

NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

September 21, 2006

School Committee in Attendance: Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Tricia Kelly, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Laura O'Neil

Absent: Cathy Giunta

Administration in Attendance: Michael Wood, Superintendent of Schools, George King, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Patricia Linenkemper, Director of Special Education, Tracey Conte, Assistant Director of Special Education

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Don Adams called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. in the Office of the Superintendent.

Mr. Adams addressed the committee with regards to their recent self evaluation, which was discussed at the September 7, 2006 School Committee meeting. Mr. Adams told the committee that he would like to see them work together on issues they all agree to so that they are spending their time most effectively. He instructed members to forward items to him that they would like on the agenda. He also added that if there is an issue they would like the superintendent to look into, then they would need to vote as a committee that this should be done, rather than just ask the superintendent. He said this would ensure that the committee was in agreement of how they were focusing and spending their time. The Chair indicated that changes to the agenda would only be made by a decision by the entire committee.

APPROVAL OF THE September 7, 2006 MINUTES**MOTION**

Ellen Sturgis made a motion to approve the minutes of September 7, 2006 as amended. Seconded by Brian Burke. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, David Horne, Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED (5-0) UNANIMOUS**

APPROVAL OF THE WARRANTS OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2006

<u>WARRANT NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
2715	9/22/06	VENDOR	\$ 357,758.69
2716	9/22/06	BENEFIT	\$ 584,732.52
2717	9/22/06	PAYROLL	\$ 983,170.83
2718	9/22/06	VENDOR	\$ 67,500.00

MOTION

Brian Burke made a motion to approve the warrants as detailed in the memo dated 9/22/06 and noted above. Seconded by Mel Govindan. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, David Horne, Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED (5-0) UNANIMOUS**

CORRESPONDENCE

- NRHS Guidance Department Annual Report- Mr. Wood told the committee he could have the high school guidance team come to a future meeting to discuss the report. Committee member Ellen Sturgis told Mr. Wood and the committee she would like the guidance team to do that and Mr. Wood agreed to have them come to a future meeting.
- Kang Associates Survey of District space needs
- MASC notice of annual meeting
- MASC Leadership Academy information

- Letter from committee member Ellen Sturgis – follow up to the packet received from Alan Levin regarding the future of the Science/Engineering program at the high school

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (This report is available on the District website at www.nrsd.net)

US Innovative Teacher's Forum

Mr. Wood told the committee that two District teachers, Mary Marotta, Nashoba Regional High School's Integration Specialist and Leslie Carroll, Mary Rowlandson Elementary School's Instructional Technology Specialist, will be honored by Microsoft for their innovative talents. He told the committee that an independent panel of nationally recognized education leaders has selected 28 learning teams, from 17 different states, to participate in this year's forum on the Microsoft corporate campus in Redmond, Washington, September 21-22, 2006. Mr. Wood said that Ms. Marotta and Ms. Carroll were selected to attend this event.

Website

Mr. Wood spoke about the redesign of the District website. He told the committee that Kathy McKinstry and Linda DeStasi have been instrumental in making changes which will make it easier for parents to find the information they need. He added that links to information like bus routes and the school year calendar have been added to the home page so that information can be accessed quickly. He also said there is now an ***Item of the Week*** section which will host information on other topics like *Seat Belt Safety* and health advisories, which are currently posted to this section.

Nashoba Makes AYP

Mr. Wood reported that Nashoba Regional School District made adequately yearly progress (AYP) as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Education. He told the committee the determination is based upon a formula including MCAS scores, percent improved, and attendance. Mr. Wood said that the formula looks at schools in the district in the aggregate (all together) and by sub group. He said that there are eight subgroups. He told the committee that based on the District's recent report card, all of the schools made adequately yearly progress, but that the District did not make it for 2006 in special education for English Language Arts for grades three through five and for mathematics in grades six through eight. Mr. Wood added that because AYP is calculated over more than one year it is possible to have scores dip one year but not the next and still make adequately yearly progress.

