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School Committee Minutes 11/10/2009

Approved by School Committee December 12, 2009

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2009
7:30 P.M.**

Present: Joe Curran, Chair Denise Burns, Vice Chair
Joe Curro, Secretary Leba Heigham
Ronald Spangler Cindy Starks
Jeff Thielman

Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie
Interim Assistant Superintendent: Wallis Raemer
Chief Financial Officer: Diane Johnson
Student Representatives: Maggie Griesmer

Excused Absence: Special Education Director: Mark Ryder

Mr. Curro exited the meeting at 8:32 p.m. and returned at 8:35 p.m.
Ms. Starks exited the meeting at 8:39 p.m. and returned at 8:41 p.m.
Ms. Burns exited the meeting at 9:00 p.m. and returned at 9:10 p.m.
Mr. Spangler exited the meeting at 9:10 p.m. and returned at 9:13 p.m.
Ms. Diane Johnson exited the meeting at 9:15 p.m. and returned at 9:17 p.m.
Mr. Curro exited the meeting at 9:17 p.m. and returned at 9:19 p.m.

Mr. Curran called the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

*Mr. Curran introduced Ms. Maggie Griesmer, a junior who is the Student Representative to the School Committee.
Mr. Curran presented the artwork from the students of Deb Martin, Hardy School.
Mr. Curran requested a moment of silence in honor of all fallen Veterans.*

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

MCAS DATA

Dr. Wallis Raemer presented the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) District scores, which included the scores of students in out-of-district placements. Leilanie D'Agostino prepared the data, which included perspectives from grade level trends, cohort trends and 2009 subgroups. The committee received individual elementary school data in their packets, but that was not included in the presentation.

This was followed by discussion on MCAS scores variation over the years. The areas of overall improvement showed Grade 3, 7 and 10 ELA, Grade 5 Science and Grade 10 Math and LEP student achievement from grade 4 to grade 6. Areas for improvement and further research included Grade 5 and 8 in Science, Grade 4 in ELA, and all middle school Math.

Committee members expressed their appreciation and requested to see some sort of strategy to help improve the scores.

Dr. Raemer noted that math is an identified area for improvement for many middle school districts in the state. The

Arlington Public Schools are expanding math coaches in Title 1 schools and continue to seek funding for additional math coaches and for professional development to build teacher content expertise.

KINDERGARTEN ACCREDITATION

Ms. Mary Villano and Ms. Debbie Pielech discussed the criteria that our kindergarten program must meet for accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Ms. Villano stated her appreciation to the kindergarten teachers who have worked together to gather the enormous amount of data needed for accreditation and – in turn -- the kindergarten grant. The Arlington Public Schools receive over \$300,000 from the kindergarten grant, which provides us with kindergarten teacher assistants, curriculum development support in ELL, ELA and math. Other benefits from the grant include emotional support, multicultural learning and CRP training.

GROWTH MODEL - MCAS STUDENT REPORT

Dr. Kathleen Bodie presented the MCAS Student Growth Model, which measures changes in individual student performance over time. The model works with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Accountability System (MCAS) year-to-year test scores rather than a student's performance level in any one year.

Committee discussion touted the advantages of our own common assessments and data measures over the new state model.

PRESENTATION OF DISTRICT GOALS 3 & 4

Dr. Kathleen Bodie reviewed the District Goals 1 and 2 that she had presented in October, and she discussed Goal 3 and Goal 4, along with associated action recommendations.

The Committee spoke briefly about the Arlington Education Foundation's donation of Think Tank boxes for K - 6 students. The discussion continued around ways to offer online course registrations for high school students and partnership ideas with local universities, as well as other action recommendations.

Ms. Burns suggested having committee members draft a goal for the administration to model trust, good character and integrity.

Mr. Spangler suggested that Dr. Bodie start working on a plan to address classroom sizes, and he suggested a study of redistricting and equity issues in the face of future budget cuts.

It was recommended to add the wording of "physical" to Goal 3 so that the goal might read, "Ensure that all Arlington students are well prepared for academic, social, emotional, physical, and vocational success in the 21st century".

Ms. Heigham moved to approve the District Goals for 2009 - 2010 with changes to Goal 3 to add "physical" after the word emotional, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Voted 6-1, Ms. Burns voted No

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Kathleen Bodie reported on the updated of H1N1 virus at various schools and the Health Clinic issuing shots at the Thompson School on Thursday.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Curro reported on all correspondence received: a letter from the Redevelopment Board regarding the lease of Parmenter and Crosby Schools, Metco Legislative Alert letter, newsletters from Brackett and Ottoson Middle Schools, flyer on Arts, MASC People article on appointment of Jeff Thielman to a Board of Elementary and Secondary Education advisory committee, correspondence on opening day 2010 and Martin Luther King, Jr. letter.

CONSENT AGENDA

***Approval of Warrant #10063 dated October 27, 2009 in the amount of \$ 499,957.96**

*** Approval of AHS Performing Arts Trip, Albany, NY April 30, 2009 - May 2, 2009**

***Approval of Minutes: none**

Ms. Burns moved to approve consent agenda as presented and pull Approval of AHS Performing Arts Trip, seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted 7 - 0

Ms. Burns moved to approve the Arlington High School Performing Arts Trip, to Albany, NY and amend the date on the flyer from "April 3, 2009 - May 2, 2009" to "April 30, 2009 to May 2, 2009," seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted 7 - 0

ROUNDTABLE

Ms. Starks reported on the Arts event she had attended. Dr. Spangler reported on the Robotics Conference he had attended, the Peirce PTO Health day, which included a fun run. Mr. Thielman and Mr. Curro suggested that the Arlington Redevelopment Board letter go to the Community Relations Subcommittee for review. Mr. Curro announced his participation the Chili Cook-off at Bishop School, and he announced the Public Visioning Session at Town Hall on December 1, 2009 7 - 9 p.m. Ms. Burns suggested showcasing other subjects in the School Committee room.

Mr. Curro moved to refer the letter from the Arlington Redevelopment Board dated October 29, 2009 signed by Carol Kowalski to the Community Relations Subcommittee and return a recommendation to full committee by date certain, December 22, 2009, seconded by Mr. Thielman.

Voted 7 - 0

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Curro moved to enter Executive Session at 10:14 p.m. for the purpose of receiving an update on negotiations with the Arlington Education Association, returning to open session only to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted 6-1

Roll Call: Ms. Starks Yes, Ms. Heigham Yes, Dr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Curro Yes, Ms. Burn No, and Mr. Curran Yes

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Curro moved to adjourn at 10:25 p.m., seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted 6-0

**Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jc**