

FAIRHAVEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
November 13, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Bueno, Mr. Monroe, Mrs. Kuechler, Mrs. Powers, Mr. Veitch

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. McKenna (with prior notice)

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Baldwin, Mrs. Kohler, Ms. Bouchard

STAFF ABSENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Abigail Bernardo, Student Advisory Representative; Isabelle Pacheco, Student Advisory Representative, Ms. Diane Sullivan – Director of Student Services, Mr. Andy Kulak – Fairhaven High School Principal; Dr. Nicholas Bettencourt – Elizabeth Hastings Middle School Principal; Dr. Yolanda Burnett – LeRoy Wood Elementary School Principal; Ms. Wendy Weidenfeller – East Fairhaven Elementary School Principal

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:34p.m.

The chair informed the audience that the meeting was being videotaped.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Bueno, Powers, Kuechler, Veitch, Monroe

Motion made by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Colin Veitch to approve regular minutes of October 23, 2019. Minutes were unanimously approved, 5-0. Mr. Monroe abstained.

There was no public comment.

Abigail Bernardo spoke regarding the ending of fall sports and indicated that the student athletes are getting ready for the winter sports season. She also discussed the robotics club and the fundraising for the Honor Society. Isabelle Pacheco also informed the School Committee of recent and upcoming events taking place at FHS. She also spoke regarding the production of Our Town & its success. Ms. Kuechler asked about the robotics competition and Abigail Bernardo spoke of regionals in April and the inner workings of the competitions.

Student Enrollment

Dr. Baldwin reviewed the attachment for the Student Enrollment Data. Fairhaven High School has surpassed 700 students as of November 1, 2019. There is not much variance from the last review of the data.

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School Improvement Plans

Dr. Baldwin introduced the principals and Ms. Diane Sullivan. Mrs. Kohler introduced the principals as a team and clarified the presentation of the School Improvement Plans.

Safe and Supportive Schools

Mr. Kulak began and introduced the safe & supportive schools goal. He reviewed last year's PDs that centered around safety and security. He spoke of the learned ability to dissect situations and respond appropriately. He also spoke of the Live Response PD. He said they learned a lot, gained positive corrections, and it allowed them to prepare for the future. He also went over the safety checks for this year.

Teaching and Learning

Ms. Weidenfeller discussed the focus on Math instruction and vertical alignment last year. She also referred to the K-2 Literacy Initiative for this year. She pointed out the universal screening for accuracy and comprehension. She also discussed the W.I.N. acronym...What I Need. She discussed the Flex grouping within classes. They also participate in Movement Activities every 15-20 minutes. The building staff have the capacity for growth with this initiative.

Dr. Burnett spoke regarding the K-2 Literacy Initiative at Wood. She said that it has been a challenge for Wood School, but they had accepted that challenge to provide what's best for all kids. She also discussed the Benchmark Assessment Team, who discovered at the first testing students viewed themselves as struggling and now have grown to feel excitement. She also spoke regarding the PDs & technology providing extra tools for them.

Ms. Weidenfeller spoke regarding the ELA theme throughout the upper grades as well.

Dr. Bettencourt spoke regarding the overall engagement level within music and instruction. He also discussed the 6-12 ELA curriculum evaluation as well as a standards revision of 6-12 Science, History, and Humanities. The goal is to break through all structures normally seen to reach all students. This can be achieved through demonstrating real world application.

Mr. Kulak spoke regarding the ELA assessments.

Climate and Culture

Ms. Weidenfeller discussed East Fairhaven School's culture. She spoke of the monthly character trait activity where students are recognized daily for embodying the trait of the month or previous months as it is cumulative. Their theme is "We are EFS!".

Dr. Burnett spoke of the culture at Wood Elementary School. She mentioned their theme is "Only One You, Only One Me" and this celebrates diversity. She also stated that she does the monthly character trait activity.

Dr. Bettencourt discussed the culture at Elizabeth Hasting Middle School. He spoke about project kindness where they try to instill an image or presence of positivity. They are making progress in changing the culture that once existed both with students and in the Teaching & Learning practices. The theme at EHMS is "365 Days of Wonder". They use daily quotes focused on wonder and awe to inspire. They pose the question to all "How can we be better for our community and for ourselves?". They also focus on building partnerships with the community.

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Mr. Kulak spoke regarding the FHS culture. He stated that their driving idea is "Connection through Community". He also gave the quote that inspires their theme "Never underestimate the power of a student that belongs. Never underestimate the power of a teacher who makes those connections."

Ms. Weidenfeller spoke regarding the family and community engagement at East and their student lead community drives.

Dr. Burnett spoke regarding the community engagement at Wood. Their drives included the food drive and Toys for Tots. She also mentioned the clubs they have that are free and afterschool. Some of these clubs have parent volunteers that help run them. These include the Garden Club and Destination Imagination.

Dr. Bettencourt spoke of the many offerings afterschool at EHMS. He mentioned the close bond that has been created with the local Council on Aging. They hope to help bridge the gap with the students and the seniors. He discussed the recent project with the 7th grade digital photography students and seniors. Mr. Kulak discussed Days of Service at FHS. It is within this that the students make connections with each other and the community. It allows the students to give of themselves. He went over the details of how it works - ½ the student body goes outside the school to perform services & the other half stays at the school & does activities that provide service.

Mr. Bueno stated that he appreciates the out of the box thinking and the benefits of it. He also spoke of the alignment of character and education throughout their school career. He also commented on the generational community involvement and the ability to learn from it. He gave thanks to all.

Mr. Veitch asked about the resources available to stay current on safety and security. Mr. Kulak answered in the affirmative and commented that they make the effort to refine their needs so they are prepared.

Mr. Veitch also commented on his recent visit to East and Wood. He was able to see the K-2 Literacy Initiative in effect. He spoke regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.

Ms. Powers commented on the K-2 Literacy Program and how it had sounded exciting in the spring. She spoke on how she is starting to see everything come together and that change is hard.

Ms. Powers also asked about the Open Air Initiative at EHMS. Dr. Bettencourt mentioned this was put on hold due to being inside (EEE, weather). Dr. Bettencourt explained the Open Air Initiative to the audience. It consists of student choice to spend ½ their lunch outdoors.

Ms. Kuechler commented on the importance of the elementary schools' movement activities. She also spoke regarding the benefits of promoting diversity and having foster grandparents. She discussed Project Kindness and its ability to recognize and promote leadership. She also commented on the Days of Service at FHS and the positive connections made, especially with the Council on Aging. Finally, she recognized the principals' presentation as a team.

Mr. Veitch spoke regarding his visit to Wood school. He spoke of the program for grades 1 and 5 that involved the grade 5 student acting as leaders for the grade 1 students. He indicated that this is a great lesson to carry over to the middle school. He also commented on Mrs. Perrotti's class and the enthusiasm in that class. He stated that it is a great addition.

Mr. Monroe spoke regarding last year's elementary science program and the standards and asked for a status on that. Ms. Weidenfeller stated that they are continuing the work, aligning as a team, and are implementing hands on programs. Mr. Monroe addressed the safety goals and noticed they are all different and suggested that everyone follow the district initiative. He also spoke regarding the positivity in the community surrounding FPS. He also spoke regarding the level of trust that has been created and that it starts with the principals and goes throughout dealing with all departments in town and the

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community and families. He also noted the great culture. He stated that he was also impressed with the MCAS improvements of East. He also commended EHMS on their positivity and reassured Wood that they have the support of the School Committee just as all schools do.

Ms. Powers commented that she liked the format of the School Improvement Plans. It is clear and readable.

Dr. Baldwin introduced Diane Sullivan. Ms. Sullivan stated that Student Services couldn't do what they do without the Administrative Team.

Dr. Baldwin spoke regarding what's next. He reviewed innovation, music, 6-12 humanities, and the K-2 initiative. He also spoke regarding the team and referred to them as being sincere and cohesive; they are not competing against each other. He is grateful for the job they are doing.

Ms. Powers spoke regarding the integration of individuals with special needs. They are a part of the community both in and out of school and it is amazing to see. Ms. Sullivan stated that no one is being left behind in this district and that is a consistent message.

Ms. Kuechler spoke regarding the integration of diversity and learning across the board with the message that everyone is different, and that they are promoting acceptance and understanding.

School Cancellation Protocol

Dr. Baldwin introduced and reviewed the protocol document at the meeting. He indicated that the cancellation call will come at 6am the day of cancellation to ensure that the right decision is made.

Mr. Bueno referenced the conference that he recently attended. He said the sessions were incredible and that they spoke of many values for School committee members. He also stated that these values were contagious throughout this body & community. The work we do here is a reflection of our community.

Ms. Powers questioned the town meeting and the media fund. Dr. Baldwin was unsure of the amount, but assured the School Committee that our portion is used over the years for our media program.

Mr. Monroe also spoke of the conference that he attended along with Mr. Bueno. He stated he was thankful to see what we are and what we could be because there are other places that make him appreciate FPS.

No Executive Session.

Motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Kuechler, seconded by Mr. Veitch, unanimously voted to adjourn 5-0.

Adjourned at 7:49pm.



Robert Baldwin, Ed.D
Secretary to the School Committee
Fairhaven Public Schools