

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

March 13, 2012

Briggs Building, 845 Park Avenue

Reed Conference Room

MINUTES

A meeting of the Cranston School Committee Sub-Committee for All-Day Kindergarten was held on the above date at 5:00 p.m. Members present were: Stephanie Culhane (Co-Chaired tonight's meeting), Lynne Conca, Michele Simpson, Stephanie DiChiro, Joel Zisseron, Judith Lundsten, Mary Ellen Russell and James Zanfini. Also present was Michelle David, Principal of Arlington School. Mrs. Ruggieri was absent with cause.

Mrs. Culhane began the meeting by identifying the items to be discussed from the last meeting.

Mr. Zisseron – Figures for Cluster Schools, Renovations Needed and Buildings being used.

Mr. Zisseron began by explaining the Hand out (Please see below)

Mr. Zisseron explained that what he tried to do was plan a Pilot Program on paper for the committee. Keep in mind that when we start talking about "Pilot", people tend to feel that this year is Pilot and next year is for real. You have to remember that we are still tight

on space in many areas. He noted that he also liked the idea of cluster areas because it doesn't give the parent an insecure feeling that you're going to take their youngster from, for example, Edgewood and bring them up to Stone Hill or Hope Highlands.

Joel's Hand-out:

As discussed at our last meeting, I looked at six (6) elementary schools to have an all day kindergarten. The schools are: Barrows, Dutemple, Eden Park, Edgewood, Rhodes and Waterman. I used this year's kindergarten population as a guide.

With a total of 217 kindergarten students this year, we would be looking for three additional classrooms since maximum number students would be twenty-five (25) per classroom.

2011-2012 KINDERGARTEN POPULATION – 217

BARROWS 42 EDGEWOOD 28

DUTEMPLE 46 RHODES 21

EDEN PARK 42 WATERMAN 38

Needing three (3) additional classrooms for seventy-one (71) students that exceed the capacity, I looked at Edgewood Highland. We would need to take the two (2) Head Start classrooms and move the self-contained class at Edgewood giving us three classrooms. This

would enable us to bus the seventy-one (71) students to Edgewood.

The breakdown would be:

BARROWS 17 EDGEWOOD 3
DUTEMPLE 21 WATERMAN 13
EDEN PARK 17

Three additional buses with three bus monitors will be needed. The saving for using fewer buses taking AM kindergarten home and taking PM kindergarten into school would be approximately \$32,000.

THREE ADDITIONAL BUSES	\$ 96,261
THREE BUS MONITORS	21,600
	\$117,861
LESS THREE K RUNS	32,000
TOTAL COST:	\$85,861

Dr. Lundsten asked if we had any agreement with Head Start. Mr. Zisseron noted that he can't remember if there is; however, if there is, they can break it; we just have to notify them. Mrs. Simpson added that she thinks the contract is over by now. The original agreement was for three years.

It was reiterated that the pilot is scheduled to happen during the 2013-14 school year. A discussion ensued regarding:

- Parent comments on justifying what schools will be piloted
- We need a school with room for three classrooms and Edgewood is most likely the only one
- Because we have room on the Eastern section, it makes sense to start a pilot program in the school districts where it will work.
- From a legal perspective can we do this?
- Non-Title one schools and the legal perspective
- Equity issues?
- Mrs. Lundsten is going to ask any legal questions, tonight, to our attorney, Ron Cascione
- Also discussed were permits being requested for the all-day kdg. pilot schools
- A lot of the western schools have a very big day care issue
- Kindergarten registration numbers; only half way through; the ones that have had registration, are about the same as past years
- Orchard Farms classrooms

Mr. Zisseron added that Hope Highlands has 41 K's this year. Orchard Farms has 52. This is between am and pm. A discussion ensued regarding using one of these schools for a pilot. Both schools have room if you moved programs around. Dr. Lundsten also suggested putting Art and Music on a cart to make room. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Joe Balducci – Absent with cause. We will discuss his report at the next meeting.

Joel Zisseron – Special Education K student figure.

This was included in his discussion above.

Mr. Zisseron added that for the next meeting, he will extrapolate those numbers for the Western side of the city.

Mrs. Culhane noted that she wants to make sure that all of the Kindergarten teachers have been given the curriculum binder. Mrs. Simpson noted that she sent out e-mails to pick them up here in the conference room if they do not have one.

Mrs. Culhane reported that Mrs. Ruggieri is still waiting for a discussion with the Mayor regarding empty space in Cranston. Mrs. Culhane does not think she had this discussion yet but she got a certain tone from a recent letter from the Mayor to the School Committee that he has no interest in helping us out. We are on our own. A discussion ensued.

**Mr. Zanfini – Other districts, currently, with All-day Kindergarten
We we're possibly talking about getting in touch with Woonsocket and Cumberland; however, Woonsocket won't be doing anything anytime soon. It was noted by Mrs. Simpson that Cumberland just passed it to go for All-day Kindergarten.**

Mrs. David added that she taught in a district where they transitioned

to All-day K and one of the things that they did was they put one all-day K classroom in each of the elementary schools; this was in West Warwick; but the other kindergarten remained an am/pm. This was done through a lottery at registration as to who wanted to be in the all-day K and then the others went in am or pm. As of right now she doesn't think it is all full day kindergarten. She thinks that they are still doing one per school and the others are am/pm schedules.

Mrs. Simpson added that East Providence had all-day k just in their Title schools, initially, and then they moved to all-day k. It got approved because they made such a great presentation of the data they had collected where the children were and they said that when the children were leaving kindergarten reading; those children were already doing what first graders in any other district do. That data they submitted was supported. Mrs. Simpson also noted that they had plenty of room to do this too.

A discussion ensued in regards to this issue.

Mrs. David pointed out that in some buildings we only have ½ time kindergarten person; either an am or pm teacher/session. She noted that her registration numbers are low for next year so if they're looking to pilot, they won't really know those total numbers at this time. She suggested having the pilot programs in those buildings where they only have part time kindergarten people. Dr. Lundsten pointed out that they only have two buildings including her building.

Also, it fluxes from year to year also. Most of the numbers will not be available until after the district finishes their kindergarten registrations which are going on during the month of March. A discussion ensued in regards to having two models in place. Also discussed was how East Greenwich picks their all-day kindergarten children. Also questioned was the Title One funding. A discussion ensued also discussing the Race to the Top Pre-School money. All kindergarten children, before entering school, need to be screened. It's going to be called the Kindergarten Entrance Evaluation which lets the teachers know where the children are when they are coming in and how to start them off. This was also called EPSS.

Mr. Zisseron noted that we also have to get a cost of putting a teacher in each classroom. Mr. Balducci will be able to give us this information. Dr. Lundsten added that basically we're probably talking about Step 3 including the benefits which would be around \$70,000.

Mr. Zisseron asked Lynne Conca if she sees any impact with the Lunch Program/Breakfast Program in elementary with an all-day Kindergarten? Ms. Conca noted that there would be an increase in lunch participation and there would not be a problem with room for the children. Dr. Lundsten also brought up Itinerants to run a pilot.

Mrs. Culhane reiterated that she is going to ask Mr. Balducci for costs of teachers and itinerants based on the six-school model. She also noted that she would contact Mr. Votto and see if they can work on

numbers for the lunches. A discussion ensued in regards to the Based on Stars program and getting a choice of schools. Private Pre-Schools were discussed and what they must provide to the students. Also discussed was P.D. on K evaluations and who pays for the staff, etc. A discussion ensued regarding the unfunded mandates involvement. Dr. Lundsten added that when you think about adding extra itinerants in, you have to add in extra periods. Not only do you need extra personnel but you may need space for that itinerant, i.e. the gym teacher (where the cafeteria is also used for lunch) or a longer day.

