

APPROVED-12/8/2011

There was a regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, November 10, 2011 at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.

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

Administration Present: Dr. Philip Thornton, Superintendent, Dr. Susan Carney, Asst. Superintendent, Joseph A. Rotella, Director of Administration

Agenda Item #1: Chairman Convenes Meeting

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

Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item #3: Approval of Agenda

Mrs. Beaulieu made a motion to approve the agenda, 2nd Mr. Gibbons, approved 6-0.

Agenda Item #4: Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting 10/27/11 – Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/27/11, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu and

Mr. Gibbons, approved 6-0.

Agenda Item #5: Student Government Report

A representative from Student Government updated everyone with the following highlights: the annual turkey basket collection is ongoing – they would like to fill 85 baskets for local needy families; November 17th the annual CHS Ring Ceremony for this years Junior class will take place; winter clothing and jacket drive will run until the end of December – clothing collected will be distributed to local families in need; upcoming Teddy Bear Raffle will benefit the Make a Wish Foundation; Adopt a Family – items, gifts, food etc. will be collected and then distributed for families that cannot afford gifts, etc. for the Christmas holiday.

Agenda Item 6: Recognition of Achievement

A. 2011 District Teacher of the Year – Dr. Thornton presented Linda Iannetta of B.F. Norton School, with a plaque for Teacher of the Year and a bouquet of flowers. Her name will also be placed on a permanent plaque that will hold her name and all of the future award winners – she is the first name to be placed on this plaque. Mrs. Maloney told everyone that Mrs. Iannetta has in depth knowledge of all areas that she teaches; she said that she is the best of the best, pleasure to work with. Mrs. Iannetta thanked everyone for receiving the award and said that she has taught for 22 years and she was very happy to receive an award for something that she loves doing – she said that everyone at BFN is the best of the best and it is a wonderful

place to teach!

Agenda Item #7: Superintendent's Report

A. "Results Now" – Review of page 1-47 – Mr. Mutter said the book was hopeful, honest assessment of where we are now and the book gives the impression that you can get a big payoff with little steps – he believes that Cumberland can make some big gains. Mr. Wood said that some things that he read are already being done in Cumberland – the book tells us to be honest, we need to move forward. Dr. Thornton mentioned that all of our policies are now on the website – they can be viewed at any time! Mrs. Beaulieu said that the book makes you more aware of the importance of quality control – we will be able to recognize strengths and weaknesses in our programs, we will be able to make items "actionable". She said that we want quality instruction – a challenge for every student – and she believes that is what the parents are looking for. Mrs. Sanzi thought that the book confirms that there is no magic bullet, but we also know that we are talking about it, now we have accountability – team players – we will have dramatic growth.

B. Introduction to Grading Practices – Dr. Thornton noted that there is a grading sub committee – they are meeting next week – they will meet throughout the winter and will bring a policy to the SC in the spring. Dr. Thornton went on to say that the sub committee will think about what scale to use and why – is the classic High School A-F working and what happens when you bring a zero into this scale – on

a 4 pt. scale a zero is a -6. How confident are we with the grades we are giving in school – all teachers are different – they all take points off for what they determine matters – so it would matter which teacher you got! Should student behavior be included in the grade? Absenteeism – should that be separate? Cheating – does the student get a zero or does he get suspension, detention, and possibly a second chance at retaking the test (another version of the test) – that is something that they will wrestle with also. Report cards – should they list what the child knows for each subject – i.e. – Spanish – the student could get an A for reading and writing, but a C for speaking and culture – should it be just the one grade, an average or strands for each subject. Grades should come from a body of evidence, standards and guidelines, the teacher’s professional judgment – not just numbers, and a grading policy. The SC members agreed that the grading systems need to be reviewed – they were all positive about the upcoming grading policy.

Agenda Item #8: Chairperson’s Report

No report at this time.

Agenda Item #9: Comments from the Public

No comments at this time.

