

***KING PHILIP REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
RETREAT MINUTES
Tuesday, July 15, 2014
Dennis, MA***

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Mr. Gee, Vice Chair, at 11:18AM.

ROLL CALL OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Members Present: Norfolk: Michael Gee, Noelle Tonelli
Plainville: Patrick Francomano, Charlene McEntee, Ann-marie Martin
(via *skype*)
Wrentham: Lynn Desrochers
Members Absent: Edward Goddard, Jim Killion, Jeff Chalmers
HS Student Council Representative: None

Note: Mrs. Martin was unable to physically attend the meeting due to an emergency at home. In accordance with Policy BEDL, Mrs. Martin was able to use *skype* to participate as a full voting member once it was verified that all audio and video communication were functioning properly. Mr. Gee chaired the meeting.

The meeting was not videotaped.

VISITORS:

Dr. Zielinski, Dr. Gilson, Mr. Schaefer, Dr. Oliveira, Ms. Lacher, Mr. Bouzan, Mrs. Witkus

Consent Agenda

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of June 16, 2014:

The Minutes of June 16, 2014 were removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed as an Agenda Item. Changes were made to reflect that Mr. Wolloff made specific representations to the Committee about what was going to happen and that the Minutes should reflect these statements.

Minutes of June 24, 2014:

- ✚ A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. Desrochers to approve the Minutes June 24, 2014. All in favor.

Agenda

- ✚ A Motion was made by Mrs. McEntee, seconded by Mrs. Desrochers to approve the Minutes of June 16, 2014 as revised. All in favor.
- ✚ A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. McEntee, to approve and hold the Minutes of Executive Session dated June 16 2014. All in favor.

Warrants were circulated and signed.

NEW BUSINESS: GENERAL OPERATIONS

2014/2015 HS Handbook (1st & 2nd Reading):

The attendance policy of the 2014/2015 Handbook was reviewed and discussion ensued on specific conditions regarding attendance. Dr. Oliveira is trying to be able to enforce the misuse of unexcused absences. There are currently 5 excused absences per quarter or 20 excused absences per year. Discussion ensued regarding how the law does not define an unexcused absence. The recommended language in the draft of the Handbook would change the requirement of a doctor's note for an excused absence from 5 to 2 days; the reason for the proposed change is because documentation has often not been provided from doctors in a timely manner.

Discussion ensued with reference to the appeal process. Specific language was requested to be included in the 2014/2015 handbook outlining the appeal process.

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. Tonelli, to add language to the handbook that clearly establishes a parent's right to appeal to the principal a determination that an absence is unexcused versus excused. All in favor.**

Page 31 – Addition to Code of Conduct:

Discussion ensued about the new language in the 2014/2015 HS Handbook referencing the right of the principal (Page 31). Concerns were raised that the language may be too broad and that the proposed changes could defeat the purpose of having rules in the first place as they fail to demonstrate to the students issues of justice and equity.

- ✚ **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. McEntee, to approve the changes to the 2014/2015 HS Handbook as discussed and presented with the changes to attendance policy and the exclusion of the proposed addition to the code of conduct, and that the that the School Committee waive the 2nd reading of the HS Handbook. All in favor.**

Goal Setting: Superintendent and School Committee

In a memorandum dated July 9, 2014, Mrs. Martin reviewed the 2013/2014 School Committee Goals. Listed below are the referenced goals and their status:

- The committee (under the direction of the Chair) will develop a School Committee Member's Handbook (which perhaps mirrors the MASC handbook) which is specific to King Philip policies, procedures and practices. December 2014
- The committee (under the direction of the Policy Sub-Committee) will develop a policy which provide that the chair will appoint a mentor for new members within a week from the individual being sworn and that new members are expected to complete new member training within 6 months of her/his election or appointment. Complete – policy BIA

- The Committee would host a legislative meeting for all 4 School Committees and invite Dan Winslow and Richard Ross. Mrs. Martin has hosted a meeting of the chairs and would like to propose as an agenda item to meet on a more frequent basis. Needs to reach out to new Norfolk chair.
- The Committee should investigate hosting a facilitated conference for all 4 School Committees to discuss and identify shared goals and missions. Will continue to look at this in meetings of the chairs and as part of increase emphasis on public relations
- The Committee should revise its strategic plan and goals. Work in process.
- Public Relations Plan should be developed. A report from the Public Relations Subcommittee is to be presented and discussed further in a later agenda item in this meeting.
- The draft policy should be forwarded to Attorney Waugh for review and scheduled for a vote subject to his recommendation. This goal referenced the Remote Participation Policy which is now policy BEDL in the King Philip Policy Manual.
- Committee meetings are not properly amplified. Mr. Schaeffer will take the necessary steps to insure that all members of the audience, including those sitting in the rear of the meeting room, will be able to hear what is being said at the meeting. Steps were taken following the 2013 retreat but some problems with amplification continue. The School Committee would like to have Mr. Ferreira attend a meeting to tailor the microphones, etc. to the School Committee's needs.
- The School Committee needs to engage the three towns in greater discussion regarding the contents and development of the King Philip Budget in order to foster a greater understanding among the community of King Philip's current academic program and its ongoing needs. See below
- The Finance Sub-Committee should move forward as outlined in the June 6th memo and that a formal letter of invite would be forwarded to each town's Board of Selectmen, Town Manager and Finance/Advisory Committee. See below.

