

MARSTONS MILLS EAST HORACE MANN CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL (MMEHMCPS)		Date:	Monday February 02, 2009	Time:	6:00 p.m.
BOARD OF TRUSTEES		Location:	Marstons Mills East HMCPS Auditorium		
		Chaired by:	Janelle D'Aprix, Board of Trustees Chair		
		Recorded by:	Kim Moberg, Parent Volunteer		
Attendees:	Janelle D'Aprix, Chair; Marjorie Berkley; Beth-Anne Allen; Jack McLeod; Tao Nguyen; David Vieira; Stephanie Wagner; Kenneth Keenan, Principal				
Absent:					
Guests:					

MINUTES

Agenda Item	Substance of Discussion	Decisions	Action Steps	Responsible	Due Date
<i>Call to Order</i>	Meeting called to order by Chair Janelle D'Aprix at 6:05 p.m.				
<i>Review of School Committee's Decision of 01-27-09</i>	Janelle D'Aprix reviewed two motions voted by the Barnstable School Committee: 1) Voted to close Hyannis East Elementary School and move MMEHMCPS to the Hyannis East Elementary School building. 2) Voted to revoke support of the MMEHMCPS charter renewal if the MMEHMCPS Board of Trustees votes against moving the Hyannis East Elementary building.				
<i>Review of Timeline of Events</i>	Ken Keenan reviewed how we got where we are today. Ken attends system-wide Leadership Team meetings and in turn, provides the MMEHMCPS Board of Trustees (BOT) and school community with updates regarding system-wide issues. - <i>11/08 BOT meeting</i> – Ken informed board members of the Barnstable school system's budget deficit issues. Ken shared the four options Dr. Grenier had outlined to the School Committee to address the deficit and discussed the impacts to MMEHMCPS for each option. The fourth option called for a 12% budget cut across the board. Ken recommended a small group be formed to examine budget issues and how they might affect our charter renewal.				

