

Ipswich School Committee

MS/HS Ensemble Room
134 High Street, Ipswich
Thursday, June 2, 2022
6:30 PM

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Mr. Stevens called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Present: Ms. Eliot, Mr. Stevens, Ms. Donahue, Ms. Cannon, Ms. Freehan, Ms. Kneedler, Mr. Poirier (6:45 PM)

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

2. Executive Session:

- *Motion to enter into execution session for the following reason: (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel was made by Emily Cannon and seconded by Pavica Kneedler.*

Roll Call

The motion passed unanimously in favor

3. Return to Open Session

The meeting returned to open session at 7:21 PM.

4. Reading of the District Mission Statement

Ms. Eliot read the mission statement.

5. Announcements

- The next School Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, June 16th at 7:00pm
- The Policy Subcommittee will meet on June 15th at 4:30 PM in the MS/HS guidance conference room

6. Special Acknowledgements

Ms. Cannon talked about the senior prom. Ms. Donahue said the High School Baccalaureate and senior parade were great.

7. Citizens' Comments

Irene Josephson, Washington Street: Asked about the approval of several meeting minutes.

8. Presentations

A. High School Ski Team Co-Op Approval

Tom Gallagher, Athletic Director, was approached by Hamilton-Wenham with an opportunity for Ipswich High School to participate in a co-op ski team for the upcoming school year. Mr. Gallagher explained that the Hamilton-Wenham School Committee has already approved the creation of the team and was looking for Ipswich School Committee approval for Ipswich to join as the guest team. If approved, Ipswich and Hamilton-Wenham will meet to discuss the interest level, coaches, and program costs. He also shared that if approved, the first year will be 100% cost to users, with a plan to fundraise.

- *Motion to approve the High School Co-Op Ski Team was made by Emily Cannon and seconded by Pavica Kneedler. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

B. High School Handbook Approval

High School principal, Jonathan Mitchell, gave an overview of the proposed handbook changes to the High School Student Handbook. Changes to the handbook are in italics below.

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Daily attendance is taken during the first period class. Students arriving after 7:45 am must check in at the main office before reporting to class. Failure to report to the office will result in disciplinary action.

Students will be allowed 5 tardies per quarter. Subsequent tardiness will result in the student losing the privilege of being involved in any school related clubs, teams, or activities. Each tardy in excess of 5 per quarter will result in detention.

Students who are tardy to school may be required to make up any tests, quizzes or work missed from the tardiness on the same day. Any schoolwork missed as a result of unexcused tardiness may not be made up.

In order to practice or compete that day, student-athletes need to be in school by 8:15.

Parents or guardians of students who are regularly late to school because of extenuating circumstances must notify the Assistant Principal of this need as soon as possible in order for the tardiness to be excused. The administration recognizes that there are unexpected circumstances that may occur and that are beyond a student's ability to control, (power failures, unsafe weather conditions, etc.), in these situations, a waiver will be granted.

THE BRIDGE PROGRAM

The BRIDGE program at Ipswich High School is a six-week program at the end of the senior year. Participants spend 30 hours per week at their worksite, gaining valuable career insight and experience. To qualify, students must have a minimum of a *70 average in each of the first three quarters in each subject during the senior year, must have a record free of disciplinary action during their senior year*, and must meet all requirements for graduation. Completion of required courses entails a special project or paper. For elective courses, partial course credit is awarded. Students do not attend classes during the internship period, with the exception of Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Five elective credits are awarded upon successful completion of the internship.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students are responsible for obtaining from each teacher the assignments which were given during their absences and to present to each teacher evidence that the assignment was completed satisfactorily. ~~A student with an unexcused absence is not permitted to take tests that were missed or to make up work.~~ Missed work (including tests) must be made up in a period of time after returning, equal to the number of school days absent plus one. Failure to complete make-up work on time will result in the student receiving a failing grade for that work. *Teachers are not obliged to prepare work in advance for students who are going to miss school.*

New section- add to page 9

COLLEGE VISITS

Ipswich High School recognizes the value of a student visiting colleges in which he or she is interested. It also recognizes the importance of school attendance. Therefore, students should attempt to schedule college visits when Ipswich High School is not in session. When missing school is unavoidable, students may submit a request for a college visit day, which will not count against his or her attendance. Juniors will be granted a maximum of two school days for college visits, and seniors will be granted a maximum of four school days. The college visit request form must be submitted at least three school days prior to the visit, and students must submit documentation of their college visit upon their return to school; otherwise, the day(s) will count as an absence.

