

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE
TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

Regular Meeting

Date: April 6, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Gala Meeting Room, Town Hall

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Tina Belanger, Mr. Richard Pearson,
Ms. Beverley Lord

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: Mr. Rob Canfield, Mr. Brent Ruter

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Amy Berdos, Dr. Alison Mello

REMOTE PARTICIPATION: Mr. William Yukna

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES: Were not present

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

COVID-19 Update

Dr. Berdos presented a COVID-19 update. She reported on progress made with remote learning, discussed feedback from staff regarding the Remote Learning Plan, and addressed issues encountered using Zoom and the increased security measures and added safety features of that platform. Dr. Mello discussed the launch of the COVID-19 web page, citing lots of new information and updates, and Mr. Yukna reported on the success of the food service program in providing school lunches to families and students. This program is now available to all Foxborough families. Information and details about all of these topics are available on the COVID-19 web page at www.foxborough.k12.ma.us.

Dr. Berdos emphasized connecting with students and families is most important during this time of uncertainty, and connections bring a sense of normalcy and security to students. Discussion with the Committee followed.

Open Public Comment

Ms. Belanger read the one public comment received from FPS student Joe Gerraughty concerning April vacation week and the last day of school. It was noted that these questions will be addressed during the meeting. Ms. Belanger explained the process of submitting open public comments for future meetings.

Approval of Minutes

Pearson moved; Lord seconded

Approve the special meeting minutes of March 30, 2020, as presented

Vote: 5-0-0

Teaching & Learning Highlight

Dr. Berdos introduced the teaching and learning segment of the meeting – Trauma Sensitive Schools – and was happy to announce that twenty-six (26) FPS staff members have completed all four trauma courses through Lesley University’s Trauma Sensitivity Institute. The goal of this program is to help educators understand how childhood trauma effects students in the classroom and how to best assist those students to be able to learn. Participation reinforces the district’s commitment to meeting the needs of the whole child.

Via remote participation, Dr. Sandra Einsel, Director of Student Services, introduced Dr. Salvatore Terrasi, Director of the Lesley Institute for Trauma Sensitivity, who recognized the achievement of the twenty-six staff members and their dedication to students. He described each of the four trauma courses and noted participants are now knowledgeable about the causes of childhood stress and how it interferes with social-emotional well-being.

Dr. Berdos stated these are the first twenty-six FPS educators to complete all four courses, but there are many more who have taken Trauma 1 and Trauma 2. Courses will continue to be offered going forward. She then read the list of the twenty-six commended at tonight’s meeting.

Discussion with the Committee followed.

Special Education Program Update

Dr. Sandra Einsel, Director of Student Services, presented the annual Special Education Program Update for Spring 2020. This update focused on specially designed instruction. Several members of the Special Education Department participated remotely in this presentation along with Dr. Einsel -- Ms. Dianna Parr, Preschool Coordinator; Ms. Rose Ferraro, Elementary Team Chair; Ms. Kim Cattan-Skelly, Middle School Team Chair; Ms. Pamela Anderson, FHS Special Education Department Head; and Ms. Kim McDowell, District-Wide Team Facilitator.

Dr. Einsel explained the special education eligibility process, defined special education and specially designed instruction, discussed related services, and described what specially designed instruction looks like at the preschool, elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Each staff member described in greater detail what specially designed instruction looks like in their own role at their particular school.

Questions and discussion with the Committee followed.

April Vacation Discussion and Possible Vote (April 20-24, 2020)

Dr. Berdos opened discussion regarding whether to continue remote learning through April vacation week (April 20 – 24, 2020), or honor that week as vacation. Either way, Monday, April 20th will be observed as a statewide legal holiday. The rationale for both options was discussed.

Working through April vacation week would ensure continuity of learning, maintain momentum, and sustain connections with students and teachers. A recent survey of the Foxborough Educators Association showed a strong preference (92%) to continue with remote learning through April vacation. If remote learning continues uninterrupted, the last day of school will be June 17, 2020.

Honoring April vacation would provide a break and a chance to regroup. The last day of school would be extended to June 23, 2020. After discussion, the Committee voted as follows:

Lord moved; Canfield seconded

Continue remote learning through April vacation week (Tuesday, April 21, 2020 through Friday, April 24, 2020). The last day of school will be June 17, 2020.

Vote: 5-0-0

School Committee Vote to Approve the Foxborough Public Schools Policy Manual

Ms. Belanger explained the need for an annual vote to approve the FPS Policy Manual. The manual is continually updated and revised on an as-needed basis throughout the school year. After discussion, the Committee voted as follows:

Canfield moved; Lord seconded

Approve the Foxborough Public Schools Policy Manual for the upcoming school year (2020-2021).

Vote: 5-0-0

Curriculum Review Schedule

Dr. Mello proposed a revision to the Curriculum Review Cycle as follows: switch years for the Science/Technology Engineering review (from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022), and the Business/Technology Education review (from 2021-2022 to 2020-2021). This is recommended as there is increasing crossover between technology and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). In addition, with the new Planning for Success model, technology and technology integration have moved to the forefront of plans going forward. Revising the Curriculum Review Schedule would reflect these trends. Discussion with the Committee followed.

Ruter moved; Canfield seconded

Approve the recommended change to the Curriculum Review Cycle as follows: the Science/Technology Engineering review will move to the 2021-2022 school year; and the Business/Technology Education review will move to the 2020-2021 school year.

Vote: 5-0-0

Other Matters

Dr. Mello updated the Committee on the Igo Elementary School Principal search and the next steps in the process. She also reported that the COVID-19 web page on the FPS website will be updated

each Sunday evening. All of Dr. Berdos' COVID-19 communications can be found there as well, and the Guidance Department has added information to the site.

Mr. Yukna discussed the status of the Burrell renovation project as far as drainage work, steel work, and work starting on the gym.

Mr. Canfield commended the staff and administration on the Remote Learning Plan. He thanked all those who worked on and implemented this very valuable resource.

Mr. Ruter echoed Mr. Canfield's comments.

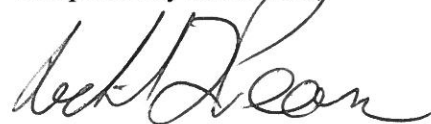
Ms. Belanger remarked that the next School Committee is scheduled for April 27th. The May meeting schedule may have to be flexible given other changes and postponements. She was disappointed to report that this year's Pops Concert has been canceled.

Dr. Berdos noted that families who need to drop off documentation for September 2020 Kindergarten registration may do so at the Central Office.

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Pearson
Clerk

Attachments:

Special meeting minutes of 3/30/20
Spring 2020 Special Education Program Update
April Vacation Discussion and Possible Vote
Curriculum Review Cycle
Memo – Specific Expectations for Special Education

Approved: April 27, 2020