

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 21, 2015
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Chair B. Hopping called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. with the following members present: F. Krason, H. O'Flynn, J. Bauman, and S. Gresh. Also present were Superintendent Hart and Finance Director Cuff.

MISSION STATEMENT

Dr. Gresh read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Hopping read the following announcements:

Executive Session will be held to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with IEA, AFSCME, and personnel matters after which the meeting will return to Open Session.

School Committee will meet on June 4, 7 p.m., M/H School Ensemble Rm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dr. Hart remarked about the success at the polls with the override due to the incredibly hard work of a cross section of the community and the outstanding support of the Ipswich Public Schools in a two-year effort. The Ipswich educators are the people that the Town came out to support. The students who took their civic responsibility seriously and made themselves heard in creative and unique ways to give a positive vote in helping a community come together.

Each of the School Committee members put their own special stamp on the successful override: Mrs. Bauman, reflecting on events which allowed the override success; that is, the audit, the Birth to 3 program, the Fine Arts, the leadership of Rachel Roesler and Sue Brengle, countless volunteers and the voters; Dr. Gresh, on the significant margin for success and the very good school system made up of dedicated teachers, a great student body and now the ability to build on all that—a mandate for the promises that we have made. He commented also on the music/arts commitment, their playing at the polls, the integral part they play to technology, engineering and math as quoted to him by a musician he met at the polls. Mrs. Krason was extremely gratified to see all the volunteers, especially on Sundays and to see the 18-year-olds voting for the first time which made her proud. Dr. O'Flynn was impressed with the difference this time with complete community support, and the overwhelming effort by the override committee, having recognized that the opportunities were narrowing to keep this a great district. He felt humbled.

Mr. Hopping thanked the students, staff, and the voters who listened to the evidence that backed up our claims and believe in us. It is now up to us, he said, to carry forth the mandate to deliver the goods and we have the resources to make it happen.

Mr. Hopping attended presentations of the Bridge Program students (serving internships guided by Justine May and Jeff Krieiger) who spoke about their experiences in 15-minute Powerpoint presentations; i.e., electricians, Pomodori, YMCA, Meridian Associates, etc. He felt that their accomplishments were absolutely incredible and may lead them on a career path going forward. He thanked Ms. May and Mr. Kreiger. Also, he attended the Doyon Brick Ceremony where Joan Frank, a deceased former teacher at Doyon, was honored by former Principal Cooper, Ms. Conley, and staff.

RULE OF NECESSITY

Dr. Gresh moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to invoke the Rule of Necessity so that Dr. O'Flynn and Mr. Hopping could participate in Executive Session discussion. UNANIMOUS.

A. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Hart reported that the eight Payne Grant applications were reviewed by the Payne Grant Committee. Action has been postponed until the June 4 School Committee meeting.

He reported on one of the last meetings of the year with the Compass group, approximately twenty teachers from across the district who have expertise in curriculum development, where finalization of sharing of curriculum units will take place in June with a coming-together of the elementary and secondary schools to get feedback from each other. This professional collaboration is very important as we build curriculum, he said.

I. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

B. IPSWICH SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION UPDATE

Nicole Whitten and Regina King presented on PowerPoint their achievements, projects, and programs for the future, working collaboratively with volunteers/community partners/administrators in composting, recycling, walking, planting, harvesting, healthy eating, in Sustaining Education. Specifically, they pointed out that the Doyon School has a water hydration refilling station that has allowed refilling of water bottles and saved 6,000 water bottles from being disposed of; two others are waiting for installation. Winthrop has a Walking School Bus program begun last March. The environmental Club (High School) and Green Team (elementary) work at gardening sites. Foam product collection and electronic recycling funds non-foam products in the schools' cafeterias. Mrs. Bauman was amazed at their accomplishments, and Dr. Hart spoke of the patient and persistent stick-to-itiveness of the workers.

C. NESDEC SCHOOL CHOICE STUDY

John Kennedy, Planning/Management Associate of the New England School Development Council, reported on the study of the impact of the Choice program in the Ipswich schools. He thanked the School Committee for their forward thinking and the people who provided documentation for the study. He explained that NESDEC has been in operation for over sixty years as a non-profit, helping school systems solve problems. He reviewed his team, scope, and process and provided an executive summary of the study.

Enrollments of students in Ipswich are projected to decline by more than 400 students to 2024-25. Currently, the Choice enrollment is about 4% of the student body, the educational achievement of Choice students is strong, and numbers are distributed evenly across the grades/classes so that their impact on class size appears to be minimal at elementary and high school levels. Even at the Middle School, due to issues of budget/staffing, Choice students are but one of several factors causing large class sizes.

School Choice impact at the High School is well within generally accepted best practice standards in core subjects, in foreign language and in electives. In the Middle School, Grades 8 and 7 are within a range of best practices while Grade 6 exceeds best practice standards. The elementary schools are within best practice standards.

School Choice impact on academic achievement, athletic, and co-curricular programs was found to be at or above class average in ELA, math, GPA, MCAS, Honor Roll, involvement in a wide range of athletic and co-curricular/musical activities. Focus groups were asked what strengths would draw students from another school district and what challenges facing the school district would cause students to choose to attend another school district. Strengths were art, music and performing arts, academics and AP offerings, opportunities to participate in sports, positive and nurturing culture, caring/dedicated staff. Challenges included decreasing per-pupil expenditure, class-size increases (MS), and program/staffing cuts.

NESDEC findings show that it may be feasible to continue to enroll Choice students at the High School (10 at Grade 9, 10 at 10, and combination of 5 in grades 11 & 12 are currently voted for 2015-16 by School Committee). They also suggested that it would be possible to enroll up to ten new Choice students in Grade 1 beginning in 2015-16. Mr. Kennedy stated that class sizes at the elementaries could be maintained at acceptable levels for a six-year period for accommodation in Grade 6. He showed options for Choice enrollments in years to come and advocated that a "gatekeeper" (perhaps an administrator) be responsible for calculating "empty seats" at each of the target grade levels. A chart showed estimated School Choice Revenue @\$5,000 per student up to 2024-25.

Dr. O'Flynn remarked that there is a lot of new information. Mr. Hopping thanked all who were involved in the study, wishing NESDEC had included teacher/parent comments.

D. AUDIT SPECIAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Dr. Hegedus reviewed the 2010 audit done by FUTURES and the recent ADHoc Audit done by Abrahams and recommendations of each. In particular, she pointed out the recommendations for fewer SPED teacher assistants, more SPED teachers, and making sure that the cost services were going to “best practices.” Teacher assistants were decreased in the FY14 budget, and in FY15 by 6.63 and behavioral assistants by 2.85. In the FY16 budget, there are funds for post-secondary transition training. She explained her “Monday meetings” with staff/parents: goals, place holders for future meetings, special needs issues. Caveats for the future were two: (1) Services are arrived at by the team, not by the administration, and (2) Parents have legal rights to “stay put” with current services. Mr. Hopping declared his tremendous faith in Dr. Hegedus and the work she is doing. Mrs. Donovan, SEPAC President, reported that a basic rights workshop is planned for parents by Dr. Hegedus. Mr. Howard, Fin Com member, complimenting Dr. Hegedus, is proud of how Ipswich handles special education, how they are proceeding into the future, and how they are creating an atmosphere of trust with parents. Dr. Hart commended Dr. Hegedus for the effectiveness of her job in a very short time. Mr. Hopping reiterated that Ipswich will never drop services support that the children deserve and need. The best service delivery that can be will be provided and the individual needs of the learners will never waiver. He applauded the professional development plans and thanked her for her presentation.

E. 2015-16 WILLIAM PAYNE GRANTS

Postponed.

F. APPROVAL OF 2015-16 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Dr. Hart recommended Option 1, approved by IEA, which has teachers reporting on August 31 and September 1 and students’ first day on September 2, 2015. Dr. O’Flynn moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, to accept the Superintendent’s recommendation of Option 1 School Calendar for the SY15-16. UNANIMOUS.

G. REVIEW OF TOWN MEETING AND TOWN ELECTIONS

Mr. Hopping was thrilled with the outcome and the success of the override, thanking Kevin Murphy for speaking re the audit at Town Meeting.

H. SUPERINTENDENT’S EVALUATION PROCESS

Mr. Hopping commented that the School Committee is to be cognizant of the dates for evaluating and urged them to review Hart’s portfolio at the Central Office.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**A. VOUCHERS/BILLS****B. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

1. ATHLETIC SUBCOMMITTEE- June 2 meeting.

2. BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE

3. COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. Bauman suggested that a letter be sent to the CHRONICLE and SALEM NEWS (Dr. Gresh will draft and forward to Mr. Hopping) that Ipswich has a 5-year budget with success of the override in addition to Feoffee funds.

4. GRANT COMMITTEES

Payne Grants - June 4 agenda.

5. OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

6. POLICY – June 8 meeting.

7. NEW BUSINESS

Dr. O'Flynn gave statistics from Beverly Hospital on measles:

1. Measles cases are contagious for 5-7 days before they feel sick.
2. After exposure, there is a 21-day quarantine.
3. In most school districts, if a person is not immunized and is exposed, s/he must be kept out of school for 21 days.

This has policy implications both for employees and children in the school system. The school is not obligated to tutor a child. The common sense first step would be to look at other districts to see how many employees are required to be immunized.

Mr. Hopping asked for two workshops:

- (1) Develop a game plan to utilize the override which becomes available on July 1. Fall Town Meeting will need to vote on a Stabilization Fund.
- (2) Schedule a meeting to go through the documents for Dr. Hart's evaluation. (Set for Thursday, May 28, 7 p.m., Payne School)

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. CONSENT AGENDA

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

Acceptance of Minutes of May 7, 2015, Open Session

Acceptance of a donation of \$728 from Molly Ryan to Birth to Three Family Center. UNANIMOUS.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, to go into Executive Session at 10:35 p.m. for the purpose of strategy for collective bargaining with IEA, AFSCME, and personnel matters after which the meeting will return to Open Session. Roll call IN FAVOR- O'Flynn, Krason, Hopping, Gresh, and Bauman.

OPEN SESSION resumed at 11:05 p.m.

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, that the Memorandum of Agreement between the Ipswich School Committee and the Ipswich Education Association, Teacher Assistants, dated 5/15/15, that has been extended from September 1, 2014 through August 31, 2015, is now extended through August 31, 2018. IN FAVOR- Krason, Gresh Hopping, Bauman; OPPOSED- 0; ABSTAINING- O'Flynn.

Dr. Gresh moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to adjourn at 11:07 p.m.
UNANIMOUS.