

UNION 54 School Committee
Brewster Town Hall
Thursday, December 6, 2018

Present for the Committees:

Brewster: Dave Telman, Jessica Larson, Claire Gradone
Eastham: Joanne Irish, Moira Noonan-Kerry, Ann Crozier, Mary Lou Sette
Orleans: Gail Briere, Hank Schumacher
Wellfleet: Jan Plaue, Betsy Pontius

Call to Order

Chair Briere called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Citizen Speak

None

Priority Business

Members shared highlights of the MASC/MASS Joint Conference – *Preparing Our Students for the Future*

Joanne Irish reviewed the MASC resolutions, noting that all resolutions passed. She also indicated that information about the resolutions and the amendments could be found on the MASC website.

Jessica Larsen reported on *Collaborative Building Structures for Personalized Learning at the School and District Level*. She felt this session was more theoretical than practical relative to competency based curriculum in education. This is proficiency based, performance based learning. What does it look like in a classroom? She mentioned self-direction, life-long learning and citizenship. Competency based was used for diverse learners.

Ann Crozier reported on *Beyond the Curriculum* with Aaron Polanski, Superintendent of Old Colony Regional Vocational School. She indicated it was a superb presentation. It was noted he is a believer in thanking people and making connections. He talked about the life rubric; kindness, honesty, conviction and curiosity. She shared a story he shared about students helping students and recognizing the need to see what other people need. They watched a segment of “Butterfly Circus,” a film about Bullying. The speaker offered to come to the region if he was invited to present to staff.

Claire Gradone – *Learning Experience* – She went to a workshop that talked about providing professional development that supports the district strategy. This was presented by Lynnfield Public Schools. They use collaborative learning experiences and professional development for teachers that trickles down to the classroom. They use faculty meeting time to do projects. One or two teachers partner to do building projects for project driven learning. They must submit the project for approval. They provide time weekly for teachers to get together and learn together to develop project-based learning for students. One example is the math department working with the music department to use music and physics in a project. Music students don’t necessarily take physics and physics students may not take music. The woodworking teacher got involved to create musical instruments. All of this created a project-based learning opportunity for students. Teachers and students are learning collaboratively. This has been in place in Lynnfield for 5 years with good success.

Jan Plaue – Social Emotional Learning: *What Leaders Need to Know and Do* – Presenter: Rachel Polander, author. The presenter talked about the five parts of social emotional learning. The idea was to have classroom instruction and activities mirror SEL goals. She explained how valuable the SEL skills were for learning. She is asking schools to integrate SEL into the classroom, family life and community life, which is a tall order. Social emotional learning is key to everyone learning. Children learn best when they are comfortable, when

they don't feel bullied, when they know their teacher likes them, when they are peaceful and then they are like sponges. Reinforcement is key. Jan suggested doing some sort of follow up to what we are doing with SEL.

Ginger Marks – *Emotional Intelligence: from Theory to Practice to Systemic Change*, Mark Brackett, P.H.D., Yale University Center for Emotional Learning. Ginger indicated he was a dynamic speaker who indicated that children cannot learn if they are emotionally upset. He created a program called, “Ruler.” He suggested trading places with your child to see what their day looks like. What is the bus experience like? Were you scared or bullied? Do you have friends in your classroom? At lunch time, how do you feel? Going home, do you go home to an empty house? Do you have alcoholic parents? A survey was done on 45,000 high school students and 83% indicated that they are stressed, tired and bored. She talked about the program, “Ruler.” Staff needs to have professional training to instruct students in class and reach out to families. It was noted, state-wide, 7 universities every year for the last five years, reported a 20% increase in students seeking mental health services.

Jessica Larsen also attended that session and mentioned the zones of regulation as to how children are feeling. (red, blue, green, yellow) She shared that children are coming to school stressed and they trigger each other. Teachers check in with students to see how they are feeling. Skills and strategies are taught to deal with emotions to regulate them. She will give more information to the Superintendent for professional development.

Ginger Marks indicted the solution is recognizing your emotions, understanding them, labeling them, expressing them and regulating them. She also felt we are asking an awful lot of our teachers but children cannot learn if they are all worked up.

Mary Lou Sette – *Immersing Learning in Virtual Reality* – She reported that in Fitchburg, they had to think about ways for students to have field trips without the costly bus transportation. They explored Google Expedition. Virtual reality glasses were distributed to the audience in attendance. They explored other countries and it was like actually being there. The first set of glasses was \$10,000 for 30 but now they are \$3,900 for a classroom set. A dedicated staff member provides professional development for the rest of the staff. This was very successful and a great educational tool.

Jill Putnam sent a report to members on one of the sessions she attended, *Embracing Social Media*, Kristen Magette. Questions raised were who is in charge of Facebook, Twitter and who monitors messages? Proactively create positive culture, push positive stories. If something is incorrect, do not debate, link it to a policy or other factual information. A chart was distributed for responding on line.

Chair Briere thanked everyone for their reports. She was amazed at all the sessions that had to do with social emotional learning and how Nauset as a district has become attentive to that topic. She indicated that at the January meeting of the Union 54 Committee, Dr. Ann Caretti will attend and review what is happening at the Elementary Level with regard to SEL.

Approval of Minutes –

On a motion by Ann Crozier, seconded by Mary Lou Sette, it was voted unanimously to approved the minutes of October 25, 2018 as amended.

Adjournment

On a motion by Jan Plaue, seconded by Dave Telman, it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Submitted by,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in packet: Minutes and report from Jill Putnam