Bolton Census

Mr. Wood reported to the committee that the Town of Bolton census numbers did not meet the 16% variance required to change the Bolton School Committee representation for the Town of Bolton to three people rather than two. The committee discussed this issue. Ms. Kelly commented that they were told last year the Town of Bolton was under the 10% range. She told the committee that she and committee member Cathy Giunta had asked for the 2006 Bolton census information so that the committee could review this information and look at the possibility of adding a third person to the School Committee for the Town of Bolton. She said Bolton currently has the highest percentage at about 12%. Mr. King explained that according to the Regional Agreement the population to committee representation should be between 10-16% and that as long as Bolton is in this range then they are not entitled to a third representative. He added that if Bolton were to add an additional member they would then be over the required range of representation. He added that the Regional Agreement states this should be looked at every 5 years. Ms. Kelly asked about the formula used to calculate the original percentages of representation and if it was done the same way it is being done currently. Mr. Adams responded that it had to be done the same way because the State Legislature was required to vote on it. Mr. King said he would get the history of it and report back to the committee. Ms. Kelly asked Mr. Wood when this could be looked at again. Mr. Wood responded that if this is looked at now, then that it would be looked at again in 2011. Committee member Brian Burke said the information the committee received verbally regarding the Town of Bolton census should be provided to the committee in a written report. He added that this should be done so that Ms. Kelly and Ms. Giunta may review the information with Mr. King.

MOTION

Motion moved by Brian Burke to ask Mr. Wood and Mr. King to give the committee a written report of the make-up of the School Committee based on the population of the Regional Agreement. Seconded by Mel

Govindan. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Mel Govindan, Tricia Kelly, Ellen Sturgis **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

Mr. Govindan commented that members of the committee should all have a copy of the agreement and review it so that they may bring their questions to the committee.

H. S. Food Services - Snack Shack Raises Prices

Mr. Wood reported to the committee on the increase of some prices at the high school snack shack. He told committee members and those in attendance that the Nashoba Regional School District is a member of the USDA Food Nutrition Program for all of the District schools and that the school committee has set the rates for student lunches and student milk that qualify for the type A lunch (typical hot lunch). He added that the District's food services program is run as an enterprise fund, which he said means that it runs outside of the District's operating budget and is responsible for meeting its revenue obligations on an annual basis. Mr. Wood told the committee the District does pay for health insurance and capital costs and repairs as well as building overhead (heat, electricity, etc.) Additional, he told the committee revenue comes from state/federal subsidy, student payments and there are snacks sold at the middle and high school level. He also told the committee the high school runs the snack shack and this has historically been run as a place where students could go during study halls and lunch to buy additional food items. He reported that last year it became apparent that with the increased costs of food, supplies, and small equipment items the department was not going to meet its obligations. Mr. Wood added that in looking where to find more revenue the District looked at increasing sales and where possible, looking at the price of snacks, especially ones that were below market. Mr. Wood said that sales have slowed down at the snack shack, but not significantly enough to suggest that the price increases have had an impact on customer satisfaction. He told the committee there has been a migration to the hot lunch program, and while that was not the intent, it appears to have had that impact. He said one place where the price increases may have had a greater impact than originally intended is on our students who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Mr. Wood told committee members that in an effort to help this situation, the District is looking at combining some of the more popular items (bagel and cream cheese and nachos and cheese) with fruit and milk to qualify under a type A lunch. He said they are also looking to offer this earlier so that students who might need this at 10:30 am will be able to access it.

District's Annual Audit

Mr. Wood reported to the committee the District is in the process of completing its FY 06 Audit. He said the auditing firm of Powers and Sullivan is working with us to complete this past year's review. Mr. Wood told the committee the firm was in during the end of the year to complete field testing for grants and Federal programs and will be returning the week of October 9th to finish up with the operating budget. He added that Mr. King will be working with the Audit Advisory Committee to oversee the finished audit and that the actual report will be viewed by the full school committee in November. Mr. Wood told the committee the first meeting of the Audit Advisory Committee is on October 5th at 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Superintendent in the Emerson Building.

