



Message from School Committee Chair, Barry W. Hopping

Folk singer/songwriter James Taylor once said, “*The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time.*” It’s been a few months since we last chatted and since then, much has transpired throughout the school district that gives cause for excitement and celebration. We as proud parents and residents of Ipswich must live vicariously through the accomplishments and exploits of our children, but that certainly doesn’t diminish how they continue to achieve and amaze us each day. Whether it be in the classroom as aspiring engineers, scientists, doctors, teachers, or trade professionals; on the field of competition representing their school with heart, determination, and grit, or on stage regaling us with sweet music or lines from a classic play, we as a community have much to be thankful for. That line alone should immediately bring to mind flashbacks to your own child’s feats during the past several weeks. National Honor Society inductions, league championships, and more incredible musical performances at Ipswich High School, rigorous programmatic and instructional changes under new leadership at Ipswich Middle School, the “*Hour of Code*” with IHS students engaging with their younger counterparts in coding activities at our elementary schools, and more at the Winthrop School, with a continued focus on broadening every child’s cultural awareness with global citizenship in mind. Also, let’s not forget that *Green Team* members at each of our schools continue their efforts through ambitious initiatives to make our planet’s natural resources sustainable and accessible for generations to come.

On behalf of the Ipswich School Committee, I want to wish all of our Ipswich families a joyous and safe holiday season. We as parents, educators, community representatives, elected officials, and residents all share in that humbling, but awesome responsibility of being positive role models for our children. While it’s only human nature to often live our lives through the experiences of others, let’s not let that practice tempt us to place unreasonable demands and expectations on our children. By all means, aim your sights high, but be cautious that the goals you set for your children are reasonable and achievable. So much of our attention and resources are now being placed on strategies to address the social/emotional challenges being faced by our children, let’s try to remember the importance of life’s balance and seeing the world through their perspective. As parents, we must accept the fact that it’s no longer about us.

My sincere hope for this holiday season is that we can all revel in the genuine gifts of love, loyalty, and wonderment that our children give to us every day. They need not look for tidy gift wrap or festive bows, but neither should we. Hopefully, you’re only going to return these gifts to sender anyway... again, again, and again!

Ipswich Public Schools adopts resolution for Massachusetts RESPECTfully Public Awareness and Prevention Campaign



At the November 7 Open Session meeting, the Ipswich School Committee took a unanimous vote to adopt a resolution in support of RESPECTfully, a new Massachusetts public awareness and prevention campaign. Led by Lt. Governor Karen Polito, the Governor’s Council to Address Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence - in partnership with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Massachusetts State Legislature - is increasing prevention efforts, with the goal of reducing the number of individuals who experience sexual and domestic violence in their lives. RESPECTfully promotes healthy friendships and relationships to Massachusetts youth between the ages of 12-18, and it is the first statewide initiative on this topic in almost twenty years.

Created with extensive input from experts and youth across the state, the RESPECTfully key message is that everyone deserves respect, honesty, and open communication. Extensive formative research was conducted to understand the issues and pressures that young people are facing with regard to friendships and relationships, as well as ensuring that the messaging developed was appropriate and engaging. The campaign aims to:

- Increase awareness about what constitutes a healthy relationship by defining characteristics using examples of acceptable vs. unacceptable behaviors
- Emphasize that respect is essential for maintaining healthy friendships and romantic relationships
- Help teens identify the escalating behaviors that lead to unhealthy or unsafe relationships and safely remove themselves from those relationships

School districts are an important partner in awareness efforts. To learn more about the RESPECTfully campaign, please visit Mass.gov/respectfully.

The Feoffees Trust: A Summary

The Ipswich Public Schools are fortunate to have the Feoffees Trust as a source of funds to enhance and enrich the educational offerings in our district. Most parents with school-aged children have heard the term “Feoffees”, but few know the history of this very important entity.

At his death in 1660, William Paine left the 36 acres of ocean front property known as Little Neck to a Trust put in place to benefit the Ipswich Schools. The management of this land was left to a group of Trustees known as “Feoffees” with the stipulation that the land be held in trust for “the benefit of the said school of Ipswich forever”. The general definition of a feoffee is a ‘trustee invested with a freehold estate to hold in possession for a purpose, typically a charitable one’. Four feoffees were privately designated as lifetime trustees with the power to appoint their successors, and the three oldest selectmen in Ipswich, known collectively as the “Old Feoffees”, served as additional trustees.

The use of the land changed over the years from space rented by farmers for cattle grazing to eventually becoming a summer community with 167 individual house lots leased by homeowners. Legal disputes over the amount of rent, desire for ownership by the tenants, and unpredictable annual payments to the Ipswich schools ultimately led to the property being sold to the tenants in 2012 for \$29.1 million.

The proceeds of this sale, net of expenses and debts owed on the property, were placed in Trust under the oversight of seven “New Feoffees”. Now the School Committee, Finance Committee and Selectmen each appoint (on a rotating basis) two individuals to serve. The Old Feoffees hold the right to appoint one individual. No appointed Feoffee may serve for more than two consecutive three-year terms. In an effort to maintain transparency and openness, all Feoffee meetings are open to the public, and meeting minutes and agendas are posted on the Town’s website. The Trust assets are audited each year by an independent third-party auditing firm.

The New Feoffees are responsible for general oversight of the Trust assets. Their duties include hiring and reviewing investment managers, creating and monitoring both the investment and distribution policies, as well as keeping the public boards informed of the overall health and performance of the Trust assets.

