

**EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EASTON, MA**

**Minutes of School Committee meeting, January 8, 2009**, Moreau Hall Library, convened at 7:04 p.m. Present: Caroline O'Neill, Dr. William Braun, Jane Martin, Rebecca Turley, Dr. Michael Green and Dr. William Simmons. Dawn Boynton was not in attendance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

None.

**OAHS SOFTBALL TEAM – ACADEMIC RECOGNITION:**

On behalf of the school system, Dr. Simmons welcomed the 2008 OAHS Softball Team, Athletic Director Jim VonEuw, and Coach Bob Huckabee. He directed his conversation to the team stating that the school system has followed the girls' success. Dr. Simmons acknowledged the three students who graduated this past June and thanked them for being here tonight.

Bob Huckabee, Head Girls Softball Coach, thanked the Committee for this opportunity to recognize the significant accomplishments of the girls' softball team, not only on the athletic field, but academically as well. He spoke of the sense of pride the student athletes have brought to the town of Easton, OAHS, and to their families and friends who are present this evening. Coach Huckabee considers these young ladies "special", because as a "team" they collectively were able to sustain an outstanding level of academic success for the 2007-08 academic year. As Coach Huckabee put it, "They raised the bar in athletics and academic achievement."

A plaque was presented to the School Committee by the OAHS Softball Team. In addition, the following student athletes received Certificates and were congratulated by the Superintendent of Schools, the members of the School Committee and the Assistant Superintendent:

Karen Babbitt	Amanda Cowan	Amy Daniels
Molly Cotter	Sarah Hurley	Sandy Anton
Elizabeth Meyer	Jessica Rodriguez	Margaret Silva
Nicole Romero	Diane Schillinger	Shauna Haggerty
Alex Bressette	Kristen Vogler	Megan Healy

**OAHS SOFTBALL TEAM – ACADEMIC RECOGNITION(continued):**

The Committee thanked Coach Huckabee and the Girls Softball Team for being here this evening.

The Committee took a brief break to allow the parents and athletes time to leave the meeting.

**MINUTES:**

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Dr. Braun, and with a 4-0 vote, the Minutes of 10/16/08 were approved.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Dr. Braun, and with a 4-0 vote, the Minutes of 11/6/08 were approved.

On a motion by Dr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Minutes of 12/4/08 were approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Schedule of Payments:**

Circulated for signatures.

**Municipal Building Committee Update:**

Dr. Green reported that the High School and Middle School punchlist items from the monetized punchlist continue to be completed followed by re-inspections by the architect and contractor. This process will most likely continue for the next few months.

Dr. Simmons interjected that until 100 percent completion is reached, we cannot take acceptance of the two schools. He added that this most likely will not take place until the latter part of the school year.

**Update on the Work of the Administrators Regarding Placement:**

Dr. Green stated that since his last update, Mr. Duarte and he have led two meetings with the elementary principals. Considerable time was expended at these meetings to review the identified options and their advantages and disadvantages. The team also identified placement options that are not feasible or viable or were determined to be unrealistic.

The next few meetings will be spent working to narrow the team's options and fine tune their Student Placement presentation.

Dr. Green emphasized that finding a suitable placement for every student is essential for their success. Therefore, the elementary team will continue to pursue this issue with considerable thought and discussion.

Dr. Simmons said it is the intent of Dr. Green, Allen Duarte and the elementary principals to make a formal presentation at the February School Committee meeting.

**Update on the Superintendent's Search Process:**

Chair O'Neill gave a brief update on the Superintendent's Search Process. She stated that all of the focus groups have been held, i.e. administrators, teachers, parents, etc. The next step is for the consultant to put together a report of these meetings. In addition, Dr. Walsh, the consultant, will also meet with Dr. Simmons. Dr. Walsh reported that there have been multiple inquiries and that applications are already being received.

Dr. Simmons stated that closure for the applications is January 20<sup>th</sup>. This has been posted on the NESDEC website. Also, the brochure, which was beautifully done, has been mailed to school districts. Dr. Simmons reported we have received a number of compliments from local Superintendents on our brochure. This process is expected to be completed by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Update on Stadium and Fields Project:**

Dr. Green spoke of the groundbreaking ceremony that was held on December 10<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the official groundbreaking of the stadium and fields project. Since that time, the contractor has finished constructing a crushed stone pad and moved our storage containers to this area, which will be a permanent location.

**Update on Stadium and Fields Project(continued):**

Dr. Green added that the field is now on rough sub-grade. All existing catch basin structures have been raised to their proposed grades. Due to the latest weather, Dr. Green mentioned that work has stopped for the time being. Next in the work sequence will be the reclamation of the track, drainage work and the trucking of materials off-site.

Dr. Simmons commented that this project has to be completed by August 1, 2009, as the district's band, music and sport programs start up in August. With the weather having been in our favor, Dr. Simmons said that the work was able to begin.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee moved agenda item Music Department Trip Request to this juncture.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Music Department Trip Request:**

Charlene Dalrymple, Music Department Chair, presented the trip proposal to the Committee. She stated that Rob Wheeler, a member of her department, had researched a trip for the entire music department, grades 9-12, for this year. The trip is to Washington, D.C. on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and return on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Students from the Concert Band, Concert Choir, and Orchestra will be attending along with 10 chaperones comprised of parents and teachers. It is felt that this time will help to build unity and community within the student ensembles of OAHS.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the Music Department Trip to Washington, D.C.