New Recycling Program

Mr. Wood reported on the new recycling program now instituted throughout the District. He said that Mr. Bill Spratt, Director of Facilities, has taken the lead with this effort to promote environmental awareness and funds for our schools. He urged community members to make use of the recycling bins as well, which he said are available at each school.

NASHOBA Improves Test Scores on SAT

Mr. Wood reported that Nashoba Regional High School students taking the newly revised SAT's scored better than students taking them in 2005. He said the district's reading scores improved 4.47 % to an average of 559 (up from 534). Mr. Wood reported that on the math portion, students in 2006 scored 562 points up from 552 or 1.81%. He told the committee the average score nationally for math was 518, while for reading the average score was 503. He added that new for 2006 was a writing section and that the NRSD students

scored an average of 552. Mr. Wood said that nationally the score was 497 and that Nashoba was the top scorer for writing in a comparison of the Northern Worcester County school systems.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Ex-Officio Report by Ms. O'Neil

Ms. O'Neil reported that Open house was held on Tuesday. She also told the committee about the 2nd annual backpack drive that is being held through the month of September. She said that new backpacks filled with school supplies for grades K-2 are being collected to donate to Project Joy and that this is a homeroom competition, with the homeroom that brings in the most items winning a breakfast with Mr. Smith.

Ms. O'Neil also reported that representatives from a variety of colleges have begun visits with prospective Nashoba students. She told the committee these sessions give interested students a chance to learn more about the colleges and ask any questions they may have.

Ms. O'Neil told the committee that each grade and various clubs will be working at the Bolton Fair this weekend to raise money.

In Sports: Ms. O'Neil reported:

- On Friday, September 8, 2006, Nashoba's football team celebrated a 14-6 victory over Clinton. There record is now 1-1.
- Girls' soccer and boys' and girls' cross country teams all have impressive records to begin the season. Girl' soccer is 4-0, boys' cross country is 3-0, and girls' cross country is 2-0.

Other points of interest: Ms. O'Neil reported the following:

- There have been many complaints about this years increase in snack shack prices. A bagel is now \$2.00, which students feel is ridiculous, especially when you can buy a bagel and cream cheese at Dunkin' Donuts for \$.99. A few other items have gone up in price by \$.25. Students are also complaining that they end up spending more money for a quick snack than they would if they went to a restaurant.
- The foreign language department is still looking for host families for the 20 students from Germany that will be coming for 2.5 weeks on October 15th.

Facilities Subcommittee, by Ms. Kelly

Ms. Kelly reported to the committee that the Facilities Subcommittee received the Bolton lease agreement from the Town of Bolton with three areas of changes which they have requested. She said this would be reviewed by the School Committee later in the meeting. She also told the committee that Mr. Wood received a space study done by Kang Associates concerning where the District should relocate the administrative and central services offices. Ms. Kelly reported that the proposed plan consisted of a 20,000 square foot addition to the high school which would not only house the administrative offices needed for the district but would also add additional classrooms and enlarge the cafeteria, which was made smaller with the last renovations done to the high school. Ms. Kelly reported that the estimated cost for the proposed renovation is in the \$5 million range. Committee member Brian Burke asked about a timeline for the project. Mr. Wood responded that this is a preliminary report and the next step would involve getting architectural drawings. Mr. Burke inquired about the towns' role in the bonding process for the proposed project. Mr. Wood said that may not be necessary. Mr. King explained the bonding process. Mr. King told the committee that they can, on their own authority, vote to issue debt by a 2/3 vote. He said the Towns then would receive notification of the debt issuance, and could call a Town Meeting to object to the debt issuance if they so desired. Mr. King said that if they take no action, the vote to issue debt would be valid and the debt could be issued. Mr. King also told the committee there is another section of the law which states that if the School Committee so desired, they could issue the debt under, and that section requires a vote of each Town at an election.

Finance Subcommittee, by Ms. Giunta

Nothing to report.

