

Minutes

PRESENT: Ms. Rebecca Shannon, Chair
Ms. Betsy Bilodeau
Ms. Jan McGinn
Mr. Patrick Sinnott
Mr. Jerry Wedge

PRESENT FROM ADMINISTRATION: Dr. Brenda Finn, Superintendent
Mr. John Flaherty
Ms. Diana Rigby

I CALL TO ORDER AND GREETING

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Shannon at 7:05 p.m.

II READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session

It was decided to table the minutes until the next Joint meeting.

IV RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Shannon thanked Mr. Sinnott and Mr. Wedge for walking in the parade.

Ms. Shannon stated the celebration for the Alcott School on Sunday was wonderful.

A. Administration

Dr. Finn recognized the parents and staff of the Thoreau and Alcott Schools in their tremendous effort invested in moving the Thoreau School, in the cleaning done at Alcott. This was partly done by parents, as well as teaching and custodial staff. Ms. Young had stated neighbors of Alcott commented on how impressed they were with staff working over the summer.

Dr. Finn recognized Gene Warfel and the information technology staff in getting the fiber optic network up and running. The telephone systems have been installed everywhere but at Ripley. Dr. Finn recognized Ed Fabiano, Linda Lagace, Bob Blazewicz, Derek Capella and Carolyn Cullinane. There was a tremendous amount of behind the scene work.

Dr. Finn and Mr. Flaherty recognized the business office and human resources staff. There were a lot of contracts that were settled over the summer with retroactive pay, longevity and stipends to work out. Rosemary Lent and Patty Siekman did a fabulous job. Mr. Flaherty also recognized Carol Hammond, Doreen Cassabona, Jane Ross and Carol Storrs. Mr. Flaherty also recognized Helen Powers and Gail Vettrus in human resources.

B. Willard School

Ms. Fernandes recognized Beverly Lucas, Tony Scimone, Ben Demesa and Carl Sweeney in working to host two summer programs at Willard. Ms. Lucas handled more than she would normally handle along with the new phone systems. The custodial staff was very flexible in the summer session as all classrooms were in use.

C. Middle School

Mr. Unobskey recognized Jim Bozak, Bill Walsh, Francesca Latuca, William Furtado, Ted Noke and Kamel Bounar in working over the summer to get the building ready for fall. He also recognized Ted Shattuck and Don Foss in maintenance for installing the new walls and new sinks.

D. Alcott School

Ms. Young recognized the custodial crew of Bill Cagnina, Bob Cote and Dick Bottino for all of their work moving boxes and for installing the kitchen.

V ACTION ITEMS

A. Approve position descriptions for Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Education K-12—Second Reading

Ms. Shannon stated this is the second reading for the position descriptions. The School Committee has taken a month to review them.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Sinnott to approve the position description of Assistant Superintendent and Director of Special Education K-12. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

VI REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

A. Fiber Optic Network Overview

Mr. Warfel stated the actual installation began the first week in August. This replaces the loop cable, which was 15 years old. He stated the benefits to this system are we will be able to get parts, and it is supported by the manufacturer. It is cost effective, has expansion capabilities, and has voice over IP technology.

Ms. Shannon asked if the average teacher would notice a difference. Mr. Warfel stated the Alcott teachers have telephones in their classrooms. Teachers will eventually notice a difference.

Mr. Wedge asked if Alcott was the hub. Mr. Warfel stated Ripley is the hub. Mr. Wedge asked if this will be a problem if Ripley moves. Mr. Warfel stated as long as the new building is close to Ripley, it won't be a big deal.

B. Summer Academic Success Program

Mr. Booth stated the program reduced its scope to include only CPS students. Students were identified by teachers and IEPs. There were 248 referrals and 72 enrolled students. Most courses were geared toward early literacy. There were very few problems and there was 100% attendance by the teachers. Attendance was also very high with students. He recognized teachers in his report as well as the librarian who opened the library every day to make this part of the program.

Ms. Shannon stated it is nice to see this program growing over the years.

C. Opening of School Staff new to Concord

Dr. Finn stated there were 20 new staff at CPS this year. Also support staff had 23 new additions. Mr. Wedge asked if any of these were a new position. Dr. Finn stated last year there were a number of retirements, there was only a new position if an IEP created the need for one. New teachers take part in a mentor program as part of professional development.

Mr. Wedge asked how long the mentoring program lasted. Dr. Finn stated the formal program lasts one year, informally it can go on for longer. Dr. Finn stated the principals have invested hundreds of hours in the interviewing and hiring process.

Enrollment numbers

The enrollment numbers look very close to last year. The middle school has increased. Mr. Sinnott stated he is delighted to see the class size generally below 20 students. There are larger classes at the middle school. Dr. Finn stated Mr. Unobskey has looked at those and is making adjustments.

Ms. Shannon asked about the 3rd grade at Thoreau. Are there aides? Dr. Finn stated there aren't in the regular class. There is an assistant sped tutor.

Ms. Bilodeau asked why the middle school numbers were high. Mr. Flaherty stated 30 new students came in over the summer.

Dr. Finn stated at last year's budget talks, the principals all committed to keeping class size down.

Transportation

There were few issues. Some buses were late on the 2nd day, some were crowded.

D. Alcott Grand Opening: September 12, 2004, 2:30 p.m.

The celebration went very well and was a nice family and community event. Mr. Sinnott stated the architect had never seen anything like it. Ms. Bilodeau will do a thank you letter in the paper.

E. Progress at 29 Prairie Street

The perimeter fencing has been installed, the permit for hazardous material and asbestos remediation has been secured. The work you see currently is related to the sewage installation. The demolition bid came in low.

F. FY04 Budget Review

Mr. Flaherty stated we expended approximately all but \$304. We did not use the special appropriation from the town of \$120K for CPS and \$200K for CCHS.

Ms. Bilodeau stated the Fin Com has expressed the concern over free cash. Not having used it will ease things.

VII OLD BUSINESS

A. Rules for Public Comment – MASC

Ms. Shannon stated MASC realizes many districts need information regarding this situation. People want to speak to the School Committee. This policy is for review. We will also give to the CCRSD School Committee. Ms. Bilodeau stated she had some edits, she finds the tone defensive.

VIII SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Chinese Exchange

Mr. Unobskey and the middle school is arranging an exchange visit. A group of middle school students along with an administrator and 2 teachers will be visiting. They will attend classes and will stay 11-12 days. The students attending are very good students with a good working ability of English. Mr. Unobskey is looking for people to host.

B. Japanese Exchange

An elementary principal is visiting Alcott. There will be one day of overlap.

C. Pool meeting

There was a pool meeting this morning. Materials were distributed. It should be completed by December 2005. Approximately \$9.5M is the total to be raised. An additional \$3M is left to be funded.

D. METCO Victory Celebration

A flier was included to attend a celebration for the increased funding of METCO to be held at Franklin Park Zoo, September 25, 6 p.m.

X ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Mr. Sinnott to adjourn the Concord School Committee meeting at 8:35 p.m. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Laura O'Sullivan, APPROVED 10/12/04