



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 05/23/2006

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2006**

Present: Sue Sheffler, Chair
Susan Lovelace, Vice Chair
Paul Schlichtman, Secretary
Sean Garballey
Suzanne Owayda
Jeff Thielman
Martin Thrope

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

Call to order: 7:35 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

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 requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.
*Approval of Warrant #06153 in the amount of \$582,792.64

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Owayda it was Voted to approve the consent agenda as presented

SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTE/ MAINTENANCE CERTIFICATES OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Town Treasurer Stephen Gilligan requested that the School Committee vote to accept the maintenance certificates of completion for the five elementary schools. The reason for doing so is to submit documentation to the state auditors and the MSBA in order to start the process of receiving our reimbursement monies. The 1st project that we are going to submit is the Dallin School Mr. Gilligan explained that we are in an accelerated and expedited mode because the MSBA has informed the town that funding is in jeopardy since new rules have been put into place.

If we do not submit the Dallin School project for reimbursement by June 16th we will have to roll over the bond anticipation notes, if that is done it will cost the Town \$350,000. and he would like to avoid doing that. Mr. Gilligan stated that he has also appeared before the Board of Selectmen requesting acceptance of the school projects as completed and requested that the School Committee vote to approve that the Superintendent and CFO sign the maintenance certification forms. That will enable the Town to submit to the completed projects to the MSBA via the state auditors.

Ms. Sheffler inquired if there was any reason not to vote for the acceptance and Mr. Gilligan stated that there is no reason not to accept the certificates; he did note however that there was an HVAC financial issue at the Hardy School but that it has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Town. When questioned how the vote would have an effect on the Dallin punch list, Mr. Gilligan noted that we are capped at reimbursement at \$11.5 million dollars, it is our expectation that the cap will be met and that we will receive all the monies due to the Town. So the outstanding items will not be an issue. The items on the punch list will not be finished before submission for reimbursement, however, for MSBA reimbursement purposes the project will be completed.

Ms. Owayda asked if we have been receiving money from Peirce, Brackett, Hardy and Bishop Schools and if not why are we so behind? Mr. Gilligan reported that the Town has only received a little more than \$1million dollars but that the documentation process has been in the hands of the school department and he cannot answer why the 1st three elementary schools were delayed.

Supt. Levenson explained that the State has substantially revamped school reimbursement and have moved it from the DOE to the DOR. Under the old method the project was really never done until you finished negotiating, and any costs/add-ons (regardless of when it was done) related to the initial construction could be lobbied for reimbursement. The town managed the projects very well and tried to keep the projects open as long as possible so that as many add-ons could be reimbursed. Under the new system with the DOR there is no discussion of add-ons.

On a motion by Mr. Thrope seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted that the Arlington School Committee accept the Arlington School Renovation Projects for the:

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| Brackett | Replacement Project #C19983603 |
| Hardy | Project #C19903605 |
| Bishop | Project #C199983604 |
| Peirce | Replacement Project #W2004116 |
| Dallin | Replacement Project #W2004117 |

Schools, and direct the Superintendent of Schools and the School Department's Chief Financial Officer to sign the MSBA Maintenance Certification forms for the above named projects, for submitting to the MSBA by the Town of Arlington, for receiving the reimbursement monies for these projects.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Student/teacher achievement

Ms. Sheffler reported that she attended the Ostergren awards where student scholar athletes' chosen from the senior class were Annie Fallon and Pete Samcko.

Science Grant- Dr. Sumner has written a grant that allows Hewlett Packard to give us \$35,000. in science equipment that supports integrated science learning.

Kate Cremens-Basbas received the Everyday Hero Award.

Mary Fischer Director of Reading was elected president of the Massachusetts Reading Association.

SC student representative

Student representative EJ Harris stated that it was an honor and privilege to serve the students of Arlington and thanked the Committee for the opportunity.

Update from Budget and Revenue Task Force

Ms. Sheffler reported that at the Budget & Revenue Task Force meeting on June 12th, Senator Havern was present and explained that State Revenues are increasing at a greater rate than expected and that there is a push to share the revenues with cities and towns in the form of a change in the Chapter 70 formula. Nothing would change for fiscal year 2006-2007 but it would provide some security in the 2008-2009 budgets. Ms. Sheffler encouraged everyone to participate in a letter writing campaign to their representatives and to the representatives on the conference committee. STAND for Children is also organizing to lobby the conference committee.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

APS principals (Martha Batten, Alan Brown, Steve Carne, Jerry Carmody, Mike McCabe, Bob Penta, Wallis Raemer) gave a presentation on the restructuring of the elementary school day schedule. The new schedule allows of for:

90 minutes of literacy learning and 60 minutes of math on most days with no pullouts.

