Minutes

I. Open Session

Call to Order:

Mr. Hopping called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Present:

Ms. Gilliam, Ms. Kneeder, Mr. Nylen, Mr. Stevens, and Mr. Whitten. Dr. O'Flynn joined the meeting at 8:08 PM.

Also Present:

Dr. Blake, Superintendent of Schools; Joanne Cuff, Director of Finance and Operations; and George Gallagher, High School Student Representative

Mr. Gallagher read the District Mission Statement.

Announcements:

- The next School Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, December 5th at 7:00 PM in the MS/HS Ensemble Room
- Wednesday, November 27th will be an early dismissal day for all students. All elementary school students will be dismissed at 11:55 AM and all middle/high school students will be dismissed at 11:20 AM.
- All school and district offices will be closed on Thursday, November 28th and Friday, November 29th
- The Vision 2030 Working Group will meet on Wednesday, December 4th at 5:30 PM in the MS/HS guidance conference room
- The School Facilities Working Group will meet on Thursday, December 5th at 5:00 PM in the MS/HS guidance conference room

Citizens' Comments:

There were none.

Special Acknowledgements:

Dr. Blake acknowledged the Middle School staff, students and teacher, Kim Chalifour, for spearheading a successful food drive.

High School Student Representative Report

Mr. Gallagher reported on the post season standings of the girls volleyball team, boys and girls cross country, as well as the cheerleading team. He discussed the student-directed plays taking place this weekend in the Dolan Performing Arts Center and lastly, reported on the safety drills that took place this past Tuesday.

Superintendent's Administrative Report

Dr. Blake reported out his schedule since the last School Committee meeting. He met with Amy Gregory, the district's Digital Learning Specialist, to discuss the district's technology plan. He attended the Triboard meeting, a safety team meeting to discuss the upcoming school safety drills and met with the Operations Subcommittee to discuss his goals. Dr. Blake met with Human Resources and the committee formed to evaluate and revise the Teaching Assistant's evaluation. He attended a conference on Federal Grants and met with School Committee member, Carl Nylen. Dr. Blake reviewed the Capital Plan with the Town Manager and Facilities Director, attended a Communications Subcommittee meeting, Professional Development Subcommittee meeting, and an Athletic Subcommittee meeting. He attended his monthly CREST Collaborative Board Meeting, as well as attended a meeting with the Ipswich Educators' Association to discuss an unfair labor practice grievance filed last year. Lastly, Dr. Blake spent time in all of the schools within the district

II. School Committee Presentations

A. Field Trip Request: French Exchange Program

High School Teacher and World Language Department Head, Susan Killian, presented an overnight field trip request to Hyeres, France as part of the French Exchange Program. The trip will take place from April 19 through April 27, 2020 and has been organized through Donovan Travel. Approximately 16 students and 2 chaperones will be attending with a cost per student of \$1,400.00.

Mr. Nylen moved to support the field trip as presented, seconded by Ms. Kneeder. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Triboard Meeting Recap

Mr. Hopping first shared that he felt the School Committee was well represented that evening and then opened the discussion up to the committee to share their thoughts. Discussion included the newly scheduled Town Strategic Planning Group meeting and the currently vacant seats on that committee. There was also a lot of discussion around the School Dude calculations for new school buildings. It was the concern of some committee members that the number projected in the report does not accurately reflect the cost of new infrastructure that would create a good learning environment for students. The projected number is solely to replace the structure as it is now, which as it stands, would not improve the quality of education in the building.

Mr. Hopping also thanked the members of the School Committee for the hours and commitments they have put forth since the beginning of the school year. He said that he believes good things are happening and that the right people are doing the work.

The next Triboard meeting will be scheduled for some time after the New Year.

C. Superintendent Evaluation Discussion

Prior to this meeting, the Operations Subcommittee met to discuss the Superintendent Evaluation process and what that may look like this year. According to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), a Superintendent does not have to be evaluated annually. Instead, the Superintendent would present a mid-cycle review and then be formally evaluated every other year.