**Retirements:**

**P.A.L. Teacher/Coordinator:**

Chair O'Neill read a letter of retirement from Nancy Hauck, P.A.L. Teacher and Coordinator at Parkview School, effective June 30, 2009. She commented that Nancy was a wonderful addition to our system.

Dr. Braun remarked on the enormous amount of work that Nancy did on the Strategic Planning Committee. He added that she was a tremendous asset to our system and a great role model.

**P.A.L. Teacher/Coordinator(continued):**

Mrs. Martin spoke about her daughter's experience in the PAL Program and the great introduction she had to the school system. She remarked that Nancy will be truly missed.

Mrs. Turley interjected that the PreK PAL Program is wonderful. Nancy displays such a level of enthusiasm for that age level.

Dr. Simmons stated that Nancy was a "pioneer" for the Early Childhood Program. Easton was one of the first communities to offer a program for 3-5 year olds. Dr. Simmons added that it was one of Nancy's dreams to have this program offered in the K-2 buildings. Instead of 40 youngsters, Dr. Simmons said that we now have a total of 118 youngsters in the Extended Day Program.

On a motion by Dr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee accepted with deep regret the retirement of Nancy Hauck as PAL Teacher/Coordinator effective June 30, 2009.

**Resignations:**

None.

**Appointments:**

None.

**2009-2010 School Calendar Drafts (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading):**

Dr. Simmons highlighted both 2009-2010 School Calendar drafts. The first draft starts school on September 2 which is prior to Labor Day with a few options for Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>: 1) attend full day; 2) half-day of school; 3) no school. This plan is to have a full day of school on September 4<sup>th</sup>. The last day of school would be June 16<sup>th</sup>, with 5 snow days built in, bringing the last day to June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Dr. Simmons spoke of the recent happenings in the western part of the State where electricity was out in many areas for weeks and schools were closed. He referred to a memorandum from the DOE that addressed the 180-day waiver requests.

**2009-2010 School Calendar Drafts (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)(continued):**

Draft #2 has school starting Wednesday, September 9, after Labor Day. The last day of school would be June 22<sup>nd</sup> with 5 days built in for snow days, bringing that to June 29<sup>th</sup>.

In reference to the DOE memorandum, Mrs. Martin said this clearly states that districts need to plan ahead such as starting before Labor Day. She says it is apparent to start before Labor Day and have school in session for the three full days prior to the holiday weekend.

Mrs. Turley would like to see parents accommodated who have plans for the long weekend.

Dr. Braun expressed that he is not in favor of extending the weekend by closing school on that Friday.

Dr. Simmons remarked that in years where school has started before Labor Day that we have had a full day on that Friday. Some districts have a half-day Professional Day on that Friday.

Chair O'Neill is concerned with the "momentum" issue of teachers, getting the students focused on learning. Her preference is to have a full day on Friday.

A parent spoke up and said that parents will take off anyway, regardless of whether school is in session or not on that Friday..

Cindy Hall of the EEA commented that at the Board meeting, the members voted 3-1 to start before Labor Day but have Friday off.

Another parent remarked that she favored the half-day before Labor Day.

Vanessa Beauchaine, Parkview Principal, says it is her personal opinion to have a full day on that Friday.

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Dr. Braun, and 3 votes in favor and 1 abstention, the Committee voted to begin school Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, with three full days through September 4<sup>th</sup>.

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

Dr. Simmons spoke of the EQA report that complimented us on the existence of an agreement with the Municipality and School Department that shares the operating costs not directly included in the school budget. It delineates some specific costs the Town picks up and then is filtered down to the school system.

On a motion by Dr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee approved the D.O.E. Renewal Agreement.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

**January 5, 2009 Enrollment Update:**

Dr. Simmons reminded the Committee that twice a year the enrollment is requested and recorded with the DOE, namely October 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>. However, with the students not returning to school until January 5<sup>th</sup>, that is the date we are using. The Superintendent pointed out that we are up three students from last October and 52 from last January. These figures were discussed with the Cabinet this past week.

**Unanticipated Expenses:**

None.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES:**

None.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE ISSUES:**

Mrs. Martin said that she had attended a FEEE Board meeting and that the preliminary report from the Volleyball Tournament showed it was successful. A mailing has gone out for the upcoming fundraiser to be held in the spring.

Chair O'Neill attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the new stadium along with Dawn Boynton. The contractor, John Haederle of the Friends of Easton Community Athletic Complex, and Colleen Corona, Chair of the Board of Selectmen, were also in attendance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Dr. Braun, and with a 4-0 vote, the Committee entered into Executive Session at 8:13 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the Minutes of 12/4/08 and to discuss contract negotiations through collective bargaining.

**OPEN SESSION:**

The Committee returned to Open Session at 8:18 p.m.

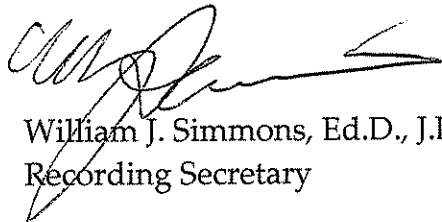
**EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES:**

On a motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mrs. Turley, and with a 4-0 vote, the Executive Session Minutes of 12/4/08 were approved.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Dr. Braun, seconded by Mrs. Martin, and with all members in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



William J. Simmons, Ed.D., J.D.  
Recording Secretary