

Wellfleet School Committee Meeting Minutes
Wellfleet Elementary School
September 12, 2017

Present for the Committee – Chair Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, Mort Inger, and Martha Gordon

Absent: Betsy Pontius

Present for the Administration – Superintendent Tom Conrad, Assistant Superintendent Keith Gauley, Director of Student Services Ann Caretti, Director of Finance and Operations Giovanna Venditti, Director of Nauset Integrated Preschool Joanna Stevens and Principal Mary Beth Rodman

Call to Order

Chair Plaue called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m.

Chair's Report

Chair Plaue reported that she attended the Nauset Professional Development day and was very impressed with presenter and teachers that were in attendance. She also indicated that Betsy Pontius has agreed to Chair the October meeting in her absence.

Citizens Speak

None

Priority Business

Principal's Report – Principal Rodman's report was included in the packet. She reported that the Farmer in School program is beginning and the PTA will be asked to share the cost. Cape Light Compact's work has been scheduled for the holiday break. They will provide WES with \$62,000 worth of equipment that will save the school \$12,000 annually. Principal Rodman reviewed the enrollment figures indicating that 9 students withdrew over the summer, 1 to school choice in Truro, 1 to school choice in Provincetown and 7 moved out of town. Two students entered. Next year, the census indicates 85 children and Principal Rodman projects 85, which is quite low. She indicated that staff levels may remain the same as she might have to create another special needs classroom. She updated the committee on status of summer building maintenance and capital projects.

Assistant Superintendent, Keith Gauley's report was included in the packet. He reviewed the Professional Development Summary. He also reported that grants have been reduced by \$86,152 to the district but that reduction would not have an impact on services this year but in the future this type of reduction may be problematic. Jan Plaue volunteered to have her name included in a drawing that will choose members of the District School Calendar Committee.

Superintendent Conrad clarified the Nauset Regional School Committee was working on their enrollment report for the MSBA and has concluded and voted unanimously that Nauset High

School will remain a Grade 9-12 school, servicing 950-1,000 students. He thanked staff members and Principal Rodman for holding Open Houses for Kindergarten students before the first day of school. The staff puts in extra days to make this happen and he appreciates all their time and efforts. He also indicated that Wellfleet Elementary School will be getting their Coordinated Program Review Report from the state. He reviewed highlights from the Summer Leadership Institute that included: social emotional learning, teacher observations, review of the suspension rules and a review of the consistency of the Nauset Tiered Support System. The team also identified Professional development that would benefit them.

The opening day was great. He attended opening ceremonies at Wellfleet Elementary School. He reported on the autonomous car project that high school students participated over the summer, partnering with MIT. Harry Terkanian was a lead teacher in the program and Ed Rohmer coordinated this project for Nauset. There are two autonomous cars in the district and he hopes the students will share their project at all-school meetings. The Superintendent also talked about MIT providing professional development for staff and working with “Beaver Works” that is the educational arm of MIT.

FY18 Budget Review

Ms. Venditti reported that salaries have not been encumbered so there would not be an expenditure report until October. She informed the Committee that \$650.00 had been returned to the town from last year’s budget. She also reminded the committee of prepayments in the amount of \$65,000.

Transportation Update

Superintendent Conrad reported that Wellfleet is running one less bus that saves \$25-\$27,000. A few stops were consolidated, there have been no issues and buses are running on time. To save some money and miles, buses are being reloaded at the middle school to travel on to the high school.

He also reported the progress of the Transportation Subcommittee and highlighted a little of the work they are doing such as researching propane, diesel and maintenance of buses. The 3-year contract with First Student is in its last year. Over 3 years’ time, they have increased 40%. The Transportation Subcommittee will have a report in October at the Joint meeting.

Preschool Update

Dr. Ann Caretti and Joanna Stevens spoke to the Committee about the Preschool program. Dr. Caretti met with Suzanne Thomas who gave her some historical numbers that included students who do not go to WES. The issue is after school and before school care. She is looking at Truro Central, as it appears students go there because they have childcare, which is covered by the Recreation program. Parents are looking for all day coverage.

It was suggested that Administration meet with the Children’s Place personnel about WES students going there before and after school with a bussing component. This would enable

students to stay in the program and stay in their own town for preschool. Dr. Caretti did not look into public preschool.

There was further discussion about 4-year olds in the public school setting, five days a week, agencies servicing preschoolers presently, after school daycare and programs.

Mort Inger had to leave the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Joanna Stevens supports the idea of Universal Preschool and would love to see it in one place as transitions are difficult for young children. It would be a big system-wide change and in the meantime, transporting kids from Eastham Children's Place will alleviate the problem for the short-term.

Capital Projects

Principal Rodman reviewed the capital project list and status of work being done with committee members. The parking lot resealing will be completed in-house by Paul. The Core Building Project was discussed. The Superintendent indicated that in discussions with Mr. Hoort, Wellfleet Town Administrator, he may like to fund this another way by paying for it within the town. The Superintendent is waiting for direction from Mr. Hoort.

Jill Putnam had to leave the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

It was noted that version 3 of the Capital Plan was submitted to the town back in May.

Elementary Survey

Dr. Ann Caretti discussed the mental health survey for elementary school-age children. The High School and Middle School students have completed a survey with disturbing results. Thoughts of suicide at the Middle School and High School were attributed to academic stresses, self-induced pressures and worries about the future. At the elementary level, Dr. Caretti would like to give parents a print out of their child's responses. She would like to get students help earlier and identify anxiety. She would like kids to learn coping strategies using the Second Step course from preschool upward.

Reports and Information

Cape Cod Collaborative – No report

Nauset Preschool – Discussed previously in agenda

Transportation Subcommittee – Discussed previously in agenda

Policy Subcommittee – meeting at the end of the month

Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes was held until the next meeting as there was no quorum present at this time.

The Superintendent indicated that in the future, minutes will include motions, votes and a summary of the topic being discussed.

Adjournment

On a motion by Martha Gordon and seconded by Jan Plaue, the meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ann Tefft

Included in the packet: Administrators' reports, capital report and minutes.