

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021  
7:00 PM  
MIDDLE/HIGH ENSEMBLE ROOM  
134 HIGH STREET, IPSWICH**

**MINUTES**

<b>I. OPEN SESSION</b>
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**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Whitten called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Present: Mr. Whitten, Mr. Stevens, Dr. O’Flynn, Ms. Kneedler, Ms. Eliot, Ms. Cannon and Mr. Poirier

Also Present: Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools and Cheryl Herrick-Stella, Director of Finance and Operations

**READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

Mr. Whitten read the district mission statement.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The School Committee retreat will be held on August 10th at 5:00pm at Turner Hill.

**CITIZENS’ COMMENTS**

There were none at this time.

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Dr. Blake welcomed the new administrative staff hired for the 2021-22 school year. All were onboarded as of July 6th.

<b>II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS</b>
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**A. PAINE GRANT COMMITTEE MEMBER APPROVAL**

The William Paine Enhancement Grant Committee is in need of a Business Representative to fill a current vacancy. Jennifer Donahue, owner of First Class Preschool and Ipswich resident, applied for the position. Ms. Donahue is an active member in the school community.

- *Motion to approve Jen Donahue as the Business Representative on the Paine Grant Committee was made by Dr. O’Flynn and seconded by Mr. Stevens. **The motion passed unanimously in support.***

**B. HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK CHANGES**

Dr. Blake presented the proposed changes to the High School Student Handbook.

On page 15- Dress Code:

*The right of students to freedom of expression in the public schools of the commonwealth shall not be abridged, provided that such right shall not cause any disruption or disorder within the school.*

*School officials shall not abridge the rights of students as to personal dress and appearance except if such officials determine that such personal dress and appearance violate reasonable standards of health, safety, and cleanliness.*

*Source: M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 82 and Section 83*

Dr. Blake said language regarding the dress code was updated to reflect current practices.

Page 22- Honor Code:

*Ipswich High School is committed to the following academic and behavioral expectations for students: integrity, community, and responsibility. Violation of the Honor Code diminishes the learning experience, not only for those involved, but also for the entire Ipswich learning community. The commitment to uphold the foundations of academic honesty promotes the trust between students and educators necessary to foster a fair and ethical community that will prepare our students as future global citizens.*

### **Types of Academic Dishonesty**

**Cheating:** *Cheating is the intentional use or attempted use of deceit, violation of rules and/or misrepresentation of one's work. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to*

- *Using any form of memory aid/notes during tests or quizzes without the permission of the teacher.*
- *Copying/offering answers on tests, quizzes or other assignments.*
- *Copying/offering homework in written form, or by electronic means.*
- *Copying or in any way duplicating assignments that are turned in as original work.*
- *Exchanging assignments with other students, whether you believe they will be copied or not. This is referred to as the facilitation of academic dishonesty and carries the same punishment.*
- *Using the Internet to search for responses rather than reading the assignment.*
- *Having anyone, including parents/guardians or tutors, complete assignments*
- *Presenting collaborative work as individual work.*
- *Using another's ideas without proper citations.*
- *The use of unauthorized books, electronic devices, notebooks, websites or other resources for assignments*
- *Unauthorized collaboration on assignments*
- *Talking or gesturing to another student during a test, quiz or exam.*
- *Any communication during an assessment will be interpreted as cheating, regardless of the subject matter being discuss*
- *Intentionally missing a test, quiz, exam, or project deadline for the sole purpose of avoiding a due date, extending preparation time, and/or obtaining information from other students.*

**Collusion:** *Collusion refers to the agreement or cooperation between students to commit an act of academic dishonesty.*

*Any student who knowingly or intentionally helps another student to perform any act of cheating or plagiarism is subject to discipline for academic dishonesty. There is no distinction between those who cheat and plagiarize and those who willingly allow it to occur. Any collaboration done without permission and knowledge of the teacher may be deemed collusion. Examples of collusion include, but are not limited to*

