

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 6, 2022

Minutes of the Virtual School Committee Meeting, October 6, 2022, Virtual Meeting via Zoom convened at 6:30 p.m. Present by roll call: Michelle Durrance, Jennifer Starr, Jacqueline Weisman, Nancy De Luca, and Caroline O'Neill.

Also in Attendance:

Dr. Lisha Cabral, Superintendent; Lynn Souza, Administrative Assistant to Dr. Cabral and School Committee Secretary; and Joe Boerman, ECAT.

Call Meeting to Order:

Chair Durrance called the meeting to order by stating that in keeping with an act relative to extending certain Covid-19 measures adopted during the state of emergency, the meeting will be conducted remotely over Zoom. Attendance by Board members will be remote and remote attendance shall count toward quorum. The meeting will be broadcast live on FaceBook and recorded on ECAT. To use zoom you will need to download the Zoom application or use the link on the agenda. The meeting will be open to the public and will take questions.

Minutes: 9/15/2022; Executive Session 8/25/2022, 9/15/2022

On a motion by Ms. Starr, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the minutes of 9/15/2022 with noted edit.

On a motion by Ms. Starr, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the Executive Session minutes of 8/25/2022 but not to be released.

On a motion by Ms. Weisman, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the Executive Session minutes of 9/15/2022 but not to be released.

Vote to Approve Foreign Travel Trip - Quebec:

Rebecca Michael, French Teacher at the Easton Middle School along with Miranda Zora from FORUM presented a proposal for a foreign travel trip to Quebec. The trip has been scheduled for 7th and 8th graders to take place April 15, 2023 through April 18, 2023.

A brief discussion took place.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the EMS foreign travel trip to Quebec scheduled for April 15, 2023 through April 18, 2023.

Discussion and Vote to accept Donation From Easton Chamber of Commerce to Easton Schools Art Programs:

Kristyn Shea, Art Department Chair and Lisa deVos from the Easton Chamber of Commerce presented a donation for the Committee's approval. Ms. deVos said the \$500.00 donation is from the Art Show and Wine Tasting event that took place on September 22nd at the Queset House. She stated that the donation would be presented to the Easton Public Schools Art Program.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the donation from the Easton Chamber of Commerce to the Easton Schools Art Programs.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Plaque at OA in Memory of Students who Served in WWII:

On a motion by Chair Durrance, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee tabled the "Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve the Plaque at OA in Memory of Students who Served in WWII" to the next School Committee Meeting on October 20th.

Vote to Accept Grant from KyleCares to OA:

Kelly Cavanaugh, Principal of Oliver Ames High School presented a grant from KyleCares in the amount of \$1,500 to cover costs associated with mental health awareness. She noted that the grant will go directly to Minding Your Mind as they will be providing the educational programming of Stories Over Sigma - 2 student assembly presentations, Stories Over Stigma and Just Talk About It - parent presentations, and Professional Development Workshop for staff. Ms. Cavanaugh added that she had worked with KyleCares when she was in another district and that Kyle, who died from suicide, is the son of Jim and Sue Johnson.

On a motion by Ms. Starr, seconded by Ms. De Luca, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee accepted the grant from KyleCares for OA in the amount of \$1,500.

Vote to Approve the OA Student Handbook 2022-2023:

Ms. Cavanaugh and TJ Flanagan, Assistant Principal of Oliver Ames High School presented the 2022-2023 Student Handbook following the review and approval of the Oliver Ames School Council. They each reviewed information that was added, removed, and that had been revised.

On a motion by Ms. Starr, seconded by Ms. O'Neill, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the OA Student Handbook for 2022-2023.

South Shore Consortium Early College Grant:

Dr. Cabral noted that last year she had discussed that along with 10 other superintendent colleagues they were looking for a way to provide efficient college and career pathways to students, particularly in early college effort. She said she believes that they are the first consortium and call themselves the South Shore Consortium. She explained that they signed an intermunicipal agreement with one another and have worked with a consultant specifically the Educational Alliance to create exciting pathways for the students. Dr. Cabral said that the consortium applied for a state grant and they were awarded a \$100,000 grant which will be shared amongst the consortium. The consortium hired a coordinator for the program who will work on behalf of all the districts in the consortium. She added that each district will have a liaison who will be paid a stipend and that Dan Fitzgerald, Guidance Counselor at Oliver Ames High School will be the liaison for Easton.

Review and Possible Vote on the Blanche A. Ames Elementary School Dedication Plaque:

Ms. Weisman, Chair of the School Planning Committee said that in the packets are photos of dedication plaques that are at Richardson Olmsted, Easton Middle School, and Oliver Ames High School. She noted that she has been working with Dawn Guarriello from Perkins Easton and they had drafted several examples of the dedication plaque for the Blanche A. Ames Elementary School. She noted that one example of the plaque had been placed in the packet.

A discussion took place around the material and color.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the design and the content of the plaque for the Blanche A. Ames Elementary School.

Vote to Approve Guidelines on Closing Out Positive Balance in Lunch Account:

Dr. Cabral noted that the School Committee currently has policy file EFC for Food Service which includes a charge policy pertaining to the lunch program. She added that there is a guideline if there is a negative balance in a lunch account but no guidelines for a positive balance. Dr. Cabral said that there is currently \$8,676 of positive balances of inactive students. Dr. Cabral recommended to the Committee that any family that has less than \$10.00 in an inactive account and that the student has left the system or has graduated, the district could close out that account. She added that there is \$1,004 in that account. Dr. Cabral suggested that any family that has \$10.00 or more in the inactive account, those families are offered 3 options, transfer the balance to a sibling or another student in the system that is currently active, offer an immediate refund, or leave the balance and donate it to the evolving account line for food service although there is not a particular designation for that as of yet, she said they have in the past provided a scholarship for a student.

On a motion by Ms. Weisman, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the guidelines on closing out positive balances in the lunch account.

Superintendent Recommendation and Possible Vote to Appoint Finance Director:

Dr. Cabral introduced Ondrea Starzhevskiy, her recommendation for the Director of Finance. Ms. Starzhevskiy joined the meeting from California where she currently resides and serves as a Finance Director. She said that Ms. Starzhevskiy is looking to relocate back to the Massachusetts area where she has family. Dr. Cabral thanked the several committee members that worked with her on filling this important position and added that Jen Starr served on the committee. Dr. Cabral read aloud several of the recommendations she had received from Ms. Starzhevskiy's references.

The Committee had an opportunity to ask Ms. Starzhevskiy questions.

Ms. Starzhevskiy had an opportunity to address the Committee.

On a motion by Chair Durrance, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee appointed Ondrea Starzhevskiy to Finance Director.

Update on Resource Officer:

Dr. Cabral noted that she has a meeting scheduled on Thursday with Chief Boone and that they should have the MOA for the School Resource Officer for the October 20th School Committee meeting. She noted that a copy of the draft document had been placed in the Committee's packet.

COVID Update:

None.

Public Comment:

Rachel Alterman, Riverside Terrace, What is the email address for early dismissal at OA please and thank you."

Ms. Starr responded oahsattendance@easton.k12.ma.us.

Superintendent's Notes:

Dr. Cabral repeated that the district has several openings in several areas especially in food service and with the district's transportation providers. She spoke of a transportation interruption that caused frustration and that 2 more drivers had been added to Lucini's staff. She had said there had been some delays due to lack of communication from the vendor to the families and that was due to Lucini's office staff having to drive as they are licensed drivers who fill in for absences. Dr. Cabral said that Ms. Pruitt was not in attendance this evening because she earned a scholarship to Panama and will be bringing back information particular to STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math) along with social and emotional learning. She noted that Ms.

Pruitt was one out of 45 applicants selected. Dr. Cabral said that a survey for the district's childcare for staff went out today and she encouraged any staff member who is in need of childcare to fill out the survey. She noted that this will be a tuition based service to the staff and that they are working with the YMCA. She said that the program will start at the Blanche Ames Elementary School and could potentially grow and may need to be in another building. They plan to open the program in the 2023 school year. Dr. Cabral said that they have been able to offer staff the ability to have some potential childcare services available during some evening events. Dr. Cabral spoke of the presentation by Katie Greer, an expert consultant in technology particularly with teens and adolescents. The presentation was about the issues of cyberbullying and it was well received. She noted that in the past Ms. Greer typically presents to the middle school students and to parents and that Ms. Greer has been asked back to the district to offer this presentation for students and parents. She noted that a date has not yet been chosen.

