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School Committee Minutes 01/9/2014

Approved by the Arlington School Committee February 27, 2014

*Arlington School Committee
Regular School Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 9, 2014
6:30 p.m.
School Committee Room
Arlington High School
869 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476*

Present: Mr. Judson Pierce, Chair, Mr. William Hayner, Vice Chair, Ms. Cindy Starks, Secretary, Mr. Jeff Thielman, Ms. Heigham, Mr. Paul Schlichtman, and Dr. Kirsi Allison-Ampe

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Dr. Laura Chesson, Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Lockyer, Interim Director of Special Education, Ms. Linda Hanson, AEA Representative, and Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Mr. Rob Spiegel, Human Resource Officer, AAA Representative and, Student Representative.

Ms. Hanson arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Ms. Johnson arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Opening Remarks

None

Happenings Around Arlington Public Schools

Due to a conflict the update on "The Role Of A Math Coach" had to be rescheduled for another meeting. (Goal 1)

Public Participation

None

Arlington Public Schools Elementary Buffer Zone Report (Goal IV)

Ms. D'Agostino thanked Dr. Bodie, Adam Kurowski and all the school administrative assistants who have supported Central Kindergarten Registration, the buffer zone information process, as well as streamlining the process for all elementary school registrations. The numbers from March through June were about 676 students registered in the central registration office and every effort was made to place students in their preferred school. A small amount of students (between 1 and 4 students at 4 elementary schools) who were wait listed were not placed in their requested school.

The School Committee (in the 2011-2012 school year) approved to create a plan to create buffer zones with the goals to increase Thompson Elementary Schools enrollment to receive MSBA funding and to provide equity in class sizes at each of our elementary schools. As students enrolled, class sizes at all buffer schools were considered. Dr. Bodie based her placement decisions on enrollment and classroom sizes at the enrolling grade level.

The committee members asked if all deadlines were met, why some classes are still large, and if this was cost effective to the Arlington Public Schools. Dr. Bodie pointed out that some parents did not register their children until late August, which affects class sizes which in turn affects space concerns and the need to hire additional teachers throughout the district. Financially for the schools central registration is cost effective and since the administrative assistants at each elementary school do not work full time during the summer, parents can make appointments to register in the central registration office over summer months. Registration now only takes about ten minutes for student enrollment to be completed, if all paperwork is completed correctly beforehand. This student data being gathered centrally also helps speed collating the data needed for state reporting.

Special Education Budget and Program Update (Goal III)

Ms. Lockyer reviewed the special education requested increases for FY 15 at all levels preschool through high school. The preschool requested increases are: a .2 TA, 1. Behavior Specialist for the SLC A program, and full time for Administrative/Parent outreach initiatives.

For the elementary schools, Dr. Lockyer requested a 1.0 BCBA/Related Services and a 1.0 BSP to work with need BCBA, who would add to the positions we already have, to be shared among the 7 schools.

The Ottoson Middle School requested increases are: a 1.0 Behavior Teachers to expand the program due to student population and general education support, a .5 Social Worker-Guidance Counselor, a 1.0 Teaching Assistant to expand inclusionary support for SLC students and a Special Education substitute to increase representation of general educators at IEP and co-planning meetings.

For the High School she is requesting: a .5 Professional Staff as a Team Chair to replicate the OMS level staffing, a .5 Social Worker due to increased population, a .5 Speech, a 1.0 Behavior Specialist, 5 district wide TA's to BSP are needed due to increased district needs, 2 system wide OT's, and 2 TA's district wide to be utilized and assigned for anticipated needs.

The committee heard the needs of the Special Education Department but suggested that the list be prioritized and that it articulate the needs for next year as it reflects the district students. A Cost analysis for all special education costs was suggested and a highlight of a comparison to other districts on costs was also recommended. The committee wants to be able to tell the community the needs and the priority of those needs in the Special Education Department.

Dr. Bodie reported that the Town Manager's number for the additional town contribution to the schools still doesn't cover the cost of all the requests that have been made. Dr. Bodie said other towns are seeing growth in new enrollments and caseloads too and staff increases are need in other EDCO communities. The committee would like to have an organizational understanding of positions now and what these requests would change as well as a cost analysis.

Mr. Pierce wanted to make sure SEPAC had some input to the requests that Special Education is crafting. Mr. Hayner informed the committee of a Special Education presentation to be held at the OMS on January 13th, but said it was not posted on any school calendar and many are not aware of this meeting.

Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Johnson presented the January 2014 monthly tracking reports and said the FY 14 budget continues to track as expected, and that her office will continue to monitor Special Education out of district costs as well as energy and other cold weather costs.

School Committee Discussion On FY 15 Budget (Goal III)

Ms. Starks appreciated and thanked the Town Finance Committee, the Town Manager, and the Board of Selectmen for their full support on the FY 15 Budget increase for the schools. She informed the committee that APS will receive an increase of 25 percent of the FY 12 per pupil cost of \$12,600 for the student enrollment growth in FY 13 and FY 14 for FY 15. She explained that APS will continue to receive additional money each year we see enrollment numbers increase and that the understanding is also that if the enrollment numbers go down, then we will not receive the extra money.

Ms. Starks motioned that the School Committee approves the town contribution of \$50,729,968 for the FY 15 Budget, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

It was noted that it took many meetings with members of the Town Manager's office, the Finance Committee, Long Range Planning, Board of Selectmen and School Committee members to come to this collective effort on solving the budget needs of the

school system.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Bodie had Mr. Pierce read the Resolution for the School Committee to vote to reaffirm Human Rights Resolution:

Mr. Pierce moved that the School Committee reaffirm the resolution:

Human Rights Resolution

- *WHEREAS our nation was founded on the fundamental conviction that all persons are entitled to equal protection, equal opportunity and the enjoyment of civil rights; and*
- *WHEREAS the strength of our nation is derived from the growing diversity of our communities; and*
- *WHEREAS thousands of people of diverse backgrounds live, work, study, and worship in Arlington, visit our Town's businesses, and enjoy our recreational opportunities; and*
- *WHEREAS all acts of subtle and overt discrimination against people protected under Federal, State, and local laws substantially undermine our communities, schools, and the promise of equal justice; and*
- *WHEREAS violations of human rights occur in our Town; and*
- *WHEREAS we can begin to solve the problem of hate by taking strategic and specific actions to promote a sense of welcome and inclusion; and*
- *WHEREAS coordinating efforts to combat and respond to such acts of hate and human rights violations continue through the Response Coordination Team comprised of public officials, Arlington Human Rights Commission, Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group, and members of the clergy;*
- *NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Arlington does endorse the efforts of the aforementioned Response Coordination Team and pledges its support for rapidly addressing violations of human rights in our community; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the undersigned elected leadership bodies of the Town of Arlington, will maintain a policy of publicly addressing human rights violations and those who perpetrate them; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will unite against prejudice and support those who are harassed or have their human rights violated; and*
- *BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we will support Town and community groups in their endeavors to creatively recognize and promote diversity, seconded by Ms. Heigham.*

Voted: 7-0

Dr. Bodie updated the committee members on the burst water pipe at the Pierce Elementary School over the weekend, which unfortunately damaged the library and another classroom. Dr. Bodie said the RETELL course was successful and over 40 teachers have committed to taking this course. She also spoke about a survey to parents on the impact of the common core as well as feedback on the conferences held at the middle and high school. Dr. Bodie provided an update on rebuild o Arlington High School. She reported that she met with the Thompson School Architect today and toured the building and met with staff and the plan is to do a presentation in February to the full School Committee. It was also suggested that the Ottoson be discussed as to how to reconfigure existing space and move programs around. Dr. Bodie agreed and committed to share this information with the committee, once more planning is complete. The December Superintendent Newsletter went out and is posted on the website.

Consent Agenda

None

Subcommittee & Liaison Reports

Policies & Procedures, Mr. Thielman said the subcommittee will meet on Monday, January 27, 2014.

Budget, Ms. Starks recommends that the full School Committee vote to approve the Proposal on the change to Foreign Exchange Student Fees:

Ms. Starks moved that the full School Committee vote to support the recommendation of the Budget Subcommittee to approve the proposal of Option B, which will increase the Foreign Exchange Program expense to \$15,936. a year, and \$7,968. a semester to cover administrative costs, seconded by Mr. Hayner.

Voted: 7-0

Ms. Starks suggested parents send emails or letter to the School Committee office or to herself with their Budget FY 15 priorities, that they can come to any school committee meeting and speak at public participation and noted the Public Hearing will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Allison-Ampe prefers additional budget meetings with parents to address their questions and budget priorities.

Community Relations, Ms. Heigham nothing to report

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment & Accountability, Dr. Allison-Ampe said the subcommittee held two meetings on December 18th, and January 6 to discuss Tools of the Mind and the Athletic Handbook and will be looking to discuss Vision 2020 survey at a future meeting.

Facilities, Mr. Hayner, nothing to report

Mr. Hayner and Dr. Allison-Ampe attended the EDCO meeting in regards to negotiations and will attend another meeting in March.

Chair, Mr. Pierce met with Rep Sean Garballey and said he would like to attend a School Committee meeting to hear our concerns and answer our questions possibly during a retreat.

Mr. Pierce had a moment of silence for Mr. Dick Smith, Arlington resident who passed away.

Secretary's Report

Ms. Starks reported on Correspondence for SC 1/9/2014

We received the following correspondence:

- Letter from Dr. Bodie to Dallin parents regarding the search for a new principal*
- Email from Dave Ardito about a free public screening of the award winning film, "ALL ME: The Life and Times of Winfred Rembert" on Thursday January 9, 2014 at 7 pm in the Lowe Auditorium at Arlington High School.*
- Email forwarded by Cindy Starks from Judi Paradis, President of the Massachusetts School Library Association that AHS was featured in the Mass. School Library Association's monthly newsletter.*
- Email forwarded from MASC asking stake holders to take their survey on the ESEA waiver.*
- Email from Jill Fekete, parent of a Bishop kindergartner with concerns about the Tools of the Mind Curriculum.*
- Superintendent Bodie's December Newsletter*
- Email follow-up from a parent regarding the CIA meeting on the Tools of the Mind Curriculum.*
- Season's Greeting card from Sheriff Koutoujian and his family.*
- Email from a kindergarten parent in support of the Tools of the Mind Curriculum.*
- Letter from a parent of a special education student regarding issues with the special education department and handling of her student's case.*
- Save the date for Academic Internship Expo to be held on January 14, 2014 from 7:30-9 p.m.*

Executive Session

None

Adjourn

Mr. Hayner moved to adjourn at 9:26 p.m. seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 7-0

Respectfully submitted by

Karen M. Fitzgerald

Administrative Assistant

Arlington School Committee/css