

**Middletown Public Schools**

**Middletown, Rhode Island**

**October 18, 2007**

**7:00 p.m. – Regular Meeting**

**MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM**

**Members Present: Michael F. Crowley, Jr., Chairman**

**Liana F. Fenton, Vice-Chair**

**Edward K. Draper**

**Theresa M. Spengler**

**Member Absent: William Coogan**

**Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools**

**Catherine McLeish, Business Manager**

**Edward Collins, Director of Facilities**

**The regular meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Michael Crowley. Administrative staff members present were Timothy Ryan, Steven Ruscito, Vincent Giuliano, Stephen Ponte, Maureen Cicchitelli, Gail Abromitis and Linda Savastano. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**Middletown High School Directors – Mr. Ruscito introduced the new directors: Laura Yentsch, Director of Humanities; John McDevitt, Director of Math and Science; Christopher Savastano, Director of Fine and Applied Arts; and Colleen Larson, Director of Performance Based Graduation.**

**Mr. Savastano framed the presentation in three parts: goals, strategies and challenges. The Directors met for five days in late August to discuss a vision for the school, and identify a focus to bring the high school to a new level ~ a premiere high school in New England.**

**Mr. Savastano presented their four areas of focus:**

- Curriculum Construction and Alignment**
- Enhanced Instructional Delivery**
- Realization of PBGR's**
- Revitalized School Environment**

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**Mr. McDevitt presented their different strategies:**

- **Personal learning communities (PLC)**
- **Streamlining portfolio implementation**
- **Huge challenges that should be transparent to students**

**Mrs. Yentsch presented the challenges:**

- **More opportunity for director-facilitated PLC's (they need to reduce their schedules to accomplish this)**
- **Need professional development to create tasks for the portfolios**
- **Promote interdisciplinary courses**
- **Adequate coverage for faculty**
- **Continue to build task banks (English has incorporated tasks throughout curriculum already)**
- **Staff needs to be open and flexible**

**Mr. Crowley acknowledged the Directors' challenges. Mr. Crowley also likes the idea of common assessments. Mr. Crowley said the committee will try to address and help with the challenges. Mr. Draper asked how the students were accepting these changes. Colleen Larson addressed this question. More students are successfully completing tasks and pursuing the CIM. Theresa Spengler said in the past five years the faculty has been reenergized regarding CIM projects and portfolios. Liana Fenton expressed thanks "for the kids" and for helping their future.**

## **PROCLAMATIONS/AWARDS**

- **STUDENT AWARDS – Student Awards were presented in the following categories:**
  - o **Newport Daily News Student of the Week**
  - o **Newport Daily News Athlete of the Week**
  
- **NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK – Proclamations for National School Bus Safety Week were presented to Bus Driver Ann Atkinson and School Bus Monitor Mrs. Patricia Ferrebee by Mr. Michael Crowley.**

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**Mr. Steven Ruscito introduced Student Council representatives, Haley Call, President and Christina Sherman, Vice President.**

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**President Haley Call said the council is interested in reorganizing and redefined the role of student council explaining that they wanted to**

have a better presence in the high school. They attended a meeting for student councils state-wide in Providence. Ms. Call said the council has considered creating a constitution, requirements for running for office that mirror the academic, civil, and social skills expectations of Middletown High School.

Additionally, Ms. Call informed the school committee the school spirit week is next week. Some spirit week activities planned are a powder puff game, a hallway contest, blue and white day, and a new request for this year is to add a senior class tent night.

Mrs. Kraeger said she was pleased to see that they joined the state student council organization.

