

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
JANUARY 7, 2016  
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

**OPEN SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair H. O'Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the following members present: S. Player, C. Whitten, J. Bauman, F. Krason and B. Hopping. Also present were Superintendent Hart, and Reed Dolan, IHS student representative.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Reed read the Mission Statement.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dr. O'Flynn read the following announcements:

Executive Session will be held for the purpose of discussing personnel and deployment of security personnel and devices, or strategies with response thereto after which the meeting will adjourn  
Winthrop 4<sup>th</sup> grade show (Rms. 3 & 7), January 11, 7 p.m.; (Rms. 5 & 9)  
January 12, 7 p.m.

Parent meeting with Dr. Hart, January 12, 6 p.m.

TriBoard meeting will be held on January 12, 7 p.m.

Communications Subcommittee will meet on January 12, 8:30 a.m., Payne School

Athletic Subcommittee will meet on January 13, 6 p.m., M/HS Guidance Conf. Rm.

School Building Committee will meet on January 14, 7 p.m., with the architect  
January 18 will be a NO SCHOOL day in observance of Martin Luther King holiday

Budget Subcommittee will be held on January 21, 6 p.m., in the M/HS Guidance Conf. Rm. prior to School Committee meeting

School Committee will meet on January 21, 7 p.m., M/HS Ensemble Rm.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Dr. Hart announced that at the Rotary breakfast this a.m. Deborah Trevarrow was awarded the Paul Harris scholarship with Hart's quote "She is the heart of the school culture at Winthrop."

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Reed Dolan spoke of the students at the High School who have begun the long process of studying for final exams. Musical students are attending the Senior District Festival this week. The Sustainability Class is doing a presentation of all

their accomplishments throughout the semester at the PAC on January 21 from 6 – 6:50 p.m., before the School Committee meeting.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT’S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Dr. Hart reported on his meeting with the Town Manager. Health care options were discussed, and he will attend a followup meeting later this month. The turf field and the allocation of Capital Funds for next year were discussed as well, and both heads felt the benefit of monthly meetings.

His goals are ongoing with a full-day PLC workshop scheduled later this month. STEAM is committed to a full-day workshop as well to finalize the STEAM Vision Statement, plan activities for the year, and review potential STEAM conferences. Elementary common assessment meetings began today with two elementary principals and the Director of Teaching and Learning in LA and math assessment selection and implementation. Each School Committee member will soon be contacted to meet with the Superintendent before the end of the school year. He extended an invitation to the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and Town Manager to participate in a site-visit day on January 15 at 10 a.m. at the Middle School to visit classrooms, etc.

Mr. Hopping feels that an approach to highlight the achievements since the override, emphasizing what the additional funds and additional personnel have enabled, would be advantageous as the budget season begins. Dr. O’Flynn commented that, of all the schools, the transformation at the Middle School is the most effective.

### **I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS**

#### **A. DISTRICT INITIATIVES**

Mr. Fabrizio, MS Principal, with a video of the school and three teachers who presented, spoke of the arduous year that was last year and the turn-around with personnel and funding. The videos showed students in the making of a book, with Chromebooks, building toothpick bridges, with “critical thinking” and “communication”, and an immigration discussion. Groups of students in teams did “collaborative thinking”, did math in differentiated stations (3 at a table) and a group of 4 solved a problem with “perseverance”. Mr. Fabrizio who took all the photos and videos didn’t see a teacher teaching, just facilitated and helped along the way while the kids did the things themselves. Ginger Eaton (Art), Melissa Ciaccia, and Karen Reed (Spanish) had collaborated during the 20-minute time periods allowing the 43 8<sup>th</sup> grade students four times a week to learn Spanish history and culture at the time of Pablo Picasso in a “powerful-learning experience” and to reproduce their own “Guernica by Picasso.”

Dr. Hart was amazed, opined that the general public doesn’t understand what has happened here with the Socratic method, that is, students asking good probing questions that allowed them to ask and think things that were exceptional. The students used a multi-faceted approach.

Dr. O’Flynn asked questions about the scheduling and thanked the group.

