

**Middletown Public Schools**

**Middletown, Rhode Island**

**March 19, 2009**

**6:30 p.m. – Budget Workshop**

**7:00 p.m. – Regular Meeting**

**MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM**

**Members Present:**

**Michael F. Crowley, Jr., Chairman**

**Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chair**

**Kellie M. DiPalma**

**Liana F. Fenton**

**William R. O'Connell**

**Also Present:**

**Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools**

**Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent for Academic and  
Technology Services**

**Catherine McLeish, Business Manager**

**Edward Collins, Director of Facilities**

**The Budget Workshop was called to order at 6:30 p.m. Administrative staff members present were Steven Ruscito, Vincent Giuliano, Pete Wood, Gail Abromitis and Stephen Ponte.**

**The School Committee budget request to the Town Council is \$36,410,653. Mrs. Kraeger had asked the School Committee, Budget Subcommittee and Administrators to rank budget reductions by priority. Closing Kennedy School would save \$834,447 and was ranked the highest priority of reductions by all groups. All-Day Kindergarten and Foreign Language at Gaudet School were ranked lowest. Blue Cross costs have increased to 12%. Current “Unknowns” are teacher and teacher assistant contract negotiation settlements and revenues such as State Aid and Impact Aid.**

**Mrs. Spengler thanked everyone for their hard work and said that these are very challenging numbers, but we need to do what is best for the students. Mr. Crowley thanked everyone, as well as the community who participated in Budget Workshops. He said that next year will be even more difficult. Mr. O’Connell would like to send a budget to the town with a 0% increase in salary lines. Mr. Crowley said that doing so would tie the hands of the School Committee. The Unions are very cognizant of the budget crisis.**

**MOTION: 1)Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To adjourn from the Budget Workshop at 7:09 p.m. Unanimous vote.**

**The regular School Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Chairman Michael Crowley. Administrative staff members present were Steven Ruscito, Vincent Giuliano, Gail Abromitis, Stephen Ponte and Pete Wood. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

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**MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) Theresa Spengler. To move “Proclamations” on the agenda. Unanimous vote.**

## **PROCLAMATIONS/AWARDS**

**•STUDENT AWARDS – Student Awards were presented in the following categories:**

- oNewport Daily News Athlete of the Week**
- oMiddletown District Spelling Bee**

## **SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**“MHS Harvard Model United Nations Presentation”**

**Ten Middletown High School students attended a 4-day conference at Harvard University. The students were required to write two position papers and attend after school classes about the country they are**

represented, which was Mauritania. Mauritania borders Morocco and Algeria on the western coast of Africa.

Each student discussed the conferences and their personal experience. The students attending were Amy Homan, Jacqui Default, Emily Weber, Emily Daughan, Lauren Call, Field Martin, Spenser Bosch, Fiona Parker and Kyle Bruneau.

Ms. Lisa Clark thanked administration, Principal Steven Ruscito and the Middletown Educational Collaborative for their assistance with providing the students the opportunity to attend this program. Mrs. Laura Yentsch assisted in bringing the program to Middletown High School.

Mrs. Spengler commended all for their efforts.

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**No Student Activities for March 19, 2009.**

## **INFORMATION**

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

- Teaching positions funded from General Fund

- Minutes from Career Tech Meeting
- Athletic participation numbers

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

**No “Correspondence” for March 19, 2009.**

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## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- Approval of Minutes of February 5, 2009 Budget Workshop
- Approval of Minutes of February 10, 2009 Safety Advisory Committee Meeting
- Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2009 Budget Workshop and School Committee Meeting
- Approval of Minutes of February 12, 2009 Executive Session
- Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2009 Sports Advisory Committee Meeting
- Approval of Minutes of February 26, 2009 Budget Workshop
- Approval of Invoice Register, dated February 6, 2009, in the amount

