

Joint School Committee Meeting
Thursday, October 27, 2016
Eastham Town Hall

Present for the Committees:

Region: John O'Reilly, Chris Easley, Sarah Blackwell, Ed Lewis
Tracy Vanderschmidt, Robert Sinclair, Deb Beal
Brewster: Claire Gradone, Jessica Larsen, Dave Telman, Marie Enochty, Bob Miller
Eastham: Mary Lou Sette, Joanne Irish, Judy Lindahl, Ann Crozier, Moira Noonan-Kerry
Orleans: Gail Briere, Josh Stewart, Hank Schumacher, Ginger Marks
Wellfleet: Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, Mort Inger, Martha Gordon, Betsy Pontius

Present for the Administration:

Thomas Conrad, Superintendent, Dr. Ann Caretti, Director of Student Services, Giovanna Venditti, Director of Finance and Operations

Call to Order

Chair O'Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and recognized Julian Cyr, former Nauset student and candidate for state senate. Julian Cyr addressed the Committee and thanked all the committee members and administrators who mentored him and believe in him throughout his years at Nauset.

Citizens Speak - None

Priority Business

Open Meeting Law –

Attorney Sean Sweeney introduced himself to the Committee and gave them a history of his affiliation with the Nauset School District and a little bit of his background. He gave a presentation on the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. He reviewed what constitutes a meeting, communication vs. deliberation, violations and consequences. He reviewed the reasons to hold an Executive Session and stressed the importance of staying on topic while in Executive Session. He highlighted the importance of postings and agendas in order for the public to be aware of what the Committee is discussing. He indicated that some of the problem areas where people get into trouble is posting meetings, proper use of Executive Session and incomplete or refusal to release minutes. He also stated the notice/posting should be very specific and a 48 hour notice is required. He reviewed the ten reasons that a committee may go into Executive Session. He also told the Chairs it was important for them to indicate before they go into Executive Session to recite the reason, and let citizens know if you will return to open session. Minutes should include the date, time, place members present, and a summary of the meeting including motions, votes and actions. Eventually all minutes become public after the matter no longer needs to be kept confidential. The Chairs periodically review the minutes of Executive Session. Committees should adopt a practice to do this. He explained what happens when there is a violation, the process, the appeal and the fine. He asked the Committee to reach out to him if they have any questions.

He also talked about the use of email, Twitter, Facebook, and electronic messaging, indicating that these are very tricky areas. Posting on an individual members Facebook page that talks about things happening at a

meeting is not wise. If other members comment on the Facebook page and a fourth member weighs in, that constitutes a meeting and that becomes a violation of the Open Meeting Laws. He cautioned everyone about using Facebook, Twitter, etc. The same holds true for emails. If you send an email and have deliberations from various members, that is in violation of the Open Meeting Laws. He reiterated that members should be very cautious. He also indicated that the Attorney General discourages talk of matters not on the agenda. He also indicated that when an item is added to the agenda, the posting should be amended to reflect the new topic. He is checking about the release of minutes with the Attorney General's office. He distributed a handout to members with his telephone number if they had questions. He also provided resources on the website for additional information on the Opening Meeting Law. Chair O'Reilly thanked Atty. Sweeney for the informative session.

Superintendent's Evaluation

The Superintendent reviewed the timeline for the Superintendent's Evaluation. He also reviewed his goals that include:

Strategic Plan Goal -

Examine the effectiveness and success of the academic assistance provided to students who have fallen behind, missed school work or need re-teaching of learning materials. He is looking at the services and success of these services in helping students improve student learning since he came to the District. He mentioned that he learned at the Union 54 meeting that there may be a need for training for afterschool programs in Math to help students in that area. He will examine the strengths and weakness of what we are doing and will examine finding from the Transportation Subcommittee and Negotiation Subcommittee that may lead to finding new initiatives for supporting struggling students.

Student Learning Goal -

Research and develop thematic programs starting in Kindergarten. Focus will be on Bilingual Education, STEM/STEAM, Applied Fine Arts, and International Baccalaureate Program.

The Superintendent indicated that this goal was derived from the Parent Survey, that parents want more options for their sons and daughters at the elementary level. He is interested in bringing forward some type of work done in bilingual immersion program, STEM or STEAM Program, Arts Academy, and an IB Program.

Professional Practice Goal -

To develop a plan to enhance communication with parents, staff and students.

