

UNION 54 School Committee
Nauset Administration Building
Thursday, October 24, 2019

Present for the Committees:

Brewster:

Eastham: Ann Crozier, Mary Lou Sette

Orleans: Gail Briere, Hank Schumacher

Wellfleet: Jan Plaue, Jill Putnam

Call to Order

Chair Briere called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed Dr. Maxine Minkoff.

Citizen Speak

None

Priority Business

Chair Briere outlined the dates for the next meetings of Union 54.

January 23rd – sharing information from MASC Conference

April 28th – Superintendent's Evaluation review of process and forms

Gail Briere facilitated a conversation regarding Nauset Strategic Plan. She asked if people wanted to share their thoughts or concerns about the Strategic Plan.

Jan Plaue thought the plan was wonderful and is very excited about it. It is a wonderful start and can see all the effort that went into creating the document.

Jill Putnam also indicated that she is very impressed with the plan and the topics.

Ann Crozier stated she felt the committee work is outstanding and it is very clear the direction the District is heading.

Chair Briere indicated that they did not receive a lot of feedback when presenting, more than likely because there is so much information presented. She also stated that this is a continuum and the District may want to do more.

Hank Schumacher asked if the Strategic Plan was limited to five years and should it be longer and go into the future. Dr. Maxine Minkoff indicated that five years gives you a plan and a roll out when to start. With a five year plan you at least begin to see things. There is no way it call all be accomplished in five years but you will have a clear vision of where the District is at that point. Chair Briere indicated it is a guiding document for Principals to align to their school improvement plans with school councils and for teacher to put these in their evaluation goals. Feedback from Teachers and Principals are then given to Superintendent who in turn, shares with the School Committee. It does not be limited to five years.

Dr. Minkoff indicated that the group has one more faculty where they will present the plan. They met with the high school staff the other day but have not heard back on anything yet. The working groups are comprised of members from all the schools including students. The high school has students on every group and they also received a good response from parents.

Jill Putnam stated she liked all members of the community coming together to work on the plan. She likes that it includes lifelong learning and really liked that people in the community would be able to take a course during the school day if there is space.

Dr. Minkoff indicated that the timetable for the groups is that meetings will be completed by the end of February. Each group will hold 4-6 meetings. Each group will look at one goal, 3 objectives and 3-4 initiatives. The schools will apply this to their level and their school.

Chair Briere distributed a sheet on Global Citizenship. Members reviewed the document and had a rich conversation about the important aspects of this goal. Members liked the documented siting excerpts like, "Education for global citizenship is not an additional subject – it's a framework for learning reaching beyond school to the wider community." They also liked, "The role of the teacher is to enable pupils to find out about their world for themselves and to support them as they learn to assess evidence, negotiate and work with others, solve problems and make informed decisions." Chair Briere indicated that technology will be integrated into the goal. A Technology Plan has been developed and the subcommittee will make sure it is integrated into the Strategic Plan.

Further discussion on the document included the phrase, "challenge ignorance and intolerance."

Hank Schumacher inquired about having languages in the elementary grades. He felt strongly that this is needed at the early level and after school. He suggested linking with different towns on Cape, like sister schools. This would give students in the District an opportunity to be exposed to diversity as well as other cultures and languages.

Chair Briere stated it is important for children to learn empathy toward others.

Jill Putnam really liked the last sentence in the third paragraph regarding the role of the teacher. She liked the role of the teacher as the facilitator. She shared the experience of fifth grade students in Wellfleet working on the Great White Shark problem on Cape Cod. Students reached out to other places with common problems. She also stated that curiosity is the greatest motivation in learning.

Jan Plaue also mentioned the future trends in education and 21st century skills like collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Dr. Minkoff indicated that the IB Program is all about the 21st century skills. She also indicated that sustainable development is also a big piece of this. Sustainability is a global issue.

Chair Briere distributed a sheet on the "Profile of a Global Citizen" showing 10 core competencies. These competencies "empower learners to think globally, act locally and ultimately change the world." She asked how we would envision education for global citizenship at the elementary level. How would it fit into the day and how would we connect it to technology.

Jan Plaue stated getting their curiosity up from Kindergarten to know more about the whole world. Everything that they read, History, Geography, every subject can focus on the whole world. Mary Lou Sette indicated that in science it is a global focus. She also indicated there are no right and no wrong answer. When you table about things they can observe. You tell us what you see. This can branch off into other subject areas. Ann Crozier liked the reference to "respects and values diversity, learning from others." She suggested this should be practiced by adults and the adults are the role models. Jan Plaue indicated that some of this is covered in the Responsive Classroom work. Children respect each other as they share experiences in their own lives. Chair Briere also felt that PreK and Kindergarten should start with something concrete. They feel a connection with someone who will share a common problem or care about something they care about. Dr. Minkoff suggested role playing is helpful and to give different scenarios so kids can understand that kids grow up in different environments. Try to walk in someone else's shoes. Chair Briere suggested point out things that are similar in languages.

Mary Lou Sette suggested working on vocabulary. Not every child comes into school with a huge vocabulary. Chair Briere suggested that literature is a good way to introduce other cultures and languages. There is a lot of

opportunity as teachers to create these learning opportunities. Jill Putnam indicated that there are a lot of wonderful books and posters about cultures. Dr. Minkoff indicated that professional development for teacher is an important part of this.

Chair Briere inquired if this would reopen a discussion about language at the elementary level. Ann Crozier indicated that Eastham School Committee has had an ongoing discussion for several years about foreign language. Joanne Irish visited immersion schools with the Superintendent. Jan Plau indicated that Wellfleet School Committee was looking at the IB school. Chair Briere voiced the challenges for foreign language including where you are going to find the time. The calendar committee has come up with recommendations of how to extend the day and professional development. Jill Putnam indicated that Wellfleet School Committee looked into Spanish a while ago. Children's literature – so many books could be in the classroom now. Why not have the “Hungry Caterpillar” in Spanish. Children already know these stories. We can do little things and children and teachers will catch on. Colors can be in multiple languages. Post notes on things like chairs and doors with a few languages. Dr. Minkoff also mentioned distance learning using same connection at all elementary schools.

Chair Briere indicated that there has been an increase in ESL students. This is a good opportunity for those kids to share their pride of their language with other children.

Chair Briere thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and for the very rich discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Submitted by,
Ann M. Tefft