

**NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

April 16, 2009

SCHOOL COMMITTEE IN ATTENDANCE: Brian Burke, Monica CampoBasso, Don Adams, Cathy Giunta, Lynn Colletti (arrived 6:46), Richard Fly, Mel Govindan and Ex-Officio Ryan Nicoll

ABSENT: David Horne

ADMINISTRATION IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Wood, Superintendent of Schools, George King, Assistant Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cathy Giunta called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM in the Superintendent's Office.

APPROVAL OF THE WARRANTS OF APRIL 17, 2009

<u>WARRANT NO.</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
2976	4/17/09	VENDOR	\$ 459,942.34
2977	4/17/09	BENEFIT	\$ 724,302.88
2978	4/17/09	PAYROLL	\$1,101,129.21

MOTION

Brian Burke made a motion to approve the warrants as detailed in the memo dated April 16, 2009 and noted above and seconded by Monica CampoBasso **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, Mel Govindan and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0-0)**

APPROVAL OF THE April 2, 2009 MINUTES

MOTION

Monica CampoBasso made a motion to approve the minutes of April 2, 2009, as amended and seconded by Don Adams **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Monica CampoBasso, and Brian Burke **ABSTAINED:** Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0-1)**

CORRESPONDENCE

MSLA Memo

Town Census Memo from Stow

Email from Lancaster FinComm.

STANDARD BASED REPORTING

The committee discussed the timeline of the process and the concern that the feedback from the School Committee regarding the timeline at the high school level was not conveyed back to the school admin before School Council meetings. The School Committee expressed it was their belief it was a K-5 rollout and were not under the understanding there would be a pilot at the high school level in 2010.

Topics

- The timeline of the process
- Requested an explanation of benchmark standards
- Definition of what the “pilot” is
- Better flow of information to SC on process and quarterly updates as pilots are rolled out
- Complete explanation of the word “pilot” at the April 29th meeting and assurance to parents that the students will continue to receive letter grades along with the Standard Reporting

Mr. Burke urged the Superintendent he would not support moving forward on the pilot without the support of the member town citizens.

Mr. Govindan would not support moving forward with a standard-based reporting system without the full support of the High School staff

Mr. Roche reported he is supportive of this and the response that he has received from area Principals is that they want to learn more. He has arranged for a group of 50 principals to meet at Borne High School to brainstorm on the topic of Standard Based Reporting. His feeling is the report card is a personal document between student and parents. The research he has done shows models still use grades and Standard Reporting, he does not support moving completely away from letter grading.

Mr. Wood stated, we are teaching to standards we owe it to the parents to report on those standards.

The Committee’s direction to the Superintendent for the April 29th meeting is develop a primitive pilot and to express a clear definition of what the pilot is, and that it is a pilot, not an implementation.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

(The Superintendent’s Report is available in full on the NRSD website at <http://www.nrsd.net>

Mr. Wood reviewed his written report to the committee. Topics included:

- House of Representatives Budget
- Upcoming Presentations to School Committee
- School Choice
- Recruiting
- Forum on Public Education
- Standards Based Reporting
- Retirement Gala
- Finance Report
- Transfers

District Improvement Plan

Mr. Wood provided an update on the District Improvement Plan as the Committee reviewed the document which is posted on SharePoint. No questions were asked by Committee.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Ex-Officio Report by Mr. Nicoll

1. Athletics

- All spring teams are off to a good start
- Girls' lacrosse has won its first five games with no losses
- Boys track remains undefeated with three wins
- All other teams have lost one game and have won their other games
- The athletics department has formed a Student Athlete Advisory Committee, which is a committee which meets monthly to discuss athletics-related issues. Each team has 2 members on the committee. There has been one meeting in April, and the committee is scheduled to meet again in May.

2. Student Council – RSVP

Student Council held its final summit for Raising Student Voice and Participation, a program in all Nashoba homerooms that gets feedback and input from students who may not usually contribute to discussions. Three major issues were decided upon, and they are as follows:

- Changing around the 10-minute break: adding a warning bell and perhaps making it into a normal break in later years.
- Allowing more access to computer labs
- Changing around the Snack Shack: opening up a second window by a student representative, perhaps, and making the PowerLunch system a swipe card system.

3. Day of Silence

The Gay-Straight Alliance held its Day of Silence at Nashoba today, which brought awareness to the silence that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people feel they have to keep in order to avoid discrimination. All in all, the day was a big success.

4. Standards Based Reporting

The new proposal of Standards Based Reporting has come up at both Student Advisory Council and School Community Council, and several issues were discussed about the Standards Based Reporting system from concerned parents.

- The fact that Nashoba seems to be one of the first schools to be piloting it (it is the first hit on Google when Standards Based Reporting is typed in)
- The fact that it seems to be already set to go for the Timeline when many parents have not been informed of it and thus are extremely unsure of it
- All in all, it seems as though it may be more work for teachers who will have to not only do the Standards Based system but convert that to the regular transcript, which will end up being just like the old grading system in the first place

Facilities Subcommittee, by Mr. Govindan

No Report

Finance Subcommittee, by Mr. Burke

Mr. Burke reported the Finance Subcommittee has drafted a letter to be submitted to the newspaper for Senior Tax Workoff program. Mr. Burke advised the activities fees report will be presented at the next SC meeting.