The School Committee discussed engaging the three towns in KP Budget process – how the process went last year and what changes could be made for the coming year. Mrs. Martin felt that the budget process this year went fairly well with some communities being more involved than others. Mr. Francomano suggested for the coming year that the Finance Subcommittee focus more on key spots such as Special Education and drill down into specific concerns. Other comments included that all three towns are encouraged to attend the school committee meetings; a business relationship should be established in the fall with the town administrators, finance subcommittees and advisory boards of all three towns; and the district needs to handle year end projections better.

- The School Committee will review materials prepared by the High School Principal (in conjunction with three School Committee members and others as she deems appropriate) which address athletic issues as outlined above.

Dr. Oliveira has been working with the athletic director (and has engaged member of the School Committee and other stakeholders) on a review of policy, job descriptions, hiring, protocols, etc., with regard to athletics. This is still in process.

- The School Committee shall review the Superintendent's Goals at its September 3rd meeting. Completed in 2013

Discussion ensued regarding access to district financial documents. Mr. Francomano proposed the idea of putting all public documents online (such as on the KP Website) so that the public, individual school committee members, and staff can easily access information. This would promote greater financial transparency. Budget policies and procedures, contracts (IEC, KPTA, vendor contracts) and budgets could also be placed on the KP website as searchable documents

Discussion ensued on the types of software and services that may be available to make these documents searchable such as *Board Docs*, MASC or other services. Mr. Francomano asked that Mr. Bouzan investigate this further and present back to the school committee at the 2nd meeting in September. Discussion ensued that to have a fully searchable format it should be by topic not by date as stated by Dr. Zielinski. Mr. Bouzan was able to make the policy manual somewhat searchable and may be able to expand this process. Capacity of the district Website will need to be looked at.

Take Aways from discussion:

Have a presentation in 2nd meeting in September on the public documents posted on the website.

MASC policy manual discussion:

- ✚ A Motion was made by Mrs. Desrochers, seconded by Mrs. Tonelli, to have MASC service the KP Policy Manual, to be made searchable by the MASC contract for the POLICY21 Program; any changes are to be e-mailed to MASC and changes to the KP Policy Manual are to be updated. The initial cost is \$3,500 and \$950 for each year thereafter. All in favor. Yes (4); No (0); 2 abstain (Mr. Francomano, Mrs. McEntee abstained.)

Atlas Presentation:

Dr. Gilson presented a run-through/review on *Atlas*. Parents and educators will be able to view units for the entire year. Dr. Gilson has shared this information with all of the elementary districts and has taken a lot of work and resources to put this together. She is not sure where the elementary districts are with this work, but we will continue to work together and Dr. Gilson will bring additional resources to this work. However, moving forward this is a huge timesaver in development capability and to edit and modify.

Atlas is a tool that can be used in the teacher evaluation process, guidance counselor mapping in a very focused format. District Determined Measures will be used to track student learning. Assessments and evidence will be gathered throughout the year to track student learning. Dr. Gilson said that this has been a great journey and it is not over yet. *Atlas* is online now and ready to launch with the teachers. It has been run through every department.

Mr. Francomano asked whether Dr. Gilson would consider doing a webinar for parents on *Atlas*. Dr. Gilson will investigate alternatives on when and where to present *Atlas* to the parents for 2014/2015

There was a brief recess for lunch at 12:45 pm; the Committee reconvened at 1:30 pm.

Public Relations Subcommittee

Mr. Gee and Mr. Francomano gave a presentation from the Public Relations Subcommittee. Mr. Gee outlined the goals of the Subcommittee and gave an overview of the communication challenges that districts and school committees face. Mr. Francomano and Mr. Gee had attended an MASC presentation entitled, “Strategic Communication for School Committees,” which helped steer the direction of the Subcommittee’s work. The School Committee must encourage and support a communication plan that consistently articulates the District’s mission, vision and goals.

