

Joint Meeting of the Nauset School Committee
Nauset Regional Middle School
January 25, 2012

Present for the Brewster Committee: Marie Enocht, Dave Telman , Donna Kalinick

Present for the Eastham Committee: Ann Crozier, Joanna Stevens, Sean Fleming, Joanne Irish

Present for the Orleans Committee: Mary Lyttle, Gwynne Guzzeau, Eric Ehnstrom

Present for the Wellfleet Committee: Jan Plaue, Elizabeth Pointius, Mort Inger, Jill Putnam, Terry Frazier

Present for the Region Committee: Frank Cummings, Ed Brookshire, Sarah Blackwell, Brian Kavanaugh, John O'Reilly, Marie Enocht, Jon Porteus, Jean Souther, Dan McEnaney

Present for the Administration: Superintendent Richard Hoffmann, Assistant Superintendent BonnyGifford, Hans Baumhauer, Business Manager, Ann Caretti, Director of Student Services, Barbara Lavoine, Director of Technology

Others in Attendance: Principals Conrad, Carreiro, Minkoff, Rodman, Fronius, and Gauley

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Guzzeau called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

AGENDA CHANGES

Item G. was added to the agenda – Transportation.

CITIZENS SPEAK

The Chair informed Citizens they could speak to the Integrated Preschool issue when it came up on the agenda. No other citizens wished to address any other issues at this time.

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Update – Integrated Preschool Program

Dr. Hoffmann gave the Committee some background information and explained how the Nauset Integrated Preschool works. He also indicated that he met with Dr. Ann Caretti, Director of Student Services, and Dr. Maggie Mack, Director of the Integrated Preschool, and they made a recommendation to eliminate one of the four classrooms due to extra capacity over the last 5 years. It was further stated that no one would make the recommendation if they thought it would have the slightest impact on the quality of the program or hurt the students in any way. The Superintendent further stated that the issue before the school committee is whether the school committee feels that the capacity to meet the needs of the students with special needs in the Integrated Preschool can be met with three or four classrooms. Reinstating the fourth classroom (a.m. and p.m. session) would leave 14 available seats for students with special needs and add 16 more seats for community friends. Dr. Hoffmann also indicated that the costs were apportioned in each town through a formula using special needs children enrollment over the past three years and taking an average.

Dr. Hoffmann reviewed the handout showing special needs children enrolled in each class and the capacity. Dr. Hoffmann indicated they reviewed the enrollment last year and years prior that showed the program ran with consistently unfilled seats. By proposing to eliminate the classroom he was showing his fiscal responsibility to the towns. The Superintendent, Dr. Mack, and Dr. Caretti thought the program could run with three classes as it had in the past, without jeopardizing the integrity of the program. He also stated that if unanticipated special needs children enrolled, a half day session, or full day session if needed, would be

reinstated. The mission of the program is to educate children who are three and four years old with special needs. There are up to 8 community friends in a class who pay approximately \$800 per year to attend the program.

Chair Guzzeau indicated that this was a Union 54 issue so the Region Committee would not be voting. She also indicated that 7 years were needed to reinstate the fourth classroom.

Marie Enochty indicated that she was not happy with the process in which the class was eliminated and felt that there wasn't any discussion prior to staff being notified of termination next year. She also stated she was concerned about changing the dynamics of the program. She suggested more outreach and a place for Integrated Preschool on the website. She suggested increasing tuition to defray costs. She also suggested giving the program some time and evaluate how we want to run our preschool and proceed in a collaborative and unified way. Donna Kalinick read a statement from Mara Liebling, who could not be at the meeting, regarding her support for reinstating the fourth classroom back into the Integrated Preschool. Donna Kalinick expressed her concerns with the very little wiggle room in the classes for other identified students. She also expressed concerns about Brewster students being educated in Orleans and felt children should be in their own towns.

The impact on the budget would be:

- Wellfleet Elementary School - \$18,200
- Orleans Elementary School - \$18,200
- Eastham Elementary School - \$32,760
- Brewster Elementary School - \$54,600

Ann Crozier, Chair of the Eastham School Committee indicated that Eastham does not have program and children go to other towns without any transitioning problems to kindergarten.

