

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE REGULAR & BUDGET MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2014
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Barry Hopping, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with the following members present: S. Gresh, S. Player, J. Bauman, and R. Roesler. Also present were Superintendent W. Hart, and Finance Director J. Cuff.

READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Sarah Player read the Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Hopping read the following announcements:

There will be no Executive Session

Policy Subcommittee will meet on February 10, 5:30 p.m., Payne School

School Committee regular/budget session will meet on February 10, 7 p.m.,
M/H School Ensemble Room

School Committee will meet on March 6 for a Public Hearing on the Budget,
7 p.m., M/H School Ensemble Room

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Hopping asked the audience to hold questions until after Dr. Hart's presentation on security. There were no comments from the audience.

I. MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL FY15 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

A. SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY PROPOSAL

Dr. Hart read from his Safety and Security Proposal to the School Committee giving background from 5/16/13 when the School Safety and Security Task Force had submitted their first document (which had guided safety and security for the past year) to the School Committee. Exterior cameras were installed in all four schools as recommended for FY14 and are working as designed. However, recent Doyon and Middle School situations caused him to reassess the timeline, and he presented two proposals to be accomplished within six weeks. Because the emergency email system failed to alert many parents, he proposed the installation of a Mass Communication System. He described the system as a buzzer video intercom system, proposed by Bill Hodge, the new Building/Grounds Facilitator, to include a buzzer and intercom system at the main entrance of each school, monitored by camera, and communicated through an intercom system. The EDP Director will have remote access to the system and will monitor the main door during before-/after-school activities. The school event director for evening activities will determine which two doors will be unlocked and no access will be allowed in any other area.

An electronic lock system will be installed in exterior doors at every school, and a swipe card system will be installed which records date/time individuals enter the building. School doors will remain unlocked in the morning for a time determined by the school principal, and exterior doors will then be locked and remain so throughout the school day and all evening.

The Blackboard Mass Communication System (used in several surrounding school districts) "can keep the entire school community informed, alert and aware during an emergency or unforeseen event" and will allow district administrators to communicate with thousands of parents and staff in minutes.

Training of the buzzer, electronic lock, and Mass Communication systems is part of the cost. Dr. Hart requested that Extended Day Program funds be used for the elementary schools and Choice funds for the secondary schools.

Mrs. Bauman opined that she personally did not feel safer because of this but knows it is the will of the people and feels better about the development of the mental health aspect. Dr. Hart assured her that Mr. Hodge will oversee the project, apologized to the people who didn't feel that security had gone as planned, and will work to see that the right procedures are in place. Dr. Gresh concurred that this proposal will give many people peace of mind. Mrs. Roesler agreed, saying that this added technology in school districts hasn't been shown effective yet, but she approves the social and emotional efforts in the mental health realm with after-school programs which have been most effective and felt that it is the School Committee's job to find the right balance. Ms. Player commented about the culture around the technology and a need for retraining and asking questions of people who do not have the proper identification within the district's buildings. Mr. Hopping commented that throughout his adult life he has been in favor of buzzer switches which "slow things down." He applauded Dr. Hart's proactive stance. Communication, he said, had been a glaring problem. He thanked Mrs. Roesler for serving on the Safety and Security Task Force.

Dr. O'Flynn joined the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Mrs. Bauman moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, to support the Superintendent's recommendation to purchase and install a buzzer video intercom system with electronic locks at the main entrance of each school building in the district including training for staff at a figure not to exceed \$65,000 and a Mass Communication system not to exceed \$5,000, to be paid from EDP funds for the elementary schools and Choice funds for the secondary schools. UNANIMOUS.

Ms. Allen, Birth to Three Director, asked and Dr. Hart suggested that she meet with him re security at the Birth to Three Center. Mr. Chub Whitten asked if the

police could be more omnipresent and perhaps write up their reports in the school driveways rather than on Argilla Road.

B. MIDDLE SCHOOL BUDGET

Dr. Hart, in his opening statement, felt it important that he publicly thank the administrative team for their Herculean effort putting the budget together, with an enormous amount of collaboration, having made drafts of two different budgets. He read a letter directed to the Ipswich community asking them “to continue their strong history of support for the local schools by supporting a \$3 million override.” All funding sources are now depleted forcing the request for a Prop 2 ½ override. The FY15 budget supports the 21st Century Curriculum (STEAM – science, technology, engineering, art, and math) that aligns with the State Common Core Curriculum, the district’s vision, and 21st Century skill development. Embedded in the budget are 24 teacher-leader positions: \$46,000. A part-time curriculum specialist will be added to help facilitate curriculum development.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) teacher-leaders will earn stipends totaling \$20,000. The high school will be adding over 22 classroom sections to expand student offerings, and the FY15 budget is designed to support a classroom instructional environment that will distinguish Ipswich Public Schools. Technology to develop a cutting edge learning experience for students will be supported by a district-wide technology director and 20 technology special teacher leadership stipends at \$20,000. Finally, the Ipswich Public Schools could not afford innovative initiatives without Feoffee funds—moving the district from good to great.

Mr. Hopping reminded that the School Committee does not vote the budget but takes it under advisement until the public hearing scheduled for March 6.

