



General Library Item

Name April 3, 2017

Content

Scarsdale Board of Education Meeting Highlights April 3, 2017

Meeting with Scarsdale Principals Association

At 6 p.m. the Board of Education met with the Scarsdale Principals Association and discussed several topics, including the progress of sustainability efforts across the District and the possibility of conducting onsite composting; the array of wellness initiatives in all grade levels, and staff preparations to present this range of work to the Tri-state Consortium assessment team during its visit in late April; and supporting various school leadership transitions, including Meghan Troy succeeding Michael McDermott (retiring this year) as Middle School principal, and elementary school teachers-in-charge changing titles to assistant principals.

Business Meeting

At 7 p.m., Lee Maude, Board of Education President, convened the Business Meeting.

Dr. Thomas Hagerman, Superintendent of Schools, provided a detailed update concerning school schedules and calendars:

Changes to the Instructional Day

A report on changes to the instructional day for each level was sent out to parents through District communique a few weeks ago and can be found on the District website [here](#). Some questions have been raised, such as compressed times between the first and second bell at the elementary schools, which are being addressed at each school site. While no further changes in the instructional day schedule are expected, parents will receive more detailed information from their building principals about implementation, including changes in practice related to student drop-off, school entrance in the morning, and the like.

Kindergarten Program

In previous years, Scarsdale kindergarten has operated as a half-day program in September. The purpose was to provide time for teachers to meet individually with students and their families, and conduct initial assessments of school readiness. However, it has been confirmed by the New York State Education Department and the District's legal counsel that the half-day kindergarten program does not meet the required minimum number of instructional days. Consequently, these half-days (formerly scheduled from September 5 to September 20, 2017) must be converted to full days to meet the requirement of 180 days in session. Because we still value the school-home partnership and early evaluation of students, kindergarten teachers are working on solutions that also adhere to attendance requirements and instructional needs.

March Conference Days

The calendar approved on March 6th had spring K-2 Parent-Teacher Conference days scheduled over the course of four weeks (only one such day can be scheduled in a week in order to meet the minimum number of required instructional hours per week). The proposed modification condenses the window of K-2 Parent-Teacher Conference days to three weeks, changing an originally scheduled day from March 20th to March 13th. To accommodate this change, the Superintendent's Conference Day scheduled for March 15th will move to March 22nd.

High School Freshman Orientation

There have been questions about Freshman Orientation, which will take place on one day next year instead of over two days. However, Orientation was actually just 1.5 days in previous years (one full day prior to staff's formal return, and a half day on the day of the Convocation). The half day portion was a walk-through of student schedules, giving students a sense of confidence about finding their classrooms prior to the first day of school. High School Principal Ken Bonamo has reported that tours will be incorporated into the day-long orientation.

Last week of June:

As noted in the memo accompanying the draft 2017-18 calendar, the last week of June, 2018, school will be in session all five days. That week will be listed as full days on the calendar, with a possible conversion to half days which would be confirmed sometime in the spring, depending on the number of inclement weather days used during the school year.

For this year, we can announce that during the last week of school, Monday and Tuesday, June 19-20, will be full days (to make up for two snow days), and June 21-23, Wednesday-Friday will be half days.

Arthur Rublin, Board member, reported on budget developments in Albany and their potential impact on school district budgets.

Community members were invited to address the Board and two did so: Bonnie Yaseen, 41 Franklin Road, speaking as a member of the Scarsdale Teen Center Board, reported that the Board is actively seeking new members; and Ellen Tiven-Moore, Executive Director of the Teen Center, announced a fundraiser for the Center on April 30.

The Board approved items on the consent agenda, including a Personnel Report presented by Drew Patrick, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Leadership Development. Mr. Patrick reported the retirement of High School secretary Ann-Marie Donohue, and noted that tenure recognition will take place at the May 8 Board meeting.

During the Information/Discussion portion of the agenda, the Board discussed a draft calendar for 2017-18 Board of Education meetings, reviewed proposed textbooks, and reviewed summer professional development courses proposed by the Scarsdale Teachers Institute (STI).

The Board approved the 2017-2018 Budget Resolution and Property Tax Report Card, with Board members commenting on their strong support for the proposed Budget. The Board also approved Scarsdale Teachers Institute 2017 Summer Courses, and an amended 2017-18 School Calendar which changes the half-day kindergarten schedule in September to full days in order to meet State requirements, along with other changes noted in Dr. Hagerman's opening remarks.

Community members were invited to address the Board during the second Public Comment period, but none came forward.

The Board conducted a wrap-up of the meeting and announced a list of upcoming meeting dates, including the Tuesday, May 16 Budget Vote and Board Election.

The Board then adjourned into Executive Session to discuss litigation matters.

A video of the Board meeting may be accessed [here](#).