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<p><i>Review of Timeline of Events (continued)</i></p>	<p>- 12/17/08 Ken met with two School Committee members, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, the school attorney, two MMEHMCPS BOT members and two representatives from Barnstable Horace Mann Charter Public school (BHMCPs). This was the first meeting that Ken heard any discussion of the possibility of revoking support for charter renewal.</p> <p>- 12-18-08 Ken spoke with the Charter School Office and asked if the School Committee had the authority to revoke charter renewal support and force the school to move to an alternate location. Ken was told that the School Committee does have that authority.</p> <p>- 12-29-08 BOT held a Special Meeting to discuss possible options and solutions to budget issues. One option discussed was the Home Petition Rule which allows for amended legislation to charter law however this is a very lengthy process that could not be accomplished prior to the new school year.</p> <p>- 01-06-09 School Committee meeting where relocating to Osterville Elementary (OE) was presented as an option. OE houses 330 students per Dr. Grenier's presentation. MMEHMCPS will have 365 students, but they might all be accommodated utilizing the two existing portables at OE.</p> <p>- 01-01-09 BOT held annual retreat where it was agreed that we will need a location that accommodates all 365 students.</p>				
<p><i>Public Comment</i></p>	<p>Janelle D'Aprix opened Public Comment and reminded speakers of the 3 minute time limit.</p> <p><u>J. Powers</u>: Has been an MMEHMCPS stakeholder for 20 years and asks shouldn't our input be solicited?</p> <p><u>A. Wood</u>, PTO member/parent. She has met with many MMEHMCPS parents. They are unhappy about the making a decision under duress.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p>(<u>A. Wood</u>) They have the following concerns regarding the move to Hyannis East: health of building, safety of area, amount of charter community that will/will not move, integrity of charter and its ability to meet new needs, future of charter. Suggestions: conduct independent inspection of new location with results publicly available, additional assurance of safety, list of capital improvements if deemed necessary.</p> <p><u>M. Caughey</u>, parent. Advocate for children. Feels we are being asked to make a blind decision. Many factors are not yet answered. Priorities should be: provide children with safe education, a safe environment, enforce appropriate behavior and social well-being with a respect for differences. Every child deserves a teacher who believes in them. If we don't have enough answers to make a decision now, please get the answers and base decisions on fact. She's heard that teachers have a 03/10 deadline to decide if they want to stay with MMEHMCPS-please don't make families decide prior to 03/10.</p> <p><u>C. Milne</u>, 1st grade teacher. Board members have spoken of protecting and promoting the charter – what does that mean? People seem to be confused about the definition of goals. In response to prior public comment she offered the following facts for clarification of the boards responsibilities: the board must ensure we meet the legal requirements of the charter which is a contract with the state; the board is responsible for protecting the interest of the schools stakeholders and its decisions should reflect the community majority (if this is true, then a relocation poll is in order); protect future stakeholders; protect the integrity of the original stakeholders who are no longer part of the school community but are still committed. She stated the board needs to be clear regarding its goals and responsibilities so we can all better understand where the board's responsibilities end and where ours begin.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>P. Horgan</u>, Kindergarten teacher. The best thing about a charter is choice. Protecting the charter is protecting choice. The faculty had a choice from the beginning. The charter invested in teachers and teachers may choose teaching models in their classroom. Governor Patrick conducted a survey asking what kind of school retains teachers for five plus years. We were able to answer yes. Please protect our choice-we will move wherever the charter goes.</p> <p><u>D. Pulsifer</u>, parent. What would Horace Mann think of the choices we are facing? She spoke of Horace Mann's six principles. President Obama says we should embrace change. We should look at the larger picture and realize we have the opportunity to lead the way. Horace Mann stated "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity." Don't take choice away from our town.</p> <p><u>A. Hill Myer</u>. Soon to parent of Kindergarten student. Just moved to Cape Cod and trying to figure out what all of this means. Thanks to everyone for helping to educate her. It seems the school is being treated as a political football and it's not fair. Is it legal? Can we renew the charter without the building? Can we get the charter and figure out the building issues later? Will enrollment always be by lottery or will it be more open to the Hyannis East neighborhood?</p> <p><u>Arthur</u> ____, parent. Feels decisions we have are between bad and worse. Location matters, whether it be business or where we send our children to school. Feels the move would be next to a "combat zone" and that is bad news. But the worse news is that it can all end today with no charter.</p> <p><u>M. Sweeney</u>, parent. Feels very passionate about MMEHMCPS. Visited with three sets of parents from the Hyannis East area who feel ecstatic about moving out and can't wait. Feels move would be a safety hazard.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>C. Quast</u>, PTO President/parent. Can't answer the community regarding building safety however she thinks diversifying is not a loss in education but a gain. She has heard positive feedback from the staff and a large percentage plan to move with the school. She has received a call from a Hyannis East teacher saying that staff is willing to step in and be part of the charter. If 25 students go, then charter will go. Please don't take away our choice. Even if not all follow, don't ruin the choice for others.</p> <p><u>G. Leonovich</u>, parent. Wanted to remind everyone we are about choice. Want to keep charter alive even if not in first choice area. Her son is a 6th grader and without this program, he would not be the student he is today. The charter is not about the building but about choice.</p> <p><u>K. Brock</u>, parent. We all love this school and staff but we need to look at long term questions. The new building is not in great condition-can we keep the facility in acceptable condition? She's heard the land that Hyannis East is on is worth a lot of money due to the new recreation facility. Can we get a commitment from the School Committee that we will be there permanently?</p> <p><u>L. Corsino</u>, 3rd grade teacher. Prior to coming to MMEHMCPS, she taught at Hyannis East. She never felt unsafe or felt the children were not safe. They were able to take advantage of the cultural places in Hyannis on school field trips. Three years ago there were problems with allergies but she's heard the building has been cleaned. Are there plans to upgrade the building?</p> <p><u>L. Scotti</u>: parent. Supports charter but requests that education happen in healthy not sick building. The 2005 health evaluation is too old. Requests current evaluation of water, mold, air qualities and radon testing as soon as possible.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>D. Mailer</u>, parent. School Committee has made an ultimatum. Can we respond by saying ok we'll move but we have concerns that need immediate attention? If the building is in poor condition how soon can and will things be fixed? Concern about the length of time children will be on the bus.</p> <p><u>L. Ahern</u>, teacher, Hyannis resident. Expressed disappointment about how fearful people are of Hyannis. She has resided in Hyannis for 20+ years, has taught at Cotuit/Marstons Mills and Hyannis East. There are many opportunities in Hyannis. There are rough elements but that is true everywhere. Hyannis East is within walking distance to Angel House, the Fire Station and the library. The element of fear needs to be addressed. There is much diversity and pride in Hyannis for the town of Barnstable. We send our children to St. Francis in Hyannis, why not MMEHMCPS in Hyannis?</p> <p><u>M_____</u>, parent. There is a wait list for the charter school. This has been a huge learning experience. She urged the board to consider the long term vision. What advantage could be realized for moving? Possibly more operating expense dollars. Any opportunity should be looked at for our future vision.</p> <p><u>A. Silvia</u>, parent. If BOT votes no to relocate then the School Committee will pull the charter – is that it or do we have another avenue of action? If we move to Hyannis East and half the staff chooses not to go, does it “kill” the charter as we know it? She loves the charter as is and as long as the ASP program stays, she will follow the school. As long as the building is not sick she is ok with the location. Sturgis Charter High school is located in Hyannis and is one of the top high schools in the country.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>K. Wyman</u>, parent. Concern over statement “If 25 children go, then charter will go” because if that is true, there will be lots of changes. We’ve been told that students of Hyannis East have unique needs. Is the charter prepared to alter the things we do? Will we see the same level of community involvement? Fundraising, etc. will be different.</p> <p><u>K. Coleman</u>, parent, business leader. She has been to Hyannis East and doesn’t think there are serious health concerns. The Board of Health wouldn’t allow children to attend school in an unsafe building. We should refrain from referring to the area as a “combat zone” because kids are as safe there as here. The School Committee led us to believe the deficit issue is new but it is not new – cash reserves have been used for a few years. More things could be cut from the budget prior to school closings. What can we do if we refuse to move? The town charter states (on the website) that within 10 days of final passing a 5% petition protesting a measure can be filed. This would bring the decision to the voters. We could work with Hyannis East to gain support to keep both schools open.</p> <p><u>S. Ellis</u>, parent of Cotuit/Marstons Mills student. She is not disappointed with the School Committee’s decision. She is with Cotuit/Marstons Mills even though she tried to enter MMEHMCPS. Feels kids will get a good education with or without the charter. If there is a mass exit of the charter by current parents and staff it will open more lottery slots and more Hyannis East students may have access. Can MMEHMCPS commit to current AYP scores with a larger population of Hyannis East students with lower AYP scores?</p> <p><u>K. Swanson</u>, school adjustment counselor MMEHMCPS. Please keep the charter. Services and monies specific to a charter school will be lost. Consider future families and incoming families and allow them the choice.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>D. Schwank</u>, parent. Son has excelled here. The number of families leaving the Cape is alarming. Keep the charter alive regardless of the location, to attract families to the Cape.</p> <p><u>D. Gauthier</u>, parent. Daughter is in 7th grade and excels in school due to this school and the charter. Mrs. Gothier attended school at Hyannis East.</p> <p><u>L. Sillman</u>, parent. Sees no clear reason why we are faced with this choice. The School Committee has not made it clear and should explain to the community why we are faced with this move.</p> <p><u>J. Crocker</u>, Councilman. Has attended many School Committee meetings. We are one town. He has two children in 4th and 7th grade – both children have been moved from their schools. The entire town is going to go through a shift. The issue is vacancy – our schools have low vacancy. This is the only time the School Committee can shift occupancy with a major shift in our census. Look at the math. Teachers and principals make the school.</p> <p><u>L. Sisson</u>. When will the charter board let parents know how many are not relocating?</p> <p><u>K. Guimond</u>, parent of 3rd grader and incoming. Wished a survey was sent when Osterville was an option to determine how many parents will follow the charter. . Also would like to know when we will know how many are not relocating. This information will make a difference in some parent's decisions.</p> <p><u>Rhona L.</u>. Protect the charter. The kids will be together. Please make sure the building is tested with a current assessment. She believes more families will follow the school if they know educated decisions are being made. The issues should've been looked at. Please make sure the building is ok.</p>				