**of \$4,203.38**

**•Approval of Invoice Register, dated February 17, 2009, in the amount of \$364,142.95**

**•Approval of Invoice Register, dated February 20, 2009, in the amount of \$2,301.18**

**•Approval of Invoice Register, dated March 3, 2009, in the amount of \$196,914.03**

**•Approval of Invoice Register, dated March 6, 2009, in the amount of \$1,921.71**

**•Approval of Special Grants Register, dated February 19, 2009, in the amount of \$28,646.24**

**•Approval of Special Grants Register, dated March 4, 2009, in the amount of \$3,811.07**

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

### **APPROVAL OF .5 JOB SHARE FOR 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR**

**Kimberly A. Ceglarski Kindergarten, Forest Avenue School**

### **EXTENSION OF MATERNITY LEAVE**

**Jaime Sheridan Grade Five, J.H. Gaudet School**

**Through the end of the 2008-2009 School Year**

**Meaghan Corr Grade Seven, ELA, J.H. Gaudet School**

**Through April 24, 2009**

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

**Kimberly Pearce Grade Three, J.F. Kennedy School**

**From May 11, 2009 to June 24, 2009**

**SPRING COACHING APPOINTMENTS**

**Eric P. Godin Head Varsity Baseball**

**Michael Yates Assistant Varsity Baseball**

**John A. Cawley JV Baseball**

**Brian Krauss Freshman Baseball**

**Christopher Greene 6/7/8TH Grade Baseball**

**Robin Ramey Head Varsity Softball**

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**Christine Elliott Assistant Varsity Softball**

**Jesse Alvanas JV Softball**

**Robert Barlow 6/7/8TH Grade Softball**

**Shane Fennessey Boys' Head Varsity Track & Field**

**Justin Buffman Boys' Assistant Varsity Track & Field**

**Ted Hersey Girls' Head Varsity Track & Field**

**Kristen Seyster Girls' Assistant Varsity Track & Field**

**Lucien E. Forbes Boys' Varsity Lacrosse**

**Richard Formica Boys' Assistant Varsity Lacrosse**

**Courtney McKay Girls' Varsity Lacrosse**

**Alexandra Botelho Girls' Assistant Varsity Lacrosse**

**Marianne Curtis Boys' Varsity Tennis**

**Lisa Clark Varsity Golf**

## **ACTION ITEMS**

### **POLICY – GRADUATION BY PROFICIENCY**

**MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee approve the revised Graduation By Proficiency policy. Unanimous vote.**

**Revisions were made to this policy because the previous policy reflected last years graduating class. There is only one reading required for this policy revision.**

### **POLICY – SERIES 2000**

**MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee approve Policy Section 2000 “Administration”. Unanimous vote.**

**Policies that are being approved for revision include:**

**2000 Administrative Organization**

**2090 School Improvement Teams**

**2100 Shared Decision Making**

**2400 Master Plans and Strategic Plans**

**2500 Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (With Student Web Mail Form)**

**New policies being approved for a 1st Reading include:**

**2000.1 Administrative Organization**

**2200 Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer**

**2510 Residency**

## **CLOSING KENNEDY SCHOOL**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Kellie DiPalma. That the School Committee approve the closing of J.F. Kennedy School, at the start of 2009-2010 school year. Unanimous vote.**

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### **Public Input –**

**Several individuals addressed the School Committee regarding the closing of Kennedy School, citing wanting the school to remain open another year, concern with bussing 4th graders and 8th graders together and the possibility of renting out the space at Kennedy School in September.**

**Mr. Crowley said this has been a very difficult process. There has been extensive community input.**

**Mrs. Spengler said she appreciated the concerns. She also said that she has a child going to Gaudet and has concerns about bussing, but has great confidence that students are cared for and monitored. Mrs. Spengler does not support surplusing Kennedy School.**

### **BUDGET ADOPTION**

**MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Kellie DiPalma. That the School Committee approve the 2009-2010 School Budget in the amount of \$36,410,653. Motion passed 4 to 1.**

**YEA: Michael Crowley NAY: William O'Connell**

**Theresa Spengler**

**Liana Fenton**

**Kellie DiPalma**

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**No "Old Business" for March 19, 2009.**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**•CLUB SOCCER – Mr. Christos Arogos addressed the Committee**