In an annual review cycle, as Mr. Hopping explained, the Superintendent would present a mid-year review in January. Once that is complete, the Operations Subcommittee would then establish a timeline for the formal, end of school year evaluation. The Superintendent will compile evidence to show that he has met his goals which will be reviewed by the School Committee. Members will then complete their own evaluations based on the provided DESE rubric. The Chair will collect all individual assessments, draft an executive summary and then read that formally into the record at a School Committee meeting.

Mr. Hopping asked for the will of the committee going forward- do they continue with an annual evaluation or would they consider an evaluation every two years? He explained that Dr. Blake was formally evaluated at the end of last year, so if they chose a two year evaluation system, he would not be formally evaluated again until June 2021.

Dr. Blake shared with the committee that he did not have a preference either way. He stated that if his job was not getting done, the committee would know about it.

It was agreed upon by several committee members that the formal assessment and the collection of evidence may be cumbersome for the Superintendent each year. The committee was in favor of a two year evaluation system if Dr. Blake provided a detailed mid-cycle review and self assessment against the goals. It is also their hope that as goals are accomplished, new goals would be added. It was also discussed that if this if the process is changing from one year to two years, the committee clearly defines that and states that expectation going forward.

Mr. Hopping made a motion to place Dr. Blake on the first year of a two year cycle and assess him formally in 2021, seconded by Mr. Nysten. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Financial Update

Ms. Cuff walked the committee through the Year-to-Date financial report. She then discussed the End of Year Report for FY19 that was submitted to the State. This report identifies every expenditure in FY19. She explained that from this report, the state is able to do their calculation

on the district. She offered to discuss the report in more detail at a later time for any committee member interested.

Lastly, Ms. Cuff shared the Budget Timeline for FY21 and with School Committee approval, would share it with the administrators on Monday.

Mr. Whitten moved to accept the Budget Timeline as presented, seconded by Mr. Stevens. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Budget Subcommittee Update

The Budget Subcommittee first discussed their second meeting with the administrative team, calling it both very information and successful. They felt that having those discussions early proved to be very beneficial. Topics discussed included co-teaching, class sizes, the Middle School model, special education, technology, class offerings, guidance, extended day, School Choice, facilities and professional development.

After much discussion, the Budget Subcommittee felt that it was very important to include things that are core to education in the budget. The thought going forward is to bring forward a budget that meets the needs outlined by the administrative team. Although the budget will be higher overall, it will more accurately reflect the cost of running the district.

Mr. Hopping added to the conversation, asking the School Committee to come prepared to the budget presentations with meaningful and insightful questions about the budget process. His hope is that the budget is truly reflective of district initiatives and that the committee can generate deep and meaningful questions that will help to tell the story of the district and its budget requests.

This year will serve as the first pitch for what the ideal district should be as the district heads toward an override.

F. Feoffees Policy Review

The Feoffee Policy Working Group and the Policy Subcommittee have met several times to discuss the current Feoffee Policy. The original policy was adopted six years ago and is in need of revisions. Mr. Hopping read a draft portion of the new policy into the record:

PRINCIPLE ELEMENTS FOR FUTURE FEOFFEEES' DISTRIBUTIONS

“In furtherance of the bequest in 1660 by William Paine who established this Trust ‘to be and remain to the benefit of the said school of Ipswich forever,’ the Trust purpose is to support the Ipswich public schools by making distributions to the Ipswich Public Schools. The educational uses of the distributed funds shall be determined by the Ipswich School Committee, for supplemental enrichment programs and uses that provide education enhancements for Ipswich public school students.”

MISSION

To expand educational opportunities consistent with the Ipswich Public Schools Mission which aspires to empower ALL students to be global citizens who are effective communicators, analytic problem solvers and savvy consumers of information. Funding is intended to support programs and practices that enhance pedagogical innovation and enrich intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and cultural experiences for all learners in the Ipswich Public Schools.

