

BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD

DECEMBER 21, 2009

MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was held on Tuesday, December 21, 2009 at 6:13 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Chairman Dave Partridge presided:

Members of the Board Present: Beth Lukovits, Vice-Chair
Marcia Farwell
Wanda Meagher
Forrest Milkowski, Secretary

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Susan Hodgdon, SAU41 Superintendent
Mark McLaughlin, Business Administrator
Carol Mace, Director of Curriculum
Bob Kelly, Director of Special Education
Lidia Desrochers, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School
Lorraine Wenger, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy
James Doig, Assistant Principal/Special Education Coordinator, RMMS
Kristina Henry, Assistant Principal/Special Education Coordinator, CSDA
Mr. Ernie Pistor, Chairman, Finance Committee
Janice Tremblay, Finance Committee

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

Superintendent Hodgdon stated the need for a non-public session at the end of the meeting.

Ms. Farwell informed the board of a request from Mr. Wheeler regarding snowmobile access across school grounds.

PUBLIC INPUT

An unidentified member of the public questioned the temperature at which children are not allowed outdoors during recess, etc. Principal Desrochers responded the guideline is 20 degrees. She added if the wind chill factor brings the temperature below 20 degrees, the children do not go outdoors.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Principals

Principal Desrochers informed the board NWEA testing would take place between January 11th and February 1st. Referring to the enrollment update provided in her report, she stated the only visible difference is Pre-K has more than doubled since its inception.

With regard to buildings & grounds, the cap at the entryway of RMMS has been completed.

The Memorandum of Understanding Review took place at CSDA on December 17th. The review process at RMMS was incomplete as Sgt. Kurland was called away on an emergency. A review is scheduled for December 22nd. The Memorandum of Understanding has been placed on the web site.

Principal Wenger commented on the nice turnout for the parent Internet safety night. Sgt. Kurland coordinated the event and brought in Sgt. Mello, a Hollis Police Officer who specializes in Internet detective work.

Ms. Lukovits stated she had read the policy and found nothing that addresses outside computer use by students. She believes the district is moving in that direction to address issues such as students being bullied by a classmate on line. Principal Wenger informed the board she is attending a cyber bullying conference in January, and that such issues have not been dealt with unless they came into the school and affected student behavior.

1 Ms. Meagher commented actions that take place outside of the school could have an impact in school. Principal Wenger
2 replied the school is dependent upon parents in such instances. If the parents make the school aware of an ongoing
3 situation, school personnel can have that awareness and monitor the situation.

4
5 Superintendent Hodgdon remarked cyber bullying is the fastest growing area for school law in litigation. All school law is
6 based on case law so something has to have gone all the way through the system so that it can be reached back to as a
7 foundation for policy. The leadership team has created a list that includes procedures for that type of situation and will
8 meet with Attorney Dean Eggert shortly.

9
10 Principal Wenger remarked 6th grade enrollment at CSDA is down slightly since the start of the school year. They are
11 losing 2 additional students at the end of the week. However, there are more people moving into town and more students
12 coming in at the beginning of the year.

13
14 Director of Curriculum

15
16 Director Mace informed the board the recommendations remaining from the 2008 Mathematics Research Report would
17 serve as the focus for the Mathematics Task Committee's work this year.

18
19 The committee will provide:

20
21 An analysis and recommendation on whether it is feasible to set as a goal that:

- 22 • All students complete Algebra 1 or Introduction to Algebra by eighth grade
- 23 • All college bound students complete Algebra 3/Trigonometry or Pre-calculus in high school

24
25 A research-based protocol for vertical acceleration, including:

- 26 • An analysis of the impact of providing Algebra to qualifying sixth graders
- 27 • An analysis of the impact on curriculum at the middle school and high school levels
- 28 • Multiple measures to identify "mathematically promising" students

29
30 A plan to support SAU-wide mathematics professional development, including:

- 31 • A clearing house to share up-to-date research on mathematics curriculum and instruction
- 32 • A regularly updated list of professional development opportunities

33
34 Guidelines pertaining to the use of the 4-function calculator

35
36 A report on the above items will be submitted to the Director of Curriculum and Instruction by June 2010

37
38 The Leadership Team has begun to address next steps on the Five-Year Plan, following its approval by the SAU Board at
39 the November meeting. Specific action steps currently underway include:

40
41 Webinar on the *Inform* data management system at the November 17th Leadership Team meeting

42
43 Inventory of current data collection and storage practices in all schools and the SAU office

44
45 Collection of lesson plan data using a common template to identify content, skills, and assessments

46
47 Development of a survey to determine SAU professional development needs

48
49 With regard to the SAU 41 Strategic Plan Steering Committee:

50
51 The organizational meeting was held on November 30th. Part of the meeting was devoted to exploring the future
52 forces impacting education. To increase their expertise/knowledge base about future trends in education, they have
53 been assigned readings, which will be discussed at their next meeting scheduled for December 15th.

