



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **School Committee Minutes 10/23/2007**

*Approved November 13, 2007*

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2007**  
**7:30 PM**

**Present:** Susan Lovelace, Chair                      Joe Curran  
                    Sean Garballey, Vice Chair                      Denise Burns  
                    Jeff Thielman, Secretary                      Ronald Spangler  
                    Sue Sheffler

Superintendent: Nate Levenson  
Chief Financial Off: Sue Mazzarella  
Asst. Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie  
Student Rep: Callie McHugh

**Absent:**  
Interim Sp. Ed. Dir: Gerald Kopperschmidt  
Student Rep: Bobby McWatters

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Boys Scout members Kevin Casey and Chris Thomas from Troop 313 of Arlington, MA are here tonight working on a merit badge for Citizenship in the Community and must attend a town meeting and take notes on various points of view.

Students from the high school, Anastasia Tserkonis, Emily Verrier and Lauren Sweester have joined the Schools for Schools Club, created by The Invisible Children Organization. The students have asked the community to help support their efforts to raise money for children in Northern Uganda.

Students from the Arlington Enrichment Collaborative program came tonight and recapped the trip to the United Nations. Students who spoke were Matthew Ober, Abigail Fowler, Daniel Wolf, and Zoe Sachs, other students who attended the trip were Eli Flinn, Madeline Burrowes, Natalie Duranceau and Jeremy Norber-Bohm. Kim Holt is the Arlington Enrichment Co Director and attended the trip along with School Committee member Sean Garballey as chaperones.

**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 Warrant 08051 in the amount of \$556,709.97

\*Approval of October 9, 2007 Regular and Executive Session minutes

\*Approval of Travel Opportunities: Costa Rica, Italy/Greece, Bella Italia, and Ireland

**On a motion by Mr. Garballey and seconded by Mr. Thielman it was voted to approve the consent agenda, \*Approval of Warrant 08051 in the amount of \$556,709.97 Approval of October 9, 2007 Regular and Executive Session minutes Approval of Travel Opportunities: Costa Rica, Italy/Greece, Bella Italia, and Ireland Vote: 7:0 unanimous**

### **LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PRESENTATION**

*The Leadership Academy is a 12-month program that trains teachers for future leadership roles in the district, such as becoming a principal, curriculum leader, coach, or special education administrator. The program includes monthly seminars, a real-life leadership project, the ASCD conference, and books discussions and case studies. Currently there are seven members in the Leadership Academy. Tonight Georgia Chute, Lori Villani, Pat Mahoney, Leilanie D'Agostino, and Karen Hartley, each spoke about their experiences over the past year and agreed that the program is beneficial and has had a positive impact on day-to-day issues currently in the classroom and in their departments.*

*The committee members and Superintendent Levenson were impressed and in agreement that the program is a positive experience and will continue to run another Leadership Academy next year. Applications for new candidates for the upcoming year will go out next week through the superintendent's office.*

### **UPDATE ON SOCIAL STUDIES DEPT.**

*Kerry Dunne, Director of K-12 Social Studies gave a summary of the social studies curriculum and the work she has been doing since coming to Arlington from the Framingham school district. The social studies department teachers have been reviewing and modifying the curriculum, especially for 8th grade and 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Ms. Dunne will continue to review the frameworks and would like to boost enrollment in the AP classes at the high school level, add economic classes, work on a social studies website, partnership with the Old Schwamb Mill here in Arlington and further review the elementary curriculum for next year.*

### **MINORITY HIRING REPORT**

*Superintendent Levenson presented the Minority Hiring Report and explained the Minority Employment statistics from October 2005 to October 2007. Nate and the Diversity Subcommittee agree that a lot of work has been done to recruit and hire, but they have not moved forward and did not go backwards. Nate and Kathy will continue to plan to participate in minority job fairs, which include AARC and will increase the number of minority job fairs they will attend.*

*Superintendent Levenson noted he would like the budget process to start and be approved earlier than prior years and would work with the AEA on issues and procedures to help with minority recruiting and hiring and noted the current contract will not allow Nate to hire early.*

*Ms. Burns asked if we know how many minority teachers actually graduated from Massachusetts with a teaching degree and if we could look into ways to offer scholarships to minority students here in Arlington who have an interest in becoming a teacher and look into hiring them once graduating with a degree.*

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

*Ms. Lovelace gave a summary of the Superintendent / School Committee retreat and noted the committee members had a discussion on the community read with Ms. Fennelly, on the book *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. Ms. Lovelace noted what the committee members think are the major issues facing them, and would like further ideas on how to address these.*

*The committee members and the Administrative Cabinet discussed the goals of the district and raised questions on, 1) why these goals, 2) what are we trying to accomplish and 3) how will they know if they have been successful.*

*Suggestions for improving the School Committee meetings were made and this was noted that the morale of teachers and the community are impacted by the meetings. Ideas for improvement*

- 1) carefully chosen words and respectful behavior should be modeled by committee members*
- 2) focusing on teaching and learning and not "playing politics" in discussing administrative issues.*
- 3) Building support for the schools but ensuring that at each meeting accomplishes of teachers, students and administrators are recognized and appreciated*
- 4) Asking student representatives to report on the high school activities as part of the regular meeting.*

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*Superintendent Levenson spoke about the Ottoson power failure and was impressed with how the entire staff handled the situation. Nate also noted how the students cell phones were an integral component of reaching parents in a short period of time.*

*The Special Education Communication Plan was presented and feedback over the next few weeks from staff, administrators, SEPAC, the School Committee and the community on the draft will help the leadership teams.*

*Superintendent Levenson would like the Budget Subcommittee to meet with the superintendent of Minuteman to discuss per pupil assessment figures.*

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Mr. Spangler gave a brief overview from the Policy and Procedures meeting minutes on October 16, 2007 and the next meeting will be Monday, October 29 at 8:30 am.*

*Mr. Thielman reported on the Accountability minutes from October 15, 2007 and the report and grid can be found on the website.*

*Ms. Sheffler reported on two Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment meetings held during the month of July.*

*Mr. Garballey is waiting to hear back from some members on scheduling a joint meeting with the Diversity Subcommittee and the Budget committee on Monday, October 29, at 4 pm.*

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

*Mr. Thielman reported on correspondence received.*

### **NEW BUSINESS**

*Ms. Burns notified the committee she will be out on leave and the committee members wished Denise a speedy recovery.*

*Callie mentioned a fundraiser for sending students to the United Nations and students would need to rent rooms and Ms. Burns asked the community to contact the School Committee office if any person would like to donate points to book rooms for the students.*

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*On a motion by Ms. Burns and seconded by Mr. Spangler it was Voted to enter into executive session at 10:24 PM*

*Roll call Mr. Spangler Yes, Ms. Sheffler Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Ms. Burn Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Mr. Garballey Yes, and Ms. Lovelace Yes*

*Vote 7:0 unanimous*

*On a motion Mr. Thielman and seconded by Ms. Burns it was Voted to exit Executive Session and return to open session to adjourn.*

*Vote 7:0 unanimous*

### **ADJOURN**

*On a motion by Mr. Spangler and seconded by Mr. Curran it was Voted to adjourn at 10:55 PM*

*Vote 7:0*

*Submitted by  
Karen M. Fitzgerald  
Administrative Assistant  
School Committee*