

UNION 54 School Committee
Eastham Public Library
Thursday, December 7, 2017

Present for the Committees:

Brewster: Dave Telman, Jessica Larson, Claire Gradone, Robert Miller
Eastham: Joanne Irish, Moira Noonan-Kerry, Ann Crozier, Judy Lindahl, Mary Lou Sette
Orleans: Gail Briere, Josh Stewart, Hank Schumacher, Ginger Marks, Sasandra Roche
Wellfleet: Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam, Mort Inger, Betsy Pontius (arrived at 6:17 p.m.)

Call to Order

Chair Briere called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Citizen Speak

None

Priority Business

Gail Briere asked members to share their experience from sessions attended at the MASC Conference entitled, "Mapping the Path for Student Success: College, Career, Life.

Jessica Larsen reported on a session entitled: Working with Your School Resource Officer to Support Student well-being. The session talked about building connections with the SRO and school community. Ms. Larsen will email slides to Gail Briere for distribution.

Jill Putnam reported on a session entitled: Supporting Students' Social and Emotional Learning. Focus topics were substance abuse, stress reduction, mental health and suicide. She indicated that it was very informative and suggested the book, Beyond Measure, by Braci, that talks about what is good for children. She mentioned the importance of free time for children. Homework was also a topic and she shared one district's policy that eliminated homework at the elementary level with the exception of reading. In this way students had time for extracurricular activities, outside play, scouts, religious studies, etc. She mentioned two other books, The Gift of Failure and How to Raise an Adult.

Moira Noonan-Kerry reported on the session entitled: Supporting Students' Social and Emotional Learning presented by Ashland Public Schools and Panorama. She indicated that they stressed the importance of social emotional learning curriculum which improves classroom behavior and stress management which leads to increase academic performance. She stressed the importance of involving stakeholders and indicated that teachers and administrators saw changes in students after introducing the curriculum. It was suggested that members look at the CASTLE website.

Claire Gradone gave a report on Early Education. She emphasized the support early education is receiving from Preschool through Grade 3. She stated that there are a lot of grants for city areas with socioeconomics needs and ESL issues. She indicated there may be a plan to expand Preschool on Cape Cod with the Cape Cod Collaborative. She felt universal preschool should be discussed for the next year. In a survey to parents it became clear that our current programs do not serve our parents' needs. There are many different models for Universal PreK.

Sasandra Roche attended the session entitled: Geek Sox, Beyond the Curriculum. This session was difficult to understand and related to Special Education 2.0. She felt the presenter had a different opinion from everyone else in the room. Other members agreed that it was not a good presentation. She left the session and went to a presentation by Aaron Polanski, Superintendent Old Colony Vocational Tech. She thought he was an excellent speaker and talked about the power of a smile, checking in with staff and students, and making connections with kids. His words, "Be kind, Be Honest, and Improve the Situation" were a powerful take away.

Joanne Irish reported on the voting results for the Delegate Resolutions. All Resolutions passed.

Ginger Marks reported on a session entitled, "Measuring School Quality." She found it very interesting where teachers design the curriculum and score the students' work. (MCIEA.org website) They talked about moving away from standardized tests and asking schools how they would like to measure quality.

Jan Plaue reported on a session entitled, "Educating for the Future, It Can Be Done." She came away feeling if she does nothing else as a School Committee person, she must advocate for change and just because we do better than most of the country in testing and SEL, we cannot sit back. The gap has widened between what the world needs and what we give our children. Many college grads return home. Students need more skills like complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and management skills. Bill Daggart, International Center for Leadership and Education (presentation on MASC website)

Bob Sinclair, Nauset Regional School Committee, mentioned Resolution 5, DESE receiving grant money and taking a percentage for their administrative work. Many people are not happy with this and would like to see the \$12,000,000 that DESE takes given back to the schools. He was a bit disappointed with the conference and thought there were too many people selling packages about how to fix things and too many consultants offering their services. He also mentioned that Amherst Public School Committee instructed their Superintendent to tell all elementary school children that they have an opportunity to opt out of testing. He also did not like the lack of diversity in the student roles.

Chair Briere thanked all the presenters for sharing their experiences and thoughts on a variety of subjects. She asked Union 54 members for a topic of discussion for the January meeting. Members asked for a follow-up on the after school programs. Chair Briere indicated there had been follow-up with Marie Enochty providing professional development for the directors. The directors continue to meet. Chair Briere will ask one of the directors to give an update to the committee in the future.

Approval of Minutes

May, 2017 minutes were held until January.

Adjournment

On a motion by Ginger Marks, seconded by Jessica Larsen, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

Submitted by
Ann M. Tefft