

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman William Blake, Mr. John Belfonti, Mr. Christopher Browe, Ms. Patricia Cardozo, Ms. Sue Cohen, Mr. Steven DeMaio, Ms. Amy Esposito, Mr. Thomas Hurley, Ms. Tracey Russo, Ms. Sheila McCreven, Mr. James Stirling and Ms. Diane Urbano.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Robyn Berke.

Staff members present: : Dr. Charles Dumais, Ms. Theresa Lumas, Mr. Scott Cleary, Ms. Kathleen Fuller-Cutler, Ms. Lisa Lassen, Ms. Anna Mahon, Dr. E. Marie McPadden, Ms. Mary Raiola and Mr. Peter Silva.

Also present: Other members of the public.

A regular meeting of the Amity Regional Board of Education (BOE) was held on Monday, December 12, 2016 at 6:30 pm in the cafeteria at Amity Regional High School.

1. Call to Order: Chairman William Blake called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

3. Recognition of National Merit Scholar Program semifinalists and commended students.

Dr. Dumais introduced Ms. Mahon to introduce the 19 commended students and the 6 semifinalists and award them their certificates. The commended students are: Emily Bacal, Suvasini Balaji, Alicia Chen, Henry Connor, Theodore Hague, Katherine Handler, James He, Sara Jadbabaie, Mather Kirschbaum, Zhi Kan Li, Kelsey McCormack, Alekya Menta, Julia, Nadlemann, Jacob Okolo, Sarah Saxe, AnnaCatherine Slanski, Jacqueline Snow, Nicholas Yoo and Andrew Zhang. The semifinalists are: Jimmy Bi, Zizhu Chen, Jethin Gowda, Jingzhao Liang, Clare Staib-Kaufman and Ray Tian.

The Mr. Blake congratulated the students and their families on this excellent achievement. He called for a short recess to allow the students and their families to depart at 6:43 pm

The Board meeting was called back to order at 6:47 pm

4. Approval of minutes.

A. Regular BOE meeting, November 14, 2016 (enclosure)

Motion by Ms. Esposito, 2nd by Mr. Hurley to approve the minutes as submitted.

Ms. Cohen stated there was one correction, typographical error, "contrast" should be "contract" on page 3 of the minutes.

Vote unanimous to approve the minutes as corrected with one abstention (Ms. Urbano)

Motion carried

Minutes corrected and resubmitted

5. Public Comment - none

6. Student Report

Ms. Ananya Kachru gave an update on events at Amity High School, Amity Middle School Bethany Campus and Amity Middle School Orange Campus over the past month, as well as informing the Board of upcoming events.

7. Presentation by the Technology Department – Shaun DeRosa (attachment #1)

Mr. DeRosa presented to the Board an overview of the Technology Department's current duties and responsibilities along with new items that are under discussion for future inclusion in the Department. Discussion and questions followed regarding Mr. DeRosa's presentation.

8. Assessment Data Presentation – Dr. E. Marie McPadden (attachment #2)

Dr. McPadden presented data from student testing from the District schools as well as the BOWA Districts. These results are extremely helpful in determining student growth over time and to see how students are performing to the standards as well as informing the curriculum. There was discussion and questions followed which were answered by Dr. McPadden, Ms. Lassen and Mr. Silva.

9. Correspondence – none.

10. Superintendent's Report

A. Personnel Report – (enclosure)

Dr. Dumais noted that there is one resignation that is effective in the middle of the year due to a spouse relocation.

B. Superintendent's monthly report (enclosure)

Dr. Dumais highlighted items in his monthly report: Ms. Mahon recently attended the national conference for Blue Ribbon Schools to speak about what Amity has done since being named a Blue Ribbon School; instructional rounds are continuing to go well with the teams doing an excellent job assessing instructional practice and making improvements; Powerschool analytics and assessments make it possible to create assessments that are tied specifically to standards and this is something that all the BOWS schools are considering using; Amity recently hosted a breakfast for area clergy to discuss how to best support students; Amity Youth survey was recently completed. Ten students opted out and about 50 students missed the survey at the high school due to absence and/or field trips on that day.

C. Other

11. Chairman's Report -

A. Committee Reports

1. ACES – Ms. Cohen stated that at the last meeting a strategic design plan was presented. Also discussed were the many risk factors that affect students such as the increasing politicization of education, declining enrollment statewide, budget pressure, increased number of immigrants, poverty, social issues, national trend toward school choice, personalization of learning and aging infrastructure; these issues are being considered in the plan.

