

Warwick School Committee Minutes
Meeting May 18, 2015 – Open Session

The Warwick School Committee met in Open Session at the Toll Gate High School Cafeteria on Monday, May 18, 2015. Ms. Ahearn called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following in attendance:

COMMITTEE

Jennifer Ahearn, Chair
Eugene A. Nadeau, Vice Chair
Karen Bachus

The Chair announced that two items on the agenda “approval to set protocol for transcript review” and “approval of continuance of meeting with Mr. Ragosta pending transcript review” were placed on the agenda by individuals who are not here this evening. She moved to table these items.

MOTION 2015-139: Moved by Ms. Ahearn, seconded by Ms. Bachus, to table the two agenda items “approval to set protocol for transcript review” and “approval of continuance of meeting with Mr. Ragosta pending transcript review”

MOTION PASSES (3-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – absent M. Terri Medeiros – absent
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye Karen Bachus - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

Master Facility Planning Workshop – SMMA

Edward Frenette recapped the first and second workshops; who we are what we doing; purpose of workshops and building trust; understanding the demographic study; understanding the capacity analysis. The goal for this evening was to understand the facilities assessment and narrowing down the alternative master plans from 8 to 4. When it was pointed out that some of the numbers were in error, i.e. Room 309 at Toll Gate listed as 806 square feet when room is 12 x 15 and not a full class room; Mr. Frenette responded that as each chapter is done it is submitted to faculty and staff for review; and after submission we want errors pointed out to us. The more input the better. Response to class size: 22 to 25 comfortable and successful number; State will not fund class size of 18. Response to parity: more parity in secondary level. It was agreed that it was better to consolidate and then redistrict.

Edward Bourget outlined the facility assessments observation process, team and condition categories. There were a team of architects and engineers that went through the buildings over a 3-week period. The architect reviewed the site, building envelope, interior/exterior construction and accessibility. Electrical Engineer reviewed electrical, lighting and fire alarm systems. The mechanical engineer reviewed mechanical, plumbing and fire protection systems. The buildings were categorized by “must repair” “should repair” “could repair” and “adequate.” The team gave each building a rating. The buildings are old, but well maintained, clean and functioning as well as can be. Similar problems were seen over and over and ventilation is a big issue.

Narrowing down the alternative master plans from 8 to 4:

Alternative Master Plans

1. Asset, health and safety protection
2. consolidation of secondary
3. consolidation of primary
4. consolidation of primary and secondary
5. creation of a middle school and two high school “magnet schools with 9th grade academies
6. creation of a broad band middle school and two high school magnet schools with 9th grade academies
7. creation of three 2-school campuses (middle and high), incorporation grade six and the reorganization of the secondary schools to magenta schools with 9th grade academies
8. creation of two new super schools middle and high

Consolidate from top down – students don't have to go through process twice. It was noted that alternative high school students having difficulty fitting in with high school life

Proposal for thinking this through:

Grade level	total capacity	current enrollment	difference	% over/under
Early childhood	324	206	118	36%
Elementary	6,406	4,709	1,697	26.5%
Junior High	2,797	1,473	1,324	47.3%
High School	4,399	2,753	1,646	37.4%
District total	13,926	9,141	4,785	34%

Consolidation at the elementary level and creation of middle schools and magnet schools can or cannot be part of all master plan alternatives. The big issue is excess capacity. Twenty-six facilities have been assessed and the goal is to have all four master plan options under consideration – after that look at data and see what happens if consolidating elementary – but you need to consider secondary first. Referencing middle schools, grades six to eight or grades five to eight does not make a difference and it is better to have than not.

Narrowing down alternative master from 8 to four

1. Asset, health and safety protection
2. creation of two middle schools and two high school magnet schools with 9th grade academies
3. creation of three 2-school campuses (middle and high), incorporating grade six and the reorganization of the secondary schools to magnet schools with 9th grade academies
4. creation of two new super schools middle and high

Mr. Frenette commented setting asset, health and safety protection as base level. Nine times out of 10 it will be cheaper to improve what you already have versus building something new. All agreed. Another approach: Keep options of creation of two middle schools and two magnet high schools with ninth grade academies and creation of three two-school campuses (middle and high) incorporate grade 6 and the reorganization of secondary schools to magnet schools with ninth grade academies. Campus would be in same place as current high schools and each campus would feature a middle school and a high school, with separate buses, building entrances, gyms, library/media centers, lunch rooms and hopefully one kitchen to share. Students separate from the time they leave their houses. The existing curriculum will be maintained in whichever master plan is selected. Consolidate secondary level first so students don't have to live through the process twice. Never recommend doing K through 12 consolidation all at once. Magnet schools are done for two reasons; to go more in depth in a subject and to provide more relevance to students. You have to rethink how you use existing facilities. A comment concerning property values when a school closes saying they drop by 10%. Mr. Frenette said if schools are well maintained and well run at a high level then property values will stabilize and improve. Ms. Ahearn commented if we bring up our instructional delivery schools will be viewed at a higher level and the status will be viewed as better and draw more people to the city and school system.

MOTION 2015-140: Moved by Ms. Bachus, and seconded by Mr. Nadeau, to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSES (3-0)

Bethany A. Furtado – Absent
Eugene A. Nadeau - Aye
Jennifer Ahearn - Aye

M. Terri Medeiros – Absent
Karen Bachus - Aye

[Note SMMA information/proposals/charts, etc. can be found on the school website.]

Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.