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School Committee Minutes 12/09/2008

APPROVED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE 1/13/2009

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2008
7:30 P.M.

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

Chief Financial Officer: Sue Mazzarella
Special Education Director: Mark Ryder
Student Representatives: Lauren Alderman, Ellery Rosin

Excused Absence:
Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

Sue Sheffler exited meeting at 10:34 and returned 10:38 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Laura Prichard, Director of Fine Arts came and presented herself to the School Committee and informed them of the current events at each of the schools.

RECOGNITION AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT

Ellery Rosin reported out on the Jazz Band's performance for the Kidney Foundation. She pointed out the artwork currently displayed in the School Committee Room was provided from the Hardy Elementary School. Art teacher Deb Martin and student teacher Laura Root posted artwork from the Kindergarten, First, Second and Fifth graders. Lauren Alderman announced the Arlington High Students who auditioned for and were accepted into the MMEA Northeast District ensembles. Orchestra: Otto Briner, Lillian Innella, Claire Marie Malfroy-Camine, Emily Nauman, Katrina Rosenberg, Natasha Rosenber, Ryan Salocks, Amanda Strominger, Ken Trieu. Band: Andrea Delgado, Chorus: Nina Goodman, Siddharth Hiregowdara, Heather Kobayashi.

Ms. Burns reported on the Model UN event posted by Kim Holt, Founder and Director of Arlington Enrichment Collaborative. Eight students from the Ottoson Middle School spent three months preparing to attend the conference on December 6, 2008 at Northeastern University. Students discussed malnutrition, Food Aid and reported out on various country topics that each student had researched. The students were eighth grader Jeremy Norberg-Bohm, seventh graders, Rita Kambil, Molly Rookwood, Louise Tanner, Grace McKay, Chloe Singer, and Isabel Verghese, and sixth grader Tano Mejia

STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARD

Members of the research committee on Standards-Based Report Cards included Marie Janiak, Stephanie Zerchycov, Alan Brown, Evenly DeRosa, Karen Hartley, Andrea Shrekgast and Gia Raia. Teachers advocated for the change because they wanted to provide a consistent grading system for grades 1-5 students. They spoke

about the process which included two study groups, collecting samples from local communities, reviewing the Mass. Frameworks and the Arlington Public Schools current process of report cards and agreed that Standards Based report cards will provide more details of information for parents and help teachers plan. A pilot program is planned for certain classroom teachers, a parent information evening will be planned, online surveys for changes/input will occur and in June a professional development of all grades 1-5 teachers will be presented, explained and discussed to inform teachers of the new Standards-Based Report Cards.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

Sue Mazzarella, Chief Financial Officer supplied to the School Committee the Arlington Public Schools FY '09 Budget Summary dated 12/9/08 and the Arlington Public Schools FY '10 Forecasting Tool and Budget Analysis that was included in the packets dated 12/5/2008. The shortfall before any state cuts were 1.5 million, the past day has changed that to now include an additional 10% for FY '10, which would be another million.

Sue Mazzarella is soliciting direction from the School Committee to help her and her team to come up with various scenarios to target the reductions.

Mr. Skidmore, Principal of Arlington High School reiterated that he would like to preserve the high school classroom teachers, and noted that the loss of the House Dean will be offset with the in-house suspension position as well as the social workers, and therapeutic workers. The loss of permanent substitutes would have to be sacrificed and students will have to be placed in Old Hall.

Mr. Spangler suggested looking at the successful Hardy After School program as an example of additional programs for potential revenue and to expand Community Education to increase offerings and make it a profit center that can support other areas of the APS budget.

Mr. Spangler informed the committee of the excess of 3 million dollars in the town reserves. He felt this money could carry us over and he expressed concern that the committee members were discussing cutting another million dollars before figuring out the reserve money first.

Some members would like to explore Mr. Spangler's option, others would like the Budget and Revenue Task Force subcommittee to first make a recommendation, which would include two School Committee members, and others from various boards not yet announced. After much discussion the following motion was made:

**Jeff Thielman "moved that the School Committee's representatives to the Budget And Revenue Task Force subcommittee be directed to lobby for a town/school allocation of funds in FY '10 that adheres to the five year plan, seconded by Mr. Curran. Roll Call:~ Mr. Thielman Yes, Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, Mr. Curran No, Ms. Burns No, Mr. Curro Yes, Ms. Sheffler Abstained
Vote: ~4 Yes, 2 No, and 1 abstention**

CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Burns spoke on the Space Study across the system and the needs for the Parmenter and Crosby Buildings. Ron Spangler and Sue Mazzarella would like to get clarification and host a meeting of the School Facilities Working Group and will report on the findings in January. Jeff Thielman and Denise will do some research on advocating to the State level for funds on unfunded mandates especially with Special Education. Denise noted the agenda change on the License Approval with Germaine Lawrence. Ms. Burns would like Kathy Bodie and Mark Ryder to write up a report for Germaine Lawrence to receive a day school license before Director David Hirshberg attended the School Committee meeting for the license approval.

ROUNDTABLE

Mr. Curro informed everyone on the next District Accountability Subcommittee meeting, December 18, at 6.
Ms. Heigham informed everyone on the next Curriculum Instruction Subcommittee meeting, December 22, at 4:00 p.m.
Mr. Thielman informed everyone on the next Community Relations Subcommittee meeting, December 16, at 4:00 p.m.
Ms. Sheffler pointed out the Ottoson Middle School now has signs to the front entrance of the school.
Committee members requested the IT Director to come to our January 13, 2009 School Committee meeting.
Mr. Curran informed every one on the next Policy & Procedures Subcommittee meeting December 18, at 8:00 p.m.
Ms. Burns informed every one on the next Superintendent Search Process Subcommittee, Tuesday December 16, at 6:30 p.m.

SECRETARY REPORT

Mr. Spangler had no correspondence to report on.

CONSENT AGENDA all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

* Approval of School Committee minutes from October 28, 2008

* Approval of Warrant # 09078 dated November 25, 2008 in the amount of \$677,110.26

* Approval of School Committee meeting on Monday, January 5, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. if needed.

*Mr. Spangler moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Mr. Curran.
Vote 7:0*

ADJOURNMENT

*Mr. Spangler moved to adjourn at 10:52 p.m., seconded by Mr. Curran.
Vote 7:0*

*Respectfully submitted
Karen Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee
FS*