Kathie McMahon, Asst. Principal, and David Fabrizio, went on describing the managerial system at the MS. The teachers are running a lot of things now. On early release days, the school faculty works on professional reading and discourse, in curriculum teams, in subject area curriculum and technology, and in data. Two units will be written in curriculum. The teacher-driven Compass committee shares with each other. There is a school-wide focus on “critical thinking and communication”, begun last year. All the successful habits of mind (SHOM) are shifting around and being done. In technology, 80% of the students are accessing these things on computers. The “PA” and “Skills” time blocks are being used to help to get certain kids to achieve these skills. “Cluster Coordinators” make the decisions. This new PA period has changed and includes remediation, pull-out help, fine arts, project extension, and student self-directed enrichment.

The School Committee and Dr. Hart were very impressed. The Superintendent remarked that there isn’t a MS in the State that has progressed as far with “teacher-running.”

#### B. CAPITAL PLAN REVIEW

Dr. Hart reviewed the five-year Capital Plan chart covering a \$1.3 million investment in capital projects. Each year there will be a \$15,000 amount dedicated to restoration and rehabilitation of the Paine School. Mr. Hopping questioned the relegation of security plans to FY18 when communications and security problems with doors at Winthrop and Doyon aren’t being taken care of. Mr. Whitten mentioned available grants for intercom systems. Mr. Murphy said it is possible to lease the phone system. Mr. Whitten doesn’t see the word “contingency.” Mr. Murphy suggested that this plan is only the tip of the iceberg of what needs to be happening with a 20-year-old M/HS and 50-year-old Doyon. Mr. Hopping would like to have Mr. Hodge review this plan again. Dr. Hart commented that some items should be part of the Operating Budget.

#### C. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE CONFIGURATION OPTIONS DISCUSSION

Dr. O’Flynn requested that discussion about the configurations model be addressed. Kevin Murphy stated that the lower elementary grades would work at Winthrop, but that it cannot do K-3 and 4/5. In summary, he said the options are: 2 K-5 elementaries, K-3 and 4/5 separate schools, and one big elementary school. He said that Doyon could handle K-3 and Winthrop, 4/5. The goal is 355 students at Doyon and 423 at Winthrop. Pre-K would raise the numbers.

Dr. O’Flynn said there is a need for another large gym in Town; Murphy wanted to put to bed the myth that the sizes of Doyon and Winthrop classrooms are very different--they are the same (725 to 750 sq. ft.) as are the gyms (100 sq. ft.),--all puny.

Mr. Hopping read about the commonalities of elementary schools:

Try to limit the number of transitions for adjustments to schools by children. In a school of K-5 in the same building, children don’t move out of the building, a bonus to smooth out those chaotic years. It enhances PLC’s more. It allows common

instructional planning, team teaching, more effective use of common assessments, balance of classroom sizes, utilization of classroom building spaces, consistency of curriculum, possibility of adjusting staff, and consolidating efforts of specialists.

In the scenario of two elementaries:

What happens if the kids from the same family attend both elementaries? Lost opportunities for older students to model with younger students. Mr. Whitten is a strong supporter of keeping K-5 together, and says that “Winthrop is a treasure.” A large population walks to school.

Doyon isn’t in great shape either—keep D open while first stage of W is done if MSBA allows a fold into the W site.

Dr. O’Flynn asks what makes the best educational choice for children? How will any configuration impact our budget? What kids are going to have to ride buses that currently don’t? What demographic piece would be addressed if we had all third graders at one particular site?

Mrs. Krason asks what the ramifications would be if we do decide to keep two schools, one which is shiny new and the other which is dumpy? (“inequality again” was the comment)

Mrs. Bauman asked if Title I reimbursements would still be in force if the two elementary schools combined?

While Dr. O’Flynn asked if there is consensus, Mr. Hopping commented that the message that has resonated is to remember to remain open-minded.

June 9 is the date for submitting to the MSBA the preferred designs program. September 29 is the date for the schematic report and from November through February the schematic design is prepared for going to Town Meeting in 14 months. Mr. Murphy suggested that the SC ask questions of the other schools who have done this.

Dr. Hart suggested that the group come up with a small number of research questions which, done well, would provide evidence that one configuration is better than another. Are we looking for a balance of standards testing? Inquiry-based learning? We have to pick a multi-faceted approach.