- *Allowing another person to copy one's own work or exam.*
- *Collaborating with another person before a quiz or examination in order to develop methods of exchanging information during the quiz or examination.*
- *Distributing an examination from an unauthorized source prior to an examination.*
- *Distributing or selling a paper or other work to other students.*

**Fabrication:** *Fabrication is the intentional and unauthorized falsification and/or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to*

- *Falsifying data or results from research or lab/fieldwork.*
- *Selectively omitting or altering data that do not support one's conclusions.*

**Plagiarism:** It is academic theft. Plagiarism refers to the use of another's ideas or words without proper attribution or credit. An author's work is his/her property and should be respected by documentation. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to

- **Directly Copying:** Copying someone else's work & passing it off as your own (cutting & pasting or retyping)
- **Patchwork Plagiarism:** Borrowing phrases from the original source & blending it into your own writing.
- **Paraphrasing:** Summarizing an idea from another source & failing to cite the author/reference.

**Note: definitions of academic dishonesty are adapted from Hamilton Wenham Regional High School handbook, Salem State University Academic Integrity Regulations, and the North Shore Community College Code of Conduct.**

#### **How can students avoid plagiarism?**

- Give yourself plenty of time. Students are more likely to cheat if they don't have enough time.
- See your teacher for help. Use all avenues of support available to you.
- Write down your sources so that they can be cited.
- Take notes when researching instead of cutting and pasting.
- Cite your sources anytime you use someone else's work. This lets the teacher know what is your work and what belongs to someone else.

#### **How can parents help to promote student achievement & avoid cheating?**

- Teachers are available for extra help after school and can be reached by email. Encourage your children to contact their teachers with questions or if they need help.
- Don't push your children beyond their limits with expectations. Many times students make bad decisions because they feel pressure to succeed.
- If you notice that your child is not completing assignments at home, speak to them about when and where they are completing assignments.
- If your child is caught cheating, please remember that this is a learning experience; help your child to accept the consequences for his/her actions so that it does not happen again.

#### **What are the consequences for infractions?**

- **1st offense:** Student will receive a zero on the paper, exam, etc., A conference will be held with the parent/guardian, student, teacher, and assistant principal. Admission of issue, if the student admits their infraction, they may, at the teacher's sole discretion, be allowed to mitigate the consequences to the score. The incident will be recorded in Aspen as an Academic Honor Code Violation.
- **2nd offense:** Student will receive a zero on the paper, exam, etc. Depending on the severity of the infraction, the student may be suspended from school for up to 3 days and be ineligible for National Honor Society and for the Distinguished Achievement Award for the remainder of the academic year. Leadership roles in clubs, activities or extracurricular teams may be lost for the remainder of the school year. A conference will be held with the parent/guardian, student, teacher, and assistant principal. The incident will be recorded in Aspen as an Academic Honor Code Violation.
- **Subsequent offenses:** Student will receive a zero on the paper, exam, etc., be ineligible for National Honor Society and for the Distinguished Achievement Award for the remainder of the academic year. Leadership roles in clubs, activities or extracurricular teams may be lost for the remainder of the school year and the following school year, and may be suspended from school for up to 3 days. Plagiarism and cheating offenses are cumulative throughout the student's academic career. The incident will be recorded in Aspen as an Academic Honor Code Violation.

Page 29- Personal Appearance

This section was removed.

Page 40- An option to have a sports replacement was added in as a graduation requirement.

Dr. Blake also shared that language outlining senior privileges was added to the handbook. All changes were reviewed at length and approved by the High School Council.

There was a discussion regarding the academic honor code changes. Members questioned whether using old tests would be allowed under this new policy. It was clarified that older tests could be considered an authorized source, but not current tests perhaps taken directly from a teacher's desk. Dr. O'Flynn felt strongly that the wording of the new honor code language could hinder the way students studied for exams. It was agreed that while the term "unauthorized resources" should be better defined, it was not a reason to hold on approval. It was also clarified that situations would be handled on a case by case basis.

