

APPROVED – 11/8/2012

There was a regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, October 25, 2012 at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.

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

Administration Present: Dr. Phil Thornton, Superintendent, Robert Mitchell, Assistant Superintendent, Atty. Stephen Adams

Agenda Item #1: Chairman Convenes Meeting
Chairman Mutter convened the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance

Before the approval of the agenda, Chairman Mutter amended the agenda for Agenda Item #4 – Consent Agenda – under “B” approval of minutes should read Executive Session 10/11/12.

Agenda Item #3: Approval of Agenda
Mrs. Beaulieu made a motion to approve the agenda, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #4: Consent Agenda

A. Approval of minutes for regular meeting 10/11/12 and B. Approval of minutes for Executive Session 10/11/12 – Mr. Wood made a motion to approve regular meeting minutes 10/11/12 and Executive Session minutes 10/11/12, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.

C. Report of Executive Session Meeting on 10/25/12 – a. Report of Executive Session Vote – Mr. Mutter stated that there was no vote taken at this meeting and b. Vote to seal minutes of Executive Session – Mrs. Sanzi made a motion to seal the minutes, 2nd Mr. Wood, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #5: Student Government Report

The secretary and the treasurer of student government gave the following report: Past events included – Spirit Week from September 30 thru October 6 – various events took place during the week ending with the first homecoming dance that CHS has held in the last several years. Fundraiser to support the troops – gifts and thank you notes were sent over to the troops to thank them for their service. Back to school night was held on October 18th – parents followed their child’s schedule like a regular school day and met with all the teachers! Blood drive took place on October 23rd – for each student that donated blood – three lives will be saved – it was not known by this meeting exactly what the total was – but it was a good turnout! Upcoming events include – the annual clothing drive – all donations will be given to people in town and at the high school, that are in need. Turkey baskets will be

donated to families in need and this year the goal is 185 baskets – so all donations of non-perishable food items and turkeys are desperately needed!

Agenda Item #6: Superintendent's Report

- A. National Principal's Month – Dr. Thornton wanted to remind everyone that being a principal is a round the clock job and not an easy job – he acknowledged all of the principals that were at the meeting and thanked all of our principals for their hard work and dedication each and every day.
- B. RIIL – Athlete of the Month Winner – Samantha Bertherman – Cumberland High School Principal, Alan Tenreiro, was going to present Samantha with a certificate of recognition, but she had a volleyball game tonight and was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Tenreiro will present the certificate to her at school and did say a few words about her. He told everyone that she is an outstanding student, she volunteers to teach young girls how to play softball, and she is a member of the National Honor Society and an all around good student/person. Congratulations Samantha!!!
- C. B. F. Norton School – Jillian Smith – SPARCri 2012 Award –Mr. Mitchell was going to present Jillian with a certificate of recognition, but she was unable to attend tonight's meeting. The Rhode Island Counselor's Association recognized Jillian for the excellent support of the children at B.F. Norton School and for her submission and creating of an award winning report card.

Agenda Item #7: Chairperson's Report

There is no report at this time.

Agenda Item #8: Comments from the Public

Ms. G. asked why the photographer that was hired to do the school pictures costs more money than last years photographer – she said that everyone was told that the photographer with the best prices would get the job, but she said that it is costing parents more money this year than last year.

Kayla – is a student at the high school and said that she has a GPA and a class rank – most colleges require a GPA and a class rank, so she is very concerned about the 4-3-2 grading system that is going to be implemented. She said she would not have the same opportunities that she does this year, but that the one good thing about the new system is that it gives you a chance to make up assignments.

Agenda Item #9: Reports of Standing Committees

- A. Payment of Bills – Mr. Wood said there were no payments tonight.
- B. Achievement and Communications Sub-Committee Update – Mrs. Beaulieu said that they had met about four weeks ago and discussed the implementation of the new grading policy – there will be more discussions and also they met with some faculty to review some improvements that are being made. On November 20th they will meet with the middle school faculty to discuss some of their improvements.
- C. Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee Update – Mrs. Teel said that they met back on October 16th and talked about the student's achievement and success

policy – specifically regarding assignments that are being re-done. They also talked about the volunteer policy – Dr. Thornton presented them with a draft policy (type of application, background information and check) – the committee will be working on this policy over the next few months – it will be completed for the next school year. Next meeting is 11/20/12.

Agenda Item #10: Old Business

- A. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve 2012-2013 Bus Routes – Dr. Thornton said that there had been one modification made to the routes during the week – they made a six minute rollback to some of the high school buses – it is on the website and Mr. Mutter noted that the times and routes that are posted are accurate. Mrs. Sanzi made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.
- B. Discussion of Student Handbooks –Elementary, Middle and High – Mr. Mitchell noted that this has been a topic of discussion at several recent meetings. He said that we all need to make sure that there is consistency, some items do not need to be in the handbooks and other items need to be added in. We will be forming a committee made up of administrators, teachers, parents, to review these handbooks. This committee will be formed by the spring of 2013 and the handbooks will be ready for the 13-14 school year.

Agenda Item #11: New Business

- A. Sodexo Facilities Report – Juan Garcia reviewed several items that Sodexo has either worked on or is working on. He said that currently they are working on 450 projects – from June until this meeting date. Thanks to his staff this amount of work can get done – and in conjunction with some of our vendors – can even save our district money. He said that recently National Grid replaced some transformers for us and this did not cost our district any money – it cost them \$150,000! Juan noted that Sodexo is pro-active with maintenance issues around the district. They install/replace worn out valves and fittings before they become a major issue or problem – they like to keep ahead of the game. They are painting and cleaning areas outside of the schools as well. Juan monitors the work orders that are in their system and he noted that his employees are working at between 99 and 100% completion of these work orders. Sodexo also is training their personnel for safety on an ongoing basis – keeping them up to speed on anything new or advanced. Dr. Thornton noted that the high school cafeteria is looking very nice – thanks to painting done by Sodexo. Dr. Thornton also said that some of the work orders that Juan refers to are created by Dr. Thornton, because as he travels from school to school and he notices things that are not right, he immediately calls Juan to report it and then a work order is generated right away. Items such as broken windows, doors, graffiti, ceiling tiles, etc. – these items are reported and repaired almost immediately. Mike Chandler told us that seven new surveillance cameras have been installed and some of the existing cameras have been moved around – the new cameras were paid for

by the Cops Grant and the system that we have now can be easily upgraded – when more funds become available.

- B. Approval of Contract for Truancy/Residency Officer – Ms. Fogell noted that at the last SC meeting the SC approved the truancy officer position and now we have the contract that needs to be approved. The only difference between this officer and the last one is that this officer is an employee of the town. He will be checking in with Dr. Thornton and Dr. Colwell – his hours will vary. Mr. Gibbons made a motion to approve the contract as presented, 2nd Mrs. Beaulieu, approved 7-0.
- C. Discussion of Peanut Procedure – Dr. Thornton said that there would be signs at the front doors of the elementary schools and also on the doors to the classrooms. There will be one peanut free classroom per grade. The cafeteria will have peanut free tables. The protocol for a group snack is that it must be commercially wrapped. The hand wipe protocol will be to have specific wipes to wipe your hands – Sodexo will use a spray bottle and wipes to clean the tables in the cafeteria. At the secondary level there will be a sign at the entrance of the building. There will be a peanut free table in the cafeteria and Sodexo will be washing the tables with the same spray and wipes. High school will have no signage. Epi pens will be available at all of the schools. There will also be mandatory training each year for teachers and bus personnel. This procedure will be on the website – eventually there will be a section entitled “Procedures” – for now it will be on the front page of the website. One parent asked if other allergies will be added for specific procedures and Dr. Thornton said that specific situations would be addressed and actions taken at that time. Another parent asked about bullying and food allergies – Mr. Mutter said that would be addressed in our bullying policy. Mr. Mutter said that there was no action needed tonight and he thanked everyone for the effort put into this procedure.

Agenda Item #12: Personnel Recommendations

Ms. Fogell had the following personnel recommendations:

Appointments

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Vera Martins, Special Educator Mild/Moderate, at Community School, effective 11/5/2012. (FTE: 1.0; Step 3; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 20.0%; budgeted)**

Mr. Wood made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Rachel Emery, Curriculum Coordinator-Science, at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Conor Geary, Curriculum Coordinator-Social Studies, at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Christine Payson, Curriculum Coordinator-Mathematics, at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Paula Vadenais, Curriculum Coordinator-English, at North Cumberland Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Karen Brodeur, Curriculum Coordinator-Mathematics, at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Mary Ann Guerin, Curriculum Coordinator-Science, at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Cecile Palumbo, Curriculum Coordinator-Social Studies, at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Karen Yacino, Curriculum Coordinator-English, at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School, effective 10/26/2012. (budgeted)**

Mr. Pedro made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. Wood, approved 7-0.

Leave of Absence

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the FMLA of **Nicole O'Connor, School Psychologist, at BF N School/Garvin School, effective 1/2/2013 with an expected return date of 4/1/2013. (budgeted)**

Mr. Gibbons made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.

Dr. Drolet noted that there are four Curriculum Coordinators in each middle school. There will be good collaboration between both sets of teachers and also decision-making will be streamlined. These coordinators make sure that all of the materials are in place for rubrics, etc., they are working with team leaders – in the past we only had team leaders – now we have both.

Agenda Item #13: Comments from the Public

Nate commented on the grading policy – he said that feedback sometimes is that the draft/plan is not the way to go – he thanked the SC for not cramming the policy down everyone's throat - Cumberland parents are very concerned with the 2-3-4

and the fact that there is no distinction between them. He thinks that the kids will say hey we are at a three – so we are good – no need to try harder to improve because we will still be a three – in most cases. Need something between a three and four – he realizes that a lot of time went into this policy and he appreciates it, but would like to see some changes to it.

Julie wants to make sure that the proficiency level does not get confused with a GPA – thinks this could be a problem with colleges. In the elementary level if a child has a three and really tries hard and the next report card still shows a three – how do you know when they are actually making progress?

Jamie thinks that some parents of high level students will be pulling their kids out of Cumberland schools and will go somewhere else because their kids grades will not be getting weighted properly – in other words you would not be able to showcase the students grades properly with this new grading policy – it is too general.

Deann asked that the research that has been offered to the SC be commented on at the next SC meeting. She would also like to know what other school districts are doing. Mr. Mutter noted that after November 6th there will be some new SC members, so other meetings will be scheduled but at this point he does not know when.

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

Mrs. Beaulieu stated that student achievement was this SC's goal and they did a good job with that – they added full day K, improved the Science and Math programs, received additional funds from the town (for the first time in 6 years) – so she wanted to thank everyone for all of their efforts. Mrs. Sanzi will not be returning – she will be taking care of her three children at home as well as her children at the school where she teaches – both will keep her very busy! She said she will still stay involved and she thanked Cindy Giroux – the new principal at Community – because she said she is very happy to have her and she also thanked Dr. Thornton for all of his hard work and dedication. She thanked the SC and said she enjoyed working with each and every one of them! We will miss Mrs. Sanzi and wish her well.

Mr. Pedro commented that we need more additions to our Music programs – he does not like to hear that students could not add Band to their schedule because there was no room. Mr. Gibbons thanked everyone on the committee – he will not be returning. He thought there was a great mix on the committee and that hiring Dr. Thornton was an excellent choice. He also said that the administration is going in the right direction and he wished everyone good luck. We will also miss Mr. Gibbons and wish him well.

Mr. Mutter thanked the administration; he also thanked Cindy Chabot and Linda Jackvony for agendas and meeting preparation. He noted that a lot has been done over the last two years – they set the bar high but did a lot – hired Dr. Thornton, redistricting, cell phone policy, grading policy, full day K, etc.

Mr. Mutter thanked everyone for all of their help during the past two years – he said everyone conducted themselves well and the tone of the public comment has been good as well – he thanked everyone again! Dr. Thornton said that he has worked with many school committees and it has been his pleasure to work with this one – they are very efficient and they know where they have been and where they want to go – he thanked the entire committee.

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

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

Agenda Item #16: Adjournment

Mr. Gibbons made a motion to adjourn, 2nd Mr. Pedro, approved 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Linda A. Jackvony