

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE
TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

Regular Meeting

Date: January 27, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Foxborough High School Media Center

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Tina Belanger, Mr. Richard Pearson,
Ms. Beverley Lord, Mr. Rob Canfield, Mr. Brent Ruter

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Amy Berdos, Dr. Alison Mello, Mr. William Yukna

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Mr. Kristian Andersen, Ms. Chiara Pacini

Ms. Belanger opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Open Public Comment

None.

Approval of Minutes

Pearson moved; Ruter seconded

Approve the regular meeting minutes of January 6, 2020, as amended

Vote: 5-0-0

Teaching and Learning Highlight

Dr. Berdos welcomed FHS K-12 Art Department Head Ms. Kelly Arcacha, elementary art teacher Ms. Linda Scotland, Igo Elementary grade 4 teacher Ms. Stephanie O'Keefe, three FHS art students and five Igo Elementary Grade 4 students. Together they presented Dragon Stories – A Digital Photography Project. Ms. Scotland described the collaboration between Ms. O'Keefe's fourth graders and the high school art students while creating a dragon drawing, choosing a background for the dragon to inhabit, and superimposing a picture of the student "riding" their dragon. Using digital photography and Photoshop, high school students were able to help the younger students create their perfect scene. All were colorful and creative. A PowerPoint presentation showcased the final products. In addition, students composed a poem describing their creation and read them at the meeting. Students and staff both cited the benefits of younger students working with older students. Dragon Stories will be published as a book for the May 7th Igo Art Show. Discussion with the Committee followed.

Proposed 2020-2021 FHS Program of Studies

Dr. Berdos explained that each year at this time next year's proposed FHS Program of Studies is brought forward to the Committee. FHS Principal Ms. Diana Myers-Pachla, FHS Director of Guidance Ms. Lauren White, and FHS Science Department Head Ms. Alyssa Mocharnuk joined the meeting to discuss proposed changes to the 2020-2021 FHS offerings. Additions and some minor changes have been made for next year.

In the Business Department, Accounting I has been modified from a full-year course to a semester course to encourage enrollment and better accommodate student schedules.

In the Science Department, Environmental Science will change from a full-year course to two half-year courses – Environmental Sustainability and Environmental Change. Three new semester courses will be offered: Green Chemistry, Cutting Edge Science, and Science of War. The new courses are the result of a curriculum survey which found that students are interested in more physical science electives.

Ms. Mocharnuk described course content and spoke about the importance of offering students what they are interested in and working within the constraints of their schedules. Discussion with the Committee followed.

Ruter moved; Lord seconded
Approve the 2020-2021 FHS Program of Studies as presented
Vote: 5-0-0

FY '21 Budget Public Hearing and Vote of Recommendation

Mr. Yukna opened the floor to the Committee for any questions or concerns related to the FY '21 FPS proposed budget and provided a synopsis of what is driving increased costs. He identified special education out-of-district placements (39 students next year) and out-of-district transportation as the major items. Dr. Berdos reported that many surrounding communities are struggling with this same issue as out-of-district placements are on the rise.

Mr. Yukna discussed FY '21 proposed staffing changes at all levels. While Kindergarten enrollment is unknown at this time, staff reductions based on decreased enrollment numbers at the middle school and high school are proposed. There was discussion around enrollment trends over time, responsible budgeting, specialized in-district programming for special education students when possible, and meeting the needs of all students. It was emphasized that a reduction in staff is necessary at this time based on enrollment.

Dr. Berdos stated these are complex and difficult decisions, but recognizes the responsibility to the Committee and taxpayers for responsible budgeting and attending to changing enrollment and student needs. The school department budget is scrutinized line by line every year by Administration and the Committee as part of a thoughtful and thorough budget process.

Mr. John (Jack) Martin and Ms. Sharon Weiskerger of the Advisory Committee joined the meeting as the two Advisory Committee Educational Liaisons. Mr. Martin requested to meet with Dr. Berdos, Mr. Yukna, and the Budget Subcommittee to discuss the FY '21 FPS budget request.

