

WEST BOYLSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
WEDNESDAY January 8, 2014

LOCATION: West Boylston Middle/High School Media Center

PRESENT: SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Owanisian, Chairman  
Jennifer Breen  
Richard Shaw  
Erin Palumbo  
James Pedone, Jr.

ADMINISTRATORS

Elizabeth Schaper, Superintendent  
Lawrence Murphy, Principal Middle/High School  
Christopher LaBreck, Associate MS Principal  
Richard Meagher, Elementary Principal  
Roger E. Pontbriand, Jr., Business Administrator  
Sherri Traina, Special Education Administrator

COMMUNITY

Faculty & Staff:	5	Guests:	14
Student Advisors:	1	Press:	1

Mr. Owanisian opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to January 8, 2014 School Committee Meeting.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Shaw made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular School Committee Meeting of December 11, 2013; Mr. Pedone seconded. Motion approved. **Voted 4-0-0.**

**Student Recognition Awards**

Mr. Meagher congratulated Ben Frechette on his student of the month status. He is a fifth grader at Major Edwards Elementary School.

Mr. Murphy introduced the student of the month for the High School, Robert Buduo – grade 9, and congratulated him on his accomplishments.

Mr. LaBreck congratulated Makhsumbek Karamatov an 8th grader in the Middle School, on his accomplishments.

**Student Advisory Council**

Tyler Armev advised those in attendance there were several events going on to include: an upcoming February Blood Drive, a Neon themed Dance, Yearbook staff has been working on superlatives, NAHS created gift baskets for senior citizens and the new edition of Dickinson's Ribbons has been published.

**Acknowledgment Of Camera Crew**

Mr. Owanisian thanked Mr. Bokankowitz for his work filming the meeting.

**Highlight on Schools – M/HS Library Media Services**

Dr. Schaper introduced Ms. Erin Klemm, library media specialist, who presented updates to the committee with regard to events occurring in the library.

Ms. Klemm stated that she had been working with a collection of under-utilized books and putting them on display and into circulation. She stated that she is happy that circulation has increased quite a bit and she is seeing a group of regular students and is getting to know what they're interested in. She is also collaborating with teachers, helping them with semester long projects, research sources and citations. Ms. Klemm stated she and Ms. Sheila Tetler (art teacher) worked together to develop a service project where the students developed a mural on the wall of the

library/media center.

Ms. Klemm stated she created a website, which is interactive. She stated the website is a good way for people to get information for their classrooms, especially when they are not able to get to the media center, and also for students to get information when they are at home working on research projects. Ms. Klemm has also created a monthly newsletter which includes new trends in technology or apps that might be helpful.

Ms. Klemm stated that she was in the process of creating a “makerspace” – a community center with tools that supports the creative process and personal growth. The goal of the makerspace is for every participant to see themselves as a maker. It is about creating creative people who think for themselves, seek to learn new things, and develop innovative do-it-yourself solutions.

There was no community input this evening.

## **Community Input**

## **Budget Planning (Public Hearing)**

Dr. Schaper announced the date of the public hearing for the School Committee’s budget will be March 12, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the media Center. The Budget Subcommittee has set two dates to meet on February 26, 2014 and March 19, 2014. She stated that one or two additional meetings may also be scheduled and posted.

## **Subcommittee Reports**

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Shaw indicated there was nothing new at this point other than they had had discussions with Dr. Schaper relative to scheduling additional meetings. Dr. Schaper stated that they were also planning to set up some meetings with FinCom and CIB.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Chapter 74. Marketing (Communications) and Negotiations Subcommittees. School Committee members indicated there was nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Policy Subcommittee. Ms. Breen indicated there was an updated Homework Policy in the School Committee packets with revisions that were discussed at the last meeting. The revisions that were added to the policy were kindergarten and the correction of 6<sup>th</sup> grade to say 60-90 minutes. Mr. Pedone made a motion to approve the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading and the adoption of the Homework Policy IKB; Mr. Shaw seconded. **Voted 5-0-0.**

Dr. Schaper stated that now that the Committee voted the policy for adoption, the only thing that had to be done would be to add the dates that we took the first reading, second reading and adoption. Members would get a new copy of the policy for their binder, one would be posted on the web and Dr. Schaper would place one in the master file. A notice would be sent out to all teachers reflecting the changes. Mr. Shaw asked if parents would be notified. Dr. Schaper indicated she would be happy to do so.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the School Building and Technology Subcommittees. Members indicated there was nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Transportation Subcommittee. Dr. Schaper stated that a decision needs to be made with regard to our transportation contract. She if members of the Transportation Subcommittee would get in touch with either her or Mr. Pontbriand to indicate their availability. Mr. Pontbriand stated that we have a three year contract that is about to expire. He indicated there is an option for two years built into that contract. He asked do we want to accept that offer or do we want to go out to bid and start over. Dr. Schaper mentioned that while they are going over the budget at this time, we want to determine what the cost will be for busing.

