

WEYMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Meeting of the Whole
MEETING NOTES
Approved 4/27/17

Date: April 6, 2017

Present: Chair Belmarsh Dr. Sullivan, Ms. Flemer, Mrs. Sheehan, Mrs. Nardone and Superintendent Curtis-Whipple

Absent: Mrs. Curran and Mayor Hedlund

Call to Order

At 6:04 p.m. Chair Belmarsh called the meeting to order.

Chair Belmarsh announced that Mrs. Curran and Mayor Hedlund will not be in attendance this evening.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple discussed staffing updates. She announced that Paul Comerford, Director of Maintenance had given his notice. He will be moving onto a similar position with the Worcester Public Schools.

Our Assistant Director of Special Education, Patti Hayes will be returning to work from her leave after the loss of her son. She will be returning to the office on April 10, 2017.

Susan Kustka has returned from her leave after the recent loss of her mother.

Peter Haviland, Principal at Weymouth High School, has announced he is a finalist in Attleboro. The information will be made public tomorrow morning (April 7th). He is very torn with the decision, but he stated that the position is closer to home and he could be spending more time with his family. Superintendent Curtis-Whipple indicated that site visits from Attleboro will begin next (the week of April 10th). She also shared the contents of several phone calls that she had with Attleboro which outlined the process they will follow in these site visits.

Mrs. Sheehan asked Superintendent Whipple if there has been any information on Ann Knapp? Superintendent Whipple indicated that there was no new information at this time. A description of the staffing in the Special Education department was provided by Superintendent Whipple to the Committee. Ellen Varnerin, a former Director of Special Education in Weymouth, has agreed to return on a part-time temporary basis to cover for Ann Knapp. This will ensure that we remain in compliance with State and Federal regulations.

Superintendent Evaluation

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple distributed a document containing a self-assessment example for the Committee to review. She went through the actual rubric and highlighted areas for growth and improvement. The Committee was very pleased with the Superintendent's self-reflection and indicated they would like to continue with an over-view of the standards utilizing the document throughout the discussion.

Chair Belmarsh asked to go through the Standards and select those that are relevant to this Committee's Superintendent Evaluation rubric.

Standard One

Chair Belmarsh indicated that Superintendent Curtis-Whipple had selected 1B and 1D as areas of needing growth. Chair Belmarsh asked Superintendent Curtis-Whipple to explain to the Committee why she had chosen those particular areas within Standard One.

The Superintendent explained that in her new role she has “pulled away” from teaching strategies, lesson planning, etc. due to the day-to-day nature of her current schedule. She indicated that she would like to make “more time” for these important aspects of the role of Superintendent. She continues on to describe the need for quality of effort and work. There so many administrators at different developmental stages at this time. The need to individualize collaboration with each is essential. An example of a school visit is given. The Superintendent described “being present” during the school visit, but then taking it a step further to do a “Learning Walk” and determine “what needs to be done”.

Evaluation Indicator – Superintendent Curtis-Whipple discusses in more detail. She felt she is meeting all of the timelines, but the “deep, rich conversations are not happening as often as she would like. It would be important to move forward and dig deeper; to determine what developmental stages each administrator is at now and depending upon their level, customize the interactions with each one individually. She would like to grow in this aspect of supervision and provide feedback in a more effective manner.

Mrs. Sheehan discussed her choices for criteria for the Superintendent Evaluation. She stated that *Diverse Learners Needs* were an important addition to the Evaluation. She asked Superintendent Curtis-Whipple to discuss her views on this particular Standard. The Superintendent emphasized the need to include this Standard and the importance of focusing on the diverse learning needs of our Weymouth students.

Mrs. Sheehan explained that it was a choice because the district vision was to bring more Special Education programming back “in-house”. She felt that in addressing this standard in the Superintendent Evaluation the vision for diverse learning would move forward.

Superintendent Curtis- Whipple continued her discussion by addressing *Diversity of Culture* as well as additional aspects of Social Learning.