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<p><i>Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p><u>J. Sawyer</u>, parent/PTO member/charter supporter. Expressed her fear regarding AYP scores. Her child had preschool monitoring. Maybe we should assume the role of mentors. As an elementary school student she mentored a Vietnamese family and it was a rewarding experience.</p> <p>Citing no more speakers, Janelle closed Public Comment.</p> <p>Ken Keenan addressed some of the public questions.</p> <p>-Why is this happening? The School Committee needs control of the MMEHMCPS school seats. Our cap is 475. The School Committee is regionalizing so this part of town has access to our building without the enrollment policy of MMEHCMPs.</p> <p>-Could we increase our enrollment by 44 students to fill the building? We must follow the state mandated enrollment policy for charter schools. Seats that become available are first made available to those on the waiting list which are mostly Kindergarten. If there are seats available after the waiting list is enrolled, we advertise to the entire community and the seats are filled by lottery. If we move, we may tap in to some families who did not want to travel to Marstons Mills including residents from Hyannis West, Hyannis East and Barnstable.</p> <p>-How many students from Hyannis East will go to MMEHMCPS? We estimate approximately 203 students may be displaced from Hyannis East. We have a town wide enrollment policy so we cannot anticipate where children will come from.</p> <p>-Will we have funding to accommodate the needs of Hyannis East students? What can we get from the town in if we move?</p>				