54
55 Director of Special Education

56
57 Director Kelly informed the board the Response to Intervention sub-committee would meet January 12th. This committee
58 falls within the SAU goals for student growth monitoring. He looks forward to seeing interventions created beyond what
59 we currently have, and without cost, that address student needs prior to special education. There is also a social skills

1 program going on that would address a number of student's needs especially over an extended program during the
2 summer instead of their having to attend some of the camps that have been utilized.

3
4 He provided worksheets related to some ideas associated with stimulus funding. The district has been allocated up to
5 \$136,000 in funding. There is believed to be an additional \$40,000 that may be allocated. Once the final allocation
6 amount is known, he will complete the necessary submissions.

7
8 When questioned about the use of stimulus funding, Director Kelly stated some things previously deemed not eligible in a
9 more general way versus through an IEP are now believed to be eligible. Mr. Milkowski questioned whether the amounts
10 were known in terms of what would be added to the budget to be offset by the stimulus funding. Director Kelly remarked
11 the expenditures would not impact the budget. Chairman Partridge explained the expenditures as well as the revenue
12 would be listed in the budget. Director Kelly stated a quick turnaround in reimbursement is anticipated (within a few
13 weeks of filing). He added the district can start expending funds at this point and the turnaround for reimbursement is
14 expected to be short. Use of current funds and quick reimbursement will eliminate the need for the expenditures to be
15 listed within the budget.

16
17 Ms. Lukovits questioned the maintenance of effort. Director Kelly responded he had originally been informed by the State
18 Department that maintenance of effort would include stimulus funding. That has since been changed to just local funding.

19
20 Superintendent

21
22 Superintendent Hodgdon informed the board the electronic version of the administrative evaluation model sent to the
23 members was missing pages, and would be re-sent.

24
25 FY11 BUDGET

26
27 Third review of the proposed FY11 Budget

28
29 Director Kelly informed the board he removed \$4,000 by changing the Preschool 101 Aid from a FTE to a .8 position
30 reducing that salary line down to \$15,004. The total special education budget overall is \$8,482 under last year's budgeted
31 amount. He met with the Business Administrator to ensure the Preschool Coordinator (.5 teacher/.5 coordinator position)
32 is included with the other administrators within the district in terms of consideration for salary increase. All other line items
33 remain unchanged.

34
35 Ms. Meagher questioned, with the additional resources, if had he been able to re-evaluate out-of-district services and try
36 to do something for cost savings across the district. Director Kelly responded the current out of districts in Brookline have
37 been looked at very closely and that is not a viable option at this time. They have discussed trying to create a predominant
38 program that would be housed within district and then to integrate students from Hollis as well as anybody that might be
39 able to come in from outside. There is still enough diversity among that particular population that resists cost
40 effectiveness to do it. It will continue to be looked at.

41
42 Ms. Meagher remarked this is the first year since she has been on the board that she has seen the special education
43 budget go down.

44
45 Mr. McLaughlin commented he had been requested to make a number of changes to the budget as a result of the last
46 meeting. He broke out FICA and retirement numbers, applied percentages, and split that out. He met with
47 Superintendent Hodgdon and Principals Wenger and Desrochers to review budget items for potential reductions. The
48 result of that meeting was an approximate \$35,964 reduction in the overall budget. The current proposed budget total is
49 \$9,087,001. With regard to the potential non-union merit increases, page 8 of the handout shows that equated to a 1.2%
50 increase (\$5,647).

51
52 A question had arisen with regard to computers. He has verified with Director Raymond the \$22,158 figure (account
53 number 2225-614-0) is correct. The overall budget is \$74,148, which includes firewall changes applied throughout the
54 districts, I Prism network filters, wireless capabilities, switch replacement in each of the buildings, generic supplies used
55 throughout the district, and PowerSchool. When proportioned out, the budget amount comes to \$22,158.

56
57 Superintendent Hodgdon added the cost of PowerSchool is shared across the district with Brookline, Hollis, and the
58 COOP each assuming 1/3 of the cost within their budgets. She was unclear whether the cost would be apportioned.
59

1 When asked, Mr. McLaughlin stated there is a yearly per-student charge each year for the PowerSchool system.
2 Information received from Director Raymond indicates the cost includes the on-line service and upgrades, tech support,
3 and host service (have a year to year contract with 6 months remaining). Twenty thousand (\$20,000) is the total yearly
4 cost for PowerSchool. Superintendent Hodgdon informed the board she could raise the issue of apportionment with
5 Director Raymond as they are still early enough in the process. Ms. Meagher remarked the COOP should assume 50%
6 of the expense.

7
8 When asked, Superintendent Hodgdon stated she would look into why the AlertNow software is not listed within the
9 budget.

10
11 Chairman Partridge questioned the \$46,000 transportation cost (account numbers 2700-510-1/2), which was discussed at
12 the last meeting. Superintendent Hodgdon responded she had not received information back from legal council. She
13 reviewed the contract, which states the price increase is tied to the CPI, and spoke with Hollis Transportation. Without
14 them being able to review the contract, the quick response she received was "it always goes up". She forwarded a copy
15 of the contract to Tom Closson. His opinion is the district would not see a decrease even though CPI is down 2 points,
16 but instead would see it as flat. He has provided a letter to Hollis Transportation stating the same. No further response
17 has been received. She will follow up.

18
19 Chairman Partridge commented more than \$450,000 of the potential increase is related to salary line changes and health
20 insurance costs. If you factor in the increase in transportation costs that accounts for approximately \$500,000 of the
21 \$550,000 potential budget increase. When you add the \$12,500 SAU increase (district adjustment) and the \$13,500 for
22 computers, there is not much else that is increased within the budget.

23
24 When asked, Mr. McLaughlin stated he has not had the opportunity to review the expendable trust fund and was unaware
25 of the current balance. Ms. Meagher requested that information be provide when available.

26
27 Chairman Partridge noted account number 5220-930 proposes a \$10,000 transfer to the expendable trust fund, and
28 questioned whether the \$6,500 allocation proposed for building repairs/carpentry (2600-438-1/2) was necessary. He
29 questioned the difference between general maintenance and building repairs. Principal Wenger commented if a door
30 needed to be fixed for say \$300 that is where the funding would come from. Chairman Partridge stated his understanding
31 of the need to have funding available to address such issues, and that he was simply trying to determine whether what is
32 proposed is appropriate for those types of issues or if repair work should come out of the expendable trust allocation.
33 Principal Desrochers provided additional examples, such as tile replacement, where such funds would be necessary.
34 Principal Wenger stated her agreement with removing the sum of \$1,000 from the proposed allocation.

35
36 Ms. Meagher remarked it appears as though the building repairs/carpentry is extra and the kind of expenditures that
37 should be taken out of the expendable trust, which is why the accounts were zeroed out last year. Chairman Partridge
38 explained last year the expendable trust was new and when it was put in these lines were taken out.

39
40 Mr. Pistor questioned whether the \$10,000 proposed transfer to the expendable trust would be addressed through a
41 Warrant Article. Ms. Meagher stated that is how it had been done in the past. Mr. Milkowski added if it was the board's
42 desire to add funds to the expendable trust a public hearing would be required.

43
44 Chairman Partridge commented if the board's intent was to put forth a Warrant Article the transfer should not be reflected
45 within the budget. Ms. Meagher stated, in presenting the budget, if the \$10,000 line item were removed from the budget
46 (addressed through warrant article), she would also subtract out from the 2009/2010 column the previous year's warrant
47 article transfer to allow for an apples to apples comparison. Without doing that, the appearance is the budget was cut by
48 an additional \$10,000.

49
50 Mr. Milkowski did not agree and felt the allocation and the transfer should both be reflected within the budget.

51
52 The general consensus was the \$10,000 proposed transfer to expendable trust be address through a separate warrant
53 article, and not be part of the baseline budget.

54
55 **MOTION BY MEMBER FARWELL TO REDUCE THE PROPOSED BUDGET BY THE SUM OF SIX THOUSAND FIVE**
56 **HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$6,500), BY REMOVING THE ALLOCATIONS FOR ACCOUNT NUMBERS 2600-438-1/2,**
57 **BUILDING REPAIRS/CARPENTRY**
58 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER LUKOVITS**

1 **MOTION CARRIED**

2 **5/0**

3
4 **MOTION BY MEMBER MILKOWSKI TO REDUCE THE PROPOSED BUDGET BY THE SUM OF TEN THOUSAND**
5 **DOLLARS (\$10,000) BY REMOVING THE ALLOCATION FOR ACCOUNT NUMBER 5220-930-0, TRANSFER TO**
6 **EXPENDABLE TRUST, AND THAT A WARRANT ARTICLE BE ISSUED FOR THE FUNDS TO BE TRANSFERRED**
7 **FROM UNEXPENDED FUND BALANCE**

8 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER LUKOVITS**

9 **MOTION CARRIED**

10 **5/0**

11
12 Ms. Janice Tremblay questioned why an increase is shown in the line items for gasoline (2700-626-1/2). Chairman
13 Partridge was unsure why the increase would be listed under the category of gasoline. The question of the increase in
14 the transportation line items remains unresolved, but the potential increase should not be identified in the gasoline line
15 items.

