

Joint Amherst-Pelham Regional and Union 26 School Committees Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Library, Amherst Regional High School

IN ATTENDANCE

Eric Nakajima, Region	Michael Morris, Superintendent
Cara Castenson, Union 26	Rachel Bowen, HR Assistant Director
Anastasia Ordonez, Region & Union 26	Timothy Sheehan, Curriculum Coordinator
Emily Marriott, Region	Doreen Cunningham, Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity and HR
Audra Goscenski, Region	Ryan Harb, Food Service Director
Peter Demling, Region	Sean Mangano, Finance Director (arrived at 8:41 p.m.)
Phoebe Hazzard, Region & Union 26	Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder
Stephen Sullivan, Region	
Vira Douangmany-Cage, Region	
Ron Mannino, Union 26	

1. Call to Order and Reorganize 6:06 p.m.

Dr. Morris called the meetings of the Regional and Union 26 School Committees to order at 6:06 p.m. He called for nominations for Chair of the Regional School Committee. Ms. Douangmany Cage nominated Mr. Nakajima, Mr. Demling seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Nakajima then called for nominees for Vice-Chair. Ms. Hazzard nominated Ms. Marriott, Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Nakajima asked for a motion for Ms. Westmoreland to serve as secretary for the Regional committee. Ms. Goscenski so moved, Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Morris then called for a nominee for Chair of the Union 26 School Committee. Ms. Castenson nominated Ms. Ordonez, Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Ordonez asked for nominations for Vice-Chair. Ms. Hazzard nominated Mr. Demling, Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Enter Executive Session

Mr. Nakajima moved that the Regional School Committee enter Executive Session according to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (Ray and Associates) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares. Ms. Goscenski seconded and the committee entered Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. by unanimous roll call vote. Ms. Ordonez asked for a motion that the Union 26 School Committee enter Executive Session according to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (Ray and Associates) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares. Mr. Mannino so moved, Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote. The committee entered Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. with intention to return to open session. The committees were called back to order in open session at 6:52 p.m.

3. Approve Minutes 6:52 p.m.

For the Regional School Committee, Ms. Marriott moved to approve the minutes of May 2, 2017 as amended. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. For Union 26, Mr. Demling moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Castenson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

4. Announcements and Public Comment 6:56 p.m.

There were no public comments. Mr. Demling noted that there was a fantastic article in the Daily Hampshire Gazette today showcasing the ARMS science program that highlights the Districts' relationship with the University.

5. Interim Superintendent's Update 6:58 p.m.

Dr. Morris distributed the Superintendent's Update and highlighted:

- The Black Scholar's Rising and Latino Student Achievement events that just occurred;
- The Bias-Based Incidents Conference he attended with other faculty and administrators;
- The June 9 ARHS graduation to which all Regional members are invited to sit on stage;
- The June 15 STARS for Special Education event sponsored by SEPAC;
- The June 19 Employee Recognition Event; and
- The courses being offered by GCC at ARHS in the fall, which will be English and Sociology.

A. OML Response from Attorney General

DOCUMENT: Letter from the Office of the Attorney General dated May 2, 2016 re: OML 2017--69

Mr. Nakajima noted that a final response to an OML complaint has been received by the School Committee, noting that many of the current members were not on the committee when it was filed. He stated that the response speaks for itself, noting that he wanted to publicly acknowledge receipt of the response. Mr. Nakajima said that the new law firm selected by the School Committees, Mirick and O'Connell, has offered to provide a free training on Open Meeting Law for the committees, which he believes the committee should arrange. There was consensus agreement to do so.

Mr. Mannino then moved to adjourn Union 26 at 7:08 p.m. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Central Office FY18 Organization

Dr. Morris thanked the School Committee for their support for his merging of roles to develop the position of Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity and Human Resources and reviewed the hiring process that was followed in selecting Doreen Cunningham for the position. He provided a brief review of Ms. Cunningham's qualifications, noting that he appreciates her intellect and clear commitment to students. Ms. Ordonez, who served on the hiring committee, noted that she is very heartened that Ms. Cunningham agreed to accept the position because she emerged early on as the outstanding candidate. Ms. Douangmany Cage, who also served on the hiring committee, spoke to Ms. Cunningham's desire to make this her home and welcomed her. She then moved to approve the Assistant Superintendent appointment of Doreen Cunningham. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Cunningham thanked the committee for their confidence and noted that she looks forward to exceeding their expectations. Dr. Morris then introduced Timothy Sheehan who will be serving as the Curriculum Coordinator next year. He provided background about Mr. Sheehan's roles in the district over the years, noting that he is thrilled to work with Mr. Sheehan in this capacity. Mr. Sheehan thanked Dr. Morris for appointing him to the position, noting that it will be something new and different since he has been teaching in Amherst since 1999. Dr. Morris introduced Ryan Harb, Food Services Director, and spoke about the process through which he was hired and his qualifications, and noted that he is pleased to welcome him to the district. Ms. Marriott, who served on the hiring committee, talked about Mr. Harb's enthusiasm. Mr. Harb stated that he is honored to be in the district and expressed his excitement to be in the role. Dr. Morris noted that Mr. Harb is already looking at food services holistically and is connecting with the elementary science coordinator.