Mr. Francomano explained that the Public Relations Subcommittee discussed how to improve between and among the District, Parents, Community Members, the three Local Districts and Town Officials. Members’ presence at town “community days” and school open houses are two examples of opportunities to distribute resource material about the District and to speak with parents and community members. Everyone needs to be aware of what KP offers to its students and the Tri-Town Community. These are opportunities to “sell” the district to upcoming students or those who might be thinking of going elsewhere. Support resources (such as a brochure) could include a snapshot of the schools, advantages of KP, etc. School Committee members’ event attendance sends a positive message to the students, staff, and the community.

Mrs. Tonelli volunteered to help co-ordinate attendance and make members aware of opportunities as they arise.

The Subcommittee’s presentation also recommended district and committee goals. Discussion ensued and several ideas, issues, and concerns were shared:

- Committee members need to be aware of issues and to rely on the administrative team to keep the lines of communication open. Similarly, Committee members must be sure to keep the administrative team aware of issues that are raised in the community.
- Administrators should be sure to introduce School Committee members to others during conversations and acknowledge their presence at school events, such as award nights and open houses for 6th Grade parents. Committee members are able to put a photograph and a brief biography on the Committee’s web page. KP clothing, identifying the wearer as a School Committee member, ordered by the District but purchased personally by each member might be suitable for certain events; this will be further developed and reported back.
- Effort should be made to inform the community about the roles and responsibilities of a school committee.

The District needs to identify the message for this year. Is the focus on academic excellence, budget, or a specific social problem/challenge? The message must be strong and consistent.

There are several opportunities for the District to support parents. 2 examples are:

Sponsorship of a parent leadership conference similar to what ABC Unified School District (See attached handout) – Perhaps all 4 districts could offer this collaboratively.

Josten's has several products including monthly "Conversation Starters" which provide the basis for good conversations between parent and child. (See attached handout)

- An effort should be made to reach out and develop alumni relationships. A starting point might be to asking graduating seniors if they would be willing to discuss their career or college choice with a KP student.
- There needs to be a discussion on how the District uses social media and other communication tools, what methods are most effective and what type of plan/protocol should be in place for the future. Examples of communications currently in use are ConnectEd, which is on a daily basis and tweeting which is utilized by coaches.
- There was discussion about what a parent wants to hear. Examples are: The schools are a safe place for their children; quality of programs; high quality teachers and staff members, respectful atmosphere for both students and staff.
- Discussion ensued on a program called "Let's talk" which allows you to track issues that are raised by parents, community and school committee members. If there is a problem you go online and the matter is routed to the appropriate upon the category chosen from a dropdown menu. It is neither anonymous nor public. It is viewable by appropriate administrators and provides for greater accountability given that the chain of events is trackable. Mr. Francomano has spoken to a representative of this program. New Bedford and Barnstable are currently using this program.

Dr. Oliveira and Dr. Gilson do not want to depersonalize the process and lose what has been gained as a result of their interactions with parents and community members. There was discussion about how candid will people be when writing.

Mr. Gee suggested bringing in the representative to present the "Let's talk" program at a future school committee meeting. The Committee could then ask how other districts have addressed our concerns.

District Report

The PR Subcommittee also shared the Needham School District annual report as an exemplar of communication to the community the district serves. Discussion ensued on whether this is a direction KP could go. Ideas included whether it was something that could be prepared by students, DECA, or a senior project; and whether it could be distributed as an insert in the town's tax book or in partnership with *The Country Gazette*.

Dr. Gilson suggested giving the town report a facelift and finding the right person who has graphics capability or a parent volunteer to donate their graphics. Could an internship be formed on a yearly basis? Dr. Oliveira suggested that we could reach out to DECA or reach out to parents, but it may cost.

Mr. Gee volunteered to explore this issue in more detail and report back so that the Committee could further discuss what direction to go in.

Continuation of PR Subcommittee

Discussion ensued on whether or not it is necessary to have a PR subcommittee or a single point person for individual projects would be the direction in which the committee would take. It was determined that a single point person would be better utilized for individual projects, such as a revamped annual report, School Committee-sponsored events, and SC attendance at community events.

Master calendar:

- The 2014/2015 master calendar was reviewed. Dr. Zielinski explained that new items from the past year that are recurring have been incorporated into the calendar. Once missing dates are finalized and other dates are adjusted (goal setting) the updated calendar will be forwarded. This continues to be a useful tool.
- A similar calendar format will be prepared for the Finance Subcommittee.
- The town annual report will be prepared now versus in early 2015.

