

Middletown Public Schools
Middletown, Rhode Island

September 12, 2017

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Michael S. Pinto Conference Room

Members Present: Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Chairman
Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chairman
Douglas Arnold
Liana Fenton
William O'Connell

Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools
Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent
Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager
David Fontes, Director of Facilities/Safety and Transportation
Sarah Kraeger, Director of Special Education
Mary Surber, Assistant Director of Special Education

The Special School Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by School Committee Chair Kellie DiPalma Simeone. All members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To receive the Newport County Regional Special Education Program report.* Unanimous vote.

I. Futures Education, LLC Program Evaluation – Newport County Regional Special Education Program

Ms. Sarah Kraeger, Director of Special Education, and Mr. Richard Labrie spoke about the report. Futures Education was hired in early March to conduct the evaluation. The evaluation team consisted of four members. A total of 93 confidential interviews were conducted in the three school districts with principals, teachers, teacher assistants, and related service providers. IEP's, State Performance Plans, Program Descriptions, Best Practices, and financial data were used in the evaluation.

It did not appear that the regional program was adversely affected by the withdrawal of Portsmouth. There were no identified weaknesses in internal accounting control. It was concluded that the program is financially well managed.

Alternatives to the regional program are:

- Program Development – Establishing a comparable program in-district would cost about \$1M more. Middletown does not have enough age appropriate classroom space available.
- Outsourcing Students – This would cost about \$753,000 or a 12% increase, which is \$9.8M over five years.

Mrs. Spengler said that we are not identifying more students, we are recognizing the challenges. She knows many parents that are pleased with the program. Some students receive services for a couple of years then no longer require the program. Mrs. Fenton said that Middletown is a "Compassionate Base", where military families choose to attend Middletown because of the quality of special education services.

Three parents spoke and commented on how it is an exceptional program that is far above what is available to students across the country. One parent spoke about their child who has since graduated from Middletown and participates in the transitional program.

ADJOURN FROM MEETING

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To adjourn from School Committee Meeting at 6:02 p.m.* Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger
Superintendent of Schools