

## **MINUTES APPROVED – 10/13/2011**

**There was a regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, September 22, 2011 at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.**

**Members Present: Jeff Mutter, Lisa Beaulieu, Linda Teel, Daniel Pedro, Erika Sanzi, Earl Wood. John Gibbons was absent.**

**Administration Present: Dr. Phil Thornton, Superintendent, Alex Prignano, Business Manager.**

### **Agenda Item #1: Chairman Convenes Meeting**

**Chairman Mutter convened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.**

### **Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Agenda Item #3: Approval of Agenda**

**Mr. Wood and Mr. Pedro made a motion to approve the agenda, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu, approved 6-0.**

### **Agenda Item #4: Consent Agenda**

**A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting 9/8/2011**

**B. Approval of Minutes – Executive Session 9/8/2011**

**Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the minutes for Regular Meeting**

of 9/8/11 and Executive Session of 9/8/11, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0.

#### **Agenda Item#5: Student Government Report**

Two members of student government reported that they had a Welcome Back Breakfast for all members of the staff and it went very well. A service project was held at the Gilbert Middle School, it was a clean up project. On 9/22 Freshman elections were held. On 9/20 the first student government meeting was held and there was a great turnout. September 29 will be “Back to School” night, where parents can follow their children around from class to class, so that they know exactly what their child is doing at school!

#### **Agenda Item #6: Superintendent’s Report**

##### **A. SAT Scores – What Do They Mean?**

Dr. Thornton started off his power point presentation by saying “if you read something in print, don’t believe it, ask questions!” He also said that College Board says the SAT scores cannot be used for the way the public uses them. SAT’s are not a mandatory test, therefore because the kids can choose to take them – this skews the results. NECAP’s are mandatory – all students have to take the test. Dr. Thornton feels that as schools do a better job of preparing the kids for college, more kids will take the SAT’s – this will be good – but the more kids that take the test, the kids scores will go down. In 2010 47% of eligible students took the SAT’s. Dr. Thornton reviewed some data regarding demographics – the data showed that demographics

do matter when the kids are taking the test. Seems like the more money the household makes, the better the scores. Some data also showed that mom's education makes a difference. Dr. Thornton also noted that just because SAT scores are not good, does not mean that the schools are bad – there is a lot more to take into consideration. He believes that preparing for the SAT's is very important – there are prep classes for the test and he believes that students should be taking those classes. Also noted was that some colleges do not take SAT scores anymore. Dr. Thornton said that daily, weekly, monthly updates are needed for our students, showing progress is very powerful. This is something that he would like to focus on this year, he wants to clearly define where we are, set more targets, track progress, post results and data on the internet, have common benchmark work and common grading practices. He wants a level playing field, lots of work to be done and he would like to publish some of it – formative assessments to track progress would be one way. Mrs. Beaulieu asked a question regarding students taking the SAT's and Dr. Thornton said that it definitely matters to each student and each student should take the SAT's if they have the opportunity – it definitely helps for college. Mr. Mutter then noted that he feels it is vital for everyone to see where we are – we need good measurements. Dr. Thornton said that the NECAP tests are a good measure but gave another example – in the fourth grade students are supposed to learn their multiplication tables and he would like to see the students take a test in October to see where they stand and then two or three months later take another test to see how they are

coming along. Mr. Mutter said he would like to see results like this on the SC agenda every six to eight weeks. Dr. Thornton thinks it is very important to routinely check on the progress of our students.

#### **Agenda Item #7: Chairperson's Report**

Alex Prignano gave a facilities update. A few weeks ago Mr. Mutter, Mr. Prignano and Dr. Thornton talked with the Mayor about several issues – basically they were lobbying for some dollars. During this meeting they found out that there was approximately \$200,000 available through an Energy Grant. Alex went on to say that earlier in the day prior to this meeting, the Mayor had given him the approval to utilize approximately \$150,000 from this grant for energy projects at Community, Ashton, Garvin, McCourt Middle and North Cumberland Middle Schools. These dollars will be available to the school department and the town will front the money and then will get reimbursed from the state. Alex reviewed several projects at each school, some were completed, some needed to be reviewed, some were already quoted on and are waiting to be completed – it was about \$600,000 worth of projects, some will get done and some will be on hold – but the money from the Energy Grant is definitely going to help out. Mr. Wood asked about the COPS Grant and Alex said that some defibrillators have come in but have not been distributed because the cases are not in yet, walkie talkies have been received and are being dispersed, some locks have been updated – several items are being addressed due to the COPS Grant.