Dr. Blake agreed to share the Committee's feedback with the high school principal.

- *Motion to approve the High School Handbook as presented was made by Dr. O'Flynn and seconded by Ms. Cannon. **The motion passed unanimously in support.***

### **C. PAINE GRANT PRESENTATION: IPS WEBSITE**

Keith Borgen, Director of Technology, was asked to discuss his Paine Grant application for a new district website due to a significant number of questions from the School Committee that were raised during the Paine Grant approval agenda item at a previous meeting.

Mr. Borgen said that most are in agreement that there are problems with the current website. His plan is to work with different constituent groups in the school community to draft business requirements for a new website design. Should the district move forward with a "bare bones" website, the pricing would remain equivalent or less than what the district is currently paying. Should the district decide on a mid-level solution that includes workflows for the Extended Day registration, athletics, and Frontline, the price would be slightly higher than what the district is paying now. A high priced solution could have different portals for staff and students, ADA compliance checking, better translation features and the workflows discussed earlier.

The original pitch to the Paine Grant Committee was to include everything the district could possibly need/want. The idea was to do a scaled approach to building the new website and dial back if necessary.

Mr. Borgen explained that the COVID pandemic really brought to light the need to evolve the website as a communication resource. He then talked about the current cost of the website. He said while \$30,000 for a new website seems costly, the idea is to replace other communication tools like Blackboard Connect and Family ID which the district is paying for.

Should the grant be approved, Ms. Borgen believed this would be a roughly 12 month implementation.

The Committee discussed at length the process to approve a grant that was not originally approved by the Paine Grant Committee. While the grant committee did not feel it was student facing enough, the School Committee disagreed and believed that a more highly functioning website would enhance and enrich the whole school community.

There was discussion about when this funding would move from a grant into the operating budget. Asking for \$30,000 per year for a website seemed steep to some members. There was discussion about whether a project like this would or could be considered under capital funding.

Although there was a general consensus for approval of this grant, the School Committee felt that based on the current Feoffees policy, they were not in a position to approve a grant that was not first approved to move forward by the Paine Grant Committee.

- *Motion to ask the superintendent to reconvene the Paine Grant committee for reconsideration of the IPS Website grant based on the new information and a focus on student facing programs was made by Emily Cannon and seconded by Dr. O’Flynn. The motion passed 6 in support, 1 opposed*

**D. SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Mr. Whitten reviewed the list of School Committee subcommittees, working groups and liaisons for the 2021-2022 school year. Members were asked to submit their preferences for participation in each group ahead of the meeting. Assignments were confirmed. A list of all subcommittees, working groups and liaison assignments will be posted to the district website.

The following people were assigned to each group:

**Subcommittees**

<b>Athletics</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Communications</b>
Hugh O’Flynn	Hugh O’Flynn	Pavica Kneedler
Greg Stevens	Greg Stevens	Greg Stevens
Jeff Poirier	Kate Eliot	Kate Eliot

<b>Mutual Concerns</b>	<b>Negotiations</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Policy</b>
Chub Whitten	Chub Whitten	Chub Whitten	Kate Eliot
Pavica Kneedler	Greg Stevens	Pavica Kneedler	Pavica Kneedler
Emily Cannon	Emily Cannon	Jeff Poirier	Emily Cannon

**Working Groups**

<b>Feoffees Report</b>	<b>Race and Equity</b>	<b>School Facilities</b>	<b>Vision 2030</b>
Hugh O’Flynn	Emily Cannon	Chub Whitten	Emily Cannon
Greg Stevens	Pavica Kneedler	Kate Eliot	Pavica Kneedler
	Jeff Poirier	Pavica Kneedler	

**Liaisons**

<b>Audit</b>	<b>Birth to Three</b>	<b>Climate</b>	<b>Community Development Plan</b>	<b>Feoffees Committee</b>
Chub Whitten	Kate Eliot	Chub Whitten	Chub Whitten	Greg Stevens
			Jeff Poirier	