Chair Belmarsh noted that all goals set in the evaluation need to be realistic in their expectations. We need to keep timelines in mind and make sure they are reasonable. She continued with a discussion of the number of categories to be included in Superintendent Whipple’s Evaluation. The Chair asked the Committee to recall the number of categories that were included in the former Superintendent Salim’s Evaluation. An example was given that maybe a selection of two of one and one of another maybe a possibility.

The Committee discussed the choices.

Chair Belmarsh described to the Committee how all of this could work. The proposed timeline included the following:

- Establish goals for this year and establish an individual consult with the Superintendent next year.
- A check-in process would be formulated and “check-in” times would be scheduled through-out the school year.

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple also proposed a timeline and discussed the goals that should be addressed. An example given was "What have you done to grow in this area? What needs improvement and have you reached proficiency in any areas?"

Dr. Sullivan added to the discussion by sharing his vision of the evaluation. He stated that the Committee and the Superintendent should set goals, establish a time-line and use them as we progress through the evaluation to measure growth. He added that the need to identify data is a very important standard to include in the final document.

Chair Belmarsh agreed with Dr. Sullivan and commented on the fact that the Committee needed to align the evaluation what we envision for the district. Chair Belmarsh also asked that the evaluation indicator be included as well.

Ms. Flemer reminded the Committee that there is an election this year. There is a potential for three new members of the Committee by January 2018. She discussed her specific concerns. She stated that it may be better to have some type of closure in this evaluation at the end of 2017.

The committee members discuss the various concerns and the timing of the conclusion of the Superintendent evaluation in 2017/2018.

Chair Belmarsh asked Superintendent Curtis-Whipple if the end of December timeline affected anything that she had envisioned for the evaluation.

The Superintendent recommended that the Committee move forward with what they have established to date.

The discussion continued with Dr. Sullivan proposal to the Committee to establish the following:

1. Goal setting to be completed by the end of this academic year.
2. Set December as a "check – in" point and
3. Utilize the final five months to review and revise the process.

He also suggested that the Committee consider the election schedule when setting the Superintendent's Evaluation schedule in the coming years.

STANDARD 2

Superintendent Whipple stated that she wanted to include the following from Standard 2:

A1- Plans, Procedures, and Teams: is an area that Superintendent Curtis-Whipple felt she needed growth in. She felt that it is necessary to be more in tune with conversations; to have the time to have meaningful dialog with Administrators and staff.

Operational Systems and Procedures was another choice of the Superintendent. A focus on this portion of Standard 2 would result in the support of the Custodial staff by Administration. The Superintendent felt it was a great opportunity to grow with the new Director of Maintenance. Even though it is not a primary focus for her day-to day role as Superintendent, it does fall under her focus of responsibility. It is an important goal going forward.

2C1- Minimizing Disruptions to Instructional Time-

Superintendent Whipple discussed the fact that Weymouth does not have a “tremendous amount” of distractions within the district. Scheduling at each individual school will need to be looked at to address any specific issues. She felt that there best overall method at each building needs to be determined and she would need to dig deeper to establish those methods.

E1- Operations

The Superintendent described her need to grow in her knowledge of various district operations. She used MUNIS as a prime example of her need to learn and grow. She has met with Leia Secor on a regular basis to obtain a working knowledge of our Financial Operating System. Superintendent Whipple stated that she wished to maximize best use of resources.

Dr. Sullivan agreed with the Superintendent adding that he had chosen this standard as well. He felt that it provided the best intersection of the workings of the district.

Superintendent Whipple continued with her discussion by including Family Engagement in her set of criteria. She felt we do “a pretty decent job” but she knew that growth was need in this area. She expressed the need for our district to become more culturally proficient and aware. Some buildings have many events, while others have few. It is something she would like to address. Mrs. Sheehan supported this statement as well. Superintendent Whipple continued by adding that there have been many district-wide programs, but expressed her concern regarding the district’s response to the needs of our culturally diverse population.

Chair Belmarsh asked the Committee if they had any other additions at this time. Mrs. Sheehan wished to add Family Concerns as well. Chair Belmarsh commented on the over-lap of these standards and how difficult it is to determine which ones to include in the evaluation.

