

Joint School Committee Meeting
January 29, 2015
Nauset Regional Middle School, Cafeteria

Present for the Committees:

Region: Ed Lewis, Ed Brookshire, John O'Reilly, Chris Easely, Jayne Fowler, Sue Skidmore, Sarah Blackwell, Kyle Wibby, and Chris Galazzi arrived at 7:35 p.m.

Brewster: David Telman, Claire Gradone, and Laurie Gilmore

Eastham: Ann Crozier, Mary Lou Sette, and Joanne Irish

Orleans: Josh Stewart, Gail Briere, Ginger Marks and Hank Schumacher

Wellfleet: Jan Plaue and Betsy Pontius

Present for the Administration:

Dr. Hoffmann, Giovanna Venditti and Ann Caretti

Call to Order

Chair Plaue called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Agenda Changes - Policy votes for the Region are for a first reading, not a second reading for School Committee Staff Communication and the Student Discipline Policy. Their meeting where policies were scheduled for a first reading was cancelled due to snow.

Laurie Gilmore, new school committee member from Brewster was introduced to the committees.

Citizens Speak - None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Review the Central Office Budget –

Gail Briere, Chair of the Central Office Budget Subcommittee presented the Central Office Budget to the Joint Committee highlighting the increases and justifications. Initially the budget was up 9.65% and the subcommittee asked for a few decreases and then voted unanimously the budget at 8.33% or \$1,668,104, an increase of \$128,239. Included in the Central Office Budget is a one-time cost for the Superintendent's severance package, an increase in a part time technology technician and a new part time accounting position for the Central Office.

Discussion ensued regarding the increase amount and the need for an additional part time accountant or an increase from part-time to full time for the technician. Mr. Telman questioned how he could justify the increase with the town. Mr. Lewis agreed with Mr. Telman and indicated that the towns asked departments to come in at 2.5%. He was not comfortable adding more to the technology budget not knowing the district plan and stated the increase was too much.

Ms. Crozier indicated that the technology has already been purchased and is being utilized. The technician already works many more hours past her contract already. She also indicated that the Central Office needs to have the appropriate number of people running the system. Mr. Easley indicated that this is not the first time the Central Office has asked for assistance and that a great deal is required of the present accountant. Chair Plaue indicated that the budget was submitted with a full-time accountant and the Central Office Budget Subcommittee approved a part time accountant who will help the individual who is working on all the capital projects presently and stays late at night to do the accounting.

Ms. Briere, Chair of the Central Office Budget Subcommittee outlined the increase for members as follows: 2.52% = Superintendent Buy Back 3.1%, 2.51% is .6 Account and .25 Technician, 1.7% is salaries and .91% is operating costs. The .6 accountant = \$30,000 and the .25 Technician's increase is \$8,759.

Members of the Committee strategized how to justify the increase to the towns. Mr. O'Reilly indicated that Ms. Venditti is a victim of her own success. She and her staff have done a great job. He also indicated there was an attempt last year to add a new position to help with Capital Projects but the bottom line is a 2.5% increase. He stated that it is a decision of the committee but noted money will be taken out of our educational budget to make the 8%.

Mr. Galazzi stated that a year ago, the committee voted to bring more technology to our schools which raised the quality of education at Nauset Middle School and Nauset High School. He also stated that he was filling a vacancy on the committee and it was very clear on the part of Orleans and other towns that the District needed to increase the amount of information and clarity of information that supports the budgets. Those requests increased the workload of our accountant to give us the dashboard reports that all the towns demanded. He further stated that the business office has picked up the pace in the execution of capital repair projects that have been funded, as the towns requested. The School Committee has asked this administration to provide more information. He suggested committee members go back to the towns and tell them we have increased the quality of education in our schools, our MCAS scores are exceptional and you should applaud the fact that this Administration has done what it has done. Just explain to the towns, here is what it costs. Look at the amount of money we are asking each taxpayer to pay to fund this increase, as it is measured in dollars. We have a one-time expense with the severance package. The increase in the technician is due to an increase in service delivery to our kids. Mr. Brookshire agreed with Mr. Galazzi and wanted to be sure we do not make cuts in programs and staff. Find cuts somewhere else.

Ms. Skidmore indicated she supports the budget and feels like the school committee has asked a lot of the finance department and further indicated that we need to address the technology position. This position is need based on the technology we already own. She further stated we cannot add more technology without adding more personnel.

Superintendent Hoffmann explained that this is a Union 54 and Region vote. It was also indicated that the Central Office budget needed to be voted to incorporate into other budgets.

REGION -

Motion: On a motion by Ms. Skidmore, seconded by Mr. Galazzi, it was voted 8 yeas and 1 nay (Mr. Lewis) to approve the Central Office Budget as recommended by the Central Office budget subcommittee.

UNION 54 –

Motion: On a motion by Ms. Briere, seconded by Ms. Crozier, it was voted 10 yeas and 1 abstention (Ms. Gilmore) to accept the Central Office Budget in the amount of \$1,668,104.

Superintendent's Mid Cycle Review-

The Superintendent reviewed his three major goals.

Professional Practice Goal: To ensure that Principals know and employ effective strategies for helping educators to improve their instructional practice.

Dr. Hoffmann stated that he is working with Principals to improve their practice in evaluations noting calibration is important across the district. He also indicated the principals are making good progress. He suggested, at some point, the district might explore a specific prescribed formula for creating lesson plans.

Student Learning Goal: To explore the development of a Global Studies Program at Nauset High School.

Dr. Hoffmann indicated he is working on solidifying the global studies program at the High School particularly with the International Student program and the IB Program. He is also looking to create a certificate program for global studies. Principal Conrad and Superintendent Hoffmann are looking at the Needham High School program. He has solidified contracts with the two firms that sent international students to the High School, Cambridge Institute and Educatius. Ultimately, he would like to see Mandarin or a foreign language expanded to the elementary schools. He is also looking at a short-term teacher exchange in China.

Goal Related to the District Strategic Plan: To develop more detailed PK-5 Technology Plans for each elementary school and lead the District's efforts to document and evaluate the impact of the Grade 6-12 Technology Plan.

Dr. Hoffmann indicated that progress has been made in grades 6-12 with a parallel plan for Grades K-5 before the end of the year. The Technology blueprint committee is being chaired by Barbara Lavoine and has met to discuss standards and how technology is having an impact on teaching and learning. It is paramount that there is equity in all schools.

Mr. Schumacher stated that the problem in all our schools is, not enough time and the school day is too short. He suggested expanding the school day and to see if this is possible. He stated that you cannot add

foreign language and technology if there isn't any time. He suggested promoting the IB program noting that most graduates don't stay on Cape Cod.

Superintendent's Search Subcommittee Update -

Joanne Irish, Chair of the Subcommittee, updated the Joint Committee on progress to date. Public forums were held and focus group information was reviewed. The Subcommittee voted to add two non-voting members to the subcommittee, Mark Mathison from the NEA and Tracey Vanderschmidt, a parent from Wellfleet. A brochure was created and edited for the website. The job has been posted in the media in various cities as well as with MASC and MASS. She asked that school committee members complete their questionnaire of 4 questions and return them as soon as possible. She indicated that a few applications have been received and that Dr. Grenier indicated there would be a flurry of activity before the deadline. On February 12th the Collaborative will deliver a binder with applicants' resumes to the Central Office for Subcommittee members to pick up and review. The subcommittee will go through the resumes and meet again on February 25th to review each resume as a group and choose the finalists.

Policy Updates -

Chair Plaue indicated that the elementary school committees may vote the policies for a second reading but the Region, due to missing a meeting, may vote the policies for a first reading. Due to lack of a quorum, the Wellfleet School Committee will vote at their next regular meeting in February. Chair Plaue applauded Josh Stewart and Ann Crozier for working with the subgroup made up of administrators and teachers who worked on the language for the School Committee – Staff Communication policy.

REGION

Mr. O'Reilly made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Brookshire, to approve the School Committee Staff Communication Policy for a first reading "in form" as submitted.

Discussion ensued relative to adding language that addressed the three roles of the school committee; budget, policy, and hiring/managing the superintendent instead of just the two roles as mentioned in the School Committee Staff communication policy. Mr. Galazzi made a motion to add the third state required element to the wording. There was no second. Ms. Skidmore indicated School Committee roles are stated in Section A of the policy manual and that she did not believe it necessary to put them in this policy. Ms. Crozier indicated this had to do with staff communication and not school committee roles. She indicated that NEA representatives were pleased with this language.

Mr. Lewis shared concerns that the communications are only shared with the Chair and that the Chair is obligated to share with the entire committee. He stated the school committee should have an opportunity to have staff communications come to them as a whole. He suggested adding that "it be submitted to the chair and the chair share information with his/her committee." Mr. Stewart indicated the committee had some discussion about that topic. He indicated that sometimes communications come to the chair that are not appropriate and then he does not share them with the committee. He indicated that Chairs have to have sensors and to review if it is appropriate and legal to share with the committee. Your committee has

to put some faith in your Chair. Mr. O'Reilly, stated as a chair, you work through the chain of command. He stated there are times when he receives a phone call from someone who was aggrieved by something. He has turned around and sent that person through the chain of command where it needs to go. He has made the decision not to bring it to the committee. As a chair, you are responsible and share the things your committee should know but the chair needs to be able to use his/her discretion.