Lord moved; Ruter seconded
Approve and send forward the FY '21 FPS Budget request of \$37,499,121
Vote: 5-0-0

Approval of the FY '21 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Yukna discussed FY '21 CIP requests. Standard items such as computer hardware, software and network upgrades, school bus purchases, and copier replacement are included in the request. FY '21 will be the first year of a multi-year music department equipment purchase. The music department is responsible for over \$400,000 worth of equipment; most of which is over twenty years old and in dire need of replacement. The total CIP request is \$558,500. Discussion followed.

Pearson moved; Canfield seconded

Approve and send forward the FY '21 Capital Improvement Plan request of \$558,500

Vote: 5-0-0

Second Reading of Policy EEA – Student Transportation

Dr. Berdos expressed her appreciation to the policy subcommittee for their time in revising the transportation policy and taking into account concerns from our visitors at the beginning of the year.

Lord moved; Canfield seconded

Waive the second reading of Policy EEA – Student Transportation

Vote: 5-0-0

Canfield moved, Lord seconded

Approve Policy EEA – Student Transportation, as presented

Vote: 5-0-0

First Reading of Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals (New Policy)

Dr. Berdos reported that many districts now have therapy dogs that have proven to be a wonderful resource to students and staff. This year the Igo School will be piloting a program for the use of an assistance dog. Mr. Stanton, Igo Elementary Principal, described the impact and benefits of assistance animals after experiencing first-hand a certified dog working with students and adults. This policy on assistance animals will provide the framework for this pilot.

Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals was read in its entirety. Mr. Pearson, policy subcommittee member, discussed the structure of the policy. Discussion with the Committee followed.

Lord moved, Canfield seconded

Move Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals forward for a second reading at the next School Committee meeting

Vote: 5-0-0

January 2020 BICO Quarterly Report

Dr. Berdos shared the contents of the Bi-County Collaborative (BICO) January 2020 Quarterly Report. Notable were an increase in referrals of 37%, and additional Professional Development offerings. Also of note, Executive Director Ms. Arlene Grubert will retire at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, and the search has begun for her replacement.

Other Matters

Dr. Mello updated the Committee on the search for the new Director of Student Services to replace Dr. Sandra Einsel. She was also happy to share that Ms. Noelle Hendrixson, K-8 Math and Science Director, will not be relocating, and the search for her replacement is no longer necessary. Focus now shifts to a replacement for Ms. Susan Shea, K-8 ELA/Social Studies Director who will be retiring at the end of the year.

Dr. Berdos reported on a wonderfully received and successful Professional Development Day. She commended Dr. Mello and the Professional Development Committee for their exceptional work in organizing an amazing day of learning for staff. All offerings were based on current focus areas, and the Foxborough Fire Department presented Stop the Bleed, a workshop that teaches bystanders how to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives.

Dr. Mello noted that the Professional Development Committee did an outstanding job, and the feedback from participants was great.

Mr. Lord remarked our method of scheduling of PD days allows teachers to immediately put to use what they have learned.

Mr. Yukna reported that elementary students at the Taylor and Burrell schools thoroughly enjoyed the Police Department and Fire Department (respectively) serving lunch to students. He updated the Committee on site work and funding of the Burrell School Renovation Project.

After a brief discussion, it was confirmed that there will be a School Committee next Monday, February 3, 2020.

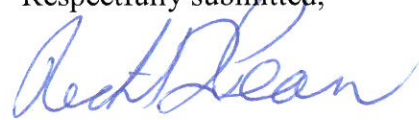
Ms. Lord reported on the passing of Ms. Laura Sobol, a long-time Educational Assistant at the Ahern School.

Ms. Belanger mentioned the Hockomock swimming/diving championships are slated for next week, and the Foxboro Rotary Club will be sponsoring a blood drive on Saturday, February 1st at St. Mary's church from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Ruter moved; Pearson seconded
Adjourn the meeting
Vote: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Pearson
Clerk

Attachments:

Regular meeting minutes of January 6, 2020

FHS 2020-2021 Program of Studies

Policy EEA – Student Transportation

Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals (new policy)

BICO (Bi-County Collaborative) January 2020 Quarterly Report

Approved: February 3, 2020