

NOTICE OF MEETING EPPING SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

July 18, 2019 - Town Hall School 7:00pm

5:45 pm Non-public Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Deborah Brooks called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were: Chairperson Deborah Brooks, Vice Chair David Mylott, Member Heather Clark, Member Ben Leavitt, Superintendent Valerie McKenney, Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom. Member Nicole Carleton absent.

SCHEDULE GUESTS:

a. Food Service Equipment/Lunch Cost Increase and Wellness Report - Ronnie Bush

Ronnie states the program has grown over seven years and the use of trays has caused the labor to increase. Ronnie is requesting a vent-less high temperature dish washing machine and a window cut out for tray dropoff in the Elementary School cafeteria. She received two quotes: one for \$18,602 from Joe Warren & Sons and one for \$17,945 from Alternative Sales Corp. Adding the window, electrical and plumping will increase the amount up to approximately \$25,000.

The Board asked if the kitchen will keep additional dishwasher hooked up. Ronnie stated that they will get rid of it and get a rebate of about \$150. The Board inquired about what was used at the High School and were informed the High School uses tall vent-less machines, similar to what is being requested. Currently a rack and milk cooler are in the space were the dishwasher will be installed. The milk cooler was returned to the company since it was not being utilized and the rack will be moved.

The Board asked, if this purchasing has anything to do with raising prices for lunches. Ronnie assured the Board it did not and explained that the expense is coming from the food service fund balance which currently has approximately \$66,000 and not coming from the taxpayers.

Vice Chair David Mylott made motion to approve for Alternate Sales Corp dishwasher in the amount of 17, 945 with funds coming from food services balance. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. Withdrawn Vice Chair David Mylott made a motion to approve the Alternative Sales Corp bid not to exceed \$25,000 with funds coming from food service balance. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

With regards to the food services program, every year the District is required by the State to fill out the "equity calculator" which indicates whether the district needs to increase their lunch prices. According to the calculator the District must increase prices by ten cents. Ronnie is requesting an increase by a quarter from \$2.75 to \$3.00 at elementary school and \$3.00 to \$3.25 at high school to satisfy the USD requirement. The last quarter increase was three years ago.

The Board questioned, based on history if this will cause a hardship, Ronnie explained that when prices are raised, a dip is usually seen and that the only other option would be for the School Board to not approve the increase and the District would pay the difference. The ramifications for not paying the increase includes not receiving free and reduced lunch funds or other federal funds.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve new lunch price of \$3.00 for elementary, \$3.25 for High School, and \$4.00 for adults, with breakfast not changing. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Climate & Culture Survey Results

Bill Preble and Michelle Mass presenting:

- Data collection process- school climate surveys in elementary, middle and high schools for teachers and parents. All surveys were voluntary for grades 3-12. Had both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Number of participants across schools shared. Advised to look for patterns in data.
- Board will get reports with themes and evidence of themes.
- Open-ended questions on survey shared.
- Definition of school climate- it is the feeling tone in a school.
- Definition of school culture- shaped by the adults, beliefs, values, in the school and community.
- Theme at the high school and parents was their dissatisfaction with the newly implemented grading system.
- Quotes- the reasons for dissatisfaction among students, however, vary widely.
- There are some people who like the new grading system and quotes were shared.
- Moving from one system of grading to another and not everyone is satisfied with the change.
- Epping is having a clash of culture about intelligence, what it means who has it and how to effectively assess it.
- Community also sees consensus in this community. Strongest consensus in 3-12 grade: teachers.

Qualitative data, only reporting things multiple people said (not all is included below):

- Elementary students- what they like best: teachers, staff, administration, friends, and safety.
- Elementary students- what they want to change- playground/recess, food/lunch, grading system.
- Elementary teachers- what they like best: one another, students, and administration.
- Elementary Teachers- work on- peer relationships, making PD better, better discipline policy, support special education leadership.
- Elementary parents- what they like- teachers/staff, PTO.
- Elementary parents- what they want to change- grading system, discipline, safety.
- Middle school students likes: teachers, staff, discipline system, grading system.
- Middle school students change: grading system, discipline.
- Teachers Middle School like: teachers/ staff, facilities
- Teachers Middle School work on: mental health resources, improved learning, discipline.
- Parents Middle School likes: teachers, small school, and community.
- Parents Middle School work on: grading system, learning environment.
- High school students likes: teachers, friends, nothing, grading system.
- High school students don't like: grading system, mental health support, everything.
- High school teachers likes: teacher/staff, work
- High school teacher's need: grading system, mental health resources.

