

Approved
Milford Board of Education

Workshop Minutes
September 15, 2014

Board members present:

John DeRosa
Suzanne DiBiase
Jennifer Federico
Laura Fucci
Susan Glennon, Chair
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin
Anthony Piselli
C. Robert Satti, Jr.
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
James Richetelli
Michael Cummings

Others present:

Laura Boutilier, CCSC

Board Members absent:

Michael DeGrego

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the Special Meeting of the Board to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Parsons complex. She then led those present in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon announced Mr. DeGrego would not be present as he was recuperating from an accident.

She then turned the meeting over to Mrs. Boutilier.

II. LONG RANGE PLANNING WORKSHOP

Mrs. Boutilier reviewed the goals for the meeting: review the agreements to date, reach consensus on the short and long term plans, and revisit the criteria for decision making.

Ms. Glennon reiterated the Board will not formally adopt a plan until its October 13th Board meeting.

Mrs. Boutilier then led a discussion of the “Agreements” and “Criteria” which had been selected and agreed upon by the Board during the workshops. The Agreements are:

- End K-2, 3-5 and return to K-5, redistrict system-wide to balance school enrollment
- Decentralize Pre-K classes
- Adhere to criteria developed
- Align short-term and long-term alternatives
- K-6 examined and removed
- K-8 Specialty School examined and removed

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Three levels of criteria for decision making have been established as follows:

Critical Criterion
Support district vision (progressive, high level of achievement, engaged community, pride in school district)
Expand and enhance programs for <u>all</u> students
Require fewer transitions between elementary grades
Be fiscally responsible
Important Criterion
Aspire for equity in resources across all schools including balancing class sizes
Ensure parity in enrollment and demographics
Make efficient use of space in the schools
Require only one set of changes and minimal disruption
Provide programs that attract and retain students within the district
Criteria that Would be Nice
Reduce duration of bussing

With the Board in consensus of the “Agreements” and “Criterion”, Mrs. Boutilier brought the group back to the discussion of the possibility of closing a middle school as part of the long term plan. She asked Dr. Feser to speak to that option.

Dr. Feser explained West Shore is currently slated for a major renovation project and is already on the Capital Improvement Plan. The school could be expanded during the renovation and some classrooms could be added. She emphasized the economic advantages would include two renovated schools that would have similar upgrades, balanced enrollment and the addition of programs. She further said that Harborside could then be turned back over to the city for repurposing.

Mr. Richetelli confirmed West Shore could accommodate the added students and programs once renovated if some classrooms are added. The City has allotted 19.5M in its Capital Improvement Plan. The additional classrooms are not included in that cost. The renovation would not be complete before three years.

Ms. Glennon added that the East Shore renovation project is complete. The school capacity numbers are finite. Therefore, the Board will need to take into account those numbers when determining the additional classrooms needed at West Shore.

Mrs. Fucci proposed that Harborside be closed in 3 to 5 years once the renovations and classroom expansion of West Shore Middle School is complete. There were no stated objections.

The Board then discussed the specialty school concept. Dr. Feser explained the concept of a specialty school within a school. Administration believes the high schools should offer programmatic changes that all students can participate in rather than those that tie a student to a specific program track.

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Following the discussion of specialty schools, the Board agreed to change the language in the Long-Term Alternative #2 from: “**Specialty School within a High School**” to “**Developing Specialty Programming linked to College and Career Pathways within the High Schools.**”

Ms. Glennon called for a recess at 7:10 p.m.

The workshop was called back to order at 7:25 p.m.

Mrs. Boutilier moved to the next topic of closing an elementary school.

Mr. Piselli said he feels it’s inevitable that an elementary school will be closed at some point.

Mr. Whiskeyman said he is reluctant to close a school in September 2015 and would be more comfortable having one year in to the K-5 restructuring.

Ms. Glennon reminded the Board parents have said they do not want to have to undergo redistricting more than once with the long range plan.

The Board discussed the building capacities. Mrs. Federico pointed out the needs for additional program rooms have changed from when the Long Range Planning Committee conducted their work, requiring more classroom space.

Mrs. Fucci added that the State is advocating for Pre-K programs to be held in public schools.

Mrs. Fucci reminded the Board that from previous analysis, the Administration stated that if an elementary school was determined to close, then some schools would not have the additional classroom space available to expand the programming being discussed equitably across the district which is contrary to the Criteria to Expand and enhance programs for all students. Mr. DeRosa stated that the Long Range Planning Committee proposed closing an elementary school in their recommendations.

Dr. Feser cautioned the Board to consider the criteria they would use to make their decisions on a final plan for the school district and how they would arrive at that decision.

Mrs. Fucci proposed that all eight elementary schools remain open in September 2015 and for the Board to reexamine the elementary school enrollment projections in 5 years to see if an elementary school should close.

Mr. DeRosa proposed the district return to K-5 along with redistricting and close one elementary school in September 2015. He reminded the Board it was the recommendation of the long range planning committee.

There were no other proposals and the board agreed to go into the public sessions with the elementary piece undecided.

The board completed and reviewed the timeline to date **for the Short Term and Long Term Plan**

October 2014

Final Adoption of Plan

February 2015

WSMS bonding for renovation

Approved

March 2015

K-5 Redistricting boundaries ready in time for Kindergarten registration

Spring 2015

Community Conversation of high school “college to career pathway” programming

September 2015

Elementary Schools return to K-5 configuration (Pre-K decentralized)

2015-16

Ongoing design work for West Shore Middle School renovation and expansion

Develop high school programming for college and career pathways

2016-17

Construction WSMS (beginning summer 2016)

Pilot 2 new HS programs

2017-18

Ongoing construction WSMS

Pilot 2 additional HS programs

September 2018 or September 2019

Potential closing of Harborside Middle School with shift to ESMS and WSMS

ONGOING

Consideration of additional elementary programming

Ms. Glennon reviewed the presentation format for the upcoming information session.

Ms. Glennon thanked the Board for their hard work.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Fucci a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeRosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Mrs. Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary

Mrs. Laura Fucci
Corresponding Secretary