

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE  
TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

Regular Meeting

Date: March 9, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Virtual Meeting

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Richard Pearson, Mr. Rob Canfield, Ms. Tina Belanger, Ms. Michelle Raymond; Mr. Brent Ruter arrived during the Teaching and Learning Segment of the Meeting

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

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT: Ms. Chiara Pacini

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Mr. Pearson opened the meeting and welcomed those viewing at home. All attendees at this meeting participated virtually.

***Open Public Comment***

Five community inbox submissions were received since the last meeting. Mr. Pearson listed the names and addresses of those who submitted comments. All submissions were previously forwarded to School Committee members for their review.

***Approval of Minutes***

Belanger moved; Raymond seconded

Approve the regular meeting minutes of February 23, 2021, as amended

Vote: Belanger-aye; Canfield-aye; Raymond-aye; Pearson-aye (4-0-0)

***Teaching and Learning Highlight***

Dr. Berdos introduced Igo Elementary School Principal Ms. Kate Campbell and the meeting's teaching and learning highlight – Igo in Action – a video slideshow of teaching and learning moments in time happening at the Igo School. Ms. Campbell explained that a challenge this year is missing the camaraderie of visiting classrooms and daily interactions that occur during a “normal” school year. Ms. Katie Young, Igo Elementary Math Specialist, was instrumental in putting the slideshows together, four of which are scheduled for this school year to be shared school-wide. A portion of December's slideshow was played for the Committee and showed snapshots of students learning, reading and creating in classrooms and small groups. The slideshow was a wonderful representation of the teaching and learning happening at school every day despite this year's disruptions. Discussion with the Committee followed.

***Superintendent's Update***

Mr. Pearson informed the Committee that in-person meetings at the Town Hall can resume as of the next meeting, following all COVID-19 protocols.

Dr. Berdos updated the Committee on the following:

- The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has provided new guidance to schools that will allow singing indoors following new safety protocols – one of which is

spacing of 10 feet apart. Dr. Berdos extended her gratitude to Ms. Neda Joury-Penders and Ms. Erin Earnst for their strong support and advocacy for this issue.

- The Fall II athletics season has started. Spectators will be allowed following the guidelines sent out by Athletic Directors. The Hockomock League has agreed there will be no road fans permitted. Local health officials will continue to be consulted throughout the season regarding any necessary change in safety protocols.
- MCAS testing for Spring 2021 was discussed along with the scheduling logistics to be worked out. No dates are available yet for elementary testing, but there is a testing window for middle and high school students during the month of May. A one-week testing period at the high school is being considered and will be worked around AP (Advanced Placement) testing. It is expected that all students will be attending school in person by that time. Discussion with the Committee followed.
- FHS graduation is scheduled for Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, with a rain date of June 5<sup>th</sup> and will be held outside. Guidelines will be forthcoming from DESE on what graduation can look like this year.

Mr. Yukna provided an update on the Burrell renovation project. The first two phases complete most classrooms, and the gym will continue to be used as temporary classrooms until phase three is completed. The project is on schedule, but due to some delays the schedule is very tight. There is significant work still to be done; i.e., gutting and rebuilding the cafeteria and kitchen and completing the gym. Mr. Yukna anticipates 100% project completion by the return to school in the fall.

### ***Return to Full In-Person Learning Update***

A thorough and comprehensive update on the return to full in-person learning was provided by Dr. Berdos. Mr. Pearson welcomed the three elementary principals: Ms. Michele McCarthy, Burrell Elementary Principal; Ms. Kate Campbell, Igo Elementary Principal; and Mr. Mike Stanton, Taylor Elementary Principal; who joined the meeting virtually. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Berdos reported in great detail regarding planning taking place for a full return to in-person school. She cited prior guidance used in decision making, noted the bus capacity limits have been lifted; and reported that planning is constantly occurring with safety as the number one priority for students and staff.

Subcommittee recommendations, vaccination eligibility and family survey data were discussed. Family survey data showed strong support for a full, in-person return. Guidance for social distancing in classrooms is a minimum of 3 feet, but for lunch and snack breaks social distancing remains at 6 feet. Additional planning and considerations for a full return to in-person school involve food service, technology and transportation. Grades K-5 will return to full, in-person learning on April 5, and grades 6-12 will return on April 26. Fully remote students (Cohort D) are allowed to continue with their remote program.

Next steps in the process to prepare for a full return were discussed and included virtual town hall meetings for parents, and sending a survey to families of Cohort D students regarding their intent to return. Questions and discussion with the Committee followed.

A question was raised about the impact a full return would have on this year's school budget from a supply, maintenance and custodial perspective. Mr. Yukna explained that due to proactive planning, staffing and additional daily cleaning will stay consistent. Based on two grants received this spring and the latest round of government support, additional funding for schools has been made available. There is enough PPE and cleaning/sanitizing product to get through the summer. Additional desks have been purchased, with commitment dates to receive the elementary furniture before April 5<sup>th</sup>, and the high school and middle school furniture over the school vacation week.

### ***Curriculum Review Cycle Discussion***

Dr. Mello described recent modifications to the curriculum review cycle and cited the reasons for the revisions. Usually the cycle gets updated at its conclusion, but due to several unexpected circumstances, a fresh start and a total revamp of the curriculum review cycle is proposed for the next 10 years. One change in this cycle from prior review cycles is separating Music and Visual Arts so that each will have their own review. This new review cycle will better serve the needs of the district.

Ruter moved; Raymond seconded

Approve the proposed 10-year FY '2022-2032 Curriculum Review Cycle, as presented

Vote: Belanger-aye; Ruter-aye; Raymond-aye; Canfield-aye; Pearson-aye (5-0-0)

### ***Third Reading of Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals***

Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals – was in the process of revision in March 2020 before the school closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was previously read into the record and is being brought back at this time to finalize the revisions. After discussion the following votes were taken:

Belanger moved/Canfield seconded

Waive the third reading of policy IMGA – Assistance Animals

Vote: Belanger-aye; Ruter-aye; Raymond-aye; Canfield-aye; Pearson-aye (5-0-0)

Ruter moved; Raymond seconded

Approve revisions to Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals as presented

Belanger-aye; Ruter-aye; Raymond-aye; Canfield-aye; Pearson-aye (5-0-0)

### ***Other Matters***

Dr. Berdos reminded everyone this weekend is Daylight Savings Time and it's time to turn the clocks ahead. She expressed her excitement looking forward to warmer temperatures and students returning to school.

Dr. Mello informed parents to watch for announcements on upcoming Kindergarten information night and screenings.

After a question about the recent CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) meeting, Dr. Berdos reported that items supported were computer/software/printer upgrades and replacement - \$100,000; three 77-passenger buses - \$246,000 (original request was for 4 buses), and copier replacement - \$40,000;

for a total CIP request of \$386,000. These items will move forward to the Town Meeting in May. The request for Music Department replacement instruments was not approved.

Mr. Pearson thanked those who tuned in tonight for the meeting and cautioned even though we are making great progress to remain vigilant regarding COVID-19.

Ruter moved; Belanger seconded

Adjourn the meeting

Vote: Belanger-aye; Ruter-aye; Raymond-aye; Canfield-aye; Pearson-aye (5-0-0)

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Canfield', written over a horizontal line.

Rob Canfield

Clerk

Attachments:

Regular Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2021

Community Inbox Submissions

Curriculum Review Cycle

Policy IMGA – Assistance Animals

Approved: April 6, 2021