16
17 Chairman Partridge questioned account number 1100-128-2, salaries, substitutes, and why actuals and budgeted
18 amounts didn't line up. Principal Wenger informed the board salary line items are budgeted through the central office.
19 Mr. McLaughlin will review.

20
21 Ms. Lukovits brought up the question of paying the substitute rate for an individual who was truly an aide. Mr. McLaughlin
22 stated that was not reflected within the proposed budget, as it was not part of the conversations he had with Director
23 Kelly. Superintendent Hodgdon remarked Mr. Milkowski had questioned using a substitute for the .5 personal care
24 paraprofessional position. The suggestion was not to take that salary from the substitute account. Mr. McLaughlin will
25 review the issue with Director Kelly.

26
27 Mr. Milkowski pointed out the vacant position remains vacant. Principal Desrochers explained a substitute was in place
28 until the paraprofessional was processed. She believes they are now ready to transition to a .5 non-substitute position.
29 Mr. Milkowski commented the .5 position is listed as a full time position within the budget. Mr. McLaughlin spoke of a
30 Preschool one-to-one aide at four days a week and .8 FTE. Superintendent Hodgdon will discuss the position with
31 Director Kelly and report back to the board.

32
33 Chairman Partridge questioned whether there was input from the Finance Committee members present. Ms. Tremblay
34 commented she had asked about lowering the budget amount for legal services (2318-301). Chairman Partridge stated a
35 request has been made for information on actual expenditures for review of the numbers. Ms. Tremblay questioned if the
36 proposed allocation could be reduced to \$25,000, as the full allocation has not been utilized in years past. Chairman
37 Partridge reiterated the need to review actual expenditures. Mr. McLaughlin stated he would remove the 08/09 budget
38 proposal columns and replace with actuals so that trending can be seen.

39
40 Ms. Tremblay touched on the sheet provided that indicated changes to the proposed budget. She commented the sheet
41 listed an addition of \$1,000 for social studies textbooks, however, that addition was not identified within the budget. Mr.
42 McLaughlin explained, as all of the sheets are formula linked and the addition of a line affects all formulas that pull forward
43 from one data sheet to another, the \$1,000 was accounted for in account number 1123-614 (\$600 was added to the \$400
44 that was already in the account).

45
46 Chairman Partridge questioned account number 1169-650-1/2 as it was budgeted in the amount of \$8,900 in 2009/2010,
47 which has carried forward into the proposed budget for the coming year. Ms. Meagher felt that might have been the
48 library purchase, which should have been a one-time expense in 09/10 and not included within the budget for the coming
49 year. Superintendent Hodgdon was unclear as to what the allocation was related to.

50
51 Mr. McLaughlin stated the accounts are not related to the I.T. budget. However, he would like to look into it further prior to
52 the board taking action to remove the accounts from the proposed budget.

53
54 Ms. Meagher remarked account number 1169-113-2, salaries aides – support staff, (computer aide), is still listed within
55 the budget although the position had been cut. The title was changed, but the account number remains the same. Ms.
56 Meagher commented the dollars associated with that position must have been reduced from somewhere else within the
57 budget as the MS22 matched the bottom line. Chairman Partridge commented the \$17,566 likely should be in another
58 line. Mr. McLaughlin will review.

59

1 Mr. Milkowski questioned whether the board had a target they wished to reach. Members Lukovits, Meagher and
2 Partridge were all of the opinion the goal was flat budgeting before salary and uncontrollable costs.

3
4 Mr. Milkowski expressed a concern with going to town meeting with a 6% increase. Suggested one approach the board
5 could take would be to identify areas where cuts could be made if necessary. He felt it would be helpful to understand
6 programs and associated costs.

7
8 Ms. Lukovits remarked there are very few places where staff could be cut and not put us well over state limits in terms of
9 class size. She expressed an opinion if the board were to cut everything it could possibly sacrifice; additional cuts would
10 still be requested. Chairman Partridge explained the board went into the budget process last year with the decision not to
11 recommend cutting programs. The town was willing to cut programs. It was the teachers who came back and saved the
12 programs and positions.