Since the funding of the Trust in 2012 with the sale proceeds of the land at Little Neck, the Ipswich Public schools have received annual distributions totalling in excess of \$5 million while during the same time period seeing the Trust grow to exceed \$30 million in assets. The amount of the annual distribution to the Schools is determined by the Feoffees’ distribution policy, which seeks to “provide a significant and relatively stable, predictable flow of funds to a supplemental budget to benefit the current generation of students while maintaining the long-term purchasing power of the principal to ensure the Trust is able to deliver equitable resources to future generations”.

The schools then rely on the Feoffees Payne grant and Mini grant subcommittees to decide which school programs should be funded. A brief description of these subcommittees is listed further on in this newsletter.

It is important to note that the Final Trust Administration Order, the legal document which outlines the parameters of the Trust, clearly states that the annual distributions are to be used for “supplemental enrichment programs and uses that provide education enhancement for Ipswich public school students”. Foundational education budget needs must be funded within the annual school budget.

The Ipswich schools and School Committee are grateful for William Paine’s bequest and the prudent management of the Trust by the New Feoffees. For more information, visit the [Feoffees Committee page](#) on Ipswich’s town website.

School Committee Meet & Greet at Zumi’s



The first of three School Committee Meet & Greets was held at Zumi’s on Saturday, November 16. Barry Hopping, Chub Whitten, and Sara Gilliam attended this informal get-together opportunity. Thank you to Zumi’s for hosting this event, and to the community members who came prepared with questions and concerns to share.

A continuation of our goal to expand Communications in 2019-20, these Meet & Greets are intended to foster and encourage in-person dialogue to those who may not be able to attend our Open Session, Subcommittee, or Working Group meetings. More information to come about our next two Meet & Greets at the Rotary Club on January 23 and at the Council on Aging on May 19.

School Committee Subcommittees, Working Groups, and Liaisons

Beyond our twice-monthly Open Session meetings, each School Committee member serves on several subcommittees and working groups. This work is vital when considering budget, policy, and other issues facing the district. These small groups of School Committee members are assigned annually,

typically meet at least monthly, and are responsible for providing the Committee information necessary to take action on school related matters.

Liaison positions, which are assigned each year just like subcommittees and working groups, afford School Committee representatives the opportunity to participate in other community meetings with relevance to Ipswich Public Schools. Our subcommittees, working groups, and liaisons give reports to the rest of the School Committee during our Open Session meetings.

For a meeting calendar and more information about our subcommittees, working groups, and liaison positions, please visit our website at <https://www.ipsk12.net/Page/775>. We will be highlighting these groups in each of this year's newsletters to help further our goal of increasing transparency and strengthening community connections.

Payne Grant Subcommittee: The Payne Grant subcommittee discusses and votes on proposals made for funding via the Feoffees Payne Grants. This subcommittee also includes appointed Ipswich Public Schools staff and community members. 2019-20 subcommittee member: Pavica Kneeder.

Mini-Grant Subcommittee: The Mini-Grant subcommittee discusses and votes on proposals made for funding via the Feoffees Mini-Grants. This subcommittee also includes appointed Ipswich Public Schools staff and community members. 2019-20 subcommittee member: Chub Whitten.

Feoffee Report Working Group: The Feoffee Report working group provides the Feoffees with an update showing how the annual Trust distributions were spent. They also create an annual report for the Town leading up to the Annual Town Meeting in May. 2019-20 working group members: Barry Hopping, Carl Nylen.

Feoffee Policy Working Group: The Feoffee Policy working group assesses the current Feoffees grant policy to determine if changes are needed. Also collaborates with the Policy subcommittee. 2019-20 subcommittee members: Barry Hopping, Carl Nylen.

School Committee Meeting Highlights

November

- Energy Reduction Plan presentation for Green Community requirements by Tony Marino, Town Manager
- Presentations on proposed IHS Visual Arts Department field trip to New York City, 8th grade field trip to Washington, D.C., and high school French trip to Hyeres; trips were approved
- Community Development Plan review, update on MSBA procedural questions
- Tri-Board meeting to discuss the EMG/School Dude facilities assessment reports, Strategic Planning Working Group, Bialek Park, and the Feoffees appointments
- Superintendent Goals and Evaluation discussions
- Budget Subcommittee updates for upcoming FY21 budget

December

- School Improvement Plan presentations for middle and high schools by Kathy McMahon, IMS Principal and Jonathan Mitchell, IHS Principal
- NEASC and Capital Planning updates
- Fall Sports Awards from Tom Gallagher, Athletic Director

Upcoming District Events

- **December 23 - January 3:** Winter Break
- **January 9:** School Committee Open Session Meeting*
- **January 23:** School Committee Open Session Meeting*
- **January 20:** School Holiday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **February 6:** School Committee Open Session Meeting*
- **February 17-21:** Winter Break

* School Committee Open Session Meetings are typically held on the first and third Thursday of the month in the MS/HS Ensemble Room located at 134 High Street, Ipswich and begin at 7:00 PM. Meeting agendas, minutes, and calendar may be found on the [district website](#). These meetings are broadcast live on ICAM. To view these meetings, please tune into Comcast Channel 98 and Verizon Channel 31. Meetings can also be viewed on the ICAM Ipswich website: www.icamipswich.com.

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