

**APPROVED-MARCH 24, 2011**

**CUMBERLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**There was a Special Programs Sub-Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 1, 2011 at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.**

**Members Present: Lisa Beaulieu, Jeff Mutter, Dan Pedro**

**Staff Present: Donna A. Morelle, Ed., Superintendent, Joseph A. Rotella, Esq., Director of Administration, Dr. Susan Carney, Assistant Superintendent**

**Agenda Item #1: Call to Order**

**The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mutter at 6:35 p.m.**

**Agenda Item #2: Discussion on Elementary Reorganization Proposals and NESDEC Options – Mr. Mutter began the meeting by reminding everyone present that the previous School Committee chose to delay implementation until September 2011 – but he noted that he sees no value in making a big decision and then having budgetary constraints – so he thinks this could be a two year plan. Mr. Mutter then made the comment that he would like to know what other savings were going to be identified because the elementary proposals are only about \$400-500,000 in savings and he believes the**

deficit is between \$2.5 –\$ 4.0 million. Dr. Morelle said the budget is not yet completed. Full day K is a big part of the budget – if there is a decision by the sub committee or School Committee to implement September, 2011, we need to have some way to differentiate between the February 2010 proposal and the April 2010 proposal. Dr. Morelle noted that the deficit or gap is \$2.85 million and part of that number includes things like Math Coaches, technology requests – hardware items, etc., educational supplies, additional staff – just to name a few – and so we would need to look at the pro's and con's of these things that we (principals, etc.) are looking to get/need and then we need to look at full day K. We need to do this so that if there is reorganization and we save money, we need to know where we want these dollars to go to – does it close the gap or do we keep some of the line items listed above. Dr. Morelle noted that since last years meetings there has not been a direction from the SC as to where we were going with full day K – it really has not been discussed – until now. Dr. Morelle noted that some of these line items will make it to the budget and some will not – they have a draft budget, not completed yet. Mr. Mutter said that if the CLT(Central Leadership Team) is looking to add to the budget and the SC is looking at adding full day K, shouldn't that be looked at and shouldn't that be being added to the budget. Mr. Mutter went on to say that the sub committee does not know what other pieces the CLT is putting into the budget. He thinks that full day K should go into the budget. Dr. Morelle explained that back in January Tier 2, Tier 3 interventions, staffing, technology, reading programs, etc., these recommendations all came from school

**budgets, not the CLT – so their responsibility is to advocate for these needs from the principals – we are trying to add technology in the budget and then so on, down the scale. Full day K did show up as an intervention – this came from the principals requests. Dr. Morelle said that if the SC wants to put full day K in the budget, the CLT will still advocate for the things that the principals want. Mr. Pedro asked how the full day K came up in the budget – and then Mr. Mutter asked Dr. Morelle if the request for full day K should come from the CLT –adding that placing K in this budget has been discussed, but not on the budget. Dr. Morelle thought that the full day K should be brought forward in a strategic plan. Mrs. Beaulieu stated that the funding formula has dollars for kindergarten; can we capitalize on that and consider this an option? She supports full day K, she would like to see what full day K will look like in next years budget and what the following year’s budget would look like also.**

**Mr. Mutter asked Mr. Rotella if the sub committee can request the CLT to put full day K in the budget. Mr. Rotella said that if there is a recommendation, the sub committee could ask the SC to bring the request to the CLT. He then went on to say that you need guidance and direction; you cannot just flip a switch and make it happen. A lot comes into play, bussing, additional teachers, which schools will be involved, additional teacher assistants, etc., it is not just making the decision itself – it is everything else that goes along with it.**

**Mr. Mutter stated that the two proposals are only \$200 and \$400,000 – so this amount is not going to fix the budget – he would like to know what all the pieces are and he does not want anything being added to**

the budget.

Dr. Carney asked if it is an option to add full day K in the next 1-2 years, would the SC feel better and then not close one school. Mrs. Beaulieu thinks we should put this full day K out to the town , so we can get funding, she believes it is right up there with technology, etc., and she believes the town will look at it more so if you put it out there now versus five years from now. Dr. Carney said we need technology at the elementary levels, desperately. She went on to say that the principals are asking, she did note that this is in the \$2.8 million budget gap. Dr. Carney said that nobody questions the value of full day K, but when it comes down to the limited resources, we need to determine priorities, technology is a priority – that is a higher priority for serving the children, more so than full day K, so that is why it has been added to the budget. Mrs. Beaulieu said that there needs to be more discussion like tonight, so that we can frame the budget. Mr. Pedro said the sub committee would like to see all these items brought before the sub committee and then the SC, and he said that they would probably always agree with what the CLT believes needs to be added in as a line item.

Mr. Mutter interjected and said that there have been surpluses in the past so he believes the technology should have been purchased years ago. He went on to say that full day K should not come from the SC, the recommendation should come from the CLT. His feeling was that those were the people with the degrees; versus coming from a SC member whose main qualification is that the SC member lives in town – so the decision should be coming from the CLT.

**Dr. Carney then said that we are making significant moves in strengthening the curriculum.**

**Mr. Mutter said he just wants to get all the pieces; he needs all the pieces to make a decision and needs the information so that he can pick a proposal – he needs to know where we are going. Mr. Mutter would ask the CLT to balance their budget and also asked the sub committee not to make any decisions on the proposals – he said, show me what the \$2.8 looks like and then they will make a decision and review the proposals. He noted that \$400,000 is not a deal breaker – they will review the proposals.**

### **Agenda Item #3: Public Comment**

**Tina F. stated that she has heard teachers at Community School complaining about getting hit with new programs at the last minute and then scrambling to learn about them, etc, and this is because the district is holding off on making decisions until the last minute. She said she has very generous parents in the Community School area that are willing to donate cash and computers, but she cannot take them because of rules and regulations – something regarding donating the computers for one school, but not the others – which she is yet to find a copy of. She would like her PTO and other PTO's in the district to come together to see if they could all have a fundraiser to raise the funds to get computers in each of the schools.**

**Dr. Carney agreed and thought there should be a community PTO, that way if people donate to one “pot”, all the children would benefit from it – not just one school. Tina would like the district to think**

**outside of the box so that they can get the technology and computers into each of our schools.**

**Mr. Mutter said that technology has not been a priority in the past because there have been surpluses, it should not have to come from donations, this is something that is vital to the district.**

**Another parent asked if once again this year, would it be too late to put either of the proposals into effect by September, 2011. Mr. Mutter said they would definitely meet the timeframe; they could do the elementary redesign by September.**

#### **Agenda Item #4: Adjournment**

**Mrs. Beaulieu made the motion to adjourn, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 3-0.**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.**

**Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Linda A. Jackvony**