Dr. Maggie Mack addressed the committee indicating that the enrollment numbers were accurate. She also indicated that enrollments fluctuate as children move in and out of the district. As far as outreach, her office just sent out 129 letters to families on the census and 45 letters to physicians and preschools looking for children. "Child find" is part of the program and happens each year. Last year they outreached to 144 families.

Mr. Kavanaugh, from the Region Committee, suggested that decision not be made in a vacuum and that the Administration make use of a portion of the \$112,000 in the preschool revolving account to mitigate costs and to use this year as a transition year. Other committee members asked if that money was accessible and if it could be used to offset their costs.

Dr. Caretti indicated that the excess fund in the revolving account are used if there is an emergency when an unidentified child moves into preschool that requires an educational assistant or to fund other unanticipated costs.

It was suggested by Joanne Irish of the Eastham School Committee that ½ a classroom be restored. Ann Crozier felt the committee should support the information that shows actual trends and is likely that there will be vacant seats. Dr. Hoffmann indicated that if we waited until the March screening, at that point, if another session was needed, we could use \$60,000 from the revolving fund.

Jill Putnam, from Wellfleet, indicated she was an early childhood professional who supports the investment in early childhood educational programs and supports the Nauset Integrated Preschool. She also indicated that Wellfleet had already approved their budget and hoped that part of the revolving account could help Wellfleet. She further stated that \$80 per month is so very low and felt the committee should vote to increase the tuition immediately.

Dr. Mack cautioned about raising the tuition rates as some parents can barely afford the cost now. She also indicated that it was the norm to plan for 7 special needs students in a classroom and that Nauset has served far fewer students in most years. There will be 11 open spots that may not be filled over six sessions (3 classrooms). She stated that this is a fair and prudent plan. If the screening identifies a few more students then propose a ½ session.

Motion: A motion was made by Joanna Stevens, seconded by Joanne Irish, to reinstate a ½ classroom in the Nauset Integrated Preschool Program for 2012-13 and revisit this after the upcoming screening to look at the numbers once again.

At this time several citizens including Patricia Hill, Jeanne Snyder, Brenda Cazeault, Greta Montgomery, Steve McKenna addressed the committee stating concerns about the process, credibility, and the need to reinstate the fourth classroom.

Mort Inger from Wellfleet indicated that this was not an issue about the process but an issue as to whether or not the fourth classroom should be reinstated. Parents sounded as if the committee was eliminating the program but the conversation should be about reinstating the fourth class.

Allison Paine addressed the committee asking how many community friends are turned away each year and could there be a preschool for non-special needs students. Dr. Mack indicated she would try to get that information for them. Tricia MacDonald, Cynthia Baron, Patricia DeWitt, and Peter Norton (Chair of the Board of Selectmen from Brewster) also addressed the committee with concerns about class size, priorities, state mandates and funding for an additional classroom.

Jan Plaue, Chair of the Wellfleet School Committee, noted that the school committee is always looking for ways to save money and that is what the School Committee asks Administration to do when preparing a budget. She also stated that School Committees do not want to ask for an override year after year. She indicated that Administration tries to balance the budget for the committees. She stated she has 100% confidence in Dr. Caretti and Dr. Mack who are in charge of the preschool program. She feels everyone should go with the recommendation of the experts who feel we can have a quality program with the three classrooms. She also stated that if more children were identified, we would accommodate them. Administration is not hurting the program or saying that anyone's child will be hurt with the change.

Amended motion: Mr. Telman made an amendment to the motion and it was seconded by Ms. Enochy to add both a.m. and p.m. sessions, with the understanding that after the screening in March, if we can service the kids with one classroom, we would do that.

Dr. Hoffmann indicated that usually the maker of the original motion must be willing to accept the friendly amendment and that the motion on the table takes precedence. Ms. Enochy felt the committee should vote on the amendment and whether or not they were allowed to make the amended motion.

Chair Guzzeau asked Joanna Stevens (maker of the original motion) if she would accept this motion. Joanna Stevens indicated she did not accept the amendment. Ann Crozier called the question.