## **Communication and Reports**

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the elementary school. Mr. Meagher stated that Major Edwards recently concluded their first “spell-a-thon” fundraiser and raised \$8,400.00, well above the goal of \$4,000.00. Mr. Meagher indicated a “building Needs” survey for 2014-2015 was conducted in December with respondents placing staffing the school library as their top priority, followed by updating the math curriculum and full day kindergarten. Mr. Meagher thanked Ms. Dziokonski (music) and Mr. Stefanelli (band) on the completion of their first holiday concerts and stated that TLA would be returning on January 17, 2014 for a full day of writer’s workshop.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the middle school. Mr. LaBreck stated that the Middle School Concerts were excellent and TLA would be returning the Middle School as well on January 17<sup>th</sup>. He indicated January 15, 2014 there would be a 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Information Night for parents, the Middle School play conducted their first rehearsal on January 7<sup>th</sup> and the play dates would be April 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. LaBreck indicated the scripts for the play were purchased with a grant from the Ellison Foundation.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the middle school. Mr. Murphy indicated that as part of their NEASC report, one of the things they recommend is that we find ways to banish anonymity so that every student is known by an adult and has some connection. He stated they have been talking about advisory, and within the last couple of weeks they have been looking at some models of advisory. He stated that they have a subcommittee that is working on this and will hopefully pilot a program in the spring and next fall, they hope to implement the program fully.

Mr. Murphy stated that there is a new opportunity for some of the struggling students called “5<sup>th</sup> Block”. This program will offer those students support. This would allow students to have the opportunity to come after school for extra help and to get guidance and support with regard to time management, study skills and motivation work.

Mr. Murphy stated that the Lions Scholar Academy students are planning a trip to the State House on January 29, 2014. He explained that the students had been to a model United Nations at Clark University and in the spring they would try and organize another one. He hopes that eventually one would be held at the High School.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Special Education Director. Ms. Traina indicated there was nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Business Administrator. Mr. Pontbriand stated we were doing well at this time.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the Superintendent. Dr. Schaper stated that classroom teachers and principals have submitted their budgets. She indicated that right now Mr. Pontbriand and she are reviewing the budget requests. The public hearing date has been set and now it is really a matter of looking at what was asked for and figuring out what needs to be done regarding raises and salaries. She stated they are currently on timeline.

Dr. Schaper stated that principals have been working with their staff to get their feedback regarding our mission statement and she will provide that information to the committee at the February retreat.

Dr. Schaper said that eleven teachers have volunteered to participate in the Writing Across the Curriculum Team and the first meeting of the team will be held on a mutually agreeable date in January or February. The members of the committee represent a range of grade levels and subject area expertise.

Dr. Schaper indicated that her administrative team has been discussing models for conducting learning walks as a means to enhance the professional culture and knowledge base of all educators. She stated that last month they discussed enhancing their protocol by adopting more of a “teacher rounds model” to obtain a higher degree of staff engagement. The first rounds in the district will take place at Major Edwards and may focus on high impact literacy practices.

Dr. Schaper asked if there were any questions with regard to the Data Dashboard. Mr. Owanisian asked Dr. Schaper about the information displayed in the School Choice 5 year trend. School Committee members inquired if there was a way we could find out the impact of School Choice students in the district such as test scores. Dr. Schaper indicated she was willing to compile the data with regard to the students who always been in the district compared to students who have been here for two years or more. Dr. Schaper felt that the decision regarding the number of students accepted into the district through school choice should continue to be decided yearly with a specific recommendation for each grade level.

Mr. Owanisian called for a report from the School Committee. All members indicated there was nothing new to report at this time. Mr. Owanisian confirmed the date of the retreat was February 21, 2014.

Mr. Owanisian made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and not to reconvene in open session; Ms. Palumbo seconded. **Voted 5-0-0.**

## **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made at 9:20 p.m. by Jennifer Breen seconded by James Pedone, **Voted: 5-0-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

---

Marie Johnson  
Recording Secretary