

MINUTES OF WESTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
July 12, 2018

Call To Order

A meeting of the Weston School Committee was called to order at 9:04 AM at Babson College Executive Conference Center, by Mr. John Henry, Chair. In attendance were Mrs. Danielle Black, Mr. Alex Cobb, and Dr. Ed Heller of the School Committee; Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent; Dr. J. Kimo Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning; Mrs. Pam Bator, Assistant Superintendent for District Advancement; Not present: Dr. Sanjay Saini.

Also in attendance were members of Administrative Council Dr. Lee McCanne, Director of Technology and School Libraries; Mr. Anthony Parker, Weston High School Principal; Mr. John Gibbons, Weston Middle School Principal; Dr. Daniel Green, Field School Principal; Jen Faber, Woodland School Principal, and Ms. Erin Maguire, Country School Principal.

Mr. Henry noted this was the School Committee' annual summer meeting, welcomed all present, and reviewed the agenda items.

Information on status, strategy and plan for Instructional Coaches in schools

Dr. Connolly reported the new positions of Instructional Coaches at the three elementary schools and Middle School have been filled with the hiring of two faculty from outside the district and two from within. She reviewed the Instructional Coaches' role, noting they are all experienced teachers who will enhance teaching, serving as professional experts in the craft of teaching and will not serve as evaluators. Dr. Connolly indicated he coaches will help their colleagues become more proficient in teaching children and focus on instruction for classrooms., noting the roles may differ in each school. Mr. Henry asked how to measure the effectiveness of the coaches, and Dr. Connolly said she would work with Mrs. Bator and Dr. Carter but noted the outcome may be qualitative. She reported that the coaches would attend Teachers 21 for additional training and would meet monthly with Dr. Carter. Dr. Connolly said she would share information about Instructional Coaches, Responsive Classroom, new administrators and other initiatives undertaken this summer in her Back to School Information to parents. No action taken.

June Academy/J-Term Review and Evaluation

The Committee was updated on the High School June Academy and Middle School J-Term programs that have taken place for two years. Mr. Gibbons spoke about J-Term Project Based Learning experiences, noting there were 33 J-Term courses this year, with most being multi-grade. He indicated that faculty were surveyed after the program and summer workshops are being held to review the data. Mr. Gibbons said feedback and comments would be shared with faculty. He also spoke about the challenge of funding for the program. Mr. Henry suggested they consider charging for field trips, and Mrs. Black indicated it is confusing to parents when some trips have fees and others do not. Mr. Gibbons said students will be surveyed in the fall to see what they would like for J-Term, but he said most students, who were asked informally, indicated they had a positive experience this year.

Mr. Parker reported on June Academy. He noted the \$40,000 support from WEEFC the past two years. Mr. Parker indicated Transportation expenses were \$4,000 in 2017 and \$8,000 in 2018 but stressed that students like to go places rather than have traditional classes. He reported that 32 students did independent projects rather than participate in June Academy this year. He said faculty were surveyed but thus far only 31 have responded and noted that teachers did not have professional development days to plan for the program this year. Mr. Parker noted in planning for next year they will try to address course equity concerns. Mr. Henry suggested there be a budget line item for each school for J Term and June Academy, conversation and plans for WEEFC support, and expectations for field trip costs. No action taken.

Highlights of building goals for 2018-2019

Mr. Henry requested a quick update on the focus at each school, and each principal spoke about their buildings. Ms. Maguire and Ms. Faber said core values and safety would be a major focus. Dr.

Connolly noted that Dr. McCanne was working on future security enhancements. Dr. Green expressed his excitement of being a part of the Weston Public Schools and noted Field School's objectives were similar to Country and Woodland. Mr. Gibbons mentioned a focus on J-Term refinement, safety, instructional coach model, and using data. Mr. Parker mentioned the High School focus would include a review of weighted GA, implementation of the new schedule and how to organize mornings, safety, and closing the achievement gap. Mrs. Bator spoke about the additional goals of new Homework Guidelines, SEL Team, and a Data Team that Dr. Carter has set up in the faculty calendar.