Summary:

- Collective teacher efficacy- is the number one predictor of student success. These scores can be improved and doing so will enhance student and teacher success.
- Amplify teacher voice and involvement in decisions that affect them, to enable teachers to build their abilities to work collaboratively on behalf of students.
- Epping appears to lack a powerful working consensus about the kind of school this community wants. Develop consensus on a powerful district vision/mission.
- Grading controversy reflects divergent values and belief about the purpose, aims and models of effective assessment. This lack of community/school consensus is negatively impacting students, the school and the community.
- Amplify parents voice to help solve problems.

Themes from elementary, middle and high school presented.

Mr. Anthony Whitesill - asked what is the separating factor from those students who liked and disliked something. Bill Preble responded that there was no background as to why people answered one way or another and that they would need to review data and find themes for correlation.

Presentation will be on website by Monday.

The Board questioned what is next, and how to use the data to form action plan.

Vice Chair Dave Mylott thanks everyone for participation and the presenter. He states long discussions need to be had and would like some plan of when to meet again to discuss. Superintendent McKenney agrees and has reached out to the climate and culture group, A meeting to discuss the findings will be on July 25, 2019 6-8pm. The topics will include diversity training, social emotional safety (choose love program) and bullying. Meeting location will be chosen.

Superintendent McKenney would like this topic brought up again in August, and discuss logical next steps.

- c. Brian Ernest will make a proposal for changes to the grading scale based upon requests from the CBE Oversight committee.

Goals:

- To identify common threads and concerns from parents, teachers, students, and administrators.
- To preserve the current structure of teaching and learning and assessment practices.
- To review and discuss recommendations to the current grading and reporting structure with the CIT team.
- To work collaboratively with parents, students, teachers, and administrators to effectively and consistently communicate changes.

Data:

- GPA
- ESD advisory committee study
- Focus Groups
- Course completion rates
- College acceptance rates

Common ground:

- Student accountability and responsibility
- Equitable process for GPA calculations to more accurately reflect student achievement.
- Policies and procedures must reflect current practices.
- Consistency in the application of CBE.

Currently at Epping High School there are three levels of grading: formative/summative level (student work), course competency, course grades and GPA. Propose to keep 4 point scale and change to: Exemplary = 4, Meets Competency = 3, Basic Competence = 2, Novice = 1, IWS = 0. Will come out with decimal value and that is the grade given for that competency.

How a student earns credit:

- Must earn a BC in all course competencies to receive credit.
- Course competency grades will be determined by: summative assessment (Average/mean)
- Final course grades will be determined by:
 - Average/mean of all summative grades = 90%
 - Average/mean of all formative grades = 10%

GPA will be calculated by utilizing final course grade. At the end of the semester all competency will average out to a certain number value. Added two categories, a plus in the BC column and plus in the MC column. It helps determine if they are in the high end or low end.

People wanted more options and equity in calculating GPA. On Student Achievement Report there will be definitions of what defines the categories.

Moving forward:

- GPA class rank (remains in place).
- Formative grades make up 10% of final course grades.
- Re-assessment.
- Add Basic competency to the 4 point rubric.
- Add plus levels to the GPA calculations.
- Revise competency handbook, policies, and student achievement report.
- Updates for PowerSchool.
- Teacher training

Requesting Board to review material and make decision to implement and revise changes.

The Board questions why there needs to be an assigned letter? With there being changes from letter to numbers, if they just use numbers would it not make things easier?

Parent Mr. Whitesill suggested taking the performance indicators and assign letters, then change to numbers and average them out and go back into a letter, and re-average it again to get another number for another letter. It's possible to do 3.5-type work all semester but gets 3.0 worth of credit. Once teachers compute number, based on the performance indicators, just enter that number, so we don't lose .5 credits. This is an improvement, and applies more to High School. He also states with this model there may be instances where students gain or lose points when converting. If there are things negatively affecting GPA it shouldn't be used.

Superintendent McKenney states she brought this up at the CIT team meeting and one thing they are trying to work on with children is that it shouldn't be about specific numbers, but rather it is about what students have learned. She continues to state that the GPA is important and asks if it is possible to give letters to keep focus on learning and put GPA separate. Principal Ernest explains that in doing so, students do get their actual grade. He also states they want students to get recognition for taking harder courses.

The Board asked if PowerSchool would add the .5 for taking harder classes. Principal Ernest stated he would need to check with PowerSchool.

Parents and students commented on the grading system and the calculations of the grade point average.