Dave Telman asked for clarification of the process.

The vote was taken on the first motion - to reinstate a ½ classroom in the Nauset Integrated Preschool Program for 2012-13 and revisit this after the upcoming screening to look at the numbers once again.

Eastham: Joanna Stevens – yea, Ann Crozier – yea, Joanne Irish – yea

Wellfleet: Jan Plaue – nay, Jill Putnam – nay, Mort Inger – nay

Brewster: Donna Kalinick – nay, Marie Enochy – nay, Dave Telman – nay

Orleans: Mary Lyttle – nay, Eric Ehnstrom – nay, Gwynne Guzneau – yes

4 Yeas and 8 nays – The motion failed.

Motion: A motion was made by Dave Telman and seconded by Jill Putnam to add the full day classroom back into the budget.

Mort Inger asked the question, if next month there are no children for one of the classrooms, then what? Dave Telman answered, we talk about it again.

Chair Guzneau asked Administration for clarification regarding a question that was raised about state and federal mandates. If children arrive and have a need, and we don't have an empty seat, we create one. Administration answered affirmatively.

John O'Reilly hoped the committee would support the motion to reinstate the fourth classroom and between now and March talk about tuition and utilizing a portion of the \$112,000 in the Revolving Fund, retaining a portion so that you could add an educational assistant or teacher if needed.

The Chair called the vote to reinstate the fourth classroom for the 2012-13 school year.

Brewster: Mary Enochy – yea, Dave Telman – yea, Donna Kalinick – yea

Wellfleet: Jill Putnam – yea, Jan Plaue – nay, Mort Inger – yea

Eastham: Ann Crozier – nay, Joanne Irish – nay, Joanna Stevens – nay

Orleans: Mary Lyttle – yea, Eric Ehnstrom – nay, Gwynne Guzneau – yea

The motion passed 7 yeas, 5 nays.

The committee took a five-minute recess at 8:45 p.m.

Motion: On a motion by Eric Ehnstrom seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted to create a subcommittee to explore universal preschool with the charge to explore the financial viability of creating a more extensive program for non-special needs students.

Brewster: Marie Enochy – yea, Dave Telman – yea, Donna Kalinick – yea

Wellfleet: Jan Plaue – yea, Mort Inger – nay, Jill Putnam – nay

Eastham: Ann Crozier – nay, Joanna Stevens – yea, Joanne Irish – yea

Orleans: Eric Ehnstrom – yea, Mary Lyttle – yea, Gwynne Guzneau – yea

The motion passed 9 yeas, 3 nays.

Jill Putnam stated Nauset should market what we already have and the tuition can be increased but remain affordable.

The Chair closed discussion on the Integrated Preschool.

Concussion Policy

Dr. Hoffmann indicated that the policy is mandated for the high school and Administration will come back with an addendum for the Middle School and elementary schools. The policy was reviewed by the Policy Subcommittee and they recommend it for approval with our trainer, Michele Pavlu's amendments.

Dr. Hoffmann also indicated that the committee must suspend the policy for a first and second reading in order to approve at this meeting.

Mr. Kavanaugh indicated that the committees take the extra time on the policy and not to suspend the rules for the second reading. This has a March 1st requirement when we will need a full policy.

Ms. Pontius indicated that she is on the Policy Subcommittee and indicated that the trainer, Ms. Pavlu, did a tremendous amount of work on the policy and answered any and all questions. The only questions that were raised regarded the middle school and elementary schools. Mr. Fleming, also a member of the Policy Subcommittee, indicated that the school nurse refers children out to their physician with head injuries.

Motion: On a motion by Jan Plaue, seconded by Mort Inger, it was voted unanimously to suspend the second reading and accept the endorsement of the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion: On a motion by Ann Crozier, seconded by Joanna Stevens, it was voted unanimously to suspend the second reading and accept the endorsement of the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion: On a motion by Marie Enochy, seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted unanimously to suspend the second reading and accept the endorsement of the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion: On a motion by Frank Cummings, seconded by John O'Reilly, it was voted 8 yeas, 1 nay (Brian Kavanaugh) to suspend the second reading and accept the endorsement of the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion: On a motion by Mary Lyttle, seconded by Eric Ehnstrom, it was voted unanimously to suspend the second reading and accept the endorsement of the Policy Subcommittee.

Motion: Adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by Jan Plaue, seconded by Mort Inger, it was voted unanimously to adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by Joanna Stevens, seconded by Ann Crozier, it was voted unanimously to adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by Mary Lyttle, seconded by Eric Ehnstrom, it was voted unanimously to adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by John O'Reilly, seconded by Sarah Blackwell, it was voted 8 yeas, 1 nay (Brian Kavanaugh), to adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

On a motion by Dave Telman, seconded by Marie Enochy, it was voted unanimously to adopt the new concussion policy as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee.

The Concussion Policy was adopted.

Central Office Budget

Dr. Hoffmann recommended approval of the Central Office Budget as recommended by the Central Office Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Baumhauer reviewed the minor adjustment to the budget to bring it down to 2.52%. Net total - \$1,321,257 or 2.52% increase

REGION VOTE: On motion by John O'Reilly, seconded by Jean Souther, it was voted unanimously to approve the Central Office Budget.

UNION 54 VOTE:

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Jan Plaue, it was voted unanimously to approve the Central Office Budget.

Brewster: Marie Enochy – yea, Donna Kalinick – yea, Dave Telman – yea

Wellfleet: Jan Plaue – yea, Jill Putnam – yea, Mort Inger – yea

Eastham: Ann Crozier – yea, Joanna Stevens – yea, Joanne Irish – yea

Orleans: Mary Lyttle – yea, Eric Ehnstrom – yea, Gwynne Guzzeau – yea

The motion passed and the Central Office Budget was approved.

School Calendar

Dr. Bonny Gifford reviewed the proposed 2012-2013 school calendar with the committee and indicated that the Administration and the Professional Development Council support the proposed calendar. The Professional Development Council and other teachers indicated that the November week off creates too much release time for students. They felt very strongly they want to see the students that week for teaching and learning. The Professional Development Days should be more spread out to give teachers time to get work done on curriculum. The initiatives we are involved in and the alignment to the Common Core is intense. Half day Professional Development days were also proposed. Discussion ensued regarding half days and impact on childcare.

At the March meeting, the committee would like to see the full calendar with parent conference dates and the last day of school included.

Strategic Plan

A **motion** was made by Marie Enochy and seconded by John O'Reilly to table the Strategic Plan discussion until March.

Update of Food Service Plan

Dr. Hoffmann reported that he and a colleague visited all the cafeterias in all schools. A report of the findings will be shared. Moving forward Dr. Hoffmann indicated they will hire a new food service director for 2012-13.

Transportation

Hans Baumhauer, Business Manager, reviewed the Transportation Analysis with the Committee. It was noted that actual costs to the Region this year are much greater than estimated. Discussion followed regarding adding early and late buses, adding buses to stay within school committee instruction of no one riding more than 30 minutes, and school choice buses were reduced from 3 to 1.

Tardiness continues to be an issue at the middle school and elementary schools, if even by a minute. Principals from Orleans, Brewster and the Middle School answered questions from the Committee and indicated what is being done in their buildings to address the tardy situation which included calls to parents,

letters to families, and expanding the drop off times. It was noted that some families are habitually late and Principals are trying to educate families regarding the impact this has on their child. It was also noted that tardies show how many students are not taking the bus. Mr. Conrad was asked to give the committee information regarding the vast majority of grades and not just the decline in the number of students with D's and F's. It was also noted that parents have shared concerns about their athletes.

Principal Conrad gave a brief history of the research regarding the benefits of later start times for high school students and he addressed the athletic program questions. Principal Conrad indicated he would bring more data to the committee next month.

Donna Kalinick asked that Administration keep tracking this data. She is concerned about the middle school and elementary schools. She suggested a survey be sent to parents to ask the question why can't you get your child to school on time.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Brian Kavanaugh, it was voted to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2011 meeting, noting Terry and Sean were absent.

Adjournment

It was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tefft, Secretary to the Joint School Committee