

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

Thursday, September 23, 2010 6:30 p.m.

Library, Greenfield High School

Approved November 18, 2010

Present: Chairperson John Lunt (JL); Andrew Blais (AB), Maryelen Calderwood (MC) (*late arrival*), Marcia Day (MD) (*late arrival*), Doris Doyle (DD), Keith McCormic (KM). Member absent: William Martin. **Also present:** Susan Hollins, Superintendent; Peter Smith, School Attorney; Elizabeth Gilman, School Business Manager; Heather Evans, Coordinator, Math & Science Academy; Kyle Kendall, GHS Student Council representative; and other school staff, citizens, and the press.

I. Call to Order:

With a quorum present (JL, AB, DD, KM), Chairperson Lunt called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes:

JL asked that approval of minutes be tabled. Motion to table made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

III. Reports

1. Chair

JL noted the strong trend of increasing enrollment and acknowledged the work of the superintendent, teachers and staff that is making this achievement possible. Student enrollment is now over 1,600; if every Greenfield public school student attended, enrollment would be 2,000.

The city has proposed that the school committee and city pursue the Mass. School Building Authority's (MSBA) new Green Repair program. If the district qualifies, the program pays 75-80% of school renovation costs for energy efficiency and related upgrades. The school district has identified the Four Corners School as its top priority for energy efficiency upgrades. The school committee fully supported the Green Repair program application. Lunt thanked town officials for their support and cooperation.

2. Superintendent's Report

- GPS has received and will be participating in a community-building grant (\$12,000-15,000) to reduce risk behaviors of middle/high school students. Building partnerships puts GPS in good position for future grants and a larger, long-range grant program is being considered for a future date. As a component, GPS is adding some funding to the program to allow for the bullying policy issue to be included in this community-wide effort.
- The Virtual School (MAVA) now has 203 students, with 185 more enrollments in process.
- SH is planning staffing adjustments at Central offices (including business, special ed., technology)
- SH has been invited to speak at Mass. Association of School Superintendents' conference. School Committee member Doris Doyle will be given a leadership award at the conference.

GPS is being recognized statewide.

- Innovation Plan for Virtual School, due Oct. 1, is close to being completed. SH intends to present one Innovation Plan at each School Committee meeting October through January.

3. Committee Reports

The work of the **Virtual School Subcommittee**, Doyle reported, will be discussed later.

Doyle reported that the **Bullying Subcommittee** has dissolved and moved the work to the Community Relations grant effort, mentioned by the Superintendent. The issue is one that should be considered by the whole community, not only the school system, although the important requirements of the school system are being addressed.

Lunt reported that the **Policy Subcommittee** has brought GPS bullying policies in compliance with new state laws. Virtual School policies will be discussed later in the meeting.

McCormic reported that the **Building Committee** is awaiting firm enrollment numbers. He clarified process of selecting project manager, to include a Request for Services out to bid, selection of finalists, and a decision by MSBA. Building timeline has moved up, with plans for community vote next summer/fall and completion by the end of next academic year (2011-2012).

Motion by AB, 2nd by KM, to **authorize the superintendent to submit to Mass. School Building Authority a statement of interest for the Green Repair program**. Discussion clarified the initial repairs will be at Four Corners School. **Motion passed unanimously.**

SH clarified GPS has completed an engineering analysis of every school. Town officials would like to see a plan from the School Committee for Green River School before discussion of renovation.

IV. Public Comment

As the request of DD, GHS student council member Kyle Kendall reported on activities at the high school: the foreign language dept. is planning a trip to France; the band is performing at Big E tomorrow; student council is working on book drive to send books to Uganda and will host "Invisible Children" presentation in March; the band has about 45 students; chorus is smaller; auditions for 16-member Select Choir were yesterday; 8th grade chorus has started; falls sports are underway; many students are excited about the new TV studio.

V. New Business:

1. Technology Update –

With help from Carol Holzberg, Technology Coordinator, SH presented 3 short films of GPS students: a 1st grade classroom using Smart Boards for a math lesson graphing favorite foods; middle school students videotaping their research presentations; and a slide show introducing the 6th & 7th grade Math & Science Academy.