2. CAFE (attachment #3) - Ms. McCreven stated that seven Board members and Dr. Dumais attended the annual meeting. Delegates did pass the high-stakes resolution. Ms. McCreven attached her full report of the meeting to these minutes.

3. Curriculum – The Curriculum Committee met on December 8th. They discussed how to best forecast future needs in terms of textbooks and software for curriculum and inclusion in the budget. An inventory of current textbooks with age, condition and edition along with age of software licenses will be done to aid in developing a longer range plan for budgeting for these items to level out the budget for these items, avoiding peaks and troughs.

4. Facilities

A. Facilities Department monthly report, November 2016 (enclosure)

Dr. Dumais stated that the fuel cell will be up and running slightly ahead of schedule and that a ribbon-cutting will be scheduled soon after the New Year. There is no update on the microgrid project at this time.

5. Finance

A. Superintendent's 2017-2018 budget update

Dr. Dumais noted that the formal budget presentation will not happen until the new year and these figures represent where the administration is currently in the budget process. The administration is working with three categories: facilities projects that that could be done in the current budget, adjusting available funding without

modifying program, and items that affect program. A meeting was held last week with Moody's to plan the purchase of the bond.

Ms. Lumas noted that the initial budget requests came in at a 3.35% increase over last year's budget which is one of the lowest initial requests from administrators. After further cuts the increase stands now at 2.86%. There is also a recommended 0.5% increase to current 20% medical reserve fund with the long-term plan for the fund to be at 23%.

There were questions and discussion from Board regarding items in the report.

B. Discussion and possible action on a la carte pricing

Per Federal requirements, there are price increases in a la carte items as detailed in Ms. Lumas' memo.

C. Discussion of monthly financial statements

D. Director of Finance and Administration approved transfers under \$3,000

E. Discussion and Possible Action on new funding requests

Ms. Lumas detailed the proposed software purchase of AESOP and Veritime software at a cost of \$9,000 to improve efficiency in terms of substitute teachers hiring and tracking with an eye toward cost savings. There will be an annual fee of \$15,000 which is in the current budget.

After questions and discussion, it was decided to send this proposal to the Curriculum Committee for further review and consideration. Mr. Stirling noted that the Finance Committee voted in favor of this funds transfer.

F. Other

1. Bonding update

2. Information on cost savings related to building maintainer

Cost savings are detailed in the enclosure from Mr. Saisa.

3. Follow up on the contract to procure natural gas

After a meeting and further analysis it was decided not to lock into a contract.

4. Update on financial audit

Ms. Lumas stated that the final document was signed today and the formal report will be presented at the January meeting.

Mr. Stirling noted that the town financial committees will be offering feedback from their respective towns at the next Finance Committee meeting, thereby contributing to the continuing process of getting budget information early in the process.

6. Policy

A. First read of unchanged and new policy recommendations: 9000, 9010, 9123, 9124, 9127, 9132.2, 9132.3, 9142.41, 9132.5, 9212, 9240, 9250, 9271, 9272, 9311, 9312, 9313, 9314, 9321, 9322, 9325.3, 9330, 9340, 9360 and 9400.

B. First read of edited policy recommendations: 9020, 9110, 9120, 9121, 9122, 9132.6 (enclosures)

Mr. Stirling stated that the consensus of the Finance Committee members is not to support the changes in policy 9132.6, feeling they are not necessary, even though the Policy Committee voted in favor of the changes. The Chairman sent policy 9132.6 back to the Policy Committee for further review.

Mr. Hurley stated that the Policy Committee is meeting again on the 19th and asked that Board members make their comments known to him before the meeting or attend the meeting.

Mr. Hurley reported that a new memorandum of understanding regarding the school resource officer was sent to the Town of Woodbridge and this was sent back with further changes for consideration at the meeting on the 19th.

7. Personnel

Ms. Cohen stated that negotiations are ongoing.

12. Items for next agenda – please forward any items to Dr. Dumais or Mr. Blake.

13. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Mr. Browe to adjourn at 9:00 pm.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk

Thomas Hurley, Secretary

Attachments(3)

Presentation, Technology Department, Mr. Shaun DeRosa

Presentation, Assessment Data, Dr. E. Marie McPadden

Report, Ms. McCreven, CAFE