



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Minutes 6-27-2006

The Arlington School Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 27, 2006
7:30 PM

Present: Sue Sheffler, Chair
Paul Schlichtman, Secretary
Katharine Fennelly
Sean Garballey
Jeff Thielman
Martin Thrope

Supt. Nate Levenson
CFO: Sue Mazzarella
Sp. Ed. Director Barbara Cataldo
Student Rep: Sean Conroy

Absent: Susan Lovelace
Asst. Supt. Kevin Hutchinson

Ms Sheffler called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm welcoming member Kathy Fennelly who has replaced the seat vacated by Suzanne Owayda and student representative Sean Conroy.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Susan Stewart – spoke in support of the proposed wellness policy

Park Wilde-supports the wellness policy and requests that the committee accept it.

Kate Cremens Basbas- thanked everyone for the opportunities and experiences while service in the Arlington Public Schools

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 # 06169 in the amount of \$1,638,743.83

*2nd reading of Policy BDEA (change in number of subcommittees).

*2nd reading of Policy DI (language change).

*2nd reading of Policy GCD-E (Professional Staff & Observance of Major Religious Holidays).pulled from consent agenda

*2nd reading of Policy JH-E-1 (Student absences for Observance of Major Religious Holidays).pulled from consent agenda

*Approval of the regular meeting minutes of May 9 (pulled) & 23, 2006

*Approval of Field Trips

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

Voted to approve the remaining items on the consent agenda as presented. (with policies GCD-e & JH-E-1 and the May 9th meeting minutes pulled as noted) 6-0.

SUPERINTENDENT'S DIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE CALENDAR REPORT

Miriam Stein representing the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee reported on the results of the religious holidays and observances for inclusion in the school calendar. The committee focused on Islamic, Jewish and Eastern Orthodox Christian observances; other Christian holidays are already on the school calendar. Due to time constraints the report does not include Hindu, Buddhist, Bahai and other faiths but will be added at a later date.

On a motion by Mr. Garballey seconded by Mr. Thrope

Move that the School Committee accept this report from the SDA Mr. Garballey amended the motion to read and **will work with the Superintendent at future diversity advisory meetings to update or increase the list when necessary.** Approved 5-1 Mr.

Schlichtman with a no vote.

The Committee discussed the calendar at length, whether to move ahead with what has been presented and to update as we go along or to hold on the religious observances until the complete list is ready.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Mr. Thrope:

Voted to amend the motion to state that the Arlington School Committee understands that the list is not complete and that we are committed to add religious observances as soon as they are identified; the calendar should note no test days on Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur. Roll Call: 4-2 Mr. Schlichtman and Ms. Sheffler with no votes.

Mr. Schlichtman stated that we should not be publishing a calendar without all information on minority observances, that it is incomplete and that he is not ready to vote on the report

Ms. Sheffler suggested that the criteria used for this calendar relate to holidays that are relevant to Arlington students and teachers, and to have the list ready for the July 26th meeting.

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

Voted to direct Mr. Schlichtman and Ms. Sheffler to research the religious observances with a series of recommendations, (consult religious leaders) and to present the complete list at the July 27th School Committee meeting. 6-0.

Policy & Procedures

.. 1st reading JLCE, Nutrition & Wellness Policy.

Mr. Garballey reported that the policy and procedures charged a subcommittee specifically to address the wellness and nutrition policy to respond to all of the involved parties concerns. That subcommittee met twice and worked on the revisions in the proposed policy. Everyone was agreeable with the end result.

The Policy & Procedures subcommittee voted 3-0 to endorse the policy and to bring before the full committee for approval.

Ms. Fennelly questioned if the entire document is meant to be the policy pointing out that some of it is not really policy but back up materials, she explained that policies are usually brief one page outlines and easy for the public to understand.

Mr. Schlichtman agreed that the entire document should not be the policy and made a motion that we direct the policy & procedures to contact our field director of MASC for the purpose to review the proposed policy and to parcel out the actual policy that would be implemented for our vote and to adopt possibly as a resolution or an exhibit the remainder of the document.

No second.

CHAIR'S REPORT

.. School Committee Retreat

Chair Sue Sheffler reported on the School committee retreat held on June 22nd. The Committee discussed the summary of the superintendent's reviews, goals for 2006-2007 and the timetable for finalizing 2006-2007 goals.

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

Voted to amend superintendent Levenson's contract to read that the 2006-2007 district goals would be due on October 1, 2006.

Mr. Thrope amended the motion with a second by Mr. Garballey that Supt. Levenson presents a substantive draft of goals to the School Committee by August 1, 2006.

.. Superintendent Evaluation

Ms. Sheffler explained that the evaluation consisted of 6 categories. Mr. Levenson scored an average of 4.08 out of 5 on the following:

Completing annual objectives, Committee-Superintendent Relations, Educational professional leadership, Personnel relationship management, Community Relations, Business & Finance Operations.

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

Voted that the School Committee intends to extend the contract of Supt. Nate Levenson and directs the chair of the school committee to appoint a subcommittee to work on the contract language and to bring a report back to the full committee by December 31, 2006. Roll Call: 4-2 Mr. Garballey and Mr. Thrope with a no vote.

.. State Aid Task Force Committee Appointment

Ms. Sheffler explained that as part of the vote from Town Meeting on Article 31 establishing a State Aid Task Force Committee the school committee must appoint a member to serve on the task force.

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

Voted to appoint committee member Jeff Thielman as the school committee designee to serve on the State Aid Task Force Committee. 6-0

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

.. Mr. Levenson reported that Assistant Superintendent Kevin Hutchinson was absent due to illness.

.. Brackett principal, Martha Batten has accepted a new position in Lexington Public Schools. The Superintendent informed that Committee that he will begin immediately on a principal search but noted that there is no guarantee that we will have a candidate by September; if not an interim principal will be named until a suitable candidate is hired.

.. Peirce Field. Supt. Levenson explained that use of the Peirce field by various users must be addressed, Nate stated that we need an inclusive process and must involve various sports user groups; he requested that the School Committee refer it to the

Community Relations subcommittee.

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

Voted that the Community Relations subcommittee work with the Superintendent and the community on the usage of Peirce Field and to report back to the full committee by December 1, 2006.

.. Staffing – Mr. Thrope requested that the Superintendent report to the School Committee by the second school committee meeting in September on staff by building, staff retentions, retirements, teachers moving to other systems and teachers leaving education altogether. Moved, seconded and voted unanimously

.. Traffic Safety Report - Supt. Levenson reported that the Safe Student Traveler Task Force has identified a concept that would improve student safety without added cost. The pilot program initiated at the Hardy School and it will expand with the addition of two more schools next year.

GOAL REVIEW – SUPT. MERIT ADJUSTMENT

Mr. Thielman reviewed the goals that needed to be voted on and made the following recommendations:

.. Goal 1, item 4 -Produce reports on meeting timelines and compliance with the Corrective Action Plan.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 1 point on Goal 1, item 4. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 1, item 5, -Provide professional development for all involved staff in writing legal IEP's and measurable goals.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Fennelly it was:

Voted to award 3 points to Supt. Levenson on Goal 1, item 5. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 2, item3, - Conduct at least two common assessments per grade K-9 in math and writing.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Fennelly it was:

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 3 points on Goal 2, item 3. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 2, item 4, -Collate, distribute and discuss data from two common assessments per grade K-9 in math and writing.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 3 points on Goal 2, item 4. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 3, item 4, -Conduct survey re relevance of professional development for staff participating in K-8 math and ELA professional development.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman seconded by Ms. Fennelly it was:

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 2 points on Goal 3, item 4. 5-1-0. abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 3, item 5, -Conduct survey to confirm sharing and team work has increased for staff participating in the K-9 math and English language arts professional development.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 4 points on Goal 3 item 5. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 3, item 6 -Provide expanded mentoring support in the area of K-5 math.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 5 points on Goal 3 item 6. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope.

.. Goal 4, item 3, -Create forums for staff and administrators to discuss enduring skills and habits of mind.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 4 points on Goal 4, item 3. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope

.. Goal 5 item 5, Recommend line item authority guidelines for school committee control as required by Massachusetts General Laws.

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

Voted to award Supt. Levenson 1 point on Goal 5, item 5. 5-1-0 abstention by Mr. Thrope.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

.. **Policy & Procedures** Mr. Garballey presented the following policies for a first reading:

.. 1st reading DBJ Budget Transfer Authority

.. 1st reading IHEA – English as a Second language

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

Voted to suspend the rules to adopt the changes in policy DBJ, Budget Transfer Authority. 6-0.

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

Voted to approve the proposed changes in policy DBJ, Budget Transfer Authority. 6-0.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

.. **Correspondence** –reviewed by Mr. Schlichtman

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

Voted to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 9, 2006 as amended (by changing Mr. Thrope's no vote to an abstention on

the vote for the supt. on goal 1, measure 2). 5-0-1 Ms. Fennelly abstains

NEW BUSINESS

Supt. Levenson reported that the Human Rights Commission was investigating an incident that took place just prior at the Arlington High School Graduation.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Voted to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations with no further business to be conducted upon return to open session except to adjourn. Roll Call: 6-0

Executive session 10:30 – 10:50 pm.

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

Voted to adjourn @ 10:50 pm. Unanimous vote.

*Submitted by
Karen Tassone
Committee Secretary*