## **Agenda Item #8: Comments from the Public**

**No comments at this time.**

## **Agenda Item #9: Reports of Standing Committees**

**Mr. Wood said that the Finance Committee did meet earlier but there were no payment of bills. He said they were discussing the school calendar – looking at how to make up the three days that were lost due to the hurricane. Dr. Thornton said that maybe this year they could go 180 days and also the elimination/consolidation of a school vacation was up for discussion. The committee also asked that Dr. Thornton send a letter to Mr. Pina to let him know that Cumberland is interested in the possibility of consolidating vacations.**

## **Agenda Item #10: Old Business**

### **A. Pursuant to the RIGL 42-46-5 – Exception (9) Grievance:**

#### **1)Vote on CTA Grievance: 10-11-01**

**A settlement in the amount of \$20,000 was brought to the committee and Mrs. Beaulieu made a motion to approve the settlement/grievance 10-11-01 in the amount of \$20,000, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0.**

## **Agenda Item #11: New Business**

### **A. Recalls**

**Dr. Thornton had the following recalls:**

#### **Addendum #1**

**I recommend that the action taken by the School Committee on February 17, 2011 not to renew the employment of the following for**

**the 2011-2012 school year, be rescinded:**

**- Michael Walsh (#372) recall to the position of Grade 4 Teacher at Ashton School, effective 9/6/2011. Mr. Wood made a motion to approve, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu, approved 6-0.**

**B. Home School Instruction Requests 2011-2012 School Year – Mrs. Beaulieu made a motion to approve the list as indicated (six names), 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0.**

**C. Discussion on District-wide Inventory of Textbooks – Mrs. Beaulieu would like to know where we are and where we would like to be – she would like an inventory. Dr. Thornton will provide the inventory listing. Mrs. Sanzi said that some of the books are really in bad shape – Dr. Thornton said that at the time of the inventory, that issue will be addressed. Mrs. Beaulieu then mentioned that some high school parents are concerned about the purchase of calculators for their children – Dr. Thornton said that some textbooks are on line, but providing something like IPADS for all students cannot be done because it is too costly – Mike Chandler will check to see if a listing of the textbooks that are on-line can be gathered.**

**D. Discussion and/or vote to approve 1st reading of new policy:**

**1) DA-DAA Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 54 – Mr. Mutter said that they would not be reading or voting on the policy tonight, it will be posted. Alex Prignano said that GASB is Governmental Accounting Standards Board – it adopts accounting standards and puts them in place – relates to the fund balance or surplus – it shows how the school department will report the funds. Mrs. Teel said that the policy committee has reviewed this policy and**

she said it would be on the October SC agenda for approval.

**E. Discussion and/or vote to approve amended policy:**

**1)JH-JHCF Physical Restraint & Crisis Intervention - Mrs.**

**Teel said that the**

**policy committee met and has recommended to move forward for approval of**

**this policy. Mrs. Sanzi made a motion to approve the amended policy, 2nd**

**Mrs. Teel, approved 6-0. Mr. Pedro asked if it would not be a good idea to**

**introduce the intervention team to the students at each school. Dr. Lisa**

**Colwell said that that has not happened and Mr. Pedro noted that he was**

**concerned about the younger students – Dr. Colwell said the introduction**

**should be done at the time of a situation, she said if it is done earlier it could**

**cause some other issues. There are three people per CPI team – one person**

**goes in first, physical restraint will not be done in front of the classroom, the**

**class will be removed from the situation first. Mr. Wood said that a parent**

**asked him about notifying other students of what was happening and he**

**noted that there was nothing in this policy referring to that – this is because**

**personnel at the individual schools will be on hand to answer questions and it**

**was noted that confidentiality is always a concern.**

### **Agenda Item #12: Personnel Recommendations**

**Dr. Thornton had the following personnel recommendations:**

#### **Leave of Absence**

**I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the FMLA Medical Leave**

**for Patricia Garrahy, Speech/Language Pathologist, at Community School, effective 10/1/2011 to the end of the 2011-2012 school year. (Budgeted)**

**Mr. Wood made a motion to approve, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu, approved 6-0.**

**Dr. Colwell noted that they are looking for a replacement.**

### **Agenda Item #13: Comments from the Public**

**No comments at this time.**

### **Agenda Item #14: School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports)**

**Mrs. Beaulieu thanked Mr. Weber for video taping the meeting for the website.**

**Agenda Item #15: Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion on Items Referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5:**

**A. Personnel Matters – Exception (1)**

**1)CTA/ICSE a) General Discussion of Personnel Matters Regarding CTA Issues**

**B. Negotiations/Litigation – Exception (2)**

**1)CTA/ICSE**

**2)Potential Litigation**

**3)Contract Negotiations**

**C. Reconvene into Open Session**

**D. Vote to Seal Minutes of Executive Session**

**Mr. Mutter said there would be no Executive Session tonight.**

**Agenda Item #16: Adjournment**

**Mrs. Sanzi made a motion to adjourn, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.**

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