

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
AUGUST 22, 2017
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 6:35 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Chairman Matthew Maguire presided:

Members of the Board Present: Lauren DiGennaro, Vice Chairman
 Alison Marsano, Secretary
 Kenneth Haag
 Erin Sarris

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent
 Dennis Dobe, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy
 Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

Superintendent Corey requested the Board consider adjusting the agenda to include a discussion of Preschool as well as a potential vote to increase staffing based upon the increase in the three and four-year-old programs.

There being no objection, the agenda was amended as requested.

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey informed the Board the School Attorney, William Phillips, has taken a new position as counsel for the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA). The SAU will begin reaching out to different firms, and the Administration would look to bring a recommendation forward in the October/November timeframe. Attorney Phillips will continue with the SAU through contract negotiations.

The New Hampshire Department of Education is sponsoring First Robotics grants for elementary schools. Mr. Ken St. Hilaire, a Hollis parent who has been very active in the High School Robotics program recently became a member of NE FIRST, which is the operational partner of the FIRST Robotics Competition in the six New England states. Mr. St. Hilaire is working with the elementary principals to coordinate this two-year grant. There is a requirement for a corporate sponsor. The Administration recently reached out to UltraSource, Inc., located in Hollis. The founder and CEO, Michael Casper, has agreed to provide that sponsorship. Grant applications will be filed, and the Board will be kept apprised.

PUBLIC INPUT

Brian Rater, Secretary, Finance Committee

Spoke of the Town Hall having lost phone service recently as the result of a component failure. The previous evening the Board of Selectmen voted to expend the necessary funds to replace the component to get the phone system back up and running. The Selectmen noted replacement of the phone system in the school district has been on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for several years, and spoke of the possibility that cost savings may be able to be achieved if looking to replace both systems at the same time.

When asked if a specific timeframe for replacement was discussed, Mr. Rater stated he was uncertain. The system at Town Hall is 12 years old.

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Principal Dobe noted staff has been training over the summer doing curriculum and other collaborative projects. He also spoke of the amount of work that has been completed on school facilities. A slideshow was presented depicting some of the facility maintenance work that has taken place over the summer (can be viewed [here](#) beginning at tape counter 38:25).

Some of the items highlighted include:

CSDA

Reseal Parking Lots

Security Cameras Installed

Hallways Repainted

Painting Underway in Gymnasium

Hallway to Art & Music Room Repainted

Erosion Issues Addressed

- Behind the building on the banking below the paved area
- Banking that goes down to access road, wraps around the back of the building, and up another hill toward the swing set and climbing structure

Principal Dobe remarked craters formed on the access road. Mr. Farwell brought in fill and leveled and packed the area of the access road that was damaged. For the banking itself, Spaulding was brought in to do drainage work; dug trench and laid in drainage pipes and gravel. The area was loamed and seeded (mulch on top), and will be taped off at the start of school. It is hoped grass will be growing in the area by mid fall.

RMMS

Patched Over 350± Holes

Kindergarten Class that Experienced Water Damage Repaired

Entranceway Carpets Replaced (5 out of 6)

Painting Projects;

- News Desk
- Learning Commons
- Lost & Found
- Gym Hallway
- Main Lobby
- STEM Room

Cabling Project Underway

New Server in Computer Lab

Water Filtration System Installed

Parking Lot Reseal

Trim Around Building Replaced

Three Water Stations Installed

Success Through Engaging Partnerships (STEP) Program Space

RMMS Safety Officials Training; Intruder Drill

Ms. Sarris questioned, and was informed additional discussion of the STEP Program will take place; the program is in the planning stage. The program is attached to the Special Education programming.

Principal Dobe noted there are four sections of grades 4 and 5 where enrollment is right around 20 and enrollment in grade 6 is a little over 20. There have been both move-ins and move-outs, although the greater number is move-ins.

Principal Molinari stated there to be 72 Kindergarten students this year; 55 full-day and 17 half-day. He noted last year there was a half-day section; however, there were also half-day students throughout the full-day section. Now there are three sections of full-day and one section of half-day.

Principal Dobe spoke of the school opening activities, which began last June with the end-of-year teacher in-service days. One of those days was dedicated to preparing and meeting as new teams. That was time well spent. Grant monies were obtained for teachers to meet over the summer to work on curriculum projects. A three-day agenda is planned for Teachers for the following week; some district and building based meetings as well as some district training, e.g., COPSync, new teacher and staff evaluation system.

Principal Molinari spoke of the Kindergarten bus run, which is now referred to as orientation. He explained this year they will not pick up families at their homes. The orientation will be conducted in stations; station 1 will be at the bus where students will learn the bus rules, station 2 will be a tour of the classroom, station 3 will be a tour of the school, and station

4 will be a meeting with office staff to obtain bus tags, etc. He spoke of reduced cost associated with this new approach, e.g. paying for the cost of a single bus rather than 6.

When asked about the status of State funds for Kindergarten, Superintendent Corey stated what is being proposed is \$1,100/student for the full-day program in addition to the \$1,800/student the District currently receives for the half-day program. The payment schedule has not yet been determined. The Governor's budget funded the first two years, and there is the potential that revenue from the keno lottery game would be used. Clarification is still outstanding regarding districts that are full-day taxpayer funded versus full-day parent funded.

Superintendent Corey suggested the District proceed into the school year, and when the funds arrive an additional discussion could occur at the Board level. If those funds are received, it is likely the Administration would recommend some sort of reduction later in the spring so that families would be able to gain the benefits. At that point, the District would have a year under its belt with the new proposal, and could then decide what the tuition rate for Kindergarten should be set at.

Ms. Sarris requested a staffing update be provided. Principal Molinari noted the handbooks, which are posted to the website, include identification of the entire staff.

DISCUSSION

- Cable Project - Update

Superintendent Corey stated the project has gone very well, and is in the process of being completed. The e-Rate funds were approved. As a result, 50% of the cost of the project will be covered by those funds.

- Preschool

Superintendent Corey noted increased enrollment, and stated the request of the Administration for an additional 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for the Brookline Early Education Program Preschool.

The unanticipated increase in Preschool referrals to the Brookline School District has challenged the District's ability to deliver services. With the increased enrollment, class sizes would exceed what is allowable. Each of the sections will have a make-up of 49% identified students and 51% typical peers. Typical peers pay tuition at a rate of \$240/month. The current number of identified students in the three-year-old class is 7, there are an additional 2 that are speech only and 2 pending referrals. In the four-year-old class there are 10 identified students, 2 speech only, and 2 pending referrals. Amy Rowe, Director, Students Services, is of the belief this group will provide a good solid structure for these students by providing the early intervention. Superintendent Corey spoke of the success the District has had with early intervention.

Superintendent Corey stated the majority of the additional cost would be covered through the Special Education budget; IDEA Grant funds, which were able to be carried over from last year will help to reduce the cost. Should the Board approve the request, the additional FTE would become part of the District's default budget in terms of overall staffing number.

Mr. Haag questioned if the cost could be covered by the special education expendable trust fund. Superintendent Corey stated his belief a case could be made for that; however, the carry over IDEA funds are required to be expended within a certain number of years. He believes it more prudent to utilize those funds.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked, looking at the four-year-old class, if those two pending referrals become identified students there would be 14 four-year old students, and there would be the need for 15 typical peers, which would result in a total of 29 four-year-old students in a classroom. We cannot run a program like that especially with the size of the classroom.

Superintendent Corey stated he is confident, if there is the need to fill additional typical peer slots, that could be accomplished easily; particularly given the monthly cost.

The Board engaged in a brief discussion of enrollment trends. Mr. Haag stated he would be interested in seeing what actual enrollments have been and trending them. He would like to see how that information correlates with what is provided by NESDEC.

Mr. Rater stated he has spreadsheets containing enrollment figures going back a few years, which identifies breakdowns for grades. He commented there are some very interesting trends that can be seen, and offered to forward that information to Mr. Haag.

When asked, Superintendent Corey stated new construction is considered. A lot of the work NESDEC does is based off permits pulled and birth rate. The migration in and out is the toughest variable that NESDEC struggles to predict. Historically Brookline has been one of the two districts that function off the economy.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the request to approve an additional 1.0 FTE position for Preschool

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO APPROVE THE ADDITION OF A 1.0 FTE POSITION FOR THE BROOKLINE EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM. SOURCE OF FUNDING IS THE FY18 OPERATING BUDGET

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER DIGENNARO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy EFAA – School Lunch Meal Payment Policy
Given its first reading;

Superintendent Corey stated the policy has been put forward by the Business Manager. The policy is required, and allows the District to outline procedures for lunch; how the District handles free and reduced meals, that pre-payment is required for student purchases, how the District addresses negative balances, and how issues are communicated with families and staff.

The Administration has worked closely with the food service staff. However, there is the need for a clear policy. Ms. Sarris questioned if there is currently a policy in place, and was informed there is not.

Ms. Marsano commented the reimbursable meal sounds like a standard meal that would be served in any of the cafeterias. She questioned if there is a differentiation between that and another meal. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated a reimbursable meal is what is reimbursable through the free and reduced lunch program, and it is a complete entrée with associated sides. What it does not allow students to do is go ala carte, and just buy the ice cream or the more expensive side items. Students could receive the hot meal of the day, etc.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted it is something the District has been monitoring, but the procedures or policy have not been in place to follow up on what happens when there are large negative balances, etc. Superintendent Corey commented when the District is made aware of a hardship, a solution is identified.

MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY EFAA - SCHOOL LUNCH MEAL PAYMENT POLICY

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy ACA - Freedom from Sexual Harassment
Given its first reading;

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the prior week many of the Principals in SAU41 attended a Principals' Conference put on by one of the other District's attorneys. A topic that was discussed was issues related to Title IX. The current policy states the person designated to handle inquiries regarding Title IX to be the Building Principal at RMMS. However, any such inquiries have in fact gone through the Director of Student Services, which is consistent with any claims regarding Rights of Disabled or Handicapped Persons. The amendment is proposed to ensure the policy is consistent with practice, and that the same individual handles all Title IX issues.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY ACA – FREEDOM FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER DIGENNARO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brookline School June 20, 2017

**MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ACCEPT AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADJOURN
SECONDED BY MEMBER DIGENNARO
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

The August 22, 2017 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____