

WEBSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WEBSTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OPEN SESSION MINUTES (M.G.L. C.39) OF Tuesday, February 12, 2013

Date: February 12, 2013 Time: 7:00 PM Location: School Committee Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order by

- Chairman Makara

The following Committee Members were present:

- Member Czechowski
- Member McNulty
- Member Gorski-Strong

The following Committee Members were absent:

- Member Collins

Chairman Makara wanted to acknowledge the passing of Gerry Dery, a former employee of the Webster Public Schools. Gerry worked many years in many positions and we wish his family our condolences.

Call to Order: Move to approve the meeting minutes of January 22, 2013

The motion was made by Member McNulty

The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative
 members having voted in the negative
 members having abstained

The motion: X passed
 Failed

The Assistant to the Superintendent for Business, Mr. Ted Avlas updated the committee on

(1) Update of School Building Project –

- The School Building Committee met with the Webster Planning Board on 2/4/2013 and held a Public Hearing – there were no questions/concerns brought up. We will attend their March meeting to get final approval
- A Webster Middle School renovation Meeting was held 2/7/2013, there was discussion concerning science labs
- Design Group held a meeting 2/7/2013 – further progress being made
- Next School Building Project meeting is 2/21/2013
- A Pre-Qualification Meeting was held to review submission of any contractor or subcontractor that wishes to bid on the project
- A group will be traveling to Middleton Public Schools on 2/21 to view furniture samples
- One 2/22/2013 a Furnishing Consultant will be making an evaluation and presentation of equipment at PAE that can be used in the new building. Later that day there is a meeting with the Fire and Policy Depts. to review the plans.

Update on other matters:

- Last week both hot water tanks at Bartlett High School failed, both have been replaced

- On Wednesday, 2/6 a water pipe at Bartlett leaked, repairs were completed later that day
- Nemo, Blizzard 2013 Friday 2/8 and Saturday 2/9 hit hard. The custodial crews and Town Highway Dept worked hard, but on Sunday it was determined an additional day was needed so school was cancelled on Monday to allow for further clean up. Acknowledgement of thanks to the Webster Town Highway Dept and the custodial staff for a job well done.

The Principal Report - Carrie Wallace, Park Avenue Elementary

- Park Avenue is continuing with it's Learning Walks, focusing on differential instruction
- A new math coordinator from DESAC has been assigned to our school and made a visit to the school
- The new teacher evaluation system is progressing, teachers have submitted goals and are now working towards those goals
- April 4, 2013 will be Park Avenue Multicultural Night – more details to follow
- Teachers have been instructed to start to think about packing and purging their classroom in preparation of the move.

District Wide Reports/Correspondence

1. 2012 Graduation Rate and Dropout Report

Dr. Malkas offered a PowerPoint presentation with the statistics of the State and Webster's dropout and graduation comparison. The current drop out percentage for Bartlett is 16.2%, compared to a state average of 6.9% A comparison of 7 "like" districts was shown; the largest factor was the attendance percentage. Also, it was shown that a high indicator of drop out numbers is a low reading achievement. There has been much research on the economic infrastructure showing that by reducing high school drop out numbers you will have an impact on many facets including real estate values, new business and the long term earning potential of students in the community. The development of having an exit plan, reaching out to students that are planning on dropping out is a proposal that the district leadership team is working on.

Mr. Knowlton spoke about the proposal that would include the help of guidance and the adjustment counselor along with working on credit recovery for students, lowering absenteeism, receiving assistance from the Webster Police Dept. to make home visits, all of which should help in keeping the drop out numbers lower.

Dr. Kelley spoke about giving support to students in grade 7 & 9 to be sure they don't get stuck in a vortex of not succeeding. Giving support at the lower grades will lower the grade 9 drop out numbers.

Discussion continued about current grade configuration being a factor in higher behavior issue and dropout occurrences. Member McNulty asked if the prediction for this year, what does our graduation and drop out numbers look like. Dr. Malkas said the drop out numbers is larger than we would like to see, stating that it will take time so it's no longer a culture to drop. Member McNulty asked what is done to reach out to a student that drops out. Dr. Malkas said that previously only the adult basic education director was informed about a student withdrawing. Member Gorski-Strong asked if community involvement has made any difference in drop out rates. The discussion continued in regards to other changes that need to be made. Dr. Kelley commented on the importance of informing parents not just of the number of days a student is not in school, but to show them exactly the content of what they're missing by not coming to school.