SH reported that 16 students are enrolled (with goal of 18), with an even gender split. SH clarified that socioeconomic and racial make-up are probably similar to general student enrollment. Science curriculum is physics and integrated biology/chemistry. Social sciences include math-science achievements of ancient civilizations. Well-rounded

curriculum includes all other subjects, including art, Spanish and technology. Innovative math curriculum completes Algebra in 7th grade, allowing students to finish entire AP math sequence by graduation and to study math-dependent topics in science.

2. MCAS Update

SH reviewed MCAS results. To bolster math performance, SH clarified that Greenfield had a Summer Math Academy was open to all 72 students who applied. An especially strategic group to support are students scoring 40-60% because their improvement may make a significant difference in MCAS scores.

JL introduced improvements in regular review of student progress. GPS has purchased Measures of Academic Progress software for computer-based screening that allows baseline, checkpoint and exit testing and guides adjustments to instruction will be used in grades 2-8.

One elementary classroom at Newton is implementing looping—the teacher of grade 2 looping up with the same children to teach them in grade 3, a strategy shown to improve achievement and possibly a strong strategy for grades 2 to 3.

3. Opening of Two Schools

The Math & Science Academy was discussed earlier in the meeting.

SH explained the budget, tuition and enrollment goals for the Virtual School. Using the School Choice formula, MAVA can bill each student's school district of origin up to \$5,000. SH recommends setting tuition at \$6,800 for up to 500 students, making a maximum \$3.4 million budget. If enrollment is less, budget will be less. SH expects 250 students by Oct. 1, with enrollment continuing. She believes the school will reach 500 students this year. The virtual school budget is being set up in a separate revolving account. This provides a financial wall between funding for this school and the general funds of the other public schools. The virtual school will be self-supporting from its tuition fees.

KM moved to set budget for MAVA at \$3.4 million for Fiscal Year 2011 with student tuition set at \$6,800 for Fiscal Year 2011, with tuitions received and expenses paid from the revolving account set up for this purpose. Motion seconded. Discussion: Staffing to include 6-8 teachers. SPED services are provided by student's home district. MAVA is doing outreach to introduce itself to sending schools. This motion reflects the maximum budget for MAVA; fewer than 500 students enrolled will mean the budget will be lower. **Motion passed unanimously.**

4. Virtual School (MAVA) Policies

AB requested formal numbering system of these and other policies. SH will do so.

Secretary Day provided the first reading for these MAVA policies:

“Multiple Child Enrollment”

“Late Enrollment”

“Academic Integrity”

“Cyberbullying”

SH noted wording changes and corrections from members. Changes will be included in second reading at the School Committee's October meeting. SH asked for adoption of these

policies at their first reading because of the pressing time need. The policy adoption policy allows for this. Motion by DD, 2nd by KM, to **accept MAVA policies of Multiple Child Enrollment, Late Enrollment, Academic Integrity, and Cyberbullying as presented with wording changes noted. Motion passed unanimously.**

5. Renaming the Middle School

JL asked members to consider possible names for the middle school, to be discussed at the next meeting. Changes to school building names do not require Town Council approval.

VI. Executive Session by roll call vote. The School Department attorney and School Committee discussed collective bargaining.

Motion by KM; 2nd by AB; To authorize the Chair to work with Attorney Smith to draft and sign an agreement for Insurance (2005) and then seek ratification. Passed unanimous.

Motion by AB; 2nd by KM; Roll call vote to leave executive session 9:20pm.

VIII. Adjournment

Reports distributed:

“MCAS & Academic Initiatives” – Supt. Susan Hollins, 9/23/2010

“School Dept. General Fund Expenditure Report – Town of Greenfield, 9/21/2010

“MAVA FY 2011 Budget” (virtual school)

Virtual School Policies:

“Multiple Child Enrollment”

“Late Enrollment”

“Academic Integrity”

“Cyberbullying”

“Student Enrollment Report” for Greenfield Public Schools