

EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EASTON, MA

EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 10, 2022

Minutes of the Virtual School Committee Workshop Meeting, November 10, 2022, Virtual Meeting via Zoom convened at 4:01 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; Crissy Pruitt, Assistant 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 but because it is a workshop so no public comment.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve an Overnight Athletic Trip:

Kyle Sousa, Cross Country Coach presented a proposal for an overnight trip scheduled for Friday, November 18th to be held in Devens, Massachusetts. He noted that this is a new course for the runners and explained the challenges of how each course is different. Due to the distance of the meet location, he requested permission to allow the athletes an overnight trip to have the ability to preview the course prior to the meet. Mr. Sousa noted that a meet has been scheduled for tomorrow and those qualifying athletes will attend the meet in Devens and that it could potentially be a total of 10 boys and 10 girls. Mr. Sousa also requested permission to bring team captains who did not make the tournament roster to the overnight trip. He said they would depart Friday afternoon, preview the course, stay the night, attend the meet on Saturday and following the completion of the race, return back on Saturday.

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the overnight Cross Country Trip to Fort Devens in Devens Massachusetts on November 19, 2022.

Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Out of State Trip to Providence RI:

Chris Getchell, Principal of Richardson Olmsted School presented a proposal for approximately 270 fifth graders and approximately 18 teachers and chaperones to attend the play, A Christmas Carol at the Trinity Rep Theater in Providence Rhode Island on November 22nd. He said that the cost to the students would be \$20.00 and the RO PTA would fund the cost of transportation. He said they would depart the school at 10:30 and return back before the high school dismissal so that it does not impact other bus runs. He noted that one of the fifth graders, Charlotte Hall will be starring in the play as Tiny Tim.

On a motion by Ms. De Luca, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0, the Committee approved the RO trip to Providence Rhode Island for the fifth graders to attend The Christmas Carol play at the Trinity Rep Theater on November 22, 2022.

Update on the Timeline for Blanche Ames Move:

Dr. Cabral said that it has been a busy time as staff and administrators from the 3 elementary schools are preparing for the move. She noted that the substantial completion date has been moved once again from November 7th to December 2nd. She said they are hoping to have temporary occupancy by Monday, December 5th which is the beginning of the move. Dr. Cabral said that Mr. Cederbaum will present the timeline that has been shared with the staff.

Mr. Cederbaum said that the staff has been busily preparing for the move and had the entire Professional Development day on Tuesday, November 8th to pack.

Dr. Cabral added that the staff has had boxes since March and have been packing all along the way.

Mr. Cederbaum said depending upon the certificate of occupancy and the substantial completion happening as scheduled for December 2nd target date, they are hoping the staff will have the opportunity to access the building every day beginning December 5th 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. to unpack their belongings. He noted that the first move of boxes will take place on November 28th through December 2nd. The movers will be going to all 3 elementary schools and the Central Administration Office and taking all boxes that have been packed thus far. He said a pre-move walk through will take place next Tuesday along with PMA and the moving company.

Dr. Cabral added that everyone has received labels for the boxes so that they can put their room number on the label. She noted that Parkview School and the Central Administration Office will be moved first due to Parkview relinquishing ownership and we are nearing the end of the lease for the Central Administration Office at 50 Oliver Street and that will take place on December 23rd. Moreau Hall and Center School will move on December 27th and 28th to the new school.

Mr. Cederbaum said that they have allocated some weekend times for the staff to have opportunities for packing. He said that prior to the winter break they will be labeling the furniture that will be left behind as the new school will have all new furniture and fixtures. Furniture that is in good condition will be marked surplus and the other 3 schools in the district will be allowed to come and take what they want for their classrooms and buildings. During the week of December 12th furniture left behind will be marked as "take now" or "do not take until December 22nd."

Dr. Cabral noted that because of the tight turnaround time they don't have a lot of options in terms of the furniture that could potentially be left in the buildings and they don't want to throw away anything that is in good condition; therefore, she asked the School Committee members before the meeting on November 17th to consider community organizations that she can reach out to for items that will be left behind. She noted that some of the organizations that the School Department partners with that serve the students are Schools on Wheels, the YMCA, and My Brother's Keeper. Dr. Cabral said that on December 23rd anything that is not fixed to the actual building will be taken by the movers and placed on the front lawn where at that point it becomes trash.

Mr. Cederbaum said they will allow time for staff to go into the new building and unpack and set up their classrooms on December 13, 14, and 15th and the following week, December 20, 21st, and 22nd they will begin to bring students from Moreau Hall, Center School, and Parkview School to go over with their teachers and see the new school and put their belongings in their desk.

Dr. Cabral said that because this is a huge project it will take time for the staff to set up their classrooms.

Mr. Cederbaum gave kudos to the Transition Team made up of 30 to 40 preK to 2 staff members and administrators who have been working since last year meeting regularly and even more so lately. He said this is the group guiding and helping form and shape what the learning community will look like at Blanche Ames School. He said they are at the beginning stages of creating the Staff Handbook that will outline all of the new procedures, policies, and protocols and will be presented to the entire PK-2 staff on December 12th. He added that the Transition Team will continue to work together throughout this year and next year.

Dr. Cabral added that they are putting a lot of effort into the handbook as they are combining 3 cultures coming together as 1. She noted that the number 1 priority will be to get back to normal as soon as possible for the kids. Dr. Cabral said that because of the timeline they will not be able to have parents or the general public go through the new building but is hoping to be able to do it in January or February. She noted that Mr. Cederbaum will be making videos for parents to see the school and that none of the fields, playgrounds, or outside spaces will be completed until later.

Mr. Cederbaum added that communications to the families will be a big piece and they will be making videos, parent tutorials on knowing where to drop students off and such.

Ms. Starr asked a question that she saw on the SEPAC FaceBook page and if the highest needs students in programs could get slower or repetitive access to their spaces.

Mr. Cederbaum responded that with the tight timelines and the construction constraints that they are under he wasn't sure if they will be able to offer any additional tours and that the hope is that if we know our students who are high needs during the 2 hour visit they will be able to take them and give them an individualized portion of a tour. He said they are also utilizing social stories, photographs, videos, and other means to lessen the fears and anxiety of moving to a new school just like they would when moving over to RO.

Ms. O'Neill noted that the Globe had a feature article about the fact that many major construction projects including schools in Massachusetts and across the country are delayed the same as ours and in many instances some projects are in much worse shape in terms of timelines because of supply chain issues.

Dr. Cabral clarified that the project is not delayed as of yet.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Ms. O'Neill, seconded by Ms. Starr, with a roll call vote of 5-0 , the Committee adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Souza
Secretary