C. Charter/Choice/Private School Survey

DOCUMENTS: Charter School Survey, School Choice Survey, Private School Survey

Dr. Morris noted that there have been minor edits to the surveys based on feedback from the Amherst and Pelham School Committees. He reported that a pre-survey letter was mailed on Friday to families who have opted to leave our district for charter, choice or private schools. Dr. Morris said that the target date for mailing the surveys to families is June 1 and the mailing will include a self-addressed envelope. For those who prefer to take the survey online, a link will be provided to a Survey Monkey version, as well as a QR code. Dr. Morris noted that the district hopes to do a similar survey of families who choice into our district and of families who leave the district and then return. Mr. Demling asked if families who have moved out of Amherst or have children who recently aged-out will be included. Dr. Morris noted that we do not have access to addresses for such families, but we will be happy to send the survey to any such families who reach out and wish to take it. Mr. Nakajima noted that it would be nice to have a report on the data at a September or October School Committee meeting. Ms. Ordonez said it would be nice to request time to share the data at Town Meeting as well. Mr. Demling noted that he has had productive conversations with members of the community regarding ways to market the district and asked what the end-game is for the data. Dr. Morris noted that it will feed into a strategic plan approach and will help us determine how to work on either perceived or experienced challenges. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that it would be good to track this survey data over time to see if it substantiates the need for a language immersion program.

D. Interim Superintendent Evaluation Update/Approve Evaluation Instrument

DOCUMENTS: End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report--Superintendent (Word document); End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report--Superintendent (Survey Monkey PDF)

Ms. Hazzard reviewed the process that the subcommittee followed in developing the evaluation instrument for the Interim Superintendent evaluation and reviewed the highlights of the document. There was discussion of the Survey Monkey form with Ms. Goscenski noting that if a member has trouble accessing it online they can submit a written copy to be entered by Ms. Westmoreland. Mr. Demling moved to approve the evaluation instrument for the superintendent. Ms. Douangmany

Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Discussion followed regarding which members will be asked to complete the evaluation. It was agreed that members who just left the committee at the past election (Ms. Appy and Mr. Baptiste) will be asked to participate. It was agreed that the survey will close at midnight on June 13. Mr. Demling asked about new members' participation, including himself, in the evaluation process and discussion followed. Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to allow Trevor Baptiste and Katherine Appy as past members to participate and to allow newly elected members to decide whether to participate. Mr. Sullivan seconded and discussion followed. Ms. Ordonez noted for the record that she is in favor of allowing past members to participate, but not in favor of allowing new members to do so. Mr. Nakajima noted that he wants the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee to come up with a procedural vote that will guide the method in a way that is transparent and consistent. The motion was then approved 5-3-1 with Ms. Ordonez, Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Hazzard opposed and Mr. Demling abstaining.

E. Interim Superintendent Artifacts/Self-Reflection Presentation

DOCUMENT: Interim Superintendent's Evaluation 2016-2017 Collection of Evidence with Artifacts

Dr. Morris explained that he developed a narrative document to help members understand the artifacts that are presented through links in the document. He noted that it is intended to provide additional information for consideration along with the committee's work with him at meetings and observations of his work directly with them and in the community. Dr. Morris said he is happy to answer any questions that may arise for School Committee members as they review the document, and would appreciate any feedback about whether the format of the document worked well for them. Ms. Goscenski and Mr. Demling commented on the document, noting that the format is very easy to read and use.

F. Approve Clerical/Media Awards

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Debbie Westmoreland, Assistant to the Superintendent re: Clerical/Media Awards dated May 18, 2017

Ms. Hazzard noted that she was privileged to participate in choosing the clerical/media award winners this year and explained the process that was followed. Ms. Ordonez moved, in accordance with the Unit B employee contract, that the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee approves clerical/media merit awards in the amount of \$500 each for Yahdira Torres and June Carpenter. Ms. Goscenski seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

G. School Committee Subcommittee Appointments

DOCUMENT: Subcommittee Assignments 2016-2017

Mr. Nakajima noted that he would like for people to be thoughtful about the subcommittees and would like to have every member serve on at least one subcommittee. He would also like to see all members take a leadership role on a subcommittee. It was agreed that the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee will be added as a standing subcommittee. Ms. Ordonez suggested trying to combine or eliminate some of the subcommittees, noting that she feels there are too many. Discussion followed about the time commitment and role of each subcommittee, including the minimum number of School Committee members needed for each one. It was agreed that Ms. Westmoreland will make a spreadsheet with details about each subcommittee, which will be sent to all members in order to inform their decision. Appointments will be made at the June 13 meeting.

H. Accept Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memos to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Jill Berry, Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Treasurer, dated May 9 and May 17, 2017

Ms. Douangmany cage moved to accept \$1,667 from the Daily Hampshire Gazette for a scholarship; \$125 from the Pelham Lion's Club for a scholarship; \$500 from Peter Tripp for the Anson Tripp Memorial Scholarship; \$1,000 from James Pistrang for a 2017 ARMS Ultimate Scholarship; and \$500 from Big Y for the ARHS Principal's discretion. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Demling moved to accept 10 Quabbin books to the ARMS library from Friends of the Quabbin in memory of Charlie Reed valued at \$156.20. Mr. Sullivan seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Morris stated that Charlie Reed was an ARHS student who passed away earlier this year, noting that he was memorialized at a baseball game earlier this week.

7. School Committee Planning

9:13 p.m.

Ms. Westmoreland will send a revised June 13 agenda and request feedback on any agenda items for upcoming meetings. Ms. Marriott suggested that strategic planning needs to be started soon. Dr. Morris noted it is on the draft agenda for June 13. Mr. Demling noted that there had been discussion of having Representative Goldstein-Rose and a representative from MASC to come talk about financing. Ms. Douangmany Cage suggested expanding that beyond the School Committee to a

larger audience. Mr. Nakajima suggested discussing a resolution at a School Committee meeting separate from such a visit and finding a time for a public forum for their visit. Ms. Ordonez suggested that the Policy Subcommittee review the recently issued guidance from the Attorney General regarding ICE access to students against the policy that was recently passed in the district.

8. Adjourn to Executive Session

9:21 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima moved to adjourn to Executive Session according to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (APAA and Food Services) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the Chair so declares, with no intention to return to open meeting. Ms. Marriott seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland