

Joint Meeting of the Nauset School Committees
Central Administration Building
July 24, 2012

Present for the Brewster Committee: Dave Telman, Donna Kalinick, Jennifer Rabold, Brenda Cazeault,

Present for Eastham Committee: Laura Freeman, Joanne Irish, Mary Lou Sette

Present for Orleans Committee: Gwynne Guzzeau, Mary Lyttle, David Abel

Present for Wellfleet Committee: Chair Plaue

Present for Region Committee: John O'Reilly, Sarah Blackwell, Ed Brookshire, Cheryl Codair, Jayne Fowler, Greg O'Brien, Jon Porteus, Sue Skidmore

Present for Administration: Richard Hoffmann, Bonny Gifford, Ann Caretti, Giovanna Venditti

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Plaue called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

PRIORTY BUSINESS

Strategic Plan

Chair Plaue indicated the Strategic Plan has been crafted over a two-year period with input from Administration, School Councils, staff and community. This is a live document that the committee can work with and adjust if necessary. The subcommittee that met with Dr. Minkoff indicated nothing had been changed except for what was agreed upon by the committee. Language was consolidated and items were combined. Headings were made consistent. The one suggestion that may not have been included was to hire a facilities manager for the district.

Motion: On a motion by John O'Reilly, seconded by Jon Porteus, it was voted unanimously to adopt the 2012-2017 Strategic Plan with the date of July, 2012.

Election of Vice Chair

Ed Brookshire nominated and Jennifer Rabold seconded, Gwynne Guzzeau for Vice Chair for the Joint School Committee. The Committee voted unanimously to appoint Gwynne Guzzeau to the position of Vice Chair of the Joint School Committee.

MASC Presentation

Dr. Hoffmann introduced Jim Hardy, MASC who gave an informative PowerPoint presentation on the roles and responsibility of school committees. Parliamentary procedures, Robert's Rules, responding to constituents, limited hiring responsibilities, strategic planning, district policies, review of school improvement plans, collective bargaining and retaining legal counsel were topics of discussion. The Superintendent's roles and responsibility included management of the schools, having authority

over all personnel, supervising of principals who are “site based managers,” responsible for implementing district policy, initiates policy and budget proposals, manages the budget that is approved by the school committee and is hired by and reports to the School Committee.

It was noted the “heart of most conflicts is when the School Committee and/or the Superintendent do not honor the responsibilities of the other, when people act inappropriately or incorrectly, but not necessarily illegally, when poor communication exists between the Superintendent and the School Committee, when the need to control trumps the focus on educating children or when there is a problem over money.”

Mr. Hardy indicated the “What” is for the School Committee and the “how is for the Superintendent. School Committees deal with policy. When curriculum issues involve policy, it is within the scope of School Committee oversight. In the area of Special Education, the Director of Special Education is the authority and advocates for children. The School Committee confirms the Superintendent’s recommendation for Special Education Director and Business manager. Schools must comply with legislation at State and Federal level.

After the presentation, a question and answer session took place. Some of the questions were: instigate vs. approval, fees/ jurisdiction of school committee, eliminating entire curriculum/school committee, parental concerns/ultimately it is the decision of the school committee but must first be brought to the teacher, the principal and then the Superintendent for resolution. Fiduciary responsibility - ultimately school committee responsibility. Make sure warrants come before a subcommittee for approval. Look for approved purchase orders with appropriate signatures. Is money being efficiently used? Are procurement laws being followed?

The budget process was discussed. Mr. Hardy suggested that the School Committee establish priorities early in the budget process. Administration develops priorities as well, some of which will tie in with the strategic plan. Once the budget is approved, it becomes an auditing piece for school committee members. It is the role of the School Committee to review and approve the budgets in a timely manner. The School Committee should receive a regular update regarding balances and accounts. This way you get an early warning for red flag areas. The transfer of money requires a School Committee vote.

Miscommunications between parents and administration – the school committee members should contact the Superintendent and indicate there is a problem he needs to address.

In the area of collective bargaining, the School Committee is Management’s side of the table, not the mediator. Collective bargaining procedures were discussed as well as “good faith bargaining.” Ground rules were mentioned and the ethical obligation of those involved in negotiations to never discuss what happens during the process. How public schools are funded was defined. Are schools hiring their first choice candidates and are people staying in the district, two indicators of competitive salary. To see more salaries go to the MASC website and find salary data base for the state. He also noted that negotiating committee members should look at “what impedes your ability to manage your buildings, what would make your life easier?” List language issues you would like to bring up.

“District Policy is found everywhere, not just in the policy manual.” Policy is found in Student Handbooks, Collective Bargaining Agreements, Strategic Plans, and in Official Goals and Objectives,

Mission and Vision Statements, as well as in School Committee minutes, grant applications, legal documents, Superintendent directives, past practices, Regional Agreements, and Town Charters. Mr. Hardy noted the most important challenge for the School Committee is how to improve student achievement. School Committees must realize that they make policy during the budget process and must appreciate their fiduciary responsibility to review and sign warrants. He also noted that school committee members must not yield to temptation to undermine their team. They must have a “master” or Strategic Plan. School Committees must avoid administrative operations, model good public practice and keep meetings open and public, and maintain high professional and legal ethics. He also noted an effective school system has strong Superintendent and School Committee Collaboration. He noted that everyone should be focused on student achievement.

It was suggested that the School Committee “Code of Ethics” be placed on all school committee agendas. (How do we want to communicate as a whole?)

Facilities – who is responsible? The towns are responsible for their elementary schools and the region is responsible for the region.

The entire PowerPoint Presentation will be sent to committee members in its entirety.

At 7:30 p.m. the committee took a dinner break and resumed their meeting at 7:50 p.m. Stop and Shop and Shaw’s of Orleans donated gift cards for the refreshments.

Superintendent’s Evaluation Process

Dr. Hoffmann reviewed the new process that the Department of Education has promulgated. He reviewed some of the discussion from the July 9th meeting of the Joint Committee which included evaluating the knowledge and skills of the professional practices of the Superintendent using rubrics (42). The Superintendent indicated that it is up to local School Committee to determine how many standards and indicators they want to use. On July 9th it was suggested evaluating the Superintendent on 8-10 of the standards. The Superintendent has to complete a self-evaluation of all 42 items and will give a copy to all school committee members. A subcommittee consisting of the 5 Chairs and the Chair of Union 54 will form a subcommittee who will represent all members in the process. The draft will be finalized and submitted to school committee members in October for approval and then it will be sent to the Department of Education for approval. The Superintendent and the School Committees will collect evidence on the 8-10 standards and monitor progress. Dr. Hoffmann suggested that between now and September members become familiar with the process and the rubric. He noted everyone collects data. At the end of the cycle review, each member fills out an evaluation of the Superintendent on prescribed forms.

Dr. Hoffmann will have a portfolio of evidence for members. Each person rates the Superintendent on the indicators and an overall rating. Members turn their evaluation into their Chair of Union 54 or the Chair of the Region and they in turn write a composite of the evaluation which is discussed at the May meeting. In the second year of the evaluation process the Superintendent is rated on his impact on student learning, i.e. did MCAS scores improve, AYP change, or are more graduates going onto higher learning. He will also get staff feedback on his performance. He asked School Committee members to help him choose goals and work together to achieve them.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Ed Brookshire, seconded by Sarah Blackwell, it was voted to approve the minutes of the July 9 2012 meeting. (Not voting: Greg O'Brien, Jennifer Rabold)

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Sarah Blackwell, seconded by Ed Brookshire, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tefft, recording secretary