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<i>Public Comment (continued)</i>	<p>The School Committee enters a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the board annually. In addition the School Committee has requested a short term MOU stating that the MMEHMCPS board cannot change its mind regarding the relocation after the DESE approves the charter renewal. We can list our concerns and requests in the short term Transitional MOU.</p> <p>-Can the School Committee legally rescind their support of our charter renewal? Yes.</p> <p>-Will diversity "kill" the charter? No. ASP program allows for change. Training for new staff will be provided by ASP representatives. There will also be system wide training due to other grade changes.</p> <p>-What is the School Committee's long term vision for the Hyannis East building? We cannot answer that right now. It is difficult to believe the School Committee would move us there only to move us again prior to the next charter renewal in five years.</p> <p>-Can the Hyannis East building be upgraded? When relocation to Osterville East was on the table we were not able to replicate our auditorium or any other upgrades of that nature. We will make the new building an ASP school.</p> <p>-When will parents know who is going to the new building? We cannot answer right now. It depends on which schools stay open.</p>				
<i>Board Response to Public Comment</i>	<p>Jack McLeod feels the School Committee made a heavy-handed and unnecessary decision – but they made it an easy decision for us in that we either move or lose the charter. Jack was the Teacher's Union President at the time of the health issues at Hyannis East. Years ago an independent study was done and Philip Turell reports that enormous changes have taken place over the last few years including a new custodial staff, new vents and removal of many stored items.</p>				

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<p><i>Board Response to Public Comment (continued)</i></p>	<p>While the building is much better, Jack agrees that a more recent assessment needs to be conducted. Jack talked about the MMEHMCPS staff and stated he has never been exposed to such incredibly committed people in his 33 years in the school system. That commitment will be with the charter wherever it is located. A charter is a promise in return for autonomy. The board's job is to see that the goals and objectives are achieved. If we vote no to relocate to Hyannis East, we vote away the charter. Jack does not support that vote. He added that we have the right leadership and staff to deal with the sidebar issues. The board needs to make the right decision for this school and we will.</p> <p>Janelle agreed with Jack's remarks and reiterated the board's plans for the next five years which are currently in progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase Diversity 2) Concentrate and focus on differentiation to meet the needs of all our learners. 3) Disseminate information about ASP 4) Create a subcommittee to maintain and sustain needed programs for MMEHMCPS. <p>Beth-Ann Allen presented an overview of the ASP program.</p> <p>Ken noted that Dr. Gina Hurley, Director of Student Services attended two parent meetings and reported she's never been called to Hyannis East for safety issues. He spoke of the School Safety Officer Program. Officer Morrison says Hyannis East is far enough away from issues and problems reported in the newspaper. The police presence in the area is because businesses and the hospital are located in Hyannis. He said the building is not a safety risk. The police log visits to Hyannis East are his visits. Ken expects Officer Morrison's continued support if we relocate to Hyannis East.</p>				

