

UNAPPROVED

There was a regular meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.

Members Present: Lisa Beaulieu, Jeff Mutter, Linda Teel, Paul DiModica, Craig Duffy, Mark Fiorillo, Raymond Salvatore

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

Agenda Item #1: Chairperson convenes Meeting
Chairwoman Beaulieu convened the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance

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

Agenda Item #4: Student Government Report
Past events included the Turkey Basket Collection – 150 baskets were filled with turkeys and baked goods, etc., the baskets were taken to the monastery to be distributed – five families of CHS students also received baskets. The junior ring ceremony took place on Tuesday, November 21st – all rings were received at the ceremony or distributed the next day.
Upcoming/ongoing events – December 2nd – 19th – Adopt A Family – four families have been adopted locally – two from CHS and two from BFN. Also, this year multiple wreaths of giving have been added – the wreaths have tags on them, which faculty, staff, students and community members may pick from to contribute gifts to families in need. On December 18th there will be a student government meeting to wrap presents for the Adopt A Family Program and the winter ball will also be discussed.

Agenda Item #5: Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting 11/14/13 and Special Meeting 11/20/13
- B. Approval of Minutes – Executive Session 11/14/13 and Executive Session 11/20/13
- C. Enrollment Report – 12/1/13
- D. Truancy/Residency Report - 12/1/13
- E. School Police Report – 11/1/13
- F. Resolution SC-R-2013-19: Wireless Classroom Initiative

Mr. DiModica made a motion to approve the consent agenda, 2nd Mrs. Teel, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #6: Report Out of Executive Session Meeting

- A. Report of Executive Session Meeting on 12/12/2013 – 1) Report of Executive Session Votes – Mrs. Beaulieu reported out on the votes taken. 2) J. Doe Student Hearing Decision – SC voted 7-0 and upheld the superintendent’s recommendation for the R.I. Collaborative for the remainder of the school year. 3) CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing Decision: Teacher A – SC voted 5-1 approving a one day suspension and a letter of reprimand to be placed in file. 4) CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing Decision: Teacher B – SC voted 7-0 – upheld the superintendent’s recommendation for disciplinary action. 5) Vote to Seal Minutes of Executive Session – Mr. Mutter made a motion to seal the minutes, 2nd Mr. Salvatore and Mrs. Teel, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #7: Superintendent’s Report

- A. Recognition of Achievement – 1) District Education Support Professional of the Year – Dr. Masterson announced Susan McLaren, paraprofessional at Joseph L. McCourt Middle School - he said that Mrs. McLaren is dedicated to the students and for the past 13 years has arrived early and left late each and every day of work. Dr. Thornton presented her with a plaque. 2) R.I. School Counselor Association – OSSCAR Award Recipients – Dr. Colwell and Dr. Thornton announced the recipients as Kerry Carlson and Cynthia Lancaster – both are counselors at the McCourt Middle School.
- B. State House Grant – PBIS – Mia Ackerman presented Mrs. Farrell with a \$1,000 check.
- C. Wireless Initiative Update – Dr. Thornton noted that they have signed off on the grant, have the funds, are working with a vendor and should be starting installations during Christmas break.

Agenda Item #8: Chairperson’s Report

- A. High School Grading Guidelines – Mrs. Beaulieu noted that she did send a letter to the editor of the Valley Breeze and it was printed in today’s edition. Briefly she wanted everyone to know that the SC is striving for a better environment for the students in Cumberland, there have been significant changes in leadership in the district, teachers are much happier and are supported, restructured the leadership at the high school, changed a lot in a small amount of time, technology initiative is on board, will continue to review grading but will maintain the present grading scale of A, B, C, etc.

Agenda Item #9: Comments from the Public

Sixth grade student at NCMS – stated that grades are important. Rubrics are hard to understand - students can barely understand them – wants the SC to reconsider standards based grading.

Colleen – standards based grading – does not like it – holds back high performers. Very hard to achieve a four – this will bring down grades and prevent students from getting in to good colleges.

Laura – attended a meeting on college admissions last January – college admissions is based on 4.0 scale – SBG is not consistent – grades are very important to get into a

good college – she would like to see more CHS students going to high performing colleges.

Carolyn – regarding the Valley Breeze article – asked if this changed had been voted on and Mrs. Beaulieu said there would be a vote – Mrs. Beaulieu also noted that rubrics have been around for a long time. Carolyn then stated that there is no consistency and said the report cards are showing traditional grades – at this point Atty. Adams noted that this is public comment – comments can be made but if not on the agenda to be discussed, it's dicey and so he cautioned the SC. Mrs. Beaulieu stated that the SC will recalibrate the grading and policies will change. Atty. Adams again noted that if it is not on the agenda, it could cause a problem.

Will – read a list of concerns from a 9th grade student – concerned about SBG – students can make many mistakes or no mistakes and get the same grade, not many students do the homework – it is discouraging, colleges may overlook some students because of the fact that it is easy to get a three and a lot of students do get three's.

Ms. Barry – has a 10th grade student at CHS – concerned about SBG and how it will affect GPA's and choices of colleges.

Meghan – the grading system will affect students at the higher level – actually hurts students who get high grades because of the inconsistencies among teachers – it creates a grey area with colleges.

Bruce – has a daughter in the middle school – SBG is desensitizing high performing students from doing better – students do not want to do extra credit work because they are meeting the standard. The students know when their tests will or will not change their final grade for the quarter – so after a certain point they do not