Enrichment and enhancement programs and practices are not meant to replace ongoing public financial support of education. Instead, the intent is to improve the quality and value of educational experiences and increase the scope of learning opportunities by the initiation and customization of creative educational practices. ¹

To honor the original intent of the Trust, funds are not to be used for foundational budget needs such as:

- *Core academic programs*
- *Routine operational expenses such as utilities, building or grounds maintenance*
- *Regular and special education transportation*
- *Supplies and materials supporting the core curriculum*
- *Or other associated costs that are fundamental for educating students*

The School Committee is committed to honoring the legacy of William Paine's generosity and to focus funding on those programs and practices that will have a lasting and profound influence on the educational experience of Ipswich Public Schools students.

Mr. Hopping asked for a motion to approve the first portion of the draft policy. He followed up by saying that the document would remain in draft form until it is completed in its entirety.

Dr. O'Flynn moved to support the draft policy DDA: Feoffees Policy as submitted, seconded by Mr. Stevens. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Vision 2030 Update

Mr. Nysten shared the most current version of the infographic created by the Vision 2030 Subcommittee. Key elements included inclusion of the District Vision, both Elementary and Secondary Education Plans, the Strategy for District Improvement document and the School Improvement Plan for each school. Mr. Nysten described the document as cyclical- one element of the document informs the other, making sure that each subsection aligns with the next. He also stated that the key elements in the document are supported by resources like financial budgets, professional development plans, curriculum and assessment, safety plans and the technology plan.

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Mr. Hopping walked the committee through the anticipated roll-out of the final document, stating that when completed, the finished product will have links to each of the reference documents. Once completed, the document will be shared throughout the district along with instructions on how to use it. Going forward, this document should identify where the senior class of 2030 should be.

III. School Committee Reports

A. Vouchers and Bills: These have been signed.

B. Athletic Subcommittee:

- a. At this time, there are currently 154 students registered for the winter sports season. They anticipate this number to rise
- b. Some sports are having a difficult time recruiting participants. These sports include swimming, girls basketball and wrestling
- c. MASCO has left the Cape Ann League
- d. There was discussion about Capital needs which included updates to the boys locker room and adding cameras to the turf field
- e. Discussed a need to lock off certain parts of the building during sporting events
- f. Discussed the relationship with the YMCA and the pool rental agreement. This year, there has been a major increase in the rental fees for the Ipswich High School Swim Team.

C. Grant Subcommittees: These two committees have not met.

D. Operations Subcommittee: Items from their last meeting were discussed earlier.

E. Policy Subcommittee: Meeting on December 10th.

F. Turf Field Subcommittee: This committee has not met.

G. Communications Subcommittee:

- a. The first Meet and Greet was held on November 16th. Although there was light attendance, those who came expressed gratitude for the opportunity to meet. Key points raised during this time were the Elementary Education Plan, equity in the elementary schools, the school building project and questions surrounding the Ipswich Education Foundation
- b. The next newsletter will be released on December 12th
- c. The next Meet and Greet will be with the Rotary Club. Time and date is TDB

H. SEPAC:

- a. Ms. Kneedler has emailed the organization and is looking for a time to meet

I. Birth to Three:

- a. Ms. Gilliam attended a meeting with the group last Wednesday. There was a presentation on Anxiety in Young Children

J. Working Groups:

- a. **School Facilities:** Meeting on December 5th
- b. **Climate Resiliency:** The Green Communities application has been filed.
- c. **Feoffee Policy:** Items from the last meeting were discussed earlier.
- d. **Feoffees Report:** This working group did not meet.

- e. STEAM Team:** Early bird registration for the event goes out on December 2nd.

K. New Business:

- a. Dr. Blake announced that the Student Opportunity Act had passed in the House and Senate. At this time, he does not know how it will impact the district.
- b. Ms. Gilliam attended the MASC/MASS Joint Conference in November. She discussed the resolutions that were passed at that meeting.
- c. Mr. Hopping and Ms. Kneeder discussed conflicts in the scheduling of upcoming meetings. It was decided that the December 19th meeting would be cancelled. The two meetings scheduled in January have been changed to January 9th and January 23rd.

IV. Consent Agenda

Mr. Hopping moved the Ipswich School Committee to accept the School Committee Open Session Meeting Minutes from November 7, 2019, seconded by Mr. Whitten. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Adjournment

Mr. Whitten moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 PM, seconded by Dr. O'Flynn. The motion passes unanimously.