Chair Durrance had asked if the staff of the daycare would be the YMCA, supplies for the program, and the cost of utilities.

Dr. Cabral confirmed that the staff would be from the YMCA and that the tuition would be paid by the individual employee and that the money will go to the YMCA, supplies would come from the YMCA and that there will not be a significant increase with utilities as they are currently in the classrooms right now.

Assistant Superintendent's Notes:

None.

School Committee Notes:

Ms. O'Neill asked Dr. Cabral if she will be sharing the email that she wrote to a middle school parent to all parents because she doesn't think people are aware of the driver shortage and how it is affecting not only the district's program but programs across the country.

Dr. Cabral responded that it will be in the next newsletter and that she had a meeting today to determine the status of the 2 drivers and that as soon as she has that information she will get it out as soon as possible.

Ms. O'Neill asked if with the transition of the new Athletic Director if he is aware that the district has always been very diligent about making sure that the turf is safe for the student athletes and that she just read a couple of articles about the dangers of turf as it ages. It can become hardened and students can experience significant head injuries and that it needs to be tested periodically.

Dr. Cabral said that the Athletic Director does not perform the maintenance and the maintenance will be done by the same people but she will make sure Mr. Gordy is informed.

Ms. O'Neill added that they just attended the wonderful Professional Status event.

Ms. De Luca said that she attended the OA Hall of Fame event last Saturday at the Easton Country Club. She said that 10 players, 1 citizen, 2 coaches, and the 2010 OA Girls Basketball Team were inducted into the Hall of Fame and that it was a lovely event. She said it was nice to see former students who are now in their thirties. She noted that tonight was the Professional Status for teachers that have been teaching in Easton for 4 years and that Dr. Cabral gave a lovely speech. She reminded everyone of the November 14th Town Meeting to be held at Oliver Ames High School at 7:00 p.m and that a lot of important items are on the docket.

Ms. Weisman said that she and Ms. De Luca are tackling the School Committee Policy Manual. The Blanche Ames Elementary School is running on schedule; lockers are in and little footprints are on the floor. She said that the PK playgrounds are the cutest and that the furniture will begin to be delivered on October 17th.

Ms. Starr said if anyone missed the Katie Greer presentation she encouraged everyone to attend when she returns to the district and that she has seen her multiple times. She added that she is looking forward to the presentation on Tuesday which is sponsored by a generous grant that the district received. She gave kudos

to all of the athletics teams that are all doing so well and to the athletes, coaches, athletic staff, and the families.

Chair Durrance said Professional Status was awesome and that it is always a kind of relief when a teacher makes it to the end of the first 3 years and that she can't imagine starting the first year of teaching during COVID. She gave congratulations to the marching band and that Tigerama will take place on Saturday at 5:00. She said 10 bands will be coming to compete and this the first time that OA has hosted a competition since 2001. She said there will be food trucks, lots of music, admission for adults will be \$10.00 and students \$8.00 and only cash will be accepted.

Ms. Starr added that the RO Booster Thon will take place tomorrow and it is a fundraiser for the revamped playground. She thanked everyone who donated.

Executive Session RE: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, §21(a) 3 To Discuss Strategy with Respect to Collective Bargaining for Unit B and Paraprofessional Unit

Chair Durrance made a motion to enter into the Executive Session and will return to Open Session for the purpose of discussion of strategy with respect to Bargaining with Unit B and the Paraprofessional Unit and stated that, in her opinion, having this discussion in public would be detrimental to the bargaining position of the School Committee. Ms. Weisman seconded the motion, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee entered into the Executive Session at 8:07 p.m.

Return to Open Session:

The Committee returned to Open Session at 8:45p.m.

Vote to Accept Unit B Contract:

On a motion by Chair Durrance, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee accepted the Unit B contract.

Chair Durrance stated that the next scheduled meeting will be October 20th at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Weisman, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Souza
Secretary