## **INFORMATION**

Mrs. Kraeger noted items of information in the School Committee Package:

- School Committee member Liana Fenton received the Tech Collective Award for Advancement of Youth In Technology
- Vaccinate before you graduate data
- The Middletown Canvassing Authority chair requested a polling location change.
- Technology department completed a Needs and Data Analysis

**Survey to gain information on how they are progressing in the delivery of technology to students and staff. Mrs. Kraeger commended Mrs. Savastano for providing this survey and its' feedback.**

**• Laidlaw Transportation was acquired by First Student. All of their employees are in the same positions.**

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

**No "Correspondence" for October 18, 2007**

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To approve the Consent Agenda. Unanimous vote.**

**1000. Approval of Minutes of September 20, 2007 School Committee Meeting**

**1100. Approval of Invoice Register, dated September 18, 2007, in the amount of \$377,116.92**

**1110. Approval of Invoice Register, dated September 24, 2007, in the amount of \$2,681.94**

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**1120. Approval of Invoice Register, dated October 2, 2007, in the amount of \$725,682.29**

**1200. Approval of Special Grants Register, dated September 18, 2007, in the amount of \$48,238.54**

**1210. Approval of Special Grants Register, dated October 2, 2007 in the amount of \$22,482.34**

**1300. Superintendent's Recommendation on Personnel**

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION ON PERSONNEL**

### **TRANSFERS**

**Ronald Viveiros Custodian, Gaudet Middle School to Night Lead Custodian, MHS**

### **FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT**

**Jonathan Paquette Art Teacher, Gaudet Middle School**

**From October 22, 2007 through November 9, 2007**

### **MATERNITY LEAVE - ARTICLE XIV, C, OPTION #1 (NEA/Middletown)**

**Robyn Borges Grade Two Teacher, John F. Kennedy School  
from January 2, 2008 to April 6, 2008**

## **GAUDET STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**Ronald Dumais Computer Club Advisor**

**Jill Armstrong Art Club Co-Advisor**

**Jonathan Paquette Art Club Co-Advisor**

**Meaghan Corr Drama Club Co-Advisor**

**Jacqueline Zahm Drama Club Co-Advisor**

**Paula Guarino Student Council Co-Advisor**

**Tina Murphy-Reynolds Student Council Co-Advisor**

## **MHS STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**Liana Fenton Volunteer FIRST Team Advisor**

**Alicia Hicks Junior Class Co-Advisor**

**Samantha Hines Academic Decathlon Advisor**

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## **ACTION ITEMS**

## **BUDGET ADOPTION**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler 2) Edward Draper . That the School Committee approve the 07-08 School Department Budget in the amount of \$36,849,091. Unanimous Vote.**

**Parents Liz Gilmore and Johnna Silvia expressed their concern for the reduced nurse/teacher coverage at Forest Avenue School and Aquidneck School.**

## **AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO APPLY FOR HR6 – TITLE 8 – 874 IMPACT AID**

**MOTION: 1) Edward Draper 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee authorize the Superintendent to apply for HR6 – title 8 – 874 Impact Aid. Unanimous Vote.**

## **HOME SCHOOLING**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve Home Schooling for 07-08-01, 07-08-02, and 07-08-03. Unanimous Vote.**

## **PEST CONTROL SERVICE BID – MIDDLETOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**MOTION: 1) Edward Draper 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee award the pest control service bid for Middletown Public Schools to Terminix. Unanimous Vote.**

## **IN\$ITE REPORT 2006-2007**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the In\$ite Report for the 2006-2007 fiscal year. Unanimous Vote.**

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **AP Results ~**

**Mr. Ruscito discussed the latest AP results.**

**Teachers need advanced mastery in the subject area. AP offers professional development.**

**Mr. Draper asked if the AP classes were applied to the tasks development at the high school.**

**Mr. Ruscito said our teachers are not fully engaged in using the resources provided by AP. Mr. Crowley said Rhode Island scores are in the bottom for students taking AP classes. He said there are bright spots such as English and European History. He also said it is puzzling why the rest of the country's scores are increasing, but this trend is not happening at MHS. Mr. Crowley suggested the results of**

**AP exams might indicate that students are not being very well prepared.**

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**Mr. Draper asked if the Virtual High School could be utilized for AP courses. Last year, students were enrolled in virtual AP courses and scored well on the exam.**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler 2) Liana Fenton. To extend the meeting past 9:00 p.m. Unanimous Vote.**

