

WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 14, 2017

Present for the School Committee: Betsy Pontius Jill Putnam, Martha Gordon, Mort Inger and Jan Plaue

Present for the Administration: Thomas Conrad, Superintendent, Giovanna Venditti, Director of Finance and Operations, Mary Beth Rodman, Principal

CALL TO ORDER/AGENDA CHANGES – Chair Jan Plaue called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

CHAIR’S REPORT –

Chair Plaue reported that Dan Wolfe has established a committee that she is looking into. He is going to dedicate himself to making some improvements with one goal being for universal preschool. His committee is looking into the voucher system and also how Mashpee handles preschool. Martha Gordon asked if they had a website as she would like to know more about the committee.

MEMBER’S SPEAK - None

CITIZENS SPEAKS – None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Administrators’ Reports

Principal Rodman’s Report

Principal Rodman’s report was included in the packet. She reported that two pipes burst at the school. She indicated that the circulator from the green grant did not automatically kick on the heaters. The pipes froze in the Library and the carpet was saturated. She called the Fire Department and Serv Pro. An area of the ceiling in the Kindergarten room below, collapsed. No one was injured. The carpet does not need replacement because it was cleaned and dried within a day. She spoke with the insurance adjuster. A Blackboard Connect call was made to parents and a letter was sent home in backpack mail apprising them of the situation. She also reported that WES celebrated the 100th day of school and that the graduate level course, “Helping Traumatized Children Learn I, was canceled. DESE is providing a free course entitled, Foundation for Inclusive Practice.

Principal Rodman will let the Committee know about tardiness and attendance at the next meeting. It was noted that invitations have been sent for the Read Aloud Program on February 27th. Martha Gordon volunteered to read. It was also noted that “office hours” for Mr. Gauley is a time when staff can discuss curriculum and assessment with him.

Assistant Superintendent’s Report

Assistant Superintendent Keith Gauley’s report was included in the packet. The Superintendent indicated that Mr. Gauley will be doing a report on MCAS 2.0 at the next Union 54 meeting. Principal Rodman indicated that MCAS 2.0 has the format of the PARCC test, has the same traditional questions from former

MCAS and other questions like the PARCC test. Testing will begin in early April. She also indicated that Wellfleet students have done the computer-based assessing.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Conrad reported that it was good to see the school committee members at the town officials' meeting on the budget and thanked them for their support. He is dealing with many budgets at this time and the snow has made meetings difficult. He is also involved in creating 47 individual contracts and has started the process. He will be negotiating with everyone. The Business Office personnel are going to attend a meeting with the MSBA in Boston. He is meeting with Town Administrators and Town Accountants to share information on February 17th. He indicated that the Region budget is seeing a \$350,000 increase in health care costs and it has \$450,000 in Out-of-District Placements at the High School. Administration has come up with creative ways to keep the programs intact.

FY17 Budget Review

Giovanna Venditti reviewed the expense report with the Committee indicating there is a balance of \$32,148. She indicated that she is applying for extraordinary relief. She highlighted account 4014, salaries teachers where she put \$3,773 back into the budget. She also indicated that account 4105 was running in the negative at -\$2,264 due to an increase in water consumption. Principal Rodman indicated that the increase is due to the hoop house and that well water takes care of the soccer field. Ms. Venditti indicated that in account #4058, \$1,088 was spent to repair the elevator, \$1,608 two windows, and \$3,972 was spent on the oil tank line issue, and \$850 was spent on roof repairs. Principal Rodman indicated that she received 3 bids for the water heater and it will be \$14,000 to replace. She also indicated that she will not have the Farmer in School program in the spring because of water cost. She also indicated that the REAP grant funds Kindergarten educational assistants and the summer school and that it might be the last time that grant is received.

Appoint Single Member to Approve Bill Warrants

Betsy Pontius indicated she was still interested in reviewing and signing the warrants and reporting to other members. This will appear on the April agenda. Betsy Pontius will talk with Ms. Venditti about the process.

Review of Budget Meeting with Town Officials

Committee members thanked Principal Rodman for all her hard work and meetings with Finance Committee representative, Fred Magee. Martha Gordon stated that members were happy with the budget but they cannot vote on it until they see the entire Wellfleet budget. Chair Plaue expressed her concern with the budget being so tight and wondered if this would be the case in the future. Principal Rodman indicated there will be retirements but other than that the budgets will be tight moving forward. Superintendent Conrad stated that 85% - 94% of the entire budget is for fixed salaries. The cost of living in our communities, health care increasing 10-12% will keep the budget tight. He will have a conversation with town officials and indicated that some communities are talking about an override. At some point the budgets cannot be sustained. He also stated that it is key to maintain our programs and how important it is to have citizens visit the schools and see what is happening. He commended Wellfleet for beginning the "community week" and

has introduced it in all Nauset schools. He stated the budget was up in Wellfleet but we continue to keep the costs down. He reaffirmed that we want to keep all our kids in their home schools.

Review of Joint School Committee Meeting

Chair Plau commended the Superintendent for an extraordinary presentation. She also indicated that the questionnaire on the school calendar was very good. She reviewed all the different responses. She stated it looked like teachers did not want any change at all. The parents showed a little flexibility. The Superintendent stated that the committee will see some interesting changes after negotiations. Betsy Pontius suggested that when you think about changing something, it is in response to what is not working. Everything is working. Don't just change something because others are doing it. Martha Gordon indicated she likes change, but believes the teachers are the people who are with the students and if the calendar was not working, they would tell the committee. Betsy Pontius inquired as to how we give teachers quality time to study and collaborate together.

iPad Discussion

The Superintendent indicated that the iPad program is working for the Brewster School Committee and the Eastham School Committee. The Orleans School Committee just started with the iPads. The Region School Committee is using iPads but some members still struggle with the technology. The Committee discussed pros and cons of using paper and the iPad for meeting materials. The Committee decided to continue with paper copies for now. An iPad demonstration was suggested for a future meeting.

Reports and Information

Cape Cod Collaborative – Jill Putnam reported that she attended the Legislative Breakfast and welcomed people to the meeting. There was a good turnout. Issues that were discussed included: Chapter 70, expense of health care, McKinney-Vento transportation for the homeless, and current funding. Representative Sarah Peake indicated that if people want to get in touch with her, they should call her. Representative Hunt indicated it always resonates with him better when people begin with, “this is what we have done.” She also reported that they are talking about having a recovery high school. The evaluation of the Executive Director will take place at the next meeting. Cape Cod Collaborative is working on bus transportation for Bourne, Monomoy, and DY. She also reported that they have a new member from Martha's Vineyard. She reported the Director of Way Point is retiring and that the STAR Program has an intern occupational therapist from Barnstable High. They voted on the Middle School's student handbook. The Friday before Columbus Day is the ALL CAPE Professional Development Day. She reported that the Virtual High School was quite popular but has dropped significantly from 300 courses to 250 as student feedback indicated they prefer the person-to-person contact.

PTA – Betsy Pontius reported that the PTA ending balance is \$10,484.80. They are making plans for the Spaghetti Supper on March 31st. The book sale was just completed and they are planning the Staff Appreciation Day that is on May 2nd. WES Fest is on May 27th from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

School Council – Martha Gordon reported that they met on January 23rd and discussed the school charter section of the School Improvement Plan. They discussed some of the programs at the school and talked

about social and emotional curriculum, behavior intervention and a monitoring system. A Buddy Bench is being made at the High School woodshop for Wellfleet and the High School students were thanked for that effort. Martha Gordon also reported that marks close on February 17 and report cards go home in March with conference being March 8th and 9th. She also mentioned the student and staff surveys for evaluation that are anonymous. Principal Rodman explained that the staff evaluates the Principal and the students evaluate the staff through a program called Panorama.

Nauset Preschool – Enrollment in packet.

Negotiations Subcommittee – Mort Inger indicated that he could not attend the meeting due to snow. Superintendent Conrad indicated that the subcommittee is working on contract language and that they are very close to an agreement. He also stated that the custodians have settled and the educational assistants and secretaries are close.

Policy Subcommittee – Betsy Pontius indicated that the Policy Subcommittee has not met yet and they will work on the Wellness Policy language when they meet.

Transportation Subcommittee – No report. Superintendent Conrad indicated that Nauset is in an excellent position with the Collaborative. Jill Putnam indicated that the Collaborative is a non-profit and they will do what it takes to meet the needs of the district.

Substance Abuse Task Force – Martha Gordon reported that a Middle School survey has been completed that will be used to identify risky behaviors. The Curriculum and Assessment Subcommittee is looking at programs that will be used at all the schools, especially elementary schools. They are looking at a program that will help kids with self-esteem and mental health issues. It was mentioned that the Advisor/Advisee program use to be at the Middle School but was stopped due to scheduling conflicts. Martha Gordon invited members to the Open Doorway meeting. Stephanie Briody spoke at the Open Doorway meeting indicating they are trying to get funding for the Cape. She indicated that Jessica Larsen and Ann Caretti attended the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Martha Gordon, seconded by Jill Putnam, it was voted unanimously, to approve the minutes of January 10, 2017, as amended.

Adjournment

On a motion by Betsy Pontius, seconded by Mort Inger, it was voted unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in packet: Administrative Reports, Expense Reports, Preschool Enrollment, Minutes