Agenda Item #10: Reports of Standing Committee

Mr. Wood made a motion to approve payments in the amount of \$943,244.84, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu, approved 6-0.

Agenda Item #11: Old Business

A. Discussion and/or Vote to approve revised 2011-12 School Calendar – Dr. Thornton said that the CTA met on 11/3 and agreed that it made sense to have the last day of school be June 15, 2012 – they will deploy two days to the next school year for teacher training days (already paid for) – if three snow days are required, the last day would be 6/20. Mr. Gibbons made a motion to approve the revised 2011-12 school calendar, 2nd Mr. Wood, approved 6-0. Mr. Wood noted that this was in Fiscal Management earlier in the evening and was approved on a 3-0 vote to come to the full committee.

B. Discussion and/or vote to approve 2011-12 Transportation Routes – Mr. Mutter noted that he had not checked with Mr. Neves prior to the last SC meeting on 10/27/11 – whether or not the routes were going to be presented at that meeting – so he wanted everyone to know that it was not Mr. Neves fault that the routes were not available at that last meeting. Mr. Mutter went on to say that this is the first time that the routes have ever been voted on – also that Mr. Neves was here to answer any questions that anyone may have. Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the 2011-12 Transportation Routes, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0. Both Mr. Wood and Mr. Mutter thanked Mr. Neves and Durham and the entire crew at Durham for probably the best year for bus routes and excellent service! Congratulations Durham!!

Agenda Item #12: New Business

A. Discussion of District Textbook Inventory – Dr. Thornton gave an

overview “snapshot” of where we are regarding books in each of the schools. In K-5 there is a need for Social Studies materials because the current textbooks are very dated, need more readers, will focus on Math. Middle schools also have Social Studies needs, teacher guides, atlases, Science – but we may hold off until we know where we are going, Foreign Language is pressing because at MMS there are not enough books for all of the students to take home. High School will be receiving \$5,000 worth of English books – the order has already been processed, History has 3 sections missing but were priced out at \$187 each – the E book was less expensive so we are going to see how that works, Science and Biology will be discussed during the winter, Math - \$16,800 budgeted – we have a plan to buy the books (current books are from 1996), we have addressed the most critical areas – during the winter there will be more conversations regarding textbooks.

B. Discussion and/or vote to approve Resolution: SC-PR-11-2011-019 – Installation of Boiler Room Exhaust Fans at CHS – Mr. Wood made a motion to approve resolution SC-PR-11-2011-019, 2nd Mr. Gibbons, approved 6-0. Mr. Mutter noted that the amount of \$15,780 will not cost the School Department anything – the money is coming from the Energy Grant from the Town of Cumberland/Mayor McKee.

Agenda Item #13: Personnel Recommendations

Mr. Rotella had the following personnel recommendations:

Retirement

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the retirement of

Mary DiGregorio, Classroom Assistant, at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 1/6/2012.

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

Appointments

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of

Lori Joubert, Classroom Assistant at Community School, effective 11/14/2011. (Budgeted)

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of

Kathleen Steinke, Classroom Assistant at Community School, effective 11/14/2011. (Budgeted)

Mrs. Beaulieu made a motion to approve the above appointments, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 6-0.

Agenda Item #14: Comments from the Public

No comments at this time.

Agenda Item #15: School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports)

Mrs. Beaulieu noted that at next Tuesday's (11/15) CHS PTO Meeting,

Dr. Thornton will be the guest speaker. Mrs. Sanzi also noted that Dr. Thornton will be the guest speaker at the Calvin Presbyterian Church on Monday (11/14) – it will be at 7 p.m. and the topic will be “The State of our Schools”. Mr. Wood noted that Cumberland Hill PTO will be holding a family bingo and their annual holiday fair in the near future. Mrs. Beaulieu said they will be discussing ELA at the next Achievement Sub Committee meeting next Thursday (11/17).

Agenda Item #16: Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion on Items Referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 – Mr. Rotella said there would be no Executive Session tonight.

Agenda Item #17: Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Linda A. Jackvony.