

Minutes of School Committee Meeting 11/06/08

A School Committee meeting was held on Thursday, November 6, 2008 at the Administration Office. Mr. Guida called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were: Mr. Guida, Mrs. Thurston, Mrs. Oberg, Mrs. Eddins, Dr. McIntyre, Dr. Calise and Mr. Tarro. Mr. Hasenfus arrived at 7:36 p.m.

Achievement Recognition

Dr. McIntyre was proud to announce that Jennifer Theroux, a 5th grade teacher at Hampden Meadows, was presented the prestigious Milken Educator Award at a special awards ceremony on October 27th.

Dr. McIntyre commended two high school teachers, Mark Davis and Deborah Gorman, Reading Specialists, who will be presenters at the Technology, Reading & Learning Diversity Conference in San Francisco in January. Their presentation is entitled "Literacy 2.0: Engaging Adolescent Readers Through Professional Learning Communities."

Mr. Guida noted Julia Steiny wrote an article in the October 19th edition of the Providence Journal commending teachers at the Middle School for their "common planning time efforts". Mr. Guida said it is a tribute to all administrators for encouraging these efforts and making arrangements for teachers to conduct common planning time.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Oberg moved and Mrs. Thurston seconded to approve the School Committee minutes of 10/02/08 as written. The motion passed 4-0.

Mrs. Oberg moved and Mrs. Thurston seconded to approve the Executive Session Minutes of 10/02/08 as written. It was noted that no votes were taken and the minutes were sealed. The motion passed 4-0.

Approval of Financials

Upon review and discussion of the June financial reports:

Mrs. Oberg moved and Mrs. Thurston seconded to approve the expenditures for June in the amount of \$6,541,119.13. Following some discussion, the motion passed 4-0. Mrs. Oberg commended Mr. Tarro and administration for their hard work in managing the school finances.

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Information and Proposals

Ms. Katie Miller, with the assistance of Scott Morpeth, presented a technology update that focused on: (1) the completed initial implementation of TIENET, (2) the Server Virtualization Project, and (3) the future priorities of the Technology Department moving forward. A handout was used as the basis of their presentation. Much discussion followed with many questions from the School Committee and members of the audience regarding various aspects of their presentation.

Dr. McIntyre presented an overview of the school funding formula. He provided the Committee with a handout which was used as the basis of the presentation. Much discussion took place by the administrators, School Committee and members of the audience regarding next steps in the development of a fair and equitable state education funding formula and the obstacles that must be overcome in dealing with this issue.

Dr. McIntyre provided the Committee with a listing of state mandates which was provided for the basis of the discussion regarding this issue. Discussion focused on the negative impact of the unfunded mandates on the school budget and efforts to date in dealing with this issue.

General Public Discussion and Information

A member of the audience inquired about the possibility of having an open forum to provide an opportunity for the community to discuss creative ways to address funding. It was noted that the meetings set aside during the budget process afford this opportunity but that additional meetings could be conducted. Members of the audience inquired about the teacher contract. Mr. Guida noted that the agenda would be taken out of order and that the Committee would be going into Executive Session and that the teacher contract would be presented to the audience prior to the Committee taking a final vote in open session.

Prior to going into Executive Session, the agenda proceeded to Old Business from the School Committee in order for Susan Healy-Mills to present a draft of School Committee Policy – Special Education Staffing for a first reading. Discussion took place to clarify various aspects of the policy. Mrs. Thurston offered to wordsmith the policy and noted that it will be up for a second reading and reviewed at the next School Committee meeting.

There was no discussion regarding the Wind Turbine Project as no final decision has been made by the Town Council.

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Mrs. Oberg moved and Mrs. Thurston seconded to adjourn the Open Meeting at 9:40 p.m. and go into Executive Session pursuant to Sections 42-46-5(a)(1) and 42-46-56(a)(2) for Personnel and Collective Bargaining and Litigation, specifically for Personnel and Collective Bargaining. The motion passed 5-0.

The Open Meeting reconvened at 10:40 p.m. The meeting was turned over to Dr. McIntyre who presented an overview of the process of negotiating the budget, followed by highlights of the teacher contract which includes a 20 percent health co-pay across the board; raises of 2% in the first year of the contract, 2% in the second year and 2.5% in the third year for Steps 1-9 and raises of 2.95 % for all three years for Step 10. In addition he noted that a Memorandum of Agreement was attached to the contract indicating that if state aid is reduced, either administration or the NEA Barrington may request renegotiating the contract.

Mrs. Oberg moved and Mrs. Eddins seconded to approve the contract that the Superintendent has recommended with NEAB with the step increases, new health care co-shares and the Memorandum of Agreement which is to be attached to the contract.

Much discussion followed among the School Committee and members of the audience regarding the contract. Some individuals voiced concern that the contract vote should be tabled until the new School Committee members are on board. Members of the present School Committee explained the rationale for voting on the contract tonight. Mr. Hasenfus made a motion that the contract vote be tabled until a later date, but there was no second. Mr. Tarro confirmed for the record that the fiscal impact of the contract was provided to all School Committee members in a timely manner and that the only information sent out earlier this morning was a worksheet confirming that the cost of the contract over the three years would fall within the budget and that it would be tight. Mr. Hasenfus confirmed that he received all required information and that he personally needed more time to digest all the information. Mrs. Oberg commended Mr. Tarro for his efforts and his timely distribution of information. Comments were then received from all Committee members expressing their point of view regarding the contract. Mr. Guida invited comments from the audience. Among those who commented were the two newly elected School Committee members who will be taking office in December. Mr. Flanagan asked questions for clarification and Mr. Shea commended everyone for their excellent work and stated that it seems like a reasonable contract. In response to a question, Mr. Guida stated that he has faith that the recommended contract is the best that could be negotiated and he is prepared to endorse it. Following further discussion:

The motion passed 4-0. Mr. Hasenfus abstained.

Mr. Guida stated that negotiating the contract is a difficult process and he thanked administration for their hard work and asked that they thank the representatives for the teachers' union also.

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The agenda returned to **Old Business from Superintendent and Staff**. There was no additional **Old Business from Superintendent and Staff**.

Old Business from School Committee

Mrs. Thurston asked the Committee for some direction as to what they wanted her to prepare for the last meeting with regard to School Committee policies. It was decided that an additional meeting would be held to discuss policies due in part to the fact that some policies have to be finalized by December 31, 2008.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the Superintendent Evaluation Form provided by Dr. McIntyre was acceptable. The Committee was asked to familiarize themselves with the form and also the portions of the Superintendent's Contract dealing with his evaluation and goals/objectives in preparation for the meeting.

New Business from the Superintendent and Staff

Mrs. Oberg moved and Mr. Hasenfus seconded to accept the recommendation of the Superintendent with respect to the request for a leave of absence for Stephen Marchetti, SE, Diagnostic Prescriptive Teacher. The motion passed 5-0.

General Discussion to Guide Future Recommendations

November 18th	8:30 a.m.	Funding Our Future Coalition @ Bryant College
November 20th	7:30 p.m.	PBGR @ High School Advisories

The Committee will be polled to schedule a meeting to discuss School Committee policies.

Mrs. Thurston noted that new Committee members should be contacted regarding an upcoming workshop entitled "School Committee 101" sponsored by the Rhode Island Association of School Committees on November 22nd. Mrs. Oberg said she would take care of notifying them.

General Public Discussion and Information

No issues were raised at this time.

Mr. Hasenfus moved and Mrs. Thurston seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 p.m. The motion passed 5-0.