MASBO Review Update:

Mr. Schaefer asked that members complete the MASBO survey by Friday, July 18, 2014. Group interviews may be held during the upcoming MASBO review and assessment. Recommendations and ways to help the Business Office become more efficient going forward. Mr. Francomano asked when will a date be firmed up; is it worthwhile to send to finance committee chairs as a procedure. Mr. Schaefer has provided this information to the three towns finance committee and town administrators.

District Strategic Initiatives:

Dr. Zielinski explained the mission & vision statements. The theory of action and specific objectives have been renamed and aligned with the current teacher evaluation rubric categories (4 key categories). The strategic initiatives were reviewed. Dr. Zielinski included a parent and community engagement section under the strategic objectives.

Dr. Zielinski asked the KPTA on how to improve the professional culture and was not given any feedback from the KPTA. She will add the MASBO questionnaire and resend to members, incorporate discussion relative to public relations.

- School Committee/Association Relationship: Mrs. Martin sent a letter to the association regarding the survey that names were redacted and that she would continue to

communicate with Mr. Gentili. Email response that they would look into what their next action would be. Discussion was held on the administration's choice of the HS Foreign Language CTL for this school year. A further consultation will be held with Attorney Waugh on this topic.

- Dr. Zielinski discussed a joint labor committee according to DESE. No one would be appointed until after they have ratified the teacher evaluation instrument. The document will be distributed to the Association membership in early September and an informational session will be set a week later and the document should be ratified by the end of September.

Review Superintendent 2015 Draft Goals:

Dr. Zielinski created a set of goals that are aligned with what is required by DESE and listed key actions and benchmarks which is aligned with the new evaluation system and standards.

SMART Goal 1: Professional Practice: Train the administrative team in managing the new teacher evaluation system and the additional mandates prescribed by DESE.

SMART Goal 2: Student Learning: Beginning in September 2014, implement the KP professional growth and evaluation system using *Teach Point*.

SMART Goal 3: Student Learning: Beginning in September 2014, develop a set of DDM that will be implemented as part of the KP professional growth and evaluation system.

SMART Goal 4: Student Learning: By October 2014, begin evaluating and strengthening the inclusion model with a focus on differentiation of instruction for all learners. Discussion ensued that it is not an inclusion model for all learners. Mr. Francomano suggested substituting special education students for all learners.

Discussion followed on what is the requested data that is being required? Dr. Zielinski will rework the draft of SMART Goal 4.

SMART Goal 5: District Improvement: Improve communications, transparency and efficiency in the District's Business and HR Offices.

A suggestion was that the Finance Subcommittee needs to attend selectmen meetings at least quarterly.

Superintendent's Evaluation:

Dr. Zielinski provided the School Committee with the following documents:

1. MASC evaluation tool, since the superintendent is under the new MA educator evaluation system;
2. The DESE mid-year report end of cycle evaluation;
3. The superintendent evaluation sample of the evaluation tool that was used last year. Discussion ensued on how the school committee would like the evidence presented, in a narrative, in a binder.

Mrs. Desrochers gave examples of what she would like to see in the evaluation tool:

- Use "I" instead of "superintendent"
- Use an example;
- Keep professionalism
- Do not use abbreviations such as RBT, but to use the actual words

The School Committee would like to maintain *Survey Monkey* online format. Dr. Zielinski will put something together and present it to the committee at a later meeting in September.

Budget & Finance Subcommittee Meeting Date Calendar:

A calendar was presented with all of the 2014/2015 Finance Subcommittee meetings. Some of the meetings will be held at 7am and some at 7pm. Mr. Francomano explained that reaching out to the three towns has been effective but we still need to do more. Two of the areas to focus on are special education and effective communication with the three towns. Discussion ensued on conflict of interest and to revise the bid form.

Subcommittee Reorganization:

Consensus of the school committee was that it is not in need of a PR Subcommittee and go with individual point people.

The following school committee members have volunteered to be on the 2014/2015 subcommittees:

Policy: Lynn Desrochers

Building Committee: Ann-marie Martin

Public Relations Liaisons: Noelle Tonelli and Michael Gee

 **A Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. McEntee, to approve the 2014/2015 Subcommittee Reorganization as discussed. All in favor.**

Dr. Zielinski noted that the 2014 KP Policy Manual has been placed on thumb drives, prepared by Mr. Bouzan, and were distributed to all school committee members, Dr. Oliveira, Dr. Gilson, Ms. Lacher, Mr. Schaefer. The Manual has also been posted to the KP website.

Adjournment:

At 4:40pm, a Motion was made by Mr. Francomano, seconded by Mrs. McEntee to adjourn the meeting. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Barrett Witkus
Executive Assistant and
Secretary to the School Committee*