

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

(*Attachments are available upon request from the Superintendent's Office.)

Committee of the Whole

March 9, 2015

A Committee of the Whole meeting of the Groton Board of Education was held on March 9, 2015, in the cafeteria of S. B. Butler School.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Rita Volkmann, Vice Chairperson, at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENT

Mrs. Rita Volkmann, Vice Chairperson
Dr. Andrea Ackerman
Mrs. Patricia Doyle
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald
Ms. Mary Kelly

ABSENT

Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson, Chairperson
Mrs. Elizabeth Gianacoplos
Dr. Kirsten E. Hoyt
Mr. Joey Schick

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Denise Doolittle, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
Mr. Michael Emery, Director of Teaching and Learning
Mr. Paul Pattavina, Special Education Supervisor
Ms. Lori Secchiaroli, Special Education Supervisor (arrived at 6:55 p.m.)
Mr. Joseph Arcarese, Principal, Fitch High School
Mr. Thomas Bousquet, Director of Guidance, Fitch High School
Mrs. Erin McGuire, Assistant Principal, Fitch High School
Mrs. Andrea Davis, Secondary Curriculum Coordinator
Mr. Terrance Henkle, Science Coordinator

1. Approval of minutes of January 12, 2015

A motion was made by Ms. Kelly and seconded by Mrs. Doyle to approve the minutes of January 12, 2015.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Overview of the March 2, 2015 Professional Day

Mrs. Davis gave an overview of the March 2, 2015 Professional Development Day. She stressed that the teachers were very excited about all the workshops K-8. She shared an assessment of the professional development day by grade level. **[ATTACHMENT #1]**

Mr. Arcarese stated that the high school continued with the National Urban Alliance initiative. It was noted that itinerant teachers attended regional workshops. Mr. Henkle addressed the Science workshops and instruction.

3. Update regarding Science instruction in response to the state wide test

Mr. Henkle explained that he started the year for grades 4, 8, and 10 by compiling resources and then putting them on the web to be used by teachers as review materials. For the past two years, he has been working on vertical articulation of Science concepts grade level to grade level. They have created a Curriculum Reference Page – getting all Science teachers together looking at the Science curriculum, each major unit and actually putting their major projects, their major ideas, formative assessments online so that teachers can review them.

For grades 6, 9, and 10, he had each teacher look at the incoming CAPT scores to see where students were strong and not so strong and then use the Science Reference Page during the middle school SRBI Science Enrichment classes to devote scientific methods, literacy and use the same with STEM teachers.

4. Discussion regarding the AP exam procedure

Mr. Arcarese and Mr. Bousquet gave an overview of the AP exam procedure. They noted that the current policy is that students can opt out of taking the AP exam. This practice is in effect for a year and then it will be revisited. Mr. Bousquet explained the procedure in initiating the new policy.

5. Update regarding ECC possible reorganization

Mr. Arcarese noted the following:

- He first heard about the ECC schools defecting from the league in mid-January.
- The main contention over the defection is that the Northern schools didn't feel they wanted to play larger schools.
- Football is the largest sport driving this defection.
- On January 30, all ECC Principals met to realign the league in the hope of keeping the league together; at a 10 to 8 vote that day, Principals decided to realign the league into two divisions based on power rating. Right now it is based on enrollment and cross over games where FHS now has to play a Plainfield and so forth. But with a power rating, at the end of the season the coaches would sit down and was what was your record, how did you do this year, what kind of talent do you have coming back. Based on all that information, teams would be ranked by power not enrollment. The teams with the highest power are not playing the schools with the least power rating. This would apply to every sport. At this point, all principals felt and agreed that this is what they were going to do. They were going to do everything they could to save the league.
- On February 25, Principals received an e-mail stating that 7 southern schools in our league have applied to the NCC, Northern Connecticut Conference. They have already applied for admission and it is understood that they are going if accepted.

- On March 2, they find out that four (4) other schools are applying to the Shoreline Conference – Waterford, Stonington, Montville, and Bacon Academy. Some of the schools may not get in due to their size. FHS, Ledyard, New London, NFA, and East Lyme are left.
- Fitch High School has every intention of staying in the ECC. East Lyme is now having conversations to go to the SCC. We don't know what is going to happen; we have to wait to see.
- Mr. Arcarese stated that FHS would entertain another League if the situation gets any worse.

6. Update regarding mainstreaming of special education students

Mrs. Doolittle, Dr. Pattavina, and Mrs. Secchiaroli gave an overview of the Least Restrictive Environment. [ATTACHMENT #2]

7. Discussion of how large are class sizes with paraprofessionals

Mrs. Fitzgerald explained the reasons for this referral.

Ms. Austin explained what has been happening this year with the assignment of paraprofessionals in classrooms. These paraprofessional only work part time, i.e., SB first grade – there are 2 classes; NEA second grade – 3 classes. The paraprofessional's time is split between the classes at each school.

8. Discussion of the class size parameters

The Board reviewed the class size parameters [ATTACHMENT #3]. It was the consensus of the Board that approval of the class size parameters would be put on a Board agenda in October.

A referral was made to the Referral List for discussion of Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten and School Readiness at a COW meeting.

9. Review of the proposed meeting template

Dr. Graner presented the proposed meeting template and explained its process

10. Update regarding the IB Program; Conference follow up

Dr. Graner, Ms. Austin and Mr. Arcarese attended the conference for administrators of International Baccalaureate schools in Bethesda, MD last weekend. He gave an overview of the conference and shared the presentation they gave of Groton's IB Program. [ATTACHMENT #4]

11. Review of the Referral List

The following referrals were REMOVED from the Referral List:

- R2014-8
- R2014-11
- R2014-22
- R2015-26

The following referrals were ADDED to the Referral List:

- R2015-28 – Discussion of Homebound – Policy Committee
- R2015-29 – Review of the X Block – COW
- R2015-30 – Discussion of attendance in remedial college courses

12. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mrs. Doyle and seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY