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Minutes 02/14/2006

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2006
7:30 P.M.

Present: Jeff Thielman, Chair
Sue Sheffler, Vice Chair
Suzanne Owayda, Secretary
Sean Garballey

Susan Lovelace
Paul Schlichtman
Martin Thrope

Superintendent: Nate Levenson
Asst. Supt.: Kevin Hutchinson
Sp. Ed. Director: Barbara Cataldo
Student Rep.: EJ Harris

Call to Order: 7:30 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- .. Karen Frank and Lisa Galen LABBB – requesting that the Superintendent as part of the LABBB collaborative engage in negotiations and the mediation process for the LCEA (LABBB Collaborative Education Association) employees.
- .. APS parents Kathryn Tighe, Cindy Starks, and Netta Davis spoke in support of and the importance of a full time nurse in each elementary school.

BUDGET

- Vote on funding for School Nurses
- Supt. Levenson spoke at length on the nursing issue. The Superintendent stated that student safety is of paramount importance and that no one questions the need to provide for the health, safety and welfare of APS students. If there were no financial constraints Nate would recommend a nurse at each elementary school and two at each secondary school. Mr. Levenson explained that based on conversations with principals and nurses he believed that current staffing provides reasonable levels of coverage and that Arlington is well above the State guidelines and requirements. However this does not mean that we will not do anything at all. The Superintendent recommended a number of steps to improve student health and safety without adding additional nurses:
- .. Review the health needs and size of each school to determine staffing assignments.
 - .. Train some staff at each school in CPR and other First Aid skills.
 - .. Provide for expanded counseling support through partnership with AYCC
 - .. Reverse the self-imposed practice of only nurses dispensing medication. With proper training and procedures, another adult in the school can be allowed to dispense regularly scheduled medication.
 - .. Educate all staff regarding Massachusetts Laws that protect and encourage emergency assistance to children in need, and articulate what adults can and should do to help students in need which will increase student safety and welfare.

Superintendent Levenson recommends maintaining the current staffing level for FY2007 and suggested that the budget subcommittee be charged with the question of "Can we increase student health, safety, and welfare and reduce cost."

School Nurse Motions – February 14, 2006

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Garballey it was
Moved that the Superintendent is instructed to build the FY07 budget to ensure that a full time nurse is in place in every APS .
This recommendation is based on reaching an equitable level of coverage of every child. 7-0 motion defeated.

Mr. Thrope voiced concern and questioned why he was lobbied against the above motion by two elementary principals, acting at the request of the Superintendent. Although we need information Mr. Thrope did not find it at all useful in making a decision that relates to the functioning of health care professionals. In an effort for more open communication with the School Committee, Supt. Levenson encouraged the principals to speak to committee members on the issue: if that is not what is wanted it will never happen again in that manner.

Other School Committee members did not share Mr. Thrope's concern with receiving phone calls from principals and

welcomed the open communication.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was

.. Voted that the Superintendent is instructed to build the FY07 budget by maintaining the current (FY06) number of nurses and deploying them based on need as determined by the supervisor of nursing following consultation with principals. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Garballey and amended it was

.. Voted that the superintendent commence a program by September 1, 2006 to train key building staff in CPR and emergency procedures pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth and approved School Department policies. The superintendent shall also work with the nursing staff and building principals to review, revise and develop protocols for trained adults to dispense routine medication where~legal and appropriate in addition to nurses. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Ms. Owayda it was:

.. Voted that the Superintendent shall work with the Policies & Procedures Subcommittee, school nurses and building principals to review and revise any policies and protocols (e.g., JLCCB, JLCCB-E, and JLCD) related to the administration of medication and emergency health services in our schools. Subsequent to this review, the Superintendent shall recommend any new policies and protocols for School Committee approval by no later than January 1, 2007. Unanimous vote

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Ms. Lovelace and amended it was:

.. Voted that the Superintendent shall work with the Budget Subcommittee, Principals, Nurses and any other participants the Superintendent deems appropriate to collect additional data and conduct necessary research to answer the question:~ "Can we increase student health, safety, and welfare in a cost effective manner?" This report is to be presented to the School Committee by no later than January 1, 2007. 6-1 Mr. Thrope with a no vote

· Timeline Review (Public Hearing - Mar14th; final vote on budget on Mar 28th)

Mr. Thielman explained that the Committee must vote on the date for the public hearing and that the Committee would then vote final budget on March 28th

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms Owayda it was:

Voted to hold the public hearing on the FY2007 school budget on March 14th 2006 at 8:00 pm.

Unanimous vote

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REPORT

· Review of 2005-06 Plan

Assistant Superintendent Kevin Hutchinson reported on Professional Development Plans for the 2005-2006. Hutch provided back up materials on school professional development plans, K-5 math mentoring program outline, Special Education staff and ELL professional development schedule, approved student groups, cross-town sharing of best practices and DRA training.

Mr. Hutchinson explained that professional development has been significantly restructured this year; the emphasis is on collaboration, common planning time, and multi school, grade and specialty sharing. Most of the staff has been surveyed on the professional day in the fall; results of the Community of Caring for high school staff showed that staff was not satisfied with the program. Middle school and elementary staff reported positive outcomes.

· Q & A with faculty who participated in professional development program

Liz Brown, Nicole Ferlota and Helen McGah highlighted their experience in the math-mentoring program.

GOAL REVIEW – SUPT. MERIT ADJUSTMENT

Chair, Jeff Thielman explained that the school committee would review only two of the elements of the professional development goal. A maximum of three points may be awarded; 2 for producing the plan and 1 for implementation.

· Review & vote on progress of Goal 3, Measure 1: Produce detailed professional development plan that supports 2005-06 curriculum goals.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Sheffler it was voted

To award Supt. Levenson two points on Goal 3, Measure 1, Produced a detailed professional development plan that supports 2005-2006 curriculum goals. Unanimous vote. 7-0

· Review& vote on progress of Goal 3, Measure 3: Report on implementation of 2005-06 professional development plan

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Sheffler it was

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 1 point on Goal 3, Measure 3, Report on implementation of 2005-2006 professional development plan. Unanimous vote 7-0

· Report of February 13th Supt. Merit Pay Subcommittee meeting – the subcommittee reviewed draft surveys of Special Education Staff, Special Education PAC and Special Education parents., the surveys are expected to be completed in February. Supt. Levenson will work with the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Subcommittee to draft faculty surveys pursuant to pertinent goals and measures.

· The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22nd at 4:30 pm.

ELL QUARTERLY REPORT

Jill McCarthy –ELL Program Director gave a report on the progress and the initiatives made to date on EEL Program and the

requirements of the DOE. Jill stated a large amount of time has been spent on laying the groundwork to ensure that the program functions according to law and is happy with the advancement made to date.

SPED QUARTERLY REPORT

Special Education Director Barbara Cataldo gave an update of the progress made to date on the DOE's Corrective Action Plan. Ms. Cataldo reviewed the many areas of success and also areas that continue to need work.

Ms. Cataldo explained that not every issue can be addressed first and that some of the areas needing to be worked on are procedural (paper work flow, translation of some internal documents, procedural manual for team chairs, and standardization of the pre-referral program. These **elements** are planned for the balance of the year.

Students needs continue to be a top priority. Approximately 50% of the CAP is completed, all but three of the prior 25 plus DOE complaints have been resolved. Only one new complaint since September is open, and is expected to be resolved before March 1st. Documentation is being collected to ensure that all students are being provided with testing. Independent auditors are reporting monthly on key performance data, consistent training around issues involving IEP development conducted and continues, additional temporary staffing added has allowed for quick return of phone calls and emails.

It is still early in the change process and much work remains to be completed. The staff continues to do an outstanding job; they put students first and accomplish much.

BREAK

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

• Annual report on home school students (per policy LBC)

Asst. Supt. Kevin Hutchinson presented and the Committee received the report on home-schooled students per policy LBC.

Currently there are 32 families, 51 total students, 28 elementary, 10 middle school and 13 high school students being home schooled.

• Redistricting Cost Analysis Update

Asst. Supt. Kevin Hutchinson reviewed the updated materials relevant to redistricting:

- The Redistricting investigations report-includes rationale, management, time, and cost.
- Feasibility report from M.A.S.S. – survey results of district, cost of the study and pertinent comments
- Building use analysis – consisting of the number of classrooms, capacity per room, current enrollment, 2006-2007 requested rooms, projected enrollment and specialties.
- Floor plans of Bishop, Brackett, Hardy, Peirce
- Current enrollment report- as of February 1, 2006; 2,312 elementary students.
- Open enrollment report for 2005-2006 – a total of 73 students
- NESDEC population projections – displaying the past, present, and projected enrollments in the system.

• Town Meeting Warrant Approval

Supt. Levenson reviewed the warrant article and requested the Committees' approval

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Schlichtman it was

Voted to see if the Town will vote to do all things necessary and appropriate including, if necessary, the filing of a Home-Rule petition in order to establish a special account into which can be deposited funds from the school operating budget to defray unanticipated special education expenses, or take any action related thereto. Unanimous vote 7-0.

• CFO Search Process

Supt. Levenson reported that resumes have been received and a search committee has been formed. He requested that a member of the school committee serve on the search committee. Mr. Thielman noted that Suzanne Owayda indicated interest in serving on the search committee.

On a motion by Ms. Lovelace seconded by Mr. Garballey it was

Voted to appoint Suzanne Owayda as the school representative on the CFO search committee. Unanimous vote 7-0.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

• Review draft of 2006-07 Calendar

The Superintendent presented a draft calendar for 2006-2007 school year to the committee for their review. Mr. Levenson noted the change of high school graduation in June from Sunday to Saturday.

Mr. Thrope stated that a Saturday graduation date would exclude a certain group of students who would miss their own graduation and stated that he would not support the date change. He suggested that with lights on the field other options could be explored (i.e. possibly a week night). Mr. Garballey encouraged more discussion with the staff and members of the staff who would be chaperoning the all night party.

Supt. Levenson will have AHS principal Charles Skidmore address the issue at a future school committee meeting.

- Vote to authorize 2 one-hour early releases during 2005-06

Supt. Levenson requested two early release days for professional development for staff; March 21 and May 9, 2006, the Superintendent did note that after school programs would be able to facilitate the early release.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to approve March 21st and May 9th as early release days in the 2005-2006 school calendar as presented by Supt Levenson. Unanimous vote.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES REPORT

Mr. Thrope reviewed the following policies for a first reading:

- 1st Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-1 (Updating timeline and process for preparation of school improvement plans)
- 1st Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-2 (Updating timeline and process for submission and approval of school improvement plans)
- 1st Reading of amendments to BDFA-E-3 (Updating timeline and process of District-wide goal setting per the new Superintendent's contract)
- 1st Reading of amendments to JCA (open enrollment not permitted if kindergarten class exceeds 19 in June; not permitted if 21 or more students enrolled in grades 1-5 in June). referred back to subcommittee for further revision..
- 1st Reading of amendment to JIB (adding agenda item at School Committee meetings to permit input from Student Advisory Committee)
- 1st Reading of amendment to JIC (adding cross reference)
- 1st Reading of amendment to JK (adding cross reference)
- 1st reading of amendment to JICC/EEAEC (add "expectation of appropriate behavior")
- 1st reading of amendment to JJ (correction of spelling error)

- Draft Religious Observance Policy Statement

Mr. Thrope reviewed the religious holidays working draft that included: General Provisions Relating to Religious Observances and Provisions Relating to Specified Religious Observances. There will be no tests, quizzes or other such examinations scheduled and no projects and other assignments due. Where appropriate to the holiday observance, this shall apply to the following day as well. For staff, there shall be no key professional meetings scheduled.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Mr. Schlichtman it was
Voted that the policy and procedure subcommittee codify the draft of the religious Observance Policy Statement for the correct placement in the manual and to bring it back as a policy to the full committee for a first reading. 6-0-1 Abstention by Ms. Sheffler

The Chair stated that unfinished items would be considered at the next meeting

- **COMMUNITY RELATIONS REPORT**
- **STUDENT TRAVEL SAFETY TASK FORCE UPDATE**
- **CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**
- **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

On a motion by Ms. Owayda seconded by Ms. Sheffler it was
Voted to adjourn @ 11:35 pm. Unanimous vote
Submitted by
Karen Tassone
Committee Secretary