David Fabrizio, Middle School principal, with Powerpoint, presented the Middle School goal of improving student learning through improved curriculum, instruction and evaluation, fostering professional relationships among staff, centering on differentiated instruction driven by data (MCAS and classroom), and supported by student services personnel and after-school participation in many programs. His objective is to re-create the Middle School model by increasing staff to maintain full clusters, by increasing student support (counselor/RTI position), a .3 FTE reading specialist, a 1.0 FTE science teacher, and 1.0 FTE social studies teacher, resulting in smaller class sizes and a focus on 21st Century learning with STEAM which offers a Related Arts program where subjects are fused with technology and the arts.

Mrs. Roesler liked the presentation; Dr. O’Flynn questioned and was told that the school could take 3-4 new Choice students. He questioned STEAM versus offering 7th grade Spanish. Dr. Gresh wants new programs and activities on the community website. Mr. Hopping was complimentary in his comments regarding

the presentation. He expressed concern about the length of the periods and would like to sit down collectively to talk about what the mission of the Middle School is supposed to be with creative ways of looking at the schedules that would provide as many opportunities for learning even if it meant sacrificing something else. He asked about money for materials for the new courses; i.e., STEAM, technology, and summer school, and about substitute teachers, and Mr. Fabrizio answered that supplies money is going to the new subjects and substitute money is being covered by professional grants in many cases. Mr. Hopping, as a School Committee member and parent of a Middle School child, thanked Mr. Fabrizio.

Dr. O'Flynn moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to take the Middle School budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

C. HIGH SCHOOL BUDGET

Mr. Dalton, Principal, had a theme for student success in his budget-driven fiscal goals. The first goal, to bolster skills for all students in math and writing, comes with needs for RTI (Response to Intervention) with a math specialist and ELA (English Language Arts) writing instructor. He showed comparative graphs and academic support that will keep students on track and emphasize three types of writing (argumentation informative, and creative). Financial impact of the goal: \$100,000.

Fiscal goals 2 and 3 are to maintain reasonable class sizes and offer a varied curriculum, increasing STEM and STEAM opportunities for students. Virtual high school (VHS), dual enrollment (Salem State or North Shore Community College plus high school), and independent courses continue to offer opportunities for the motivated students. The High School has lost 31 sections (600 student seats lost) in five years with attrition of 6.2 FTE positions. Budget impact: technology, \$2,000; performing arts instructor, \$55,000; social studies, \$32,000.

Fiscal goal 4, to provide increased and coordinated opportunity for authentic learning experiences and transitional support to post-secondary environments, will allow students to gain necessary skills for navigating post-secondary careers and related resume/interviewing skills. Budget impact: 1.0 FTE transition specialist.

Fiscal goal 5, to provide increased opportunity for student leadership training and student-led programs through the athletic department, intends to change the structure of the Athletic Director position which has been altered considerably in the last few years due to fees/payments, hosting of more sports, scheduling of facilities, concussion regulations, new coaches' education requirements, a lengthened day due to a lighted field, and overall time required and deserves a full-time position without a 60% teaching requirement. MIAA has student programs and initiatives which can be implemented at school. Budget impact: 1.0 FTE athletic director and .6FTE health teacher totaling \$44,642.

Mr. Dalton outlined outside funding, other creative and resource revenue, SPED participation, and free/reduced lunch participation percentages. He was enthusiastic about his Post Secondary Authentic Learning (slide) enriched through

STEM, guided by core values and 21st Century Skills, and STEAM (art in science, art in math, physics of sound, art and movement, science and society, anthropology, and archaeology), outlining the core course of study for Grades 9 and 10 and going beyond the traditional courses in Grades 11 and 12 while getting academic support reinforcing math concepts and focusing on writing in all grades.

The accreditation process has been pushed out to 2016, and Dr. Hart advocates pushing it out further in order to allow the vision to come to fruition. Dr. Gresh and Ms. Player are excited to get out the story to make the “good” schools into “GREAT” schools.

Dr. O’Flynn appreciated the change for the Athletic Director status and mentioned the changes since Choice decline which the Finance Committee must understand. He mentioned that the last ten years of success in the district is obvious in the MCAS slides. He urged that the district must give students the tools they need, allowing SAT scores to be higher, and he commended the principal for helping students succeed.

Mr. Hopping called the presentation a refreshing approach and appreciated the level of specificity given. He was told the net FTE overall in high school is 2.0 FTE (.05 AP teacher) and sections will be added to the curriculum, not just replaced.

Dr. O’Flynn moved, seconded by Mrs. Bauman, to take the High School budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Roesler, to accept the following consent agenda items:

Acceptance of a donation from the Norton family to the Winthrop School Annual Fund in the amount of \$500

Acceptance of a commission from Geskus Studios and Yearbook Publishing, Inc. to the Ipswich Middle School in the amount of \$1,180

Acceptance of a commission from Geskus Studios and Yearbook Publishing, Inc. to the Winthrop School Gift Account in the amount of \$988.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Bauman moved, seconded by Dr. Gresh, to adjourn at 9:50 p.m. UNANIMOUS.

