

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

July 24, 2006

3:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, July 24, 2006, in the media center of the Block Island School.

Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 3:05 P.M. The following members were present: Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway. Jack Lyle was also present. Also in attendance were Judy Durden, Nancy Greenaway, Deborah Hart, Martha Velie-Gass, Sue Gibbons, Ben Bentrup, Marlee Lacoste, Vicky Carson, Barbara Michel, Nancy Cole, KC Perry, and Gloria Redlich.

Work Session with Faculty/Staff on Adjustments to Existing Site Based Management Plan

William Padien started the discussion by saying that the School Committee members were in agreement that they wanted the teachers to teach, educate, and take care of the kids and not be bogged down with administrative work, which has been happening more and more over the last eight years. The committee currently wants to make minor changes to the site based management system.

Richard Tretheway submitted an organizational chart he developed

and explained that this was a starting point with a move in right direction, but nothing too drastic. His chart stipulated a management team under the superintendent, which would include teachers, parents, students, administrators, community members, and anyone else who wanted to attend the meetings. Under this team would be a dean or secondary coordinator, with a K-7 facilitator acting as an assistant dean. All other positions would be under the deans.

KC Perry, principal at Feinstein High School in Providence, explained that their SAW team (School as a Whole) served as a school improvement and management team. It is open to the entire staff, community members, parents, etc. The SAW team meets monthly for two hours. He also holds weekly work sessions where specific topics are discussed, but no decisions are made. He further explained that SAW would not deal with custodial issues, parking, etc., but would concentrate on teaching and learning. It is a team oriented approach that uses the strengths of the different members to improve the school.

It was suggested that at least one of the positions under the superintendent should be non-union to deal with personnel issues. It was also suggested that perhaps the school needs a full-time administrator with a background in curriculum development to guide educational programs because members of the current faculty do not have this training. Returning to a full-time superintendent/principal model was another suggestion. Any administrative changes would

have serious budgetary impacts. Salaries for full-time superintendents and/or principals in Rhode Island are in excess of \$100,000 and even assistant principals are in the \$80,000 range.

When asked if the School Committee wanted a full-time, non-union, administrative person at the school the answer was yes. The committee is looking for daily accountability. Last fall the staff overwhelmingly voted to keep site based management rather than go with the “principal of the year” model. The idea of two deans or assistant deans was also discussed, with certified members of the teaching staff filling these roles and also being responsible for either full- or part-time teaching duties. These roles would need to be clarified and it was suggested that optimally the deans would need to meet on a weekly basis with the superintendent/principal to help eliminate some of the communication problems.

It was suggested that Mr. Lyle start putting together the information for the various job descriptions with the school’s attorney assisting with any legal areas, such as what items can or can not be delegated.

No one could see any problems with giving a School Improvement Team a trial run this year. It was stated that clear goals and objectives needed to be written for the SIT. Those in attendance wanted to know if the SIT would be the place to vent. Would there be specific activities? It was felt that the SIT would be the

communications central where all groups (parents, teachers, students, management) could come to discuss all aspects of the school. It should be an open forum so the entire community can be involved. Consensus decision making would be used instead of casting votes with winners and losers on various issues. The SIT could open the school community to all being empowered members of an organization working towards a common goal.

The next work session was scheduled for 3:00 P.M. on Monday, August 14.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, McGarry) at 4:55 P.M. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: 8/21/2006