Ms. Player said that she would rather read the research herself. Mr. Murphy spoke of the difference between the “white paper” and reality. Mr. Hopping commented that what we can take away is that there is no perfect model. The culture, the expectation of the residents, and what our definition is of teaching and learning all enter into this. Murphy concluded that it is, at least, learning the real-world pros and cons. To Dr. O’Flynn’s question of where to go to find the right papers, Mr. Hopping replied that consensus is that there is no consensus. You must try to eliminate transitions, and have continuity of programs and growth.

What are the downsides of a really big elementary school? Dr. O’Flynn asked, to which Mr. Hopping answered that you find a basic concept of a school within a school (with two wings) still having that richness between younger and older kids. All third graders are there. He would not advocate for 750 students with one principal and one size fits all. Mr. Murphy said that most elementary schools are designed for between 500 and 700 students. To the question of MSBA’s concern

with a much bigger school, Murphy said that the numbers really haven't been run out for the bonding. The M/HS bond will be retired in 2020 and the premise is that the new bond could begin then. Mr. Hopping commented that we have to give that consideration to the BOS and Fin Com for a bigger school.

The first meeting with the architect will take place on January 14 at Town Hall.

**D. OPERATIONAL AUDIT - SCHOOL COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

The recommendations from the Operational Audit had been set up by the Business Manager on Excel in ten categories and designated to certain individuals for responsibility.

"X. Feoffee Funding" was assigned to the School Committee and Dr. Hart responded that Curriculum Development and PLCs are now in their last year and the systems are in place to shift to teacher-driven professional development. Dr. Hart will work on this as a part of professional development for Feoffee funding and the School Committee would like to have that approach expanded.

Currently \$75,000 goes to each building and each administrator decides on the fund's use for professional development. Mr. Hopping commented that it will move to a site-based oversight partly with Feoffee funding and at a reduced amount from the present amount.

Ms. Player reminded that a procedure has been created for each mini-grant of \$200 or less where Ms. Cuff has the ability to approve it without change. If, however, there was a huge change, procedural change becomes necessary and she would speak to Ms. Cuff about the actual wording.

The Board agreed that Ms. Cuff should return with policy recommendations re Munis (program) and quarterly reports.

**E. TARGET BUDGET**

Dr. O'Flynn referred to TM Robin Crosbie's FY17 revenue estimates per 12/14/15 and explained her complex formula. He asked permission to question it, as well as the turf field amount of \$40,000 which isn't "coming off the top." After discussion of Mr. Fay's figures, splits between Schools and Town of 62/38% and 64.38/35.62%, and Dr. Flynn's interest in speaking with Town Manager and Fin Com on the subject of the split, Mr. Hopping authorized the Vice-Chair to express his concerns to the Town Manager and it became consensus of the group. Mrs. Bauman asked if anyone is requesting an audit on the Town side; Mr. Murphy replied that Mr. Feldman had had a conversation with Mark Abrahams (audit) who said that doing a concentrated audit is nearly impossible because of the many elements, i.e., fire, police, public works, etc.

**II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**A. VOUCHERS/BILLS**

**B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE**

- 2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE
- 3. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
- 4. GRANT COMMITTEES
- 5. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

6. POLICY – Mr. Hopping reviewed four items on their agenda including the Acceptance Use Policy still in progress...”email” is pressing topic at M/HS; nurses who brought in a policy which will come on January 21; and student activity fund changes requested by the auditor.

7. TURF FIELD SUBCOMMITTEE – Mr. Hopping advised that abutters need to be informed by the School Committee.

8. SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

9. NEW BUSINESS – Mrs. Bauman reported that Mr. Dalton had a meeting about the new high school schedule. Only 30 parents attended and the general reaction is that everyone is excited about it.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. O’Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to accept the Consent Agenda as follows:

Acceptance of Minutes of December 17, 2015, Open Session

Acceptance of anonymous donations of \$1,500 for the Winthrop School annual appeal to be deposited in the Winthrop School Gift account.

Acceptance of Mark Newman Funds of \$524 for the purchase of a Lincoln Weld-Pak 140HD, wire-feed welder to fabricate metal components for the robotic program. UNANIMOUS.

**IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Dr. O’Flynn moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to go into Executive Session at 10:27 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel and to discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with response thereto after which the meeting will adjourn. Roll call IN FAVOR- Hopping, Player, Krason, Whitten, Bauman, O’Flynn.