The Chair and the Committee discussed their options in detail. The discussion included the addition of Electronic Communication (i.e. Twitter accounts, Facebook, etc.) The Chair recognized several in the audience to participate in this particular discussion. Dr. Sullivan also proposed the addition of Mindfulness in Communication as well.

Superintendent Whipple suggested an additional focus – norms and behavior. She discussed how norms and behavior are a key component of developmental theory. The discussion included the need for richer conversations. (i.e. Why are you always quiet at the table?). The answers to these types of questions are key in establishing a connection with your staff.

Several other criteria were discussed:

B-Establishment of a Team on Policies and Practices - A focus could be working with the Anti-Defamation League to uncover any practices that maybe questionable, things that we may not even be aware we are doing.

Managing Conflict and Conflict Resolution-

The Superintendent added this to look into the improvement of consensus building within the district. She felt that everyone could benefit from this district-wide.

Mrs. Sheehan commented on the fact that we need a commitment to high- standards and it should be a focus across the district. Weymouth High School could benefit from a focus on conflict resolution.

The Committee discussed an on-going issue with communication among staff and Administration at the Weymouth High School. Superintendent Whipple also commented that it is something that needs to be addressed at the district-level as well.

Chair Belmarsh requested that the Committee look at how to group the standards. For example, the need to choose a standard dealing with Professional Development. She asked them to choose one from the group. Superintendent Whipple reiterated that Social Emotional Learning and Cultural Proficiency should be included.

The Chair and Committee reviewed the standards and commenced with the selection of certain sections and standards to be included in the Superintendent Evaluation. The Chair made several suggestions including 4B as the Professional Development Standard. A consensus was reached by the Committee. A standard to include Fiscal policies, Student Achievement & District Achievement was also suggested by the Chair and the discussion continued.

1E1- The Chair read the text of this Standard to the Committee and asked if the Committee would consider it to be Student Achievement standard chosen for the evaluation. Additional standards were read by the Chair as potential Student Achievement evaluation criteria.

3B1 & 2- were read by the Chair.

The Chair summarized what the Committee had chosen to this point:

- Standard 1 – 1E3- District or Student category
- Standard 2- Fiscal Systems- District category
- Standard 3- 3B1 & 2 – District or Student category
- Standard 4- - 4B1- Professional Practice category

Superintendent Curtis-Whipple suggested to the Committee that 1E3- is more student centered and should be selected under a student focused category. The Committee agreed - Standard 1- 1E3 is listed under student achievement in the evaluation rubric. The Committee also designated 3B 1&2 as District focused and placed that into the evaluation rubric in that category.

Chair Belmarsh asked the Committee members if they still wanted to conduct another Meeting of the Whole on April 27th. It was decided by the Committee that they would hold a Meeting of the Whole on April 27th at 6:00PM before the regular School Committee Meeting at 7:00PM.

Chair Belmarsh asked that the categories be sent to Mrs. Curran and that she is given time to select her choices. The Committee will finalize the selections at the April 27th meeting. A format and timeline for the evaluation will be chosen and finalized on April 27th as well. **Chair Belmarsh stated she would touch base with Mrs. Curran about this meeting, and what was discussed, so she would be 'up to speed' before the next one.**

Mrs. Sheehan moved to adjourn the Meeting of the Whole.

Chair Belmarsh asked to discuss one more item. She suggested that a "Thank You" event be held in honor the many Weymouth Public School community donors and partners. She would speak with Betsy Harris to discuss the process of setting up this type of event. The Committee agreed that it was a very good idea.

On a motion of Mrs. Sheehan, seconded by Dr. Sullivan it was voted to close the Meeting of the Whole at 7:00PM.

Next Meeting of the Whole: April 27, 2017 – 6:00 PM – Mary Jo Livingstone Humanities Center;

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Sheehan – Secretary

Approved

Documents Related to April 6, 2017 Meeting of the Whole:

- Agenda
- Self-assessment example

Approved