**regarding starting a privately funded middle school club soccer team.**

**He is investigating private and business sponsorships as well as fundraisers to support the program. He has met with the Boosters, Athletic Director and the Sports Advisory Committee.**

**There will be a need for fields for games and practices, transportation, indoor practice space during inclement weather, used equipment, and the coordination of referees. He would like to begin this fall with 16-20 players. Initially, this could be a non-league play to keep costs down and also be a stepping stone. Mr. Crowley said that this will be beneficial to Middletown children. Mr. Arogos will meet with Mrs. Kraeger to discuss the plan further to assure compliance with Title IX and the middle school interscholastic league.**

**•MPS WEBSITE – Mrs. Savastano has recently redesigned the School Department Website to be more user friendly. The new address is [www.mpsri.net](http://www.mpsri.net). Mrs. Spengler expressed concerns with listing the calendar events and thought it is too much information to be posted on the website. Others found it very helpful to have**

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**this information listed for all schools in one place. Mrs. Savastano will revisit this and look into the policy.**

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS**

### **•CURRICULUM –**

#### **•TESTING**

**oNECAP (New England Common Assessment Program) results from the October 2008 assessment have been released. We now have four years of data for elementary and middle school. Scores are moving in the right direction.**

**oMAP (Measures of Academic Progress) tests are local assessments. Results include the National norm in reading and math. Scores are based on RIT score – 3 digit number.**

**oStandards Based Report Card Correlation against NECAP and MAP took a snapshot of grade 8 and grade 5 in math and reading. Student scored better on NECAP than they did on report cards.**

**oAP tests are scored with a 1-5, 5 being the highest score. Mr. Crowley said he has concerns that the majority of students taking AP exams are not prepared. The AP teachers are attending many workshops. There is still not the enrollment in classes that there should be. Students are not taking the challenge, particularly in science and math.**

**•SCIENCE CURRICULUM – The State has made a commitment with the Dana Center to improve Science and Math curriculum. EBEC is also taking a look at how we can work together aligning science curriculum to GLE's and GSE's. There will be a retreat in April that**

**will focus on science. There are gaps with the science kits.**

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

**Mr. Basil Pantasopolous spoke about the quality and quantity of curriculum. Mrs. Kraeger said that the heart of the curriculum comes from the GLE's and GSE's. Teachers are designing curriculum maps and once the maps are developed, a validation committee should review the content. Mrs. Savastano said that it takes 3-5 years to develop a curriculum.**

**•FINANCIAL – Mrs. Kraeger recently attended the Spring Impact Aid Conference in Washington, D.C. and said the mood is very positive. The MISA Summer Conference will be held on Middletown this summer from June 21-23. Mrs. Kraeger would like to have access to the Navy base to showcase the military installment we support.**

**To date, 54.09% of the budget has been expended. This compares favorably with last year.**

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**•FACILITIES – Mr. Collins reported that the school department went before the State Fire Board to get approval for waivers to phase in**

**improvements. Gas prices are locked in for the next seven months. We will pull out of the electricity bidding market and go with National Grid for the next two months and then revisit the prices.**

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

## **REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

### **Miss DiPalma**

**•Attended RIASC meeting where there was discussion about the Federal stimulus money.**

### **Mrs. Fenton**

**•Attended Middletown Economic Advisory Committee Meeting. Discussion was about connecting K-12 with what the town is doing for economic development.**

**•Attended Aquidneck Island Regionalization Committee Meeting. There will be a report by the end of April.**

**•Attended GRRL Tech Expo 2009 at Roger Williams University. A Middletown High School Student won a \$100,000 scholarship plus \$1,000 for books. 450 girls throughout the state applied.**

**•Attended Newport County Robotics won the 2008 BAE Systems Granite State Regional Competition.**

### **Mrs. Spengler**

•Attended Early Childhood Committee Meetings. A pamphlet on Kindergarten eligibility was developed and a presentation will be made to the School Committee in April.

## **ADJOURN FROM MEETING**

**MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) Kellie DiPalma. To adjourn from School Committee Meeting at 9:34 p.m. Unanimous vote.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk**