

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord School Committee
Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Ripley Building
Concord, MA
March 13, 2007
6:30 p.m.

Minutes

PRESENT:

Ms. Betsy Bilodeau
Mr. Peter Fischelis
Mr. Michael Fitzgerald
Ms. Jan McGinn
Ms. Rebecca Shannon
Mr. Jerry Wedge

PRESENT FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Brenda Finn, Superintendent
Mr. John Flaherty

ABSENT:

Mr. Chad Koski
Ms. Diana Rigby

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting returned to Open Session and was called to order by Mr. Fitzgerald for CCSC and Ms. McGinn for CSC at 6:36 p.m.

A. PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL CHOICE

Mr. Fitzgerald declared the Public Hearing Open. Ms. Bilodeau stated in order to fulfill a legal requirement, the School Committee must hear from the public and deliberate on reasons why or why not to have school choice.

Hearing no comments from the audience, Mr. Fitzgerald closed the public hearing.

B. School Advisory Council

The students introduced themselves. Hannah Braaten stated there are not many issues at the high school now. Eric Beaulieu stated the upper gym floor is very slippery and there are many teams who use that floor.

Mr. Flaherty stated he is aware of the gym floor problem, they are trying an intermediary solution over April vacation.

Mr. Beaulieu wondered if there was a way the fitness room could be open five afternoons after school instead of M/W/F. He also asked if a study group could be developed for kids to prep for the SAT's that don't have access to a paid tutor or prep class.

Brad Mattison stated he had trouble getting to class on time during the four-minute passing time experiment. Many students agreed it was harder to get to classes on time. Many students in school would rather a longer day at the end of the day than cut down on the passing time.

Mr. Fischelis asked the students if they would work on finding a solution to eliminate the amount of trash in the parking lot. More trash cans are needed and they need to be emptied more often. Mr. Flaherty made a note of that.

II. READING OF THE MINUTES

Executive Session

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Fischelis for CSC to approve Executive Session minutes from a meeting held January 24, 2007. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

A. MA Dept of Environment Protection WPA Form 1

Dr. Finn stated received correspondence regarding whether the wetland by the proposed playing fields is subject to the Wetland Protection Act.

Mr. Fischelis received correspondence from a Brister's Hill neighbor asking School Department to look at the trash behind the bus depot, by the railroad tracks. He has been by there and stated there is a fair amount of trash to be picked up.

Mr. Fitzgerald received correspondence from the Natural Resource Commission regarding the playing fields. It states they support the new fields project and that the project poses no threat to wetlands.

IV. RECOGNITIONS

A. CCHS

Mr. Dulong recognized Peter Atlas, math teacher, who has been recognized by a student at Stanford University as his most influential teacher. Stanford is flying Mr. Atlas to CA to honor him.

Mr. Dulong recognized George Kendall, Al Dentino, Ned Roos and the 111 students involved in the production of Evita. He stated it was the best performance he's seen in a high school.

Mr. Dulong recognized the winter sports teams for making it into state tournaments: boys and girls basketball, boys and girls hockey, boys and girls fencing, boys and girls ski teams.

Mr. Dulong recognized the custodial and maintenance crew for their amount of hard work during the snow and rain storm last Friday. They were everywhere stopping leakages.

Mr. Dulong recognized a group of students who presenting a program called “Be The Change” designed to make their high school the best it can be. The entire process has been done by the students.

B. CMS

Dr. Finn stated Mr. Unobskey recognized the custodial and maintenance crew for their hard work to keep building and walkways safe and clear.

C. Willard

Ms. Fernandes recognized the Willard staff for their thoughtful reflection and flexibility in discussions of the new school design. Mr. Flaherty stated the custodial staff at Willard did an excellent job during the last storm.

D. Alcott

Dr. Finn stated Ms. Young recognized Nancy McPherson, Lynne Kwarinski and the 4th and 5th grade students on their all-town concert.

Mr. Fischelis recognized the Destination Imagination team and stated it was a great program.

V. REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

A. CCHS Debt Exclusion for FY08

Mr. Flaherty presented the debt exclusion capital projects at the high school. He highlighted the work that had been completed last year. Dr. Finn stated some items were cited by the Fire Chief and some by NEASC. Mr. Flaherty discussed FY08 projects.

Mr. Fischelis asked if this amount was an approximation of past years. Mr. Flaherty stated in the 90’s there was a year of \$10-13M, then several years without significant projects. FY05 was about \$535K, FY06 was about \$590K, FY07 was \$1.2M and FY08 was \$1.2M. Because of the age and condition of the building, we are looking at portability or whether the projects will survive the renovations.

Mr. Wedge asked about the cafeteria work. The flooring cannot be saved, but furniture can be moved.

Mr. Fischelis asked if this was the end of the lighting that needed to be replaced. Mr. Flaherty stated we are nearing completion of the project.

Ms. Bilodeau stated the vote is in two weeks, the space issue cannot be emphasized enough.

B. Food Service: Proposed Price Increase for 2007-08

Bonnie Hardy requested an increase in the cost of school lunches at CPS of \$.50 for students and \$1 for teachers. She stated there have been increases in the cost of food, equipment repairs, and maintenance.

C. Renzulli Learning System

Robin Cicchetti stated the Willard School is piloting this program this year. It is a great perspective for students in gathering research materials. The core piece is that kids take surveys. The program has access to 30,000 sites, kids can bookmark sites, manage a small number of sites and spend less time conducting random searches.

D. Update on Playing Fields

Mr. Fischelis stated the design continues to go on. He stated that the closest point to an abutting lot line is 140 feet and most are about 200 feet. The two fields will be end to end in order to avoid adding a retaining wall. The fields committee has gone before the NRC and planning board and gotten their endorsements. Mr. Fischelis stated there is an initiative by the fields group to do a reforestation project and replace the trees. He also stated the land will not have to be brought down as far as originally thought. Instead of bringing the field down 10-14 feet, it will be dropped 7 feet.

Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Fischelis for his hard work.

E. Willard School: Project Design

Mr. Wedge stated there is agreement on design enrollment numbers and the ed. specs. He went over the design schedule. The architects have presented different options of 3 story and 2 story buildings.

The septic system was on the fast track to done, but the site manager may put it off until actual construction. A decision will hopefully be made at the next meeting.

The integrated design group involves the building committee, green team, David Anderson, Frank Cannon, and project manager. Everyone is present when making decisions.

There has also been communication with Danner DeStephano and Chris Whelan regarding planning the fields.

VI. ACTION ITEMS**A. Vote on School Choice for the 2007-08 School Year**

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CSC that the Concord and Concord-Carlisle School Committees vote not to participate in School Choice for the school year 2007-08 for the following reasons: 1. the regional school district is in need of additional space at the high school to meet instructional and support needs due to a substantial increase in student enrollment over the past decade. Supporting school choice would add to enrollment challenges at this time. 2. There is

not an equitable or adequate transportation system in place to allow all students to be able to attend a school in another district. Thus some students are denied the chance to participate. 3. Districts who have children leave to attend another school choice district are penalized financially because they have to pay some portion of the per pupil cost for those students. Districts losing students in this manner have fewer resources available to build up their own programs to retain or attract students.

The MOTION was unanimously approved.

B. Vote on Food Service Price Increases for 2007-08

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CSC to increase the price for school lunch \$.50 for students and \$1 for teachers in 2007-08 as was presented by Bonnie Hardy.

Mr. Wedge stated this increase keeps us in the average range. The MOTION was voted and unanimously approved.

C. Permission to Plan Trip to Peru

Mr. Dulong stated Eric Pohl has been to Peru four times. The trip is immersed in Spanish past and present. The biggest concern is usually the cost of the trip and whether there will be scholarship money available. The same fundraising methods will be used as has been done for other trips. Fundraising can be done through the Parents Association, benefactors and students sell candy.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Mr. Fischelis for CCSC to approve the request to plan a trip to Peru from July 2 – July 13, 2007. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

Ms. Shannon stated there seems to be more trips like this every year. She asked if they were fully subscribed. Mr. Dulong stated they are always fully subscribed, one trip last year had one opening.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Bilodeau stated the Finance Committee has unanimously supported the high school debt exclusion. The Board of Selection has not taken the matter up, but it is anticipated they will support it as well.

Mr. Wedge asked if a presentation could be made by CCTV regarding the second camera.

Ms. Shannon updated the committee on the high school principal search. Eight candidates have been interviewed and it has been narrowed to four finalists. They will be re-interviewed at the library at 6 p.m. on Thursday.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Scheduling Policy Subcommittee Meeting:

Dr. Finn will send out dates for meeting next week.

B. March 27, 2007: Concord Town Election 7 am – 8 pm

FYI

C. April 2, 2007: Suburban Coalition Annual Legislative Breakfast 9:30 – 11:30 am,
The Great Hall, State House

FYI

IX. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

X. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CSC to adjourn the Joint School Committee and enter into Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. The MOTION was unanimously approved by roll call.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura O'Sullivan

APPROVED: 4/10/2007