13
14 Ms. Farwell stated the importance of letting townspeople know if funding were reduced it would result in staff or program
15 cuts and provide specific examples. Chairman Partridge remarked that was what was done last year and the discussion
16 and resulting decision did not go the way it should have. He did not have a problem with having numbers in hand, but he
17 would not vote to cut those out of the budget. He will go in with a budget that keeps the programs in place and will let the
18 townspeople make any decisions about eliminating programs. The existing programs were voted in by the townspeople,
19 and he would not recommend cutting any.

20
21 Mr. Pistor commented last year townspeople did say they were willing to cut programs by chopping money out of the
22 budget and allowing the board to re-arrange things as they would. He suggested the board could propose certain cuts
23 and perhaps would get the desired reaction that the townspeople want to keep them in place.

24
25 Mr. Milkowski felt the board might want to consider creating a list of specific items that would be cut if a reduction were
26 required as well as what the impact of such a reduction would be. Chairman Partridge reiterated that was the approach
27 taken last year.

28
29 Ms. Meagher questioned account number 2600-432-1/2, Fire Alarm. She also questioned account number 2600-622-2,
30 Utility Svcs Lighting, and felt \$8,000-\$9,000 could be reduced from that line as the budgeted amount is \$50,000 and
31 actual for 09/10 was \$41,000. Chairman Partridge questioned the unreserved fund balance at the end of each year.

32
33 Ms. Meagher commented the cost of oil for 09/10 was based on a good contract we were able to get in on. She
34 questioned whether the district has the opportunity to get the same type of rate this year. She was concerned the
35 proposed budgeted amount may be low. Superintendent Hodgdon will pursue and report back to the board.

36
37 Carrie Morse, 26 Benfarmsworth Road

38
39 Thanked the board for opening the discussion to the public. Stated she would be willing to pay more taxes to cover the
40 cost of education. Remarked we owe it to our children, the community, and ourselves. She would only expect taxes to go
41 up after some teachers did not take raises – we owe it to them.

42
43 Confirm dates noted in FY11 Budget meeting calendar

44
45 *The January 26th meeting date was re-scheduled to January 19th at 6:30 p.m.*

46
47 CALENDAR

48
49 *The February 23rd meeting date was re-scheduled to February 16th.*

50
51 Ms. Farwell informed the board of a request received from Mr. Wheeler to cross over school grounds, during non-school
52 hours, for the purposes of traversing a snowmobile trail. He offered to erect a sign stating the area is not a real trail.

53
54 **MOTION BY MEMBER FARWELL TO APPROVE THE REQUEST OF MR. WHEELER TO ALLOW HIM TO UTILIZE**
55 **THE TRAIL FROM HIS HOUSE TO JOIN THE TRAIL BEHIND THE RMMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WHEN SCHOOL**
56 **IS NOT IN SESSION PROVIDED HE MARK THE TRAIL AS A PRIVATE TRAIL FOR HIS USE ONLY**

57 **MOTION CARRIED**

58 **5/0**

59

1 APPROVAL OF SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES

2
3 Brookline School Board – Non Public September 22, 2009

4
5 **MOTION BY MEMBER MILKOWSKI TO APPROVE AS WRITTEN**
6 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MEAGHER**
7 **MOTION CARRIED**
8 **5/0**

9
10 Brookline School Board October 27, 2009
11 ▪ **Held**

12
13 Brookline School Board – Non Public October 27, 2009

14
15 **MOTION BY MEMBER MILKOWSKI TO APPROVE AS WRITTEN**
16 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MEAGHER**
17 **MOTION CARRIED**
18 **5/0**

19
20 Brookline School Board November 17, 2009

21
22 **MOTION BY MEMBER FARWELL TO APPROVE AS WRITTEN**
23 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER LUKOVITS**
24 **MOTION CARRIED**
25 **5/0**

26
27 Brookline School Board – Non Public November 17, 2009
28 ▪ **Held**

29
30 NON-PUBLIC SESSION

31
32 **MOTION BY MEMBER FARWELL THAT THE BOARD GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3**
33 **II (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE**
34 **REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF**

35
36 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MILKOWSKI**

37
38 *A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

39
40 Yea: Dave Partridge, Beth Lukovits, Forrest Milkowski, Marcia Farwell, Wanda Meagher

41 5

42 Nay:

0

43 **MOTION CARRIED**

44
45 *The Board went into non-public session at 8:19 p.m.*

46
47
48
49
50 Date _____ Signed _____