

EDGARTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

December 11, 2013

Staff Lounge

8:30 AM

DRAFT

Those present were Chairperson Susan Mercier, Members Megan Anderson and David Rossi, Superintendent Jim Weiss, Assistant Superintendent Matt D'Andrea, Business Administrator Amy Tierney, and Principal John Stevens. Also in attendance was PTA Representative Julie Lively.

I. Approval of Minutes of November 13, 2013

On a motion by Megan Anderson, seconded by David Rossi, the Committee agreed to accept the minutes of November 13, 2013.

II. Parent Groups and Community Input

No report was given.

III. Finance Report

A. Expenditure Report

Mrs. Tierney shared the most recent general funds expenditure report and fund balance report for FY14. The budget is steady at this time, except for negative balances on a few lines: substitutes and textbooks. The general maintenance section is low on funds as well. School Choice Fund is also good. A few items were paid this past month.

Four fuel companies requested to place a bid on heating oil: Island Fuel, Vineyard Propane, Energy Company from CT, and Ad Agency. RM Packer Company did not ask to place a bid. The deadline to obtain a bid packet is December 17th.

IV. Superintendent's Report

V. Principal's Report

A. FY15 Budget

Mr. Stevens reviewed the proposed FY15 school budget with the Committee in preparation for the presentation at 9:30 AM to the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. Mrs. Mercier commented that the report was well done, and she appreciated the extent of data provided for the review. Some features he highlighted included the dramatic increase in the enrollment census over the past two years, student/teacher ratio statistics across the Commonwealth, the need for a new 1:1 hire for a kindergarten student, the fact that 68% of staff are at top step plus making note that 88% of budget is due to contractual obligations. Also, it should be proudly made known of the impressive academic performance of the Edgartown School - a level 1 school in the 85th percentile. Mr. Stevens remarked that the School Choice Fund will continue to hold on to a \$100,000 plateau for unexpected emergency expenses.

Another area of discussion aimed at the need for a stipend to help the revolving lunch program keep up with the demanding and increasing amount of State required paperwork. Dr. Weiss is looking into an overall solution such as an Islandwide facilities manager and dietary person.

In regards to the School Choice policy, Mrs. Lively questioned if Edgartown is sending more students to other schools than accepting. Dr. Weiss replied that several reasons contribute to this conclusion. If the Edgartown School numbers allow room for more students, and the parents

have applied within the policy, then students are accepted. The school was originally built to accommodate 550 students; 600 in specials areas.

VI. Correspondence

No report was given.

VII Old/New Business

A. Superintendent's Evaluation Report

Mrs. Anderson gave a report on the recent Superintendent's Evaluation. Goals were met regarding longer school visits and regular meetings directly with principals, increase SGP math in grades 6, 7, 8, and district improvement; implement a new educator evaluation model. The Committee also commented on future meetings. They would like to see some item of student achievement at every meeting. For example, the recent presentation by Spanish Teacher Eric Herman was exceptionally informative and entertaining. It would be valuable for the Committee to see what is new and enriching in all corners of the building.

B. Policies

1. BMI - 1st reading

Dr. Weiss shared a revised version of the policy due to regulations through the Commonwealth. Parents are entitled to opt out of the BMI calculations in a written request. On a motion by David Rossi, seconded by Megan Anderson, the Committee agreed to accept the 1st reading of the BMI policy.

2. School Choice - 1st reading

Dr. Weiss said that a few changes were made to make the policy as transparent and appropriate as possible. The Edgartown School policy is linked to a specific number; a maximum of 18 per classroom, therefore there has to be capacity to receive more students in the class for someone to apply and be accepted. A new rule has been implemented whereas a family may apply for school choice prior to December vacation, but this only applies to existing Martha's Vineyard students. Once a student is accepted for school choice, it is a permanent acceptance for the duration of his/her stay. On a motion by David Rossi, seconded by Megan Anderson, the Committee agreed to accept the 1st reading of the School Choice Policy.

Mr. Stevens introduced a new issue to consider regarding the ACE MV. He is encouraging them to hold more adult education classes in the Edgartown School facility.

VIII. FY15 School Budget Discussion with Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee (9:30 AM)

Those present were Selectman Arthur Smadbeck, and Finance Committee members Bob Clay, Les Baynes, and Tom Durawa.

The FY15 budget was shared with these visiting committees. It was suggested that more effort be placed in keeping down expenses since contractual salaries are firm expenses. Some expenses have been paid out of School Choice such as drama, drumming, building maintenance (painting, etc.). It was recommended that some of these items could be incorporated in the general budget. Other areas of discussion included the following: increase in food service stipend due to more paperwork demands, increase nurse hours to 5 more days a year, expect increase in transportation costs due to additional school day each year, recommendation to hire a full time grant writer island-wide, look at level funding budget and focus on discussion with island-wide negotiations, and perhaps come back to meet with more substantial changes. The Committee thanked the Selectmen and Finance Committee for attending this meeting and for their helpful dialogue.

IX. Adjournment

The Committee agreed to schedule their next meeting on Wednesday, January 15th, at 8:30 AM. With no further business to discuss, the Committee agreed to adjourn at 10:50 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne M. Fligor
Secretary Pro-Tem

(Pam Cassidy transcribed)