

Joint School Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 29, 2015
Eastham Town Hall

Present for the Committees:

Region: Ed Lewis, Tim Linkkila, Deborah Beal, Chris Easley, Sue Skidmore, Sarah Blackwell, and Chris Galazzi
Brewster: David Telman, Marie Enochy, Jessica Larsen, and Claire Gradone
Eastham: Ann Crozier, Joanne Irish, Mary Lou Sette, Amy Handel, and Judy Lindahl
Orleans: Josh Stewart, Ginger Marks and Hank Schumacher
Wellfleet: Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, Mort Inger, Martha Gordon, and Betsy Pontius

Present for the Administration:

Thomas Conrad, Superintendent

Call to Order

Chair Plaue called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and thanked Assistant Superintendent Keith Gauley for the presentation on testing with the wonderful students that took place from 6-7:00 p.m. at the Union 54 meeting.

Citizens Speak - None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members

Jim Hardy, Field Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, reviewed the roles and responsibilities of school committee members. He indicated that the most important responsibility of the School Committee is student achievement. He also stated that effective school committees have a vision of high expectations, focus on accountability, foster strong relationships, use data to monitor progress, lead as a united team, trust and collaborate with administration. They set goals with a mission and vision. He mentioned self-governance and professional development for School Committee members. He reviewed the overlapping roles of the Superintendent and School Committee. The legal responsibilities of the School Committee include making policy, approving a budget, hiring and evaluating the Superintendent and certain other positions, and are the employer of record for Collective Bargaining Agreements.

School Committee personnel functions include: Hiring and contracting the Superintendent, hiring and retaining legal counsel, advise and consent on the Assistant Superintendent, Business Manager, Special Educator Director, and approve school physician, nurses and attendance officers. They establish compensation for Principals and others not set by collective bargaining through the budget process and enter into collective bargaining with unions.

In concluding, Mr. Hardy stated that the “What” is for the School Committee and the “How” is for the Superintendent. It is for the School Committee to make decisions if: the question is a policy one versus an administrative one, there are budgetary implications, or there are collective bargaining implications. It is for the Superintendent and Principal when: dealing with day-to-day administrative issues and tasks, academics,

parent concerns, operations, purchasing and maintenance. The Superintendent and the Principal make the decision about hiring, supervision, assignment transfers and other employment matters. The Superintendent and Principal are responsible for assessing and evaluating faculty or making pedagogical decisions related to teaching.

Mr. Easley asked about retreats and work sessions, where no votes are taken. Mr. Hardy indicated that this could be done but the meeting must be posted and minutes taken, as it is still a public meeting.

Mr. Lewis asked, in light of a couple of situations on Cape, what does the school committee do when put in difficult positions with the media when the school committee was not involved in the decisions. Mr. Hardy indicated that the Superintendent has all the protection rights as any other employee of the district. Sometimes the School Committee knows things but publicly cannot say them. Sometimes the School Committee has to just listen and take it as some things are learned in Executive Session and cannot be made public. It is a challenge when the public wants more. A phrase Mr. Hardy suggested members use, "I am not at liberty to discuss this matter."

Ms. Beal inquired about the roles, Superintendent vs. School Committee, what they are looking for in the policy and at what point do they allow the Superintendent latitude or oversight.

Superintendent's Evaluation

Superintendent Conrad reviewed the timeline for the Superintendent's Evaluation, his three goals, and four standards that will be his focus, the rating sheet for goals and the overall rating sheet with the Committee.

Goals:

To develop new opportunities to inform and discuss issues with staff, parents and various community groups. Engage stakeholders in tackling educational challenges our schools are facing. Promote and inform our communities about successful programs.

To research and develop a global education program that will expand opportunities for our students.

To develop an entry and strategy plan for systemic improvement of all our schools.

Standard 1:

Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Standard 2:

Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing and scheduling.

Standard 3:

Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

Standard 4:

Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a district culture of professional practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Superintendent Conrad reviewed the actions steps he would take and the documentation he would use as well as expected results. He mentioned using Channel 22 and his show, “Superintendent’s Spotlight,” where he is highlighting the Central Office to make the public aware of who and what takes place at the Central Office. He is also meeting with the Chairs, looking at students’ work and seeing how staffs are doing. He has several Superintendent Community Chats scheduled for the entire year to meet with parents, community members and staff members. He reported that he attended all the Open Houses and would like to have a “Community Night” for non-parents. He indicated that it is critical to move our system forward with our committees realizing we are the schools and we need to help each other. He welcomed anyone to come in and meet with him anytime.

The Superintendent stated he is very interested in a Global Education Program and would like this to be a K-12 program.

He is currently working in the Superintendent’s Institute and preparing an entry plan with strategic planning and goal setting. He is looking at the K-5 Tech Plan. As far as EngageNY, he is anxious to observe classes in that subject. He is also learning about the Wonders Program. He is also looking at the data analysis noting that the district should be careful that data collection does not become a bad word. He wants to make sure the data collecting has value and is what we need to help students. He is also very interested in how change comes about in the district. He indicated it might take longer, but everyone and anyone who is impacted by the change must be involved in the process. Teachers need to be part of the discussion. He will make sure this happens in the future.

He also indicated the budget process is well underway. He is blending the works of our Boards and getting discussion from the community. He stated this is a major commitment to look at our programs as well as our fiscal responsibility.

Ann Crozier requested that the Union 54 May 5th meeting be moved to May 12th.

Marie Enocht asked that the Superintendent think about how we use technology. She suggested videos be included on the website and that Administration think of other ways to get news out about what is happening in the schools. The Superintendent indicated he is working on the social media piece.

Marie Enocht liked the idea of global education and thinks we need to get our students off the Cape and instill confidence in them to do so.

Deborah Beal stated that the Superintendent has a good handle on his approach to different things. She also thinks the Superintendent’s will get people to work together. She applauded him for using the personal approach.

Chair Plaue indicated because the Superintendent is doing this special Superintendent Induction Program which forces him to pay attention to certain things more than others, he has guided his evaluation pieces to include those things that are required of him. She suggested the Committee agree with what is written and talk about this further next year.

Motion:

Mr. Galazzi made a motion to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

A point of order was raised by Ms. Enochty suggesting that the committees vote separately on this issue. Chair Plaue thought the Joint committee could reach a consensus and will research this vote further.

Motion:

Region: On a motion by Chris Galazzi, seconded by Sue Skidmore, it was voted 7 yeas to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

Brewster: On a motion by Marie Enochty, seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted 4 yeas to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

Wellfleet: On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted 5 yeas to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

Eastham: On a motion by Ann Crozier, seconded by Joanne Irish, it was voted 5 yeas to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

Orleans: On a motion by Josh Stewart, seconded by Ginger Marks, it was voted 3 yeas to accept the Superintendent evaluation process as presented for 2015-2016.

Substance Abuse Task Force

Superintendent Conrad indicated that there is one member from each Board on the task force, a school nurse and that Dr. Ann Caretti will chair the board. He is still waiting for confirmation from several counselors. Meeting dates are being set up and he will bring a charge and ask for a chair for these subcommittees at their first meeting.

Chair Plaue asked if the Joint Committee would like to meet again in a week to approve the Central Office Budget. This budget is always presented later on in the budget process but the Superintendent feels it should be presented and included with the other budgets. Some committee members needed more time to arrange their schedules so the meeting will be scheduled sometime in December to ratify the Central Office Budget.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Sue Skidmore, seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of July 30, 2015.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in the packet: Superintendent's Evaluation Process Packet. Jim Hardy from MASC distributed a handout on the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee members. Minutes from July 30, 2015.