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<p data-bbox="79 164 275 240"><i>Board Response to Public Comment (continued)</i></p> <p data-bbox="79 930 254 979"><i>Board Discussion and Deliberation</i></p>	<p data-bbox="304 164 831 240">Ken stated that Principal Larrabee has offered access to the Hyannis East building to assist parents and staff in decision making.</p> <p data-bbox="304 269 831 370">Margie Berkley researched reported incidents through the Barnstable Police Department's website and the Interactive Crime Mapping Tool and found no reported incidents on school grounds.</p> <p data-bbox="304 399 831 548">Stephanie Wagner researched the websites for Hyannis East (in addition to her own neighborhood) and echoed Margie's findings. Stephanie was told by her friend the police community that there have not been any incidents on Hyannis East school property in the last couple of years.</p> <p data-bbox="304 578 831 678">Janelle stated the board received and reviewed the requested health and safety documents. The documents showed issues and resolutions to various schools including Hyannis East.</p> <p data-bbox="304 708 831 906">Margie compiled a document that outlines a number of health and safety reports by name, date and purpose of report. The reports range from 07/03 to 02/07. The board also reviewed the School Facility Expense reports from 2004-2009 which show line item expenses totaling \$259,260 for upgrades, replacements, repairs, installations, and painting at Hyannis East. Margie's document is attached.</p> <p data-bbox="304 935 831 1109">Dave Vieira reviewed his motion made at the last meeting which stemmed from a lack of transparency. He has reviewed the health and safety documents and attended Dr. Grenier's presentations. He feels appropriate action has been taken by the School. Dave stated that he would send his child to Hyannis East.</p> <p data-bbox="304 1138 831 1239">We need to keep ourselves informed about if and how the new building will be impacted by the School Committee's Statement of Interest with the School Building Authority.</p>				

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<i>Board Discussion and Deliberation (continued)</i>	<p>Discussion regarding the formation of a Transition Task Force comprised of the All School Community.</p> <p>Discussion regarding wording of transitional MOU to ensure it addresses outstanding issues and building needs assessment including, but not limited to, current air quality report, roofing, exterior window and doors, electrical and plumbing and any other areas to ensure the building's safety and acceptable condition.</p>				
<i>Board Vote</i>	<p>Motion by David Vieira: I move that the MMEHMCPS Board of Trustees accept the offer by the Barnstable School Committee to move our operations to the current Hyannis East Elementary School building beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. Motion seconded by Stephanie Wagner. Board vote as follows: Janelle D'Aprix, yes; Margie Berkley, yes; Beth-Anne Allen, yes, Jack McLeod, yes; Tao Nguyen, yes; David Vieira, yes; Stephanie Wagner, yes. All were in favor and motion passed.</p>	<p>Vote to move MMEHMCPS to the Hyannis East building effective school year 2009-2010.</p>			
<i>Board Discussion Next Steps</i>	<p>Janelle stated next steps, primarily formation of the Transitional Task force. David volunteered to serve and other board members offered their assistance.</p> <p>Discussion regarding timelines and responsible parties for Annual MOU and Transitional MOU.</p> <p>Janelle encouraged board members, leadership, staff and parents to notify the board of any questions and/or concerns that could be addressed in the Transitional MOU.</p>				
<i>Adjourn</i>	<p>At 9:05 p.m. Jack McLeod made a motion to adjourn. Stephanie Wagner seconded. All were in favor, meeting was adjourned.</p>				