**Mr. Tim Ryan concurred with Mr. Ruscito's assessment of the SP courses. Mrs. Fenton asked about dual enrollment. She also asked if we have honors and AP in same subject. She suggested that maybe we should push those students into the AP course instead of offering an Honors section.**

**Coach/Volunteer Evaluation ~**

**Mrs. Kraeger noted that this evaluation was included in the school committee packet.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

## **COZ ~**

**Mrs. Kraeger introduced our new COZ director, Mrs. Carmela Geer. Mrs. Geer distributed an information packet to the school committee members. She highlighted the program, reinforcing a buy-in from everyone; schools, community, and families. Mrs. Geer wants to provide better access of COZ services, resources/referrals, and parent education. She plans to update the strategic plan for COZ within the next 60 days, create a COZ calendar.**

**Theresa Spengler highlighted Mrs. Geer's community networking skills to be a huge asset to Middletown Public Schools.**

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS**

- **CURRICULUM – Mrs. Kraeger introduced Maureen Cicchitelli, who outlined the new ESL model of services. Mrs. Cicchitelli and Mrs. Geer, our COZ Coordinator, attended a meeting at the Naval War College. We have a high population of war college families in Middletown who send their children to our schools. Mrs. Cicchitelli provided a Powerpoint presentation which highlighted the need to take a look at how we provide services to our ESL students.**

- o **We currently have approximately 78 ESL students enrolled, with a new group of officers and their families coming in January 2008**

- o These families speak 20 different languages, mainly Arabic and Spanish**
- o We recognized that families do have a person who speaks English in the home, and spouses are required to enroll in an English class at the War College when they arrive**
- o Multiple forms of identification of student needs is necessary**

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- o Professional development is needed for differentiated instruction**
- o Parent and teacher focus and advocacy group are needed**
- o Evaluation of program**
- o Suggests multiple measures for ESL program participation, not just at point of registration**
- o Family meeting is planned for November 30th to talk about programs and support available for youngsters**
- o Salve volunteers will be available to help these students at the Middletown Library**
- o Introduced the Rosetta Stone computer model on how we learn language will be provided—pilot program offering is online. It will provide support for language learning in all languages for all students in district with a tool to track progress. The program also has a screening piece available with the program**
- o Grant funds will support the program**
- o Many districts across the country are using this tool**
- o Maureen Cicchitelli will be contacting Emily Kline at the Department**

of Education to ask for the new regulations proposed for the LEP program. She reviewed literature and research by the U.S. Government, and Emily Kline provided insight into the Office of Civil Rights and their view of this concern.

- o Also, the War College would be happy to have an officer from a particular country share their language and ethnicity at any school.
- o Liana Fenton asked if the war college would assist with funding for this program.

**Mrs. Kraeger addressed other activities:**

- Parent teacher conferences are scheduled by each school
- Planetarium activities continue to evolve
- MRSA info – We are emphasizing hand washing and are waiting for direction from the Department of Health regarding guidelines. Every school has assured all safety precautions will be taking place.

**• FINANCIAL –**

o Preparation of this year's budget was difficult. The budget for 2008-2009 won't be any better.

o Impact aid numbers are not clear yet. There was hope that we would receive the same as this year as last year. The military

property was sold after October 29, 2006, which allows us to receive additional money.

- o MISA expressed interest in Middletown hosting the Summer 2009 Conference

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- o We will be meeting with the Town Council and Legislators on December 10th at 6:30

- o Funding formula for group home, pension relief are possibilities

- o Fielding Nair Workshop will be held on November 20th at Gaudet at 6:00 to share the results of their report with the Town Council.

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee receive the Superintendent's Reports. Unanimous vote.

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

Mrs. Fenton said she will provide a full report next month.

## **ADJOURN FROM MEETING**

**MOTION:** 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To adjourn from

**School Committee Meeting at 10:00 p.m. Unanimous vote.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk**