

**EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EASTON, MA**

**EASTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
WORKSHOP MINUTES**

**Thursday, January 7, 2010**

**Minutes of the School Committee Workshop meeting of January 7, 2010**, convened at 4:35 p.m. in the Simmons Lecture Hall at Oliver Ames High School. Present were: Caroline O'Neill, Jane Martin, Bill Braun, Colleen Less, Rebecca Turley, Judi Frederick, Allen Duarte, Wes Paul, Bob Smith and Mike Green.

Judi Frederick, serving as workshop facilitator, led today's meeting and began with an overview of the Assistant Superintendent search process. She shared the proposed timeline, recommended tasks, and interview process.

Through a structured brainstorming process, the School Committee and administrators worked to develop a list of attributes/characteristics that are important for the new Assistant Superintendent to possess. Judi asked the group to be mindful about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education standards for administrators, job responsibilities the new Assistant Superintendent will assume, topics important in the Easton Public Schools, as well as school culture.

On a motion by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee members adjourned the Workshop Meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael A. Green, Ed.D.  
Secretary

**EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
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**Minutes of School Committee meeting of January 7, 2010**, Simmons Lecture Hall, convened at 7:05 p.m. Present: Caroline O'Neill, Jane Martin, William Braun, Colleen Less, Rebecca Turley, Allen Duarte, and Dr. Michael Green.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

None.

**MINUTES:**

On a motion by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with 3 votes in favor and 2 abstentions, the Workshop Minutes of 11/24/09 were approved.

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with 4 votes in favor and 1 abstention, the Minutes of 12/3/09 were approved.

On a motion by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 5-0 vote, the Workshop Minutes of 12/17/09 were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:  
Schedule of Payments:**

Circulated for signatures.

**2010-2011 School Calendar Drafts (*Second Reading*):**

The Committee had before them two different drafts of the School Calendars for 2010-2011 for a second reading and for a vote this evening.

Dr. Green reviewed the two calendars for the Committee. He explained that Calendar #1 shows school starting before Labor Day. The first day for staff would be Wednesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>. Grades 1-12 would begin on Thursday, September 2. Friday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, would be the first day for kindergarteners. Dr. Green pointed out the Thursday after Labor Day, September 9, is a holiday in observance of Rosh Hashanah. The last day for students if there are no snow days would be Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> and, with five (5) days built in for snow or emergencies, Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 would be the 180<sup>th</sup> school day.

**2010-2011 School Calendar Drafts (*Second Reading*)(continued):**

The second calendar would begin school after Labor Day. Staff would return on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>. Wednesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, would be the first day for students in grades 1-12. Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, is a holiday for Rosh Hashanah. Kindergarteners' first day would be Friday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. With this calendar, the last day for students would be June 17<sup>th</sup> if there are no snow days, and with five (5) days built in for snow and emergencies the last day of school would be June 24<sup>th</sup> , 2011.

Mrs. Less expressed her concern in starting school after Labor Day and turning around two days later and having another holiday. With no exemption from the State for snow days and unknown weather conditions, Mrs. Less believes that Draft #1 is a better option. This version provides a two-day window to get the students acclimated to the new school year.

Vice Chair Martin concurred with Mrs. Less and indicated strongly to begin school before Labor Day.

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved Draft #1 for the 2010-2011 School Calendar which begins school on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Retirements:**

**Moreau Hall Principal:**

Chair O'Neill read the letter of retirement submitted by Robert Smith, Principal of Moreau Hall, to be effective July 30, 2010.

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee accepted the retirement of Robert Smith as Moreau Hall Principal effective July 30, 2010 with much regret.

Mrs. Less remarked that the times she was at Moreau Hall she felt Bob's presence has made a difference in developing a welcoming community within the building.

**Moreau Hall Principal(continued):**

Vice Chair Martin said in conversations with parents of Moreau Hall children that they spoke positively about the experience and that Mr. Smith was very accessible.

Dr. Braun commented that it was a privilege to be on the Search Committee when Bob was hired. He said that he was very impressed and observed his uncanny ability to bring every constituency together. Bob will be a loss to the system.

Mrs. Turley concurred that Bob's retirement will be a great loss. He has displayed a wonderful relationship with his staff, students, and always put the children first.

Chair O'Neill said that Bob provided educational leadership and a love for the community.

Dr. Green said that it has been a pleasure to work with Bob over the past 13 years. He remarked that Bob is an outstanding principal, educator and gentleman. He has made such a positive impact working with the children and families at Moreau Hall. Bob has been heavily involved with the Early Childhood Committee, the Placement Committee, and has worked on STELAR and Title 1. Lastly, Dr. Green stated that Bob will certainly be missed.

**OAHS Foreign Language Teacher:**

Chair O'Neill read the retirement letter from Claire Planeta, OAHS Foreign Language Teacher, to be effective March 26, 2010.

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee accepted with regret the retirement of Claire Planeta as OAHS Foreign Language Teacher effective March 26, 2010.