Student Representative to the School Committee Ashton Morio

Ashton will not be present this evening

Old Business

A. FY14 Budget Update

Ted Avlas gave a presentation of the second draft of the FY2014 budget. Since the last SC Meeting, the Governor's budget was released and Chapter 70, House Budget was presented. There was a power point presentation of the Chapter 70 Foundation Budget followed by the school district FY 14 budget broken down by each school. On page 18 is the review of Park Avenue Elementary, page 19; Webster Middle School, page 20; Bartlett Jr. Sr. High School and page 20 the district administration breakdown. Building principals were available for any questions. Mrs. Baris spoke about the addition of a 1.0FTE District Coordinator added in the budget. She said this position will allow for effective case management. Over the next several years with effective management there could be significant savings by bringing students back into the district. Mr. Avlas gave further explanation of the increased athletic budget to meet the needs of uniforms for some of the athletic teams. Some of the uniforms are over 9 years old. On page 22 of the power point showed the FY14 Foundation Budget, outlining the Chapter 70, the town's contribution and the presented 5.6%. The final budget must be to town administrator by February 28, 2013

B. Final approval of 2013-2014 School Calendar

Dr. Malkas realized the copy presented this evening was not the final draft and asked that the final approval is held off until the next meeting.

New Business

A. Approval of BHS Student Council to attend annual overnight conference

Melinda Doherty, advisor, along with Samantha Kelly and Joshua Sterczala attended the meeting to give information pertaining to this field trip. This is an annual field trip taken to Cape Cod for the Massachusetts Association of Student Councils. Eight students from BHS will be attending this conference, sharing transportation with other districts.

Motion: Move to approve the field trip request for BHS Student Council to attend the annual Student Council conference held on the Cape from March 6, 2013 to March 8, 2013

The motion was made by Member Gorski-Strong

The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

B. Approval of BHS Show Choir to attend out of state competition

This is also an annual event, presented this evening since it is an out of state trip. The Show Choir will be attending the Nutmeg Show Choir Festival at Windsor Locks High School in Windsor Locks, CT on March 9, 2013

Motion: Move to approve the Bartlett Show Choir to attend the Nutmeg Festival in Windsor Locks, CT

The motion was made by Member McNulty

The motion was seconded by Member Gorski-Strong

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

C. Approval of BHS Music Program to attend overnight trip

Peter Carney is requesting to attend the Massachusetts Music Educators' Association (MMEA) Festival to accompany Bartlett High School student, Matt Bernier. Matt has been selected to perform, making him on one the top 50 basses in Massachusetts. The festival is held at Symphony Hall from February 28 – March 2, 2013

Motion: Move to approve Peter Carney and Matt Bernier to attend the MMEA as presented this evening

The motion was made by Member Gorsky-Strong

The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

D. Approval of SWCEC Annual Report

Mr. MacDonnell, Director of the Southern Worcester County Education Collaboration (SWCEC) attended tonight's meeting to review the recently changes in regulations regarding educational collaborations. He handed out (included in packet) the regulations. Also provided for the committee was the SWCEC Annual Report. Mr. MacDonnell highlighted the report along with describing each program offered.

Chairman Makara thanked Mr. MacDonnell for coming this evening

Motion: Move to approve the Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative (SWCEC) Annual Report as presented this evening

The motion was made by Member McNulty

The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed

 Failed

E. Approval of CMSEC Annual Report

Dr. Malkas presented the Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative (CMSEC) Annual Report, as required by new state regulations. There was no discussion

Motion: Move to approve the Central Massachusetts Special Education Collaborative (CMSEC) Annual Report as presented this evening

The motion was made by Member McNulty

The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

4 members having voted in the affirmative

 members having voted in the negative

 members having abstained

The motion: X passed
 Failed

F. High School Graduation Requirement Policy – First Reading

Webster Public Schools does not have a policy on graduation requirement, it only has an Academic Achievement Policy (Policy IK and IKAB). The current academic requirements do not meet the recommended courses reflected in the MassCore requirement. As part of the Race to the Top initiative, the district must meet goals set by the DESE. Mr. Knowlton spoke about the level of instruction increasing the rigor and addressed the need for more math and science to raise MCAS Scores. Dr. Malkas explained that these changes would take effect with next year’s incoming freshman class.