Ipswich Education Foundation	MASC Voting Delegate to Annual Business Meeting	Paine Grants	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
Greg Stevens	Jeff Poirier	Jeff Poirier	Emily Cannon/ Jeff Poirier

STEAM Team	Strategic Planning	Student Advisory Council	Traverso-Weathera II Grants	Turf Field
Pavica Kneedler	Chub Whitten	Jeff Poirier	Emily Cannon	Hugh O’Flynn
				Greg Stevens

**E. SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR APPROVAL**

Mr. Whitten reviewed the proposed School Committee meeting calendar for the 2021-2022 school year. Once approved, the calendar will be posted to the district website.

- *Motion to support the School Committee meeting calendar as presented was made by Mr. Stevens and seconded by Ms. Eliot. The motion passed unanimously in favor.*

**F. FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The interim Finance Director, Bill Frangiamore, ended his contract with the district as of June 30th. Cheryl Herrick-Stella, the newly hired Director of Finance and Operations gave the financial update with the help of Dr. Blake. Their report included the following:

- The FY21 budget has closed on a positive note.
- A breakdown of the ESSER grants. ESSER 1 has been spent and the district is in the process of reporting to the federal government. ESSER 2 funding is being spent now. ESSER 3 applications have not been submitted.
- ESSER 1 funds were included in the FY22 budget process. Several things were pulled from the appropriated budget so the district could instead utilize ESSER funding for those expenditures.
- The district is looking to be strategic in how these ESSER funds are spent. They recognize that while they are funding some positions to fill gaps, especially around mental health needs, once ESSER funding is used, the position may not be supported in the appropriated budget.
- A discussion regarding an override strategy in light of receiving additional ESSER 3 funding

**G. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Dr. Blake reported on his work throughout the district in weeks since that last School Committee meeting. His report included:

- Attendance at the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) Executive Institute Conference
- Meetings with all the new administrative staff to help with their transition into the district
- An Administrative Team meeting
- Work with the new Extended Day Program (EDP) Director
- With with regard to the Professional Development Day in October

Dr. Blake then shared the list of anticipated administrator increases. According to School Committee policy, these administrator increases should be presented to and approved by the School Committee. All administrators received the same increase.

- *Motion to approve the administrator increases as presented was made by Mr. Stevens and seconded by Ms. Eliot. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

#### **H. SCHOOL COMMITTEE RETREAT TOPICS**

Mr. Whitten reviewed the topics that were planned to be discussed at the School Committee Retreat to be held on August 10th. Topics included:

- Discussion/drafting of 2021-2022 School Committee Goals
- Discussion/drafting of 2021-2022 Superintendent Goals
- Review and discussion of the current Feoffees policy with the intention of better defining the process and the definition of “enhancement and enrichment”
  - Discussion of marketing strategies to promote the grant program and work being done with grant funding throughout the district

It was decided that a speaker and/or facilitator would not be necessary for this year’s retreat.

<b>III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS</b>
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- A. VOUCHERS/BILLS:** All were reviewed and signed.
- B. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:** There were not subcommittees meetings to report on.
- C. WORKING GROUP REPORTS:** There were no working group meetings to report on.
- D. LIAISON REPORTS:** There were no liaison reports.
- E. NEW BUSINESS\***

There was a question regarding a meeting with the Select Board to discuss the school building project. Mr. Whitten confirmed that a meeting between the Town Manager, Superintendent, Select Board Chair and the School Committee Chair did take place to discuss the possibility of a school building project.

<b>IV. CONSENT</b>
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#### **A. CONSENT AGENDA**

- *Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Mr. Whitten and seconded by Ms. Kneedler. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

<b>V. ADJOURNMENT</b>
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- *Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Whitten and seconded by Dr. O’Flynn. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

**Meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM**