

Mission

Ipswich Public Schools aspires to empower *ALL* students to be global citizens who are effective communicators, analytical problem solvers and savvy consumers of information. We propose to do this through an emphasis on communication, critical thinking, creativity, self-management, perseverance and collaboration. Students will be active partners in authentic learning, offering voice and choice in demonstrating competency.

IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2021

7:30 PM

MIDDLE/HIGH ENSEMBLE ROOM

(School Committee Members only, public participation through Zoom)

Minutes

I. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Whitten, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM.

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

Also Present: Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools; Bill Frangiamore, Interim Director of Finance and Operations and Caroline Jepsen, High School Student Representative

READING OF DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

Ms. Jepsen read the District Mission Statement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 17th at 7:00pm.
- The last day of school for students is Friday, June 18th. This will be a full day.
- The School Facilities Working Group will be meeting remotely on June 7th at 5:30pm.
- The Negotiations Subcommittee will be meeting remotely on June 9th at 7:30pm.
- The Athletic Subcommittee will be meeting remotely on June 16th at 6:00pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There were no comments at this time.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mr. Whitten held a moment of silence for the former Ipswich Public Schools superintendent, Richard Thompson, who recently passed away.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ms. Jepsen reported on the activities and events taking place at the high school, which included:

- The High School finished their musicals and performances for the year.
- Athletics continue to run smoothly and athletes are happy to no longer have to wear masks.
- Clubs and extracurricular activities are wrapping up for the school year. Many groups are electing officers for the upcoming school year.

- Juniors and seniors are looking forward to their proms.

Overall, students are happy to be back in the buildings. There has been some concern among students that people have become more relaxed with mask wearing in the building.

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS

A. STUDENT CLIMATE RESOLUTION

Ipswich students Ava and Ella Borgman, along with members of the Ipswich Political Sunrise Group, came before the Committee to request the School Committee's support of the *Ipswich Can Lead: Climate Resolution*. This student-written resolution is intended to hold the School Committee and school community accountable to have an environmental outlook with regard to decision making.

The resolution reads:

Ipswich Can Lead: Climate Action Resolution

WHEREAS, our nation has been a forerunner in acknowledging humanity's most challenging and urgent problems and in advancing the cause of human rights and prosperity. Our state has been a key leader in finding solutions to these problems. One way is through the state's dedication to providing an engaging and quality education. Even in a global pandemic, our schools are committed to providing safe and enriching learning environments;

WHEREAS, Ipswich has a history with environmental challenges and its citizens have been leaders in confronting those challenges;

WHEREAS, as a coastal town, we are first-hand witnesses of climate change. Crane Beach is disappearing as a result of rising sea levels. Our clams are suffering from ocean acidification, and record high temperatures are impacting both Ipswich's flora and fauna. We realize the necessity to address climate change to protect and preserve Ipswich's unique ecosystems;

WHEREAS, there is a clear scientific consensus that climate change is real and rising CO2 levels are the result of excess extraction and burning of fossil fuels. Internationally, scientists warn that it is critical to act now, and climate inaction will have disastrous effects on the planet;

WHEREAS, anthropogenic climate change is one of the greatest challenges faced by humanity;

WHEREAS, climate change is neither a partisan nor a political issue;

WHEREAS, we recognize the importance of environmental justice. Climate change disproportionately impacts young people as well as communities of color and those in poverty, and limits opportunities for equality;

WHEREAS, we have the technology and the economic strength for bold climate action; all that we need is public and political will to meet the challenge;

WHEREAS, we have faith in the American people, our democratic processes, our elders, and our collective ability to lead the world out of this climate crisis;

WHEREAS, all Americans from all political parties, religions, ethnicities, rural/urban/suburban

communities, and from all corners of the nation can unify behind climate action, for the good of current and future generations, and for all Americans and all people of the world;

WHEREAS, time is of the essence and the actions we take in the next few years will be critical if we want to reduce the damage of climate change.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT. . .

1. We declare climate change a generational justice and human rights issue;
2. We endorse equitable and effective state and national carbon pricing policies and call on all adults, voters, leaders, and institutions to join us in advocating for and implementing these policies rapidly;
3. We call on all youth, all adults, and all institutions to advocate for and to take climate action in order to protect our generation and future generations.
4. We encourage all individuals, all leaders, and all institutions to engage in non-partisan advocacy and outreach among peers and similar institutions as well as organizing bodies such as county, state, and national boards or associations; as well as across scales and sectors including engagement with local, state, and federal agencies, jurisdictions, and leaders.

NOW THEREFORE LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT

1. We celebrate our District's leadership in sustainable initiatives and education. The School Committee has adopted the Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Climate Resolution and endorsed the Ipswich Municipal Government Resolution for Zero Carbon Energy by 2040. Students have headed projects such as Generation Growers (which won the 2019 Presidential Environment Award), Ipswich's plastic and styrofoam ban, and hydration stations around the schools. The Ipswich Middle/High School has also been recognized with a national Green Ribbon award;
2. We encourage our student council officers, teachers, school board members, and superintendent to engage with local, state, and federal jurisdictions and elected leaders to engage in non-partisan advocacy for science-based policies to restore the climate;
3. We encourage our school district to form a multi-stakeholder committee (students, school committee, teachers, facilities personnel, food servicers, director of teaching and learning, etc.) to develop a Climate Action Plan addressing these prioritized areas:
 - a. Climate Literacy and Climate Advocacy in the Curriculum
 - b. Direct Greenhouse Gas Measurements and Goals for Zero-Carbon
 - c. Institutional Advocacy for Climate Action
 - d. Building and Grounds
 - e. Operations/Waste Management and Food Service

Members of the School Committee thanked the students for their work on this resolution.

- Motion to support the Ipswich Can Lead: Climate Resolution as presented was made by Dr. O'Flynn and seconded by Ms. Cannon.

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously

B. DEDICATION OF WINTHROP PLAYGROUND

In honor of Winthrop School principal Sheila McAdams' retirement, a parent group has requested that the playground located at Winthrop School be dedicated in her honor. A plaque will be placed on a rock in the playground area. This dedication will be announced publicly at a gathering at the school on June 12, 2021.

- *Motion to support the dedication of the Winthrop School playground in honor of Sheila McAdams was made by Ms. Cannon and seconded by Ms. Eliot.*

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Dr. Blake shared his schedule in the weeks leading up to tonight's meeting. Events included:

- Spending time in each school
- Interviews with each elementary principal candidate
- Reviewed feedback forms from the elementary principal Meet and Greets
- Offered the position of elementary school principal to two finalists
- Participated in several STEAM Showcase virtual events
- A meeting with the Ipswich Education Foundation
- A meeting with the Athletic Director, high school principal, and members of the School Committee to discuss athletics
- A discussion with Facilities regarding security upgrades at the high school and turf field
- Two Paine Grant Committee meetings
- A visit to the newly constructed Beverly Police Department to look at their net zero building

D. SCHOOL REOPENING UPDATE

Dr. Blake first shared the current COVID positivity rate in Ipswich. In the past two weeks, there has been one positive case reported. Overall, the district is in great shape. Dr. Blake then explained that, while not required outdoors, students and staff will continue to follow the mask mandate and wear face coverings inside all school buildings. All buildings continue to be sanitized and cleaned on a regular basis. Dr. Blake then reviewed the number of staff who are currently fully vaccinated.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) will be providing guidance for schools in the fall. Dr. Blake said that DESE has announced schools will not be able to provide a remote option for students. It is still unclear what the mask guidance will be.

E. ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL SEARCH UPDATE

Dr. Blake started by reviewing the search process with the Committee. After an initial paper review of 49 candidates, the Elementary Principal Search Committee narrowed down the group to a total of 8 candidates to interview. After the first round of interviews, four candidates were selected to move forward in the process. Each of the four finalists spent two days in the district, visiting the schools and holding "meet and greet" opportunities with students, staff, administrators and the community. After each "meet and greet" session, participants were asked to complete a feedback form. After a final interview with each of the candidates and a thorough review of the feedback forms, Dr. Blake announced the two principals that would be joining the Ipswich school community. Ultimately, Amy Sullivan was chosen as the next principal of Winthrop School and Sarah Goodale-O'Brien was selected as the next principal of the Paul F. Doyon Memorial School.

Both Amy and Sarah joined the meeting via Zoom to introduce themselves to the Committee. Members of the School Committee welcomed each new principal and shared their enthusiasm for the upcoming school year. Ms. Cannon, a member of the search committee, felt that both principals showed a true passion for education and excitement to get to know the community.

F. FEOFFEES GRANT UPDATE

Dr. Blake shared that both the Traverso-Weatherall Innovation Grant Committee and the William Paine Enhancement Grant Committee have met to review all grant applications. Traverso-Weatherall Innovation Grant recipients have been notified of their approval. Paine Grant recommendations will come before the School Committee at the next meeting for final approval.

There was some discussion about the need to review the Feoffee Policy and how to address recurring grants. While the idea is to eventually fund repeat grants in the operating budget, it may not be possible. It could be beneficial to look at other funding sources or update the current policy.

A question about unfunded grants was addressed. If a grant was to go unfunded due to lack of funds, there may be other avenues to look into to fund the grant. Other times, grants may go unfunded because they do not align with the district goals or meet the criteria to be funded.

G. SUPERINTENDENT VACATION CARRYOVER REQUEST

Dr. Blake presented his request to carry over 25 unused vacation days from FY21 into FY22. He reviewed contract language regarding his accrual of 30 vacation days per year and the ability to carry over 10 of those days into each new fiscal year. Due to the nature of the past year and the demands on his schedule, he will be unable to take significant time off prior to June 30, 2021.

Several Committee members recognized that due to the pandemic, it was difficult for staff to take time off. It was stressed that any agreement to carry over vacation time was not precedent setting and should only be taken into consideration this year.

- *Motion to approve the superintendent carrying over a total of 25 vacation days into the 2021-2022 school year was made by Mr. Stevens and seconded by Ms. Kneedler.*

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously

H. SUMMER SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

It was decided that the School Committee would hold a meeting on July 15, 2021 and host a retreat on August 10, 2021. The location of the retreat is still to be determined.

I. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments at this time.

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. VOUCHERS/BILLS: All were reviewed and signed.

B. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- 1. ATHLETICS:** Did not meet
- 2. BUDGET:** Did not meet

3. **OPERATIONS:** Met to onboard new School Committee member Jeff Poirier.
4. **POLICY:** Did not meet
5. **COMMUNICATIONS:** Did not meet
6. **MUTUAL CONCERNS:** Did not meet
7. **NEGOTIATIONS:** Meetings are ongoing as negotiations continue.

C. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

- **SCHOOL FACILITIES:** Met on June 7th to discuss a community survey and engagement strategy around a new school building project.
- **RACE, EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE:** Some members of the group participated in a Massachusetts Association of School Committee (MASC) webinar called *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion- Making Goals Attainable*. Ms. Cannon said that listening to other districts that are on the forefront of these issues speak was invigorating. There was some discussion around Juneteenth. The Ipswich Watershed Association had reached out to Ms. Cannon with an interest in diversifying their membership and building out their curriculum. They hope to come before the Committee to discuss ideas and generate a partnership.
- **STEAM TEAM:** Ms. Eliot shared a slideshow of highlights from the virtual STEAM Showcase.

D. LIAISON REPORTS: There were no liaison reports at this time.

E. NEW BUSINESS*: There was no new business to report on at this time.

IV. CONSENT

A. CONSENT AGENDA

- *Motion to approve the School Committee Open Session meeting minutes from May 6, 2021 was made by Mr. Whitten and seconded by Dr. O'Flynn.*

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously

V. ADJOURNMENT

- *Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 PM was made by Dr. O'Flynn and seconded by Ms. Cannon.*

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously

<p>*All business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Agenda items may be taken out of order to fill time gaps and/or to accommodate presenters when necessary. All times are approximate.</p>