Curriculum Update from K Teachers

Ms. DiChiro noted that they haven't had the opportunity to meet in the last couple of months. It's a huge job what they would have to do so they are waiting to hear if there is any way that they could be compensated with either a sub or something like that, to work on this step. They were going to check into that Race to the Top, which isn't going to come through. Discussed was if we had any P.D. money at this time but Dr. Lundsten noted that she would check with Mrs. Nota-Masse to see if she put any money aside to bring in any subs or pay out stipends to work on this piece. Ms. DiChiro added that just getting together for an hour after school, as they have been doing, doesn't do it. They actually need blocks of time and a lot of what was discussed today is the reason they didn't get together this time. Mrs. Culhane stated that she would call Mrs. Nota-Masse and see if there

was any way they could find some P.D. money or something.

Mrs. Culhane brought up the HIPPY for Reading Program and the education money which was a free program for any student. They come in once a week; they give them a book; an entire curriculum; the parents commit to 20 minutes a day, five days a week; it's fantastic. They cut the funding for the program.

New Issues

Mandate from General Assembly Funding – only available for full district roll out and only for one year. So...there's money available but only if we were doing it for the entire district. Do we know who the sponsor of that bill was? A discussion ensued. Dr. Lundsten added that she heard that it wasn't for the full amount but only a portion and not a lot.

Also discussed was the following:

- Pals Assessment from when we had TA's in the classrooms**
- The TA's were pulled out a while ago; maybe five years ago**
- Look at the numbers since we had the TA's and then look at the next three years without the TA's.**
- There needs to be a P.D. to teach the TA's to work with the teachers and the children; and freeing up the teachers so they can work in the classroom**
- It was noted that a TA should not be used for running off copies**
- PD is concentrated so much on high schools and middle schools**

and the elementary schools have to sort of sail along

- **Pre-school children coming in before they actually start school**
- **Look at the scores and think about how we cut funding for professional development and we've added in all these other evals and all these other requirements of teachers that have taken away from them being able to develop who they are as a teacher**
- **If you know how to use it, a one-shot conference can do a lot**
- **Offering P.D. on Saturdays**
- **Dr. Lundsten is going to check with Deb Mellion in regards to the Pals Scores with and without the TA's**
- **Mr. Votto can give the committee the cost of TA's**

Mrs. Culhane noted that we are already going to get level-funded as far as the Mayor and the budget is concerned. We've already been told by the Mayor to forget Debt Restructuring or Forgiveness. Right now as we stand we are about 2.5 million dollars in the hole and the Mayor hasn't voted on the budget yet. We just presented the budget to him. This is based on letters received from him.

Mrs. Culhane noted that she would love to find a way to put TA's back and she knows that it is needed. She reiterated to please don't think that they as a committee don't understand these needs in the classroom because they fully do. It has to be to get it back to the kids.

At this time, Mrs. Culhane asked everyone to come up with a list of

questions or issues that they think will need to be addressed as part of the plan. Mrs. Culhane reported that she will talk to Mr. Votto and he and Ms. Conca will get some numbers together; they will work off of what Mr. Zisseron has given us. Mr. Zisseron is going to look at the Pilot in the Western side of the City and see where we could maybe make this happen at one or two places. Mrs. Culhane will also ask Mr. Balducci to run an estimate for teachers and itinerants so that we can have a number or fiscal impact of that. Mrs. Simpson is going to check on the Head Start Agreement to see if that is something that we are locked into. Mrs. Culhane is going to speak to Mrs. Nota-Masse about the Professional Development for teachers and also see if there is any professional development out there for the Kindergarten Teachers. Mrs. Culhane will also talk to Mrs. Mellion about getting the numbers on PALS and see what that looks like. Mr. Zanfini will see if the Cumberland School Department can come to one of our meetings to report on how they got into the All-day Kindergarten Program. He noted that he did leave a message for them; however, they never returned his call. Mr. Zisseron pointed out that it may be too early to bring them in to talk to the School Committee at this time.

The next meeting of the All-Day Kindergarten Sub-Committee will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. here in the Conference Room at the Briggs Building.

There being no further business to come before this sub-committee,

the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Leone

Recording Secretary