

Town of Darien
RTM Education Committee
Meeting: Mar 5, 2012, 8:00pm

Attendees: Lois Schneider, Peter Kelly, Maria Ferretti, Dennis Maroney, Sandy Savage, Arden Broecking, Sumathi Ebrahimi, Dave Martens, Emily McDermott, Karin Sharp, Tony Imbimbo, Susan Morrison, Barbara Thorne, Joan Davis, Christa McNamara

Guests: Board of Education Chairperson: Betsy Hagerty-Ross, Superintendent: Stephen Falcone, Board members, members of the public and press. The meeting was covered by Channel 79.

Absent: Chris Camuti

Meeting Minutes:

Quorum for the meeting was met.

- Lois Schneider asked that the first 30 minutes were reserved to ask the BOE and the Superintendent questions related to the World Language program. After the 30 minutes of questions, the Education Committee continued with the meeting agenda.
- Questions posed by the Education Committee members included:
 - clarity on the goals of the program,
 - explanation of level of expected proficiency of language as a result of the 5 new teachers in the World Language program
 - how the administration will ensure the program is embraced by the other teachers in the elementary schools.
 - school administration expectations of language proficiency as students move from Elementary School to Middle School and High School.Dr. Falcone and the Board of Ed members addressed each question.
- At the completion of the questions to the Board of Ed and the Administration, they departed and the Education Committee continued with further discussion on the budget process. Lois asked each member to voice their opinion on the World Language program. Opinions included:
 - not sure why Spanish is the only language
 - thought that it was best to start the program but were concerned that 45 minutes per week were not sufficient.
 - thought that the program was not a strong language program but at least it was a start.
 - thought that the program was not a good use of 5 new teachers
 - concern that the once a week frequency would limit the effectiveness of the language effort.
- Motion was made by Dennis Maroney for a sense of the meeting to present our thoughts on the World language program to the Board of Finance at their upcoming meeting. Motion seconded; Sense of the meeting results: yea 1, nay 13, abstain 0
- Summary of upcoming meetings:
 - BOE to BOF Mar 6
 - BOE meeting Mar 8 to discuss deficit
 - BOF public hearing Mar 13
 - Tour of schools to review capital projects. Mar 31 8-10:30am
- Motion to accept the Jan 19 meeting minutes without changes. Motion seconded
Vote results: yea 11, nay 0, abstain 3
- Motion by Barbara Thorne to adjourn. Motion seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm

Peter Kelly
March 12, 2012