

JOINT MEETING

Concord School Committee
Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Ripley Building
Concord, MA
April 13, 2004
7:00 PM

Minutes

PRESENT:

Ms. Betsy Bilodeau, Chair, CSC
Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Chair, CCSC
Ms. Nicole Burkel
Ms. Meg Gaudet
Ms. Rebecca Shannon
Louisa Slocum, Student Representative
Mr. Jerry Wedge

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

ABSENT: Mr. Pat Sinnott

I. CALL TO ORDER AND GREETING

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Fitzgerald for CCRSD and Ms. Bilodeau for CPS at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Fitzgerald addressed the high school faculty present at the meeting. He stated they would be given 5 minutes to speak after recognitions.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Finn read the correspondence Notification to Abutters under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Ms. Bilodeau received a letter from Claude Cicchetti thanking the Class of 2007 and Faculty Advisors for the Trivia Night fundraiser.

Ms. Bilodeau received correspondence regarding the Patriot's Day Parade.

Ms. Bilodeau received an invitation to the Holocaust Memorial Observance, Sunday, April 25.

Dr. Finn received a thank you from Pat MacAlpine on behalf of Alliance for Teen Safety.

IV. RECOGNITIONS

A. Willard School : ASCD Conference Presentation – Pat Fernandes
Ms. Fernandes distributed copies of the presentation and described Willard's School Improvement Plan and the focus on writing and open response questions.

B. Middle School: The Hobbit – Kathleen Bernklow, Emily Roos, Linda Penniston and Mal Grant

On behalf of Mr. Unobskey, Dr. Finn recognized the middle school's production of The Hobbit, which played March 25 and 26.

C. Alcott School: A Midsummer Nights' Dream – Carol Birdsall's Grade 4 class

On behalf of Ms. Young, Dr. Finn recognized Alcott's production of A Midsummer Nights' Dream. It was evident there was something in this play for everyone. She commended the Ms. Birdsall for introducing Shakespeare to students.

D. Thoreau School: Poetry Reading

Mr. Popp thanked Dr. Finn for reading to the students. The poetry session ended with a week of poetry with members of the community reading as special guests in the library.

E. CCHS:

Dr. Finn stated Mr. Dulong is currently taking 83 students in the band to Japan over the school vacation.

Dr. Finn recognized the Concert Band for earning its 13th consecutive Gold Medal at the MICCA Festival. They are to be congratulated for an outstanding performance.

Dr. Finn recognized the Orchestra for earning a Gold Medal under Andrei Sobchenko. This is the first gold medal under this his direction.

Dr. Finn recognized Merideth Eaton as a finalist for Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen's award. She was 1 of 400 entries. She was chosen as one of the final 5 due to her regular community service to the elderly.

Dr. Finn recognized Deborah Berlin, physics teacher, for presenting at the National Science Teachers Association. Her class gathered solar data in the classroom.

Dr. Finn recognized Hai Ming Wu, Chinese language teacher, who was chosen to participate in the 2004 CLASS Fulbright-Hays Summer Study Abroad Program.

Dr. Finn recognized Neil Lynch, ESL teacher, who was accepted to the Program for Teaching East Asia at the University of Colorado. He was 1 of 20 accepted.

Ms. Shannon recognized Tom Curtain and Al Dentino for putting together the Japan trip for the band.

F. Administration:

Dr. Finn recognized Alex Popp in announcing his retirement effective July 30, 2004. Dr. Finn read a letter thanking Mr. Popp.

Andrei Joseph and Harriett Stephens spoke on behalf of the CCHS faculty. Mr. Joseph stated the teachers recognize the budget constraints and they are here in the spirit of cooperation to bring a plan to benefit the town and the students. They are offering to suspend awarding sabbaticals for one year in order to save \$133K in the budget. They would like items #6, 8, and 10 restored from the reduction list. The teachers would like to preserve the 90/1 class size ratio and though they value professional development they are willing to forgo it this year. A negotiation session is scheduled for early May. They will extend the sabbatical offer three weeks past the next negotiation session.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Charge for Thoreau Construction Article

Ms. Bilodeau stated this is a CPS matter. It makes sense that we formally charge the Build Thoreau Committee to present the article. Ms. Bilodeau will introduce them and then turn it over to Chris Sgarzi.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Shannon for CPS to accept the charge, “To assist in the preparation and presentation of material to the upcoming 2004 Annual Town Meeting regarding Article 27, the Thoreau School construction fund authorization, the School Committee authorizes the following to make the presentation to Town Meeting: Christopher Sgarzi, Mark Howell, and/or Maureen Spada.” The MOTION was unanimously approved.

B. Concord Education Fund Grant Acceptance

Dr. Finn stated year after year the Concord Ed Fund invests hours and meetings to generate funds. We are very grateful for the amount of

work they have done. This year the Concord Education Fund was able to award an extraordinary amount of over \$150,000 in grants.

Ms. Bilodeau stated we hope to see rewards in the schools and we do see, year after year the difference grants make in the schools.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Gaudet and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CCRSD and a MOTION was made by Ms. Shannon and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CPS to accept the Concord Education Fund Awarded Grants. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

C. Vote on School Choice for the 2004-2005 School Year

Dr. Finn stated the School Choice issue was presented at the previous meeting. A vote is needed at this meeting. A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Burkel for CCRSD and a MOTION was made by Ms. Gaudet and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CPS to not participate in the School Choice provisions of the State Law for the school year 2004-2005 for the reasons as written. The MOTION was unanimously accepted.

VI. REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Budget Update

Mr. Flaherty stated there are no changes since last session. Mr. Fitzgerald stated the selectmen met last night and voted not to hold an election on May 18. We now will have an election in June.

A discussion ensued regarding whether the School Committee should draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen. It was decided to ask the Board of Selectmen for 5 minutes on the first night of town meeting.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated the issue is we have the school committee adopted budget. There are also two other possible numbers. This could confuse voters. There is a lot of incorrect information out. How do we get the word out. Ms. Bilodeau stated a formal letter from the Chair of the School Committee should be written.

Mr. Wedge stated when we tell the story, people think we did a good job. We need to add a statement about where we are coming from, with regards to level services.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated we are missing the piece of building relationships with other town boards. Ms. Shannon stated we have tried to work with other boards.

Dr. Finn stated there is not just the operating budget to worry about. There are major capital projects in the near future. We don't want these presented as either/or. We need to present them as and.

Mr. Wedge asked the implications of a June vote. Ms. Bilodeau stated a lot of planning is done in June. Kids won't get schedules before school ends. We can't set up classrooms until we get a budget. Dr. Finn stated we can go through administration and get letters ready before June 8 and hold them.

Beginning the Principal Search Process at Thoreau

Dr. Finn stated it will be posted next weekend. There was a meeting with Thoreau staff and PTG. We will establish a timeline and hope to have a person named before Mr. Popp leaves.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Bilodeau stated she met with the Long Range Planning Committee this morning. It was a useful conversation with this group. At a future meeting we will try to wrap up work. Some recommendations are controversial. They have a lot of criticism regarding schools and how they are run.

Dr. Finn stated there are a number of factors to be recognized. There are 7 bargaining units. Sped costs have increased 300% over last 20 years while regular ed has only increased 25%.

Ms. Rigby stated we have the highest percentage of sped kids in Massachusetts. We also have the highest percentage of out of district placements. We need to allocate resources. We have 17 students in out of district placements, which could be easily replicated here.

Ms. Bilodeau stated she heard from Rep. Atkins that communities will not be penalized for building during the moratorium.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Suburban Coalition Legislative Breakfast, Tuesday, April 13 at the State House in the Great Hall, 9 a.m. coffee, 9:30 a.m. speakers begin.

Dr. Finn attended this morning.

B. Proposed NESDEC Workshop

This was presented as an FYI. Dates will be discussed with Mr. Wedge

C. Case meeting with Legislators and Superintendents/April 2

Dr. Finn stated there were 8 legislators present. They broke into small groups, there was good dialogue and people were taking a lot of notes. Topics included Chapter 70, Circuit Breaker, SBAB reimbursement and charter schools.

D. Public Forum – Campaign and Political Finance Issues Related to School and Town Budget Override Ballot questions, April 15, 2004 2 p.m.

This was presented as an FYI.

E. Town Meeting Preparation

Ms. Bilodeau reviewed who will be doing what at Town Meeting. She stated 1000-1200 handouts will be needed and reviewed the breakdown of the meeting over the different days.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Ms. Burkel and seconded by Ms. Shannon for CCRSD and a MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Shannon for CPS to adjourn the regional meeting and enter into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. The MOTION was unanimously approved by roll call.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura O'Sullivan
APPROVED: 5/28/04