Personnel Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

Nothing to report.

Policy Subcommittee, by Ms. Kelly

Nothing to report.

SPED PAC

Nothing to report.

Stow Building Task Force (SBTF), by Ms. Sturgis

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS**SPED PAC Presentation:**

SPED PAC Chairperson, Debra Hennessy, addressed the committee and gave a brief outline of the SPED PAC organization and goals for the coming year. She told the committee that SPED PAC meets 4-6 times per year and that the first meeting of this year will be on October 18th. Ms. Hennessy told the committee they will elect new officers at this meeting and discuss topics to be addressed in the coming year. She also told the committee that last year the meetings were held at the Florence Sawyer School in Bolton and not very well attended. This year, she said, they decided to move the meetings back to the Stone Building in Stow, as the group seemed to have better attendance when the meetings were held in Stow. Committee member David Horne asked how many special education students the district currently had. Assistant Special Education Director Tracy Conte responded that there were approximately 420 special education students in the district. Brian Burke recognized Ms. Hennessy for her efforts regarding the organization of SPED PAC. Committee member Tricia Kelly noted that Joanne Daniels was very involved with SPED PAC in previous years and was very involved in its original establishment.

District Improvement Plan:

Mr. Wood presented a draft of the District Improvement Plan and requested a vote to accept the plan. Discussion ensued regarding the plan. Mr. Wood told the committee in looking at what to include in this plan he used their recent self evaluation report. Ms. Kelly commented that she was disappointed in the self evaluation report recently received by the committee and has been researching scales of measurement which she feels would be more accurate. Committee member Ellen Sturgis commented that the items listed on the District Improvement Plan for the School Committee seemed too broad. Monica CampoBasso said that she would like to see the items listed for the school committee divided and given to the subcommittee that would be most involved with each item. Ms. CampoBasso said she would then like to have the subcommittees decide how to measure each item. Committee Chair, Don Adams, said there seemed to be a consensus of conflict and there needs to be more assignment of responsibility. David Horne told members of the committee they need to decide tasks and how to spend their time. He added that he also thought this should go to the subcommittees over the next four weeks and the subcommittees should then come back to the full committee with actionable goals. Committee member Tricia Kelly agreed and said there would need to be a consensus.

MOTION

Motion moved by David Horne that the items listed in the District Improvement Plan for the full committee be stricken from the spreadsheet entitled "District Improvement Plan", and that the subcommittees come back to the full committee with goals that are actionable and measurable. Seconded by Tricia Kelly.

IN FAVOR: Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Mel Govindan, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

MASC Delegate:

The committee voted to appoint a delegate representative who will attend the MASC Conference, November 8, 2006 in Hyannis, MA on behalf of the Nashoba Regional School Committee.

MOTION

Motion moved by Mel Govindan to nominate Ellen Sturgis as the Nashoba Regional School Committee delegate for the MASC Conference, November 8, 2006. Seconded by Monica CampoBasso. **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Mel Govindan, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

Collaborative Appointments:

Mr. Wood told the committee that as is required each year, each charter requires the school committee appoint a member to the Board of Directors for the Collaborative Boards.

MOTION

Motion moved by Monica CampoBasso to nominate Michael Wood to the Board of Directors for the ASSABET, CASE, and FLLAC Collaboratives for the 2006-2007 school year. Seconded by Ellen Sturgis **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Mel Govindan, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

Mabel Hale Fund:

This item was withdrawn and will be addressed at a future meeting.

OLD BUSINESS**Bolton Lease** (taken out of order)

The lease agreement between the Town of Bolton and the Nashoba Regional School District was discussed. Mr. Wood told the committee the Town of Bolton has made three changes to the proposed agreement. He outlined the changes, which included:

1. Section A – adding the text “Addendum known as Addendum A”
2. Section C- adding text “In case of emergency, or in a matter involving public safety, this notification requirement will not apply.”
3. Section I: adding text “except in the case that the Nashoba Regional School District has failed to adequately insure the premises.”

Mr. Wood said he felt all the proposed changes were reasonable. Mr. Adams asked when the Town of Bolton would be voting to accept the agreement. Ms Panny Gerkin, member of the Bolton Select Board was in attendance and answered that the Bolton Selectmen were meeting next week and would vote on it then. Ellen Sturgis commented that the original intent regarding the agreements with each of the towns was consistency so that they would all be the same. She asked if the committee would be changing the other towns’ agreements as well. Mr. Wood responded that the added language does not change the intent of the agreement at all and that changing the other towns’ agreements would not be necessary. Mel Govindan also responded that each town had ample time to review the agreement and come back to the committee with any questions or concerns. Committee member Brian Burke said he had some concerns about the language in section I, and specifically the word “adequate”. Discussion ensued regarding this.

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to accept the changes to the Agreement Between the Town of Bolton and Nashoba Regional School District as reviewed on September 21, 2006, with the added changes to Section I, “**as required in section H**”, made by the Nashoba Regional School Committee. Seconded by Mel Govindan **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Ellen Sturgis, Brian Burke, Mel Govindan, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Tricia Kelly **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

DOE Proposed Changes to Regional Agreement:

Mr. King distributed information which clarified some questions that School Committee members had regarding the Proposed Regional School Regulations. Brian Burke said he would like time to review the information and discuss it with his constituencies before voting on any recommendations. He recommended tabling the item. Ms. Kelly asked what point caused Mr. Burke concern. Chair, Don Adams, commented that the tabling of an issue was not something that could be discussed.

MOTION

Motion moved by Brian Burke to request more time to analyze the recommendation the superintendent is asking the School Committee to make. Motion was not seconded.

Committee member Tricia Kelly asked Mr. Burke what his concerns were. Mr. Burke responded that he would like to look at the Excess and Deficiency Fund statutes and to illicit opinions of his constituents.

MOTION

Motion moved by Brian Burke to table the table the recommended comments pertaining to the Assistant Superintendent's report dated September 14, 2006. Seconded by Mel Govindan **IN FAVOR:** Don Adams, Brian Burke, Mel Govindan, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne, Tricia Kelly **ABSTAINED:** Ellen Sturgis **VOTED AND PASSED.**

Suburban Coalition

The committee discussed whether they should become members of the Suburban Coalition. Mr. Wood said they would still be able to attend meetings of this group even if they did not opt to join.

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to pass on joining the Suburban Coalition. Seconded by Tricia Kelly. **IN FAVOR:** Tricia Kelly, Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

CITIZEN INPUT

Stow resident George Dargaty said he has spoken with elderly members of the Stow community and they have questions about how the district measures the effectiveness of teachers. Mr. Dargaty also said they would like to know if the district pays for teachers to go to school to further their education. Mr. Wood told Mr. Dargaty that tuition reimbursement is part of the teacher's contract. Concerning how the District measures the effectiveness of teachers, Mr. Wood told Mr. Dargaty that there is an evaluation cycle that teachers must follow and that teachers who do not meet the District regulations are not invited to return for the next year.

David Lindsay of Bolton asked for an explanation of the bonding process. Mr. King responded that the School Committee, on its own authority, can vote to issue debt by a 2/3 vote. The Towns then would receive notification of the debt issuance, and could call a Town Meeting to object to the debt issuance if they so desire. If they take no action, the vote to issue debt would be valid and the debt could be issued. Mr. King also told the committee there is another section of the law which states that if the School Committee so desired, they could issue the debt under, and that section requires a vote of each Town at an election.

Bill Joss of Stow asked for enrollment information. Mr. Wood reported that there are currently 3349 students in the Nashoba district and added that he would get more specific information regarding enrollment for him.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION

Motion moved by Ellen Sturgis to adjourn. Seconded by Monica CampoBasso. **IN FAVOR:** Tricia Kelly, Mel Govindan, Don Adams, Brian Burke, Ellen Sturgis, Monica CampoBasso, David Horne **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0)**

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda DeStasi
Executive Assistant