

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES

September 24, 2009 Work Session

6:00 p.m. Davis Street Building

Approved November 12, 2009

Present: Chairperson Doris Doyle; Committee Members: Keith McCormic, Dalton Athey, Marcia Day (arrived at 6:15). Also present: Superintendent Hollins, School Attorney Smith, administrators and members of the public and press.

1. Call to order: With a quorum present, chairperson Doyle called the meeting to order at 6:15.p.m.

2. Discussion Topics:

A. Virtual School

The Superintendent discussed the status of the Virtual School and at least one child who needs this program this year. The committee and superintendent discussed legislation to address the commissioner's concerns—taking MCAS testing, attendance, etc. The chairperson has reviewed the proposal.

B. School Opening

The Superintendent gave an overview of school opening 2009-2010 which generally went well. Ten students choiced in; school population is 1,509 counting pre-school. Special programs are doing well this year.

Greenfield is still discussing a shared special education program with Gill Montague. e.g. we have vehicles, GM has strong community/job development component. The two special education administrators have been meeting to see if this proposal can be realized.

Reports from elementary open houses and tours--very upbeat. Federal Street is far better with fewer students. Bus schedules and details are still being adjusted.

Principals Donna Woodcock and Jim Mullevey spoke about improvements at Greenfield High School from this summer. 90% of the high school was painted, 4 bathrooms were painted, the remaining bathrooms were power- washed and had lighting additions, 20 new SMARTboards are in classrooms. Staff and students are overjoyed. Doug Wilkins from GCC has been/will be donating his time to provide training.

The 8th Grade Academy is doing very well; students worked with Antioch College on team building to start off the year Grade 8 students have access to most GHS extracurricular activities. Overnight activities for students in band and chorus were discussed. No decisions made. A common concern is encouraging grade 8 students to participate in band and chorus. Overall, students appear to be happy at GHS – 285 students offered to participate in “Rachel’s Challenge.”

C. Extended Day

D. Athey inquired about the extended day program at GMS and Newton. . Discussion ensued about how extended day salaries were paid and how long it takes to set up the grant, compute a specific budget, and staff the program.

D. Additional Administration Staffing

K. McCormic inquired about new administration staffing. Superintendent reviewed hiring; new grant writer (goal is a self-funded position); 2nd person to join Superintendent's office in a couple of weeks. Special Ed has added two coordinators (k-8 and Out-of-District specialty programs for transition). As assistant for buildings and grounds is in place, Kate Wallen, who has environmental science background. Donna Shucanek is re-assigned to Four Corners and will continue to assist with management of transportation.

GPS still needs Literacy Tech. teachers part-time for each elementary library and would like to add data monitors soon. K. McCormic requested a complete list of the cost of administration functions under previous administration vs. now. Discussion ensued about positions that rely on grant funding vs. budgeted \$\$

E. Transportation Contract

Superintendent pointed out that GPS is in the 5th year of a 5-year contract and is seeking clarification of committee involvement in this important contract.

K. McCormic recommended sending it to the Strategy committee.

F. Other

Short discussion about agricultural possibilities. K. McCormic recommended a garden planting festival in the spring;

Nancy Bershoff requested to be on the next agenda.

3. Chairperson Doyle called Executive Session at 7:30 p.m. to discuss Labor Relations Strategies on pending litigation; potential settlements and resolutions. Motion by Doyle; 2nd Day: To enter non-public session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation with attorney. Passed by roll call vote. Unanimous.

The school attorney spoke to the committee, as warned.

K. McCormic left at 8:17 p.m. The meeting concluded at that time and all members left at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Audrey LaBonté