Update on seatbelts for school buses

Mr. Henry reported that a bid for buses with belts had been put out and they would see what the additional costs will be and how to proceed.

Review and approval of Superintendent contract

Mr. Henry presented a recommendation that the Committee appoint Dr. Connolly to serve as Superintendent and to approve a three-year contract, noting he had conducted successful negotiations with Dr. Connolly. He noted this would remove "Interim" from her title. Mr. Henry mentioned changes in the contract include a more meaningful allowance for expenses and revised language regarding additional vacation time during school vacations, with rollover not to exceed 25 days.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Black, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the three-year contract with Dr. Connolly, effective July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2021.

Update on Class Sizes/Enrollment

Ms. Faber and Ms. Maguire noted the high enrollments at Kindergarten and Grade 3. Much discussion took place, and the Committee agreed to have an additional meeting on July 24 to discuss further. Mr. Parker indicated no change in average class size at the high school, an enrollment of 709 students. He noted he did not have data on new students. Mr. Gibbons said the Middle School had enrolled 18 new students thus far and reported on the enrollment and section averages. No action taken.

Update on High School scheduling process

Dr. Connolly noted that Data Manager Nick Blank would be leaving on August 1 and that his position has been posted. Dr. McCanne noted the challenge to fill the position at its current salary when compared to the private sector. He indicated that whoever is hired will help with scheduling.

Review Memorial Policy

Mr. Henry indicated the Committee should review Policies FFA and FFA-R and have general discussion during the next year.

Possible presentation re: Ash Baird memorial – none presented

Appointment to Town of Weston Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee

Mr. Henry reported that the Board of Selectmen voted to appoint Michelle Callanan as an at-large member to the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee for a term expiring June 30, 2021, and further to approve Melissa Crocker as the Recreation Commission Representative and John Power as the Weston Youth Soccer Representative and requested the School Committee do the same.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to appoint Michelle Callanan as an at-large member to the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee for a term expiring June 30, 2021 and further to approve Melissa Crocker as the Recreation Commission Representative and John Power as the Weston Youth Soccer Representative.

Facilities Director

Mr. Henry presented a request by the Board of Selectmen that the Committee approve a Memorandum of Understanding for Director of Facilities - Joint Reporting Agreement between the Board of Selectmen and School Committee.

Approved by School Committee 8.27.18

MOTION: Upon motion by Mrs. Black and seconded by Mr. Cobb, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve a Memorandum of Understanding for Director of Facilities - Joint Reporting Agreement.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Approval of Minutes of June 18 and June 22, 2018

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of June 18 and June 22, 2018.

Approval of Warrant – None presented.

Acceptance of Gifts – None presented.

Exception to Policy BCB

Mr. Henry noted the request to hire Marcus Parker, son of HS Principal Anthony Parker, as a Learning Assistant for Middle School Access Program this summer, 6 weeks for 5.5 hours per day, at a rate of pay of \$22.92 per hour. He noted the School Committee must approve an exception to its policy in order for Marcus to be employed and was assured he would not be supervised by Mr. Parker.

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, the School Committee voted unanimously to waive Policy BCB to allow the hiring of Marcus Parker in Middle School Access Program this summer.

Executive Session

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mrs. Black and seconded by Mr. Cobb at 11:15 AM the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn for lunch and resume in Executive Session at 1:00 PM for purposes of discussion of Collective Bargaining with Legal Counsel, with the intent to not return to Open Session, with Mrs. Black voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye; and Mr. Henry voting aye.

The School Committee Executive Session was comprised of Contract Negotiation Training with Attorney Jim Pender. No action taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment

MOTION: Upon motion made by Mr. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Heller, at 3:30 PM, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn from Executive Session with Mrs. Black voting aye, Mr. Cobb voting aye, Dr. Heller voting aye, and Mr. Henry voting aye.