The Superintendent suggested what other means do we need to consider to communicate with parents. He would like to examine social media and research district wide communication other than emails. He would like to see a program that monitors public media sites.

Committee members commented and gave the Superintendent some suggestions on his goals.

The Superintendent also indicated that the Strategic Plan is up in 2017. He is going to work with the Chairs to revisit the discussion about the Strategic Plans and Goals that were discussed last year. He would like to have discussion at the individual boards and bring it back to the Joint School Committee meeting.

MOTIONS:

Region – On a motion by Ed Lewis, seconded by Robert Sinclair, it was voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent Evaluation process.

Brewster – On a motion by Dave Telman, seconded by Marie Enochty, it was voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent Evaluation process.

Eastham – On a motion by Judy Lindahl, seconded by Moira Noonan-Kerry, it was voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent Evaluation process.

Wellfleet – On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent evaluation process.

Orleans – On a motion by Gail Briere, seconded by Josh Stewart, it was voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent evaluation process.

Substance Abuse Task Force Presentation

Dr. Ann Caretti updated the Committee on the work of the Substance Abuse Task Force. She indicated that the Task Force is in its second year and they have done a lot of work over the past year. She stated the group wants to continue the work and they had a meeting on October 5th. In the second year they would like to survey High School and Middle School students relative to what they know and what they have been exposed to with regard to substance abuse. Dr. Caretti is working with Beth Alpert on the surveys, edited, and brought to the Task Force for their review. Dr. Caretti would like to post it on the website for parents. The Task Force will report on the results and they will give them some direction of what to target.

She also reported that they would also like to identify a program K-12 that will have the same language in helping our kids deal with substance abuse, peer pressure, etc. The Curriculum and Assessment Committee has formed a subgroup to look at the program and a recommendation will be forthcoming for the Superintendent to bring to the School Committee.

They are working with the staff on prescription drugs, addiction and stigma. She is working with Gosnold to help teachers identify signs and symptoms. She shared that there is a program on substance abuse for parents on Sunday, November 20th, noon, at the Cape Codder in Hyannis. Parents need to register in advance. There is also a program for Parents of Teens on November 3rd from 5-7 p.m. at the NRMS. This is a six week program that focuses on helping parents with risky behaviors that students might be demonstrating and substance abuse. This is sponsored by the Family Resource Center in Haynnis and is almost full. Food will be provided thanks to the Church of the Holy Spirit in Orleans. Dr. Caretti indicated she will keep the Committee informed.

Nauset Public Schools Seminar Subcommittee

The charge of the Subcommittee is:

Seminars sponsored by Joint School Committee, in consort with the recently established Nauset Educational Foundation, will examine matters of consequence that catch the imagination of forward looking educators and interested citizens of the community; including students teachers, parents, and taxpayers. Members of this committee plan, implement, and evaluate the seminars. They identify topics, set a schedule, propose speakers, and iron out various details for two compelling seminars offered during the academic year.

Robert Sinclair emphasized that these seminars would be the District's topics of interest. He would hope to tap into the expertise of teaching and people from within the system could identify things that need attention and consideration.

MOTION:

On a motion by Ed Lewis, seconded by Deb Beal, it was voted unanimously to approve the formation of the Subcommittee and approve the charge as written.

Superintendent Conrad would like to have two seminars this year. He also indicated that the Nauset Education Foundation (NEF) was formed to support educational endeavors in the entire District. He would like to have some consideration about how students are admitted to college and the radical approach that is suggesting going deeper into a subject and also students having 1 or 2 community service endeavors that are thoughtful and continuous and not just a list of things they have done.

Discussion ensued regarding the role of the School Committee and the merit for the School Committee looking at education as a total process. Mr. Lewis suggested that this is a way to get Committee and School Department to partner in education.

The Superintendent explained the Nauset Endowment Foundation (NEF) to the Committee. He indicated that it is a 501.3C and they are dedicated to supporting educational needs in the Nauset Regional School District. They are looking to fund raise right away. The system will be able to apply for funds through mini-grants that the budget cannot support. NEF has no interest in being involved with athletics and is strictly formed for academic services. They have a website and an event on Saturday evening at the Capt. Linnell House in Orleans.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Ed Lewis, seconded by Marie Enochty, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes of May 26, 2016.

Adjournment

On a motion by Ed Lewis, seconded by Marie Enochty, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in the packet: Open Meeting Laws, Superintendent's Evaluation, and Minutes.