Policy Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

Mr. Adams reported the Policy Subcommittee has reviewed the Overnight Field Trip policy and Animals in Classroom Policy which will be submitted to the School Committee tonight. The Attendance Policy was also reviewed and we are waiting legal advice before presenting to School Committee.

Personnel Subcommittee, by Mr. Adams

Mr. Adams reported they have met and discussed the economic environment and its impact on contracts. Mr. Adams also reminded the committee to submit the Superintendent's Evaluation.

SPED PAC, by Mr. Burke

Mr. Burke reported there will be a presentation by Karen Libby, The Other Side of the Table, on April 29th which will be an insightful perspective to help you understand the system and how to navigate your way through it.

ESBC by Mr. Wood

Mr. Wood reported we are now having weekly conversations with MSBA and are on a very aggressive time schedule.

CCC by Ms. Giunta

No Report

Joint Planning by Mr. Govindan

No Report

NEW BUSINESS

Third Quarter Financial Report

Mr. King reviewed the Third Quarter Financial Report posted on the SharePoint Site. The committee had no questions.

Transfers

Mr. King requested a vote to transfer \$126,735 from the Salary Reserve Account to the District Text Book Adoption Account.

MOTION

Monica CampoBasso made a motion to accept Mr. King's request to transfer \$126,735 from Salary Reserve Account to District Text Book Adoption Account and seconded by Don Adams **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti, Monica CampoBasso, Mel Govindan and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0-0)**

School Choice Recommendations 2009-2010

Mr. Wood advised he is proposing a number of changes which are outlined on the memo from Michael Wood to the School Committee dated April 8th, which included the recommendation to allow up to two (2) students per grade for grades one through five (an additional 30 seats). This could enable siblings to enter and they get first priority under the law to continue with current kindergarten, sixth, seventh and eighth grade cap of five per grade per town and to maintain the cap of one hundred (100) overall, but lift the twenty-five (25) per grade cap at the high school.

Ms. CampoBasso advised she would like a clearer definition of how the choice works in moving from grade to grade and determining caps in others districts such as Harvard. Mr. Wood will research.

The committee requested Mr. Roche's thoughts on class size and capping per grade, he stated he believes lifting the cap of 25 per class and revising it to a 100 cap per school would not negatively impact the class sizes.

Pilgrim Health Care Grant

MOTION

Mel Govindan made a motion to accept a \$500.00 grant presented by Jay Vanassee from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care to Carol Archambault at the Mary Rowlandson School and seconded by Monica CampoBasso **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti, Monica CampoBasso, Mel Govindan and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0-0)**

SubCommittee Organization 2009-2010

Mr. Wood recommended that the school committee have two subcommittees of four members. One would be Operations and one would be Policy. Operations would address finance, warrants, facilities and personnel. The latter would address policy and all things related to governance. We could meet the alternate weeks of school committee and I think this would give finance especially more “meat” to make their work authentic and meaningful. Audit Advisory would continue as would representation to the school building committee, Mabel Hale, etc.

Mr. Wood also recommend an earlier start time for our meetings (5:30) so that we can be live for cable telecasting. Finance could meet at 5:15 or the full committee could review warrants under warrant review in the full agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

Student Overnight Travel Policy – Final Reading

Mr. Wood reviewed the policy revised as advised by our Legal Council regarding the Ethics Law. Mr. Wood advised that this policy may eliminate the desire for teachers to organize trips and advised that the way the policy is written the teachers can organize outside of the school culture.

Ms. Mckale stated she does not agree with the Ethics Law stating that being a 24 hour chaperone should constitute a paid trip as compensation as the chaperones are working during the trip, not on vacation. Ms. McKale also stated she does not agree with the procurement aspect of this policy.

MOTION

Don Adams made a motion to accept the final reading and adoption of the Overnight Field Trips and Student Travel Policy, policy number JJH and seconded by Monica CampoBasso **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti, Monica CampoBasso, and Brian Burke **ABSTAINED:** Mel Govindan **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0-1)**

Animals in Classroom Policy – First Reading

Mr. Wood advised this is a first reading; the district does not currently have an animals in classroom policy. The committee discussed concerns regarding the health safety issues of students.

MOTION

Don Adams made a motion to accept the first reading of the Animals in the Classroom Policy, policy number IMG and seconded by Monica CampoBasso **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti, Monica CampoBasso, Mel Govindan and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0-0)**

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Andrew Martin (Stow) thanked the committee for the late bus and asked that better scheduling with the athletic events be looked at. Mr. King replied that this issue was addressed last week and should not be happening in the future. Mr. Martin stated he would like the Committee to review the parking fees at the high school. Mr. Martin stated he has heard that power lunch is not being accepted by the community. Mr. Martin advised on Standard Based Reporting he believes that taking away the grading system reduces student motivation.

MOTION

Mel Govindan made a motion to adjourn seconded Don Adams **IN FAVOR:** Cathy Giunta, Don Adams, Richard Fly, Lynn Colletti, Monica CampoBasso, Mel Govindan and Brian Burke **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (7-0-0)**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Aleta Masterson
Executive Assistant

NOTES