Superintendent McKenney emphasizes that the community has learned a lot about CBE, and this program will get better. Students are figuring out they don't have to sit in class daily from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM to get an education and this is mostly due to CBE. She stated that tonight's discussion is about the grading scales and that she received feedback that was given by students, teachers and parents that helped create this plan. She is asking for a decision to be made so that final revisions for the 19-20 handbooks can be created.

Parent Shana McTague, Liz Johnson, and Amy Hodgden voiced their concerns and dissatisfaction with the grading system.

The Board asks whether there can there be a conversation with PowerSchool. Although they agree it should happen, they believe it shouldn't stop them from making a decision. The Board is trying to find a way to listen to the community and come up with solutions.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to ask Brian to go back to PowerSchool to have the ability to go by actual GPA earned and see if it is feasible or not. If it is not feasible, accept plan as is. Dave seconds for discussion. He believes they are slowing down process. Ben states everyone has the best interest but agrees a call should be made but it also shouldn't be postponed. Vote 3-1. Vice Chair Dave Mylott votes against.

Dave suggests Board give principal question to ask PowerSchool. Principal Ernest states his understanding is when you come up with final grade take that final grade and add GAP points to it. The Board will send question.

d. Football Agreement

Valerie reviewed the information from the attorney with regards to football boosters and with new Booster Club president. She presented the 19-20 Affiliated Agreement and contract between Epping and Newmarket.

Vice Chair Dave Mylott made a motion to approve football agreement. Seconded by Member Heather Clark. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

5 minute recess.

POLICY

Due to the time, the Board informally decided to hold off with policy until the August 1, 2019 meeting.

PERSONNEL:

a. Resignations:

Melissa Gagnon - Speech and Language Teacher

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept resignation. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. Vote 3-1. Motion carries. Vice Chair Dave Mylott votes against.

b. Nominations:

- Allison Bates for 5th grade team position.
- Callie Ierardi- was a one-year substitute for Elizabeth Feld who resigned. This will be her second year teaching 5th grade.
- Karen Dowling - Elementary Reading Specialist
- Julie Yuhás - High School Computer Technology Business Teacher
- Andrew Marden - Head Coach for Girl's Basketball program.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept all nominations as stated. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS.

a. Superintendent's Report:

- Fire department will be open Friday, Saturday or Sunday to anyone who is in need of relief from the heat 6am-6pm. Pets welcomed with leash. Epping middle school is available to spend the night if needed.
- Dr. Benna did a national presentation and discussed his Doctorate work related to superintendents who work well with Administrators and colleagues have better productivity.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS & DISTRICT SERVICES:

Bonnie provided an update from EEI (Energy Efficient Investment company). They have accessed all the buildings multiple times. Bonnie stated that she will create a report as it is ongoing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. Public Minutes for June 20, 2019

Member Heather Clark made a motion to accept public minutes as amended for June 20, 2019 with spelling adjustments. Seconded by Member Dave. Vote 4-0 Motion carries.

b. Non-public Minutes for June 20, 2019

Member Heather Clarks made a motion to accept June 20, 2019 non-public minutes. Seconded by Dave. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

MANIFEST:

a. Payroll:

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Payroll Manifest #26 (6/28/2019) in the amount of \$532,253.01. Seconded by Member Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Payroll Manifest #1 (7/12/2019) in the amount of \$111,122.14. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

b. Accounts Payable:

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Accounts Payable #27 (6/30/2019) in the amount of \$63,230.46. Seconded by Member Ben Leavitt. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Accounts Payable #1 (7/05/2019) in the amount of \$1,184,825.43. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

Member Heather Clark made a motion to approve Accounts Payable (7/8/2019) in the amount of \$245,705.16. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

COMMENTS/OTHER

Member Ben Leavitt- none

Member Heather Clark- none

Chairperson Deborah Brooks - has begun investigating the process of hiring a new superintendent. She has found two companies who can present at an upcoming public meeting and advertising can start in October. The companies will possibly present on August 29, 2019 at 6:00pm.

Vice Chair David Mylott – Since there was a change at the high school related to reporting out on student achievement when will the final changes be brought back to the Board on August 1st, or August 15, 2019. Dave hopes the length of these meetings can be reduced.

NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED:

August 1, 2019 at 7:00pm

NONPUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II*

None

ADJOURNMENT

Member Heather made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Vice Chair Dave Mylott. Vote 4-0. Motion carries.

The public meeting adjourned at 11:28pm.

Minutes submitted by,
Erika Brazee
School Board Secretary