Member Gorski-Strong questioned how adding more classes/electives could be made while budget cuts were being presented. Dr. Malkas said the plan is to increase the classroom enrollment to 20-25 which would free up some teachers for additional electives. She said we would be using current recourses more effectively. Mr. Knowlton added that by increase electives it would eliminate study halls to expose students to more. Dr. Kelley gave further details promoting this policy.

G. High School Grading System Policy – First Reading

Dr. Malkas told the Committee that there is not a grading policy , only an outline in the Bartlett Jr. Sr. High School Student Handbook. This proposed policy has been developed using a sample from the MASC. After its review by the district leadership team it has been recommended that we raise the passing grade from 60 to 65.

H. Student Activity Account for Park Avenue Elementary and Webster Middle School

Mr. Avlas presented info relating to student activity accounts. Currently on Bartlett Jr. Sr. High school has such an account. Policy JJF outlines the procedures set by the Webster Public Schools. Presented this evening is the maximum balance for each school to have in their checking account.

Member Gorski-Strong asked what reason Park Avenue Elementary and Webster Middle School are in need of such an account. Mrs. Lundwall said the school has been generating money that has helped fund extra curricular activities and other student related activities. It had previously been through the PTO since they have bank accounts available to them, but having an account for the school will make the accounting more transparent.

Motion: Move to authorize, in compliance with M.G.L. Ch71 Sec. 47 and Webster Public Schools Policy JJF, the Webster Town Treasurer to establish a Student Activity Checking Account and a Student Activity Savings Account for the Webster Middle School and the Park Avenue Elementary School, to be operated and controlled by the school principal. The maximum balances for the Student Activity Checking Accounts, as authorized by the School Committee, are as follows:

Bartlett Jr. Sr. High School	\$25,000.00
Webster Middle School	\$10,000.00
Park Avenue Elementary School	\$ 5,000.00

The motion was made by Member McNulty
The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

 4 members having voted in the affirmative
 members having voted in the negative
 members having abstained

The motion: X passed
 Failed

Review / Transfer / Signing of Bills, Payrolls and Vouchers: Committee reviewed and signed bills and vouchers.

Motion: Move to approve the transfer of \$20,722.43 from the BHS Student Activity Savings Account to the Checking Account

The motion was made by Member McNulty
The motion was seconded by Member Gorski-Strong

The following roll call vote was taken:

___ members having voted in the affirmative
___ members having voted in the negative
___ members having abstained

The motion: X passed
 _____ Failed

Motion: Move to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM.

The motion was made by Member McNulty
The motion was seconded by Member Czechowski

The following roll call vote was taken:

 4 members having voted in the affirmative
___ members having voted in the negative
___ members having abstained

The motion: X passed
 _____ Failed

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Glennon

Documents used during this meeting include:

- Agenda for Tuesday, February 12, 2013
- Minutes from January 22, 2013
- Dr. Malkas' notes
- 2012 Graduation Rate and Dropout Rate Report and Power Point presentation
- FY14 Budget Power Point Presentation
- 2013-2014 School Calendar
- Field Trip Request – BHS Student Council – overnight trip
- Field Trip Request – BHS Show Choir – out of state competition
- Field Trip Request – BHS Music Program – overnight trip
- New Collaborative Regulations
- SWCEC Annual Report
- CMSEC Annual Report
- Policy IK and IKAB
- Policy IKF – High School Graduation Requirements – First Reading
- Policy IKA – High School Grading Systems – First Reading
- Student Activity Fund Account Outline
- Bartlett Jr. Sr. High Student Activity Account Transfer Request