Page 32 (in reference to suspensions):

Academic Progress: Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up tests, assignments, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his/her removal.

Impact on Extracurriculars: Any student assigned a short term or long term suspension may be ineligible for student leadership positions such as club presidents, athletic team captains, class officers, etc.

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.

To ensure the safety of students, headwear that potentially conceals a student's identity or covers the ears is not permitted inside the school building.

- *Motion to support the changes to the High School Student Handbook as presented was made by Kate Eliot and seconded by Jen Donahue. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

C. School Safety and Security Update

In light of recent events taking place at Uvalde, TX, Dr. Blake felt it was important to review what the district has implemented in terms of school safety and security. He wanted to assure the district that safety protocols are in place across the district and reviewed often. All staff are trained through the A.L.I.C.E. program. First responders have access to the buildings and through the BeSafe program, maintain a database of access points and maps of each individual school building. The district maintains a positive relationship with the Ipswich Police Department and has a full time School Resource Office rotating through the buildings on a daily basis. Dr. Blake also confirmed that staff and students are told not to prop doors open for any reason. Staff remain vigilant in watching for people that do not belong in the building.

D. Facilitator/Listening Session Update

Mr. Stevens, Ms. Eliot and Dr. Blake had a call with facilitator Bill Logue to discuss dates for the listening sessions on the future of the elementary school buildings. It was decided there would be two rounds of listening sessions. The first round will be scheduled on July 26, 2022 and August 1, 2022. Each day will have two sessions, totaling four sessions in round one. Meetings will take place in person in the morning and evening. The first sessions will look at and talk about community values in terms of education. These discussions will be facilitated using guiding questions from the Logue Group.

Information from the first round will be digested and used to create ideas/proposals to use at the second round of listening sessions scheduled for September and early October.

Mr. Stevens shared that the Communications Subcommittee is working on a public relations plan to reach as many people in the community as possible.

It was suggested that a brief video recording be created to show at the beginning of each listening session in the first round, reviewing the past process, as well as the current state of the schools. There will also be a survey shared with the community for those who cannot attend the meeting.

Ms. Kneeder talked about the need for a remote meeting option. Members were in agreement that a remote option should be available.

Lastly, clarification was made that although School Committee members may be present at these listening sessions, they would not be facilitating the meetings.

E. Summer School Committee Meeting Schedule

A discussion regarding the dates of the summer meetings took place. It was decided that the School Committee Retreat would be held on August 10th with a location to be determined. The School Committee talked about potential retreat topics, including a discussion on FY23 goals and a review of the Feoffees policy. Another regular open meeting will be held on August 25th.

F. Potential Vote for Executive Compensation

The School Committee met in executive session to discuss the superintendent's FY23 compensation.

- *Motion to approve the FY23 superintendent salary proposal as discussed in executive session was made by Emily Cannon and seconded by Kate Eliot. **The motion passed with 7 in favor and 1 abstention.***

9. 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 a number of end of year events
- Attendance at the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Association (M.A.S.S.) spring conference
- The William Paine Enhancement Grant Committee meeting to
- A phone call with Bill Logue to discuss listening session dates
- High School Graduation will be held on Sunday at 10:00 AM

Dr. Blake then reviewed the COVID positivity rate of the district. He noted that the testing program will remain through the end of the school year. The district purchased enough testing equipment to test symptomatic students and staff through summer programming in the fall.

10. Subcommittee, Working Group and Liaison Reports

- **Communications Subcommittee:** The last newsletter will be sent out to the school community tomorrow. Talked about creating a flyer for listening sessions that will be circulated and shared throughout town
- **Traverso-Weatherall Innovation Grant Committee:** The group reviewed 13 grants. Approvals should be going out within the next week. Good to re-tool the feoffee grants.
- **William Paine Enhancement Committee:** Grant applicants gave brief presentations at the committee's last meeting. Grants will be presented to the School Committee at the last meeting in June.
- **Operations Subcommittee:** The group met to onboard the two new School Committee members.

11. New Business*

No new business was discussed.

12. Vouchers and Bills

All were reviewed and signed. Ms. Eliot shared that a backup signatory was needed for payroll warrants in the event she was not available. Ms. Cannon volunteered for that role.

13. Consent Agenda

- *Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Pavica Kneedler and seconded by Emily Cannon. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

14. Adjournment

- *Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Emily Cannon and seconded by Pavica Kneedler. **The motion passed unanimously in favor.***

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