Dr. Green stated that Claire has done an outstanding job teaching Latin, French and Spanish at OAHS over the past 28 years and will be missed. Claire has been a tennis coach and has served as co-advisor to the National Honor Society for many years.

**OAHS Foreign Language Teacher(continued):**

Chair O'Neill remarked that she totally agrees with Mike's comments. Claire has been approachable, students have responded well to her, and she was utterly devoted to the National Honor Society.

Dr. Braun interjected that Claire was responsible for organizing a trip to France with the students whereby she had to arrange lodging for the Easton students to stay with families abroad. He said that this was an extraordinary experience for the students. Dr. Braun publicly thanked Claire for her excellent work.

**Resignations:**

**Parkview Principal:**

Dr. Green spoke of the resignation of Dr. Vanessa Beauchaine, Principal of Parkview School, effective June 30, 2010. He remarked that Vanessa has done a great job as the Principal of Parkview School for the past 6 years and is also an outstanding administrator/educator and professional. Dr. Green said that Vanessa has made a positive impact working with the children and families at Parkview. She has been heavily involved with her work on the Math Committee of which she is co-chair and also on the Report Card Committee. Vanessa will certainly be missed.

The Committee concurred that Dr. Beauchaine will be a great loss to the system but wished her well.

**Appointments:**

**Director of School System Operations:**

Dr. Green announced that David Twombly has been appointed as the Director of School System Operations. Mr. Twombly will be in charge of maintenance, plant and grounds management, transportation and several personnel functions. Dr. Green added that there were a number of applicants for this position. Marilyn Gordon, Business Manager, and Allen Duarte, Interim Assistant Superintendent, worked with him in screening the applications and scheduling and conducting interviews. Mr. Twombly is a graduate of Northeastern University and is licensed as a School Business Administrator. He has been Director of Operations for the Hull School Department where he assumed similar responsibilities. Dr. Green thanked Marilyn and Allen for their assistance in this search.

Mr. Duarte mentioned that he was impressed with Mr. Twombly's experience and skill set, as well as his concern for others as part of his day-to-day interactions and activities.

**SPED Teacher:**

Dr. Green informed the Committee that he had appointed Noreen D'Andrea as a Special Education Teacher which is being funded through the Stimulus Grant. Noreen has worked previously in the district and has a good background in special education.

**Guidance Secretary-OAHS:**

Mrs. Kathleen C. Duggan was recently appointed as Guidance Secretary at OAHS to fill the vacancy due to the retirement of Elayne Mahoney. Kathy has substituted in that office and has developed a great rapport with the students and is familiar with guidance procedures.

**Renewal of D.O.E. Agreement:**

Dr. Green remarked that this is annual agenda item. He stated that this agreement came about a few years ago as a result of the town audit. The audit suggested that we take a look at allocating school operating costs according to the guidelines suggested by the Department of Education. Dr. Green reminded the Committee that the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen agreed to follow what was suggested in the audit. The Committee needs to vote to support the D.O.E. Agreement with the Town on the allocation of school operating costs not directly in the school department budget.

On a motion by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, the Committee voted 5-0 to support the D.O.E. Agreement with the Town on the allocation of school operating costs not directly in the school department budget ending June 2010.

**MCAS TEAM Program:**

Dr. Green provided some background information relative to the MCAS TEAM Program. He told the Committee that the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Academic Support Grant Program is made available to districts with the goal of providing academic support for identified students in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, and biology preparation for the annual MCAS tests. Dr. Green went on to say that for each of the past three years Easton has received approximately \$11,000 to fund an after-school program for identified students attending Oliver Ames High School.

**MCAS TEAM Program(continued):**

Mr. Duarte, who has assumed responsibility for applying for these grant funds and submitting the required documentation and program evaluations, and Mr. T. J. Flanagan, Dean of Students at OAHS, who serves as our Program Leader and Coordinator, were in attendance tonight to provide the Committee and those at home with a presentation about the OAHS Academic Support Program.

Mr. Duarte mentioned that back in the fall of 2007, Mr. Paul and Mr. Flanagan worked with him to develop and submit a MA Department of Education Academic Support Grant Application to offer an after-school program at Oliver Ames High School. Once the grant was approved, they developed an Action Plan designed to establish the foundation for a successful program that would support students and help them find success on the MCAS. Mr. Duarte stated that Mr. Paul and Mr. Flanagan, along with the program instructors, have demonstrated a true sense of teamwork which has served to create effective after-school programs for students for the past three years.

Mr. Flanagan thanked the Committee for allowing him to present the program this evening via PowerPoint. With much enthusiasm, he stated that this program is an excellent tool for students who are invited into the program based upon students' past MCAS results. The program helps to relieve any anxiety on the student's part. He explained that TEAM means "Together Everyone Achieves More". The components of the program include math, English Language Arts, and biology and are offered in the fall, winter, and spring. Technology is integrated as part of each subject in order to enhance students' skill levels and motivation to learn.

As Program Leader, Mr. Flanagan outlined the program objectives and the configuration. He said that it provides a small class environment with certified instructors in the content area, enabling students to focus on their areas of weaknesses identified from their past performance, MCAS item analyses, and other MCAS test summaries. The program meets after school for an hour twice a week for a five-week period prior to the MCAS test date.

**MCAS TEAM Program(continued):**

The process was explained for inviting students to participate in this program. Each teacher in the program is provided program materials and data that highlights each student's area of weakness. Following that, goals are established during the first session and progress reports are issued at mid-point. At the end of the 5-week session, students review their goals, provide feedback relative to the program, and those who successfully complete the program receive an incentive.

For 2008 and 2009, Mr. Flanagan reported that 10 ELA students successfully completed the program. Thirty-eight students completed the program in math and 9 students completed the biology program. He was happy to report that all students who participated have passed the MCAS tests.

Also shared with the Committee were the strengths of this program and the feedback and comments of the students who participated in the program.

The Committee thanked Mr. Duarte and Mr. Flanagan for their informative presentation.

**Policy DD Grants Revision(First Reading):**

Dr. Green explained that Policy DD Grants was before the Committee for a first reading, as it has been revised to meet Title 1 requirements. He pointed out that the last paragraph has been added as well as the title of the policy. Dr. Green stated that this policy will be back on the agenda at a future meeting for a second reading and a vote.

**Budget Guidelines FY11 (First Reading):**

Dr. Green stated that he included in the Committee packets a draft of the FY11 Budget Guidelines for Committee review. He said it is before the Committee tonight for a first reading and discussion. These guidelines will be back on the agenda at a future meeting for a second reading and a vote.

**Resignation of School Committee Representative to  
Municipal Building Committee and School Planning Committee:**

Chair O'Neill read the last paragraph of the resignation letter from Dawn Boynton, former School Committee member, as School Committee representative to Municipal Building Committee and School Planning Committee.

The last paragraph that Dawn wrote sums it up nicely:

“ I would be remiss if I didn't thank the entire community for its support of these projects. There is no better investment in the future than children's education. Thanks to the administrations, faculty, and staff of OAHS and EMS for their patience and inconvenience as construction went on while educating 1700 students each and every day. But most of all, I thank the students for their ability to adapt and learn during this time. They truly are the best!”

Chair O'Neill stated that Dawn did a wonderful job as designee and was instrumental in addressing any issues or concerns that came up.

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee accepted with regret the resignation of Dawn Boynton as School Committee representative to the Municipal Building Committee and the School Planning Committee.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:  
January 4, 2010 Enrollment Update:**

Dr. Green reviewed the enrollment figures as of January 4, 2010. He added that the enrollment is requested and recorded with the Department of Education twice a year, October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. Due to the fact that the students did not return until January 4<sup>th</sup>, that is the date being submitted to the Department of Education. The Superintendent pointed out that the grade 2 enrollment is down and the grade 4 enrollment is up. He talked about class sizes at the various levels and how they are consistent. Dr. Green said that the overall enrollment from last school year is down 60 students.

Vice Chair Martin asked if sections can be changed from one grade to another and Dr. Green replied yes.

**Unanticipated Expenses:**

None.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES:**

Dr. Green reported on the H1N1 Flu Clinic taking place this evening at the Olmsted/Richardson building which is being offered to students in grades 3 through 12. As the vaccine arrives, the flu clinic will be offered to staff. He said the schools continue with all of our preventive practices. Dr. Green said the flu has not really hit the district as student attendance has been good. The Superintendent applauded the efforts of the Board of Health in providing information and conducting these clinics. The school department continues to work closely with the Board of Health. Another clinic will be held on January 14, 2010 with more information to follow.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE ISSUES:**

Mrs. Less was pleased with the appointment of Kathleen Duggan as Guidance Secretary at OAHS. She said that Kathy has been very involved in the community and has done a great job. Mrs. Less also commented on the resignation of Dr. Beauchaine. She stated that Vanessa is very skilled and has accomplished a great deal to improve the school's culture and focus on education. Mrs. Less wishes her the best and said it will be difficult to fill her shoes.

Vice Chair Martin said her first interaction with Dr. Beauchaine was when the EveryDay Math Program was being introduced. She met with parents who had concerns but, with her confidence, convinced and persuaded the parents and helped them to better understand the program.

Chair O'Neill remarked that Dr. Beauchaine's resignation is a huge loss to the system.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

On a motion by Mrs. Less, seconded by Vice Chair Martin, and with the members polled, the Committee entered into Executive Session at 8:08 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the Executive Session Minutes of 12/3/09, approve Executive Session Minutes of 11/5/09, and to discuss contract negotiations through collective bargaining.

**APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES:**

On a motion by Vice Chair Martin, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with a 5-0 vote, the Committee approved the Executive Session Minutes of 11/5/09.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Dr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Less, and with all members in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. Green". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael A. Green, Ed.D.  
Secretary