Mr. Galazzi moved to strike the third sentence of the paragraph. Chair Plaue indicated that the Committee oversees issues of policy and budget and that the purpose of the sentence was to tie into the next sentence. Mr. Wibby agreed with Mr. Galazzi and felt there should be consistency with the three purposes. He suggested either putting in all three roles or taking them out entirely.

Mr. Mathison addressed the committee, as a matter of clarification, that the language was put in there so both parties know that certain things are not brought to the school committee level. The staff has other ways to communicate. He reiterated that the phrase was put in for clarification.

Mr. Stewart indicated that he was apprehensive to add anything about hiring the superintendent. He stated he was comfortable with the wording seeing those two items are the school committees' primary roles. He also indicated that a lot of work went into coming together with the phrase and the language. He does not think it is necessary to change anything and supports the policy as written.

Mr. Telman indicated that if the Region changes the wording, it will have to go back to all the committees for review and they have all accepted this for a first reading. Mr. Telman thanked Sue Skidmore, Josh Stewart, and Ann Crozier for putting so much time into this policy.

Mr. Brookshire made a motion, seconded by Mr. Easley, to move the question. It was voted 8 yeas and 1 nay (Mr. Galazzi) to move the question.

REGION-

Motion: On a motion by John O'Reilly, seconded by Ed Brookshire, it was voted 8 yeas and 1 nay (Mr. Galazzi) to approve the School Committee Staff Communication Policy for a first reading "in form" as submitted.

Brewster –

Motion: On a motion by Mr. Telman, seconded by Ms. Gradone, it was voted unanimously to approve the School Committee Staff Communication Policy 4214 /1390 "in form" for a second reading.

Eastham –

Motion: On a motion by Ms. Irish, seconded by Ms. Sette, it was voted unanimously to approve the School Committee Staff Communication Policy 4214/1390 "in form" for a second reading.

Orleans –

Motion: On a motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Schumacher, it was voted unanimously to approve the School Committee Staff Communication Policy 4214/1390 “in form” for a second reading.

Wellfleet school committee members will take this up at their next meeting as they did not have a quorum.

Student Discipline Policy –

REGION -

Motion: On a motion by Mr. O’Reilly, seconded by Mr. Brookshire, it was voted unanimously to approve the Student Discipline Policy as written, “in form” for a first reading.

Brewster -

Motion: On a motion by Mr. Telman, seconded by Ms. Gradone, it was voted unanimously to approve the Student Discipline Policy as written “in form” for a second reading.

Eastham -

Motion: On a motion by Ms. Crozier, seconded by Ms. Irish, it was voted unanimously to approve the Student Discipline Policy as written, “in form” for a second reading.

Orleans -

Motion: On a motion by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Ms. Marks, it was voted unanimously to approve the Student Discipline Policy as written, “in form” for a second reading.

School Calendar –

Mr. Keith Gauley, Assistant Superintendent, reviewed the 2015 School Calendar highlighting changes that included; 2 in-service days for staff that are early release days for the purpose of having building level work, curriculum alignment and DDM. There is a change in the Parent/Teacher conference dates and the conferences will fall before the report cards are issued and will focus on student progress. The calendar contains 181 days that is consistent with the flexible PD day.

A discussion regarding vacation weeks ensued. Mr. Gauley indicated that the team, including the Professional Development Committee, talked about many options and looked at the possibility of a calendar in the future, two years down the road, with only one spring vacation. He stated that many families have already planned their vacations. He also indicated any radical changes in the school calendar would have to be a collaborative effort with the NEA and staff as a whole. He did not feel it was worth pursuing at this time.

Chair Plaue indicated that she understands the half days but thinks the kids need as much time as they can possibly get in school. She was saddened to see the half days back in the next calendar year. Mr. Gauley

indicated that Administration knows what is on the plates of educators and kids and that Nauset has the fewest in-service days of many calendars. He indicated that many districts have two in-service days a week; some districts have one in-service day a month. He noted that Atlas curriculum work was put on the back burner because Nauset staffs do not have the time to continue the work. School Committee members and NEA President stated the difficulty in changing the vacations and if they were to change, a 2-3 year notice would be advisable.

MOTION:

Region –

On a motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mr. Galazzi, it was voted unanimously to approve the 2015-2016 School Calendar as submitted.

Union 54 –

On a motion by Ms. Crozier, seconded by Mr. Telman, it was voted unanimously to approve the 2015-2016 School Calendar as submitted.

Approval of Minutes –

On a motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Ms. Crozier, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of October 1, 2014.

Adjournment -

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Tefft

Included in the packet: Central Office Budget, Mid Cycle – Supt. Evaluation, Policy Updates, School Calendar 2015-2016, minutes.