The change also allows for ACE, physical education, music, and library classes with no changes.

Instrumental music will continue during the day but not during Math or ELA.

The 3rd grade swim program will be offered after school and the 5th grade chorus is tentatively scheduled within the 5th grade music lesson.

The intent is to have students not be pulled out during the 90/60 time blocks for special education, instrumental, ACE etc. The Committee was in favor of the proposed schedule change and noted and appreciated that the specialists' schedules have been changed and rearranged; the Superintendent noted that specialists would be at no more that two schools.

ESSENTIAL STANDARDS & COMMON ASSESSMENTS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Assistant Superintendent Kevin Hutchinson presented an overview of presentations on Essential Standards and Professional Development.

K-9 Essential Standards and Common Assessments included a summary of the committee's work including application of traits to forms (genres) of writing, use of common rubrics, establishing common assessments. Elementary teacher Sue Croy presented examples of professional development connections at the elementary study group and OMS teacher Maggie Davis and English Chair Elise Frangos presented the work from the May 9th early release day.

K-8 Math Essential Standards and Common Assessments. Alan Brown provided a summary of the committee's work that includes the review of pacing guides, benchmarks, common assessments, and scoring guides, revision of common assessments and identifying additional needs. Hardy second grade teacher Richard Sullivan presented the example of impact with the 2nd grade end-of-year common assessment.

Ms. Sheffler asked to move to agenda item 9 for the goal review

GOAL REVIEW – SUPT. MERIT ADJUSTMENT

Ms. Sheffler noted that there is not an ELL presentation but that Jill McCarthy is present to answer questions from the committee on the 80-page document that was submitted to the Committee.

Goal 1 – Measure 6 (Implement an intensive ELL program)

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 6 points on Goal 1 measure 6 (implement an intensive ELL program)
Mr. Thrope abstaining until he discusses privately with Supt. Levenson. (independent of the effort) 6-0-1

The Committee agreed that the document submitted on the ELL program should be the instructional model of what the committee receives to determine the awarding of points because it includes an action plan, meeting agendas, the number of employees, and samples of work produced.

Nate agreed that it is a good standard and will provide the same detail for the essential standards and professional development for the next meeting if the committee wants to hold off two weeks.

Proposed Summer Meeting

Ms. Sheffler explained that a request has been made to schedule the July meeting for Wednesday the 26th instead of the tentative date of Tuesday, July 25th.

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

Voted that the Arlington School Committee hold a summer meeting on Wednesday July 25, 2006 at 7:30 pm

Professional Development

Assistant Superintendent Kevin Hutchinson, along with teachers Marie Janiak, Pat Mahoney, Evelyn DeRosa and Richard Sullivan gave a presentation on professional development including:

.. A summary of the professional development committee that resulted in 6 components that builds curriculum clarity and focuses on instructional strategies while responding to the need of students. Professional development acknowledges the assumption that improving teacher practice improves student achievement.

.. Examples of Professional Development for 2005-2006

.. Work from the Professional Development Committee

.. A sample of the professional development survey

.. Application for 2006-2007 professional development, (professional development calendar, summer organization and higher order thinking, study group examples).

.. Examples of Tuesday calendars

Hutch explained that leadership meetings over the summer will determine how all of the professional development days will be used next year.

Nate clarified that the five district goals for this year drive this year's professional development; the five goals set for next year will drive next years' professional development. The standards and many goals will carry over; the data that we are generating both internally and externally that drive professional development schedule.

Mr. Thrope noted that the sharing of skills, best practices in a collegial and collective way is very important- but questioned that if there is a need for remediation of a specific teacher how is that need identified and what are the professional development options for providing that remediation? Nate stated that under the current set up it is almost entirely up to the individual teacher and/or principal, primarily through formal negotiation and discussion and that the current system of evaluation doesn't really generate anything more than that. The Superintendent explained that our current process is not a plan that brings about professional growth and that he along with the AEA will look at the evaluation process next year after the completion of the contract. The goal is to change from a scoring system of good or bad to one that is really coaching and helping. If we can make that change we will help teachers grow professionally with their support and with them invested in that plan.

Ms. Sheffler questioned if there are any further votes to be taken on the goals

Mr. Thielman explained that we have not yet received the 2006-2007 complete plan and that we can voted on Goal 3 #3 at the meeting of June 13th. The documents will mirror the ELL model

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Mr. Garballey it was
Voted to move the 11:00 rule until 11:20. Unanimous vote

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Job Descriptions

Supt. Levenson presented the final 5 revised job descriptions relative to the leadership restructuring to the Committee for approval. They reflect a lot of good thought and discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Schlichtman seconded by Mr. Thielman it was
Voted to approve the K-12 Director of Health, Wellness & Student Support Services job description.
5-1 (Mr. Thrope with a no vote)

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Owayda it was unanimously
Voted to approve the Reading Coordinator K-5 job description.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Owayda it was unanimously
Voted to approve the Physical Education, Health, & FACS-Lead Teacher 6-12 as amended (number one under qualifications to read: Certified teacher in one of the three relevant disciplines).

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Mr. Schlichtman it was unanimously

Voted to approve the Director of English/Language Arts K-12 job description.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Owayda it was

Voted to approve the Social Studies Lead Teacher 6-12 job description. 4-2 Mr. Garballey and Mr. Thrope with no votes. Mr. Garballey noted that he is opposed to not having a social studies chair position at the high school and cannot support the motion

In response to Mr. Thrope's question on who evaluates Social studies teaches Supt. Levenson stated that principals would conduct formal evaluations. However the leadership structure is built on the concept of moving towards a coaching model.

Mr. Garballey requested that the Superintendent ensure that staff receives the postings in a timely manner and that deadlines for applying for the positions are clear.

.. **Dallin Playground usage update**

The Superintendent stated that the issue at the Dallin School is that the playground is locked. The play area in the front of the school was designed with a gate and lock and from the day that the school opened the gate has been locked at the end of the day. Mr. Levenson does not think that the gate should be locked but wanted to be sure there were no past reasons for doing so. The Superintendent suggested that community relations investigate the issue. Mr. Schlichtman pointed out that current signs in the schoolyards in Town note that playgrounds close at 9:00 pm and that the policy manual states that the schoolyard is open until 9:00 pm. He suggested that it is appropriate for us to stop locking the play area and have a sign made that states that the facility closes at 9:00 pm. and that children under age 8 must have adult supervision. Susan Mazzarella will follow up on the Dallin play area and also the AHS track.

.. **Nursing Task Force**

Supt. Levenson reported that CFO Sue Mazzarella will be soliciting membership this week and next on the nurse fact finding committee. Nate acknowledged that it is a late start and that data is being collected.

.. **Cyber Conduct**

Supt. Levenson reported that there has been interchange of comments, photos etc. by students on the Internet via Myspace.com where cyber bullying and harassment takes place. Nate stated that we must note what is appropriate behavior and what is school jurisdiction around school related comments.. The DA, police and most school systems are not sure what is the school's jurisdiction and he requested that the policy & procedure subcommittee work with our attorney, the principals and the middle and high school student and teacher representatives to craft both policy and any related student handbook changes that are needed.

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

Voted that the policy & procedures subcommittee craft a policy and any related student handbook changes that are needed. 6-0
The subcommittee will work with school counsel, AHS & OMS principals, a teacher rep and a student representative with a target date of September.

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

Voted to move the 11:00 rule until 11:30 pm. 6-0

The Committee agreed to postpone discussion of the remaining items.

.. **Goal 2 – Measure 1 (Articulate essential standards K-9/math & writing)**

.. **Goal 2 – Measure 2 (Articulate common assessments/math & writing K-9)**

.. **Goal 3 – Measure 3 (Professional Development 2005/06)**

SECRETARY'S REPORT

.. **Correspondence** – Reviewed by Mr. Schlichtman

.. **Approval of minutes**

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

Voted to approve the organizational meeting minutes of April 11, 2006 (abstention by Mr. Garballey) 5-0-1

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

Voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 11 2006 5-0-1-(abstention by Mr. Garballey)

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

Voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of April 25 2006 5-0-1

Ms. Owayda noted that she had submitted her resignation from the school committee effective June 9th and tonight was her last meeting. She will be present at the meeting of June 13th and members will have the opportunity to speak from 8:30 – 9:00

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

Voted that the school committee vote on the appointment of the school committee vacancy at the regular meeting of June 13th. 6-0

NEW BUSINESS

.. **Staff Recognition/May 24th**

Ms. Sheffler noted that staff recognition would be held on Wednesday, May 24th at 3:00 pm at the Ottoson Middle School. Mr. Garballey will be in attendance in the afternoon; it has come to his attention that there is a staff meeting at the high school and because we are recognizing high school staff he hopes that they have the opportunity to attend the Ottoson gathering ,Mr.

Garballey wanted to bring it to the attention of the Superintendent.

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

Voted to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation, a personnel matter, negotiations, and the filing of a criminal complaint with no further business to be conducted upon return to open session except to adjourn. Mr. Levenson stated that personnel matter could not be discussed in executive session without notification and other steps. Roll Call: 5-1 Mr. Schlichtman with a no vote

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

Voted to adjourn at 11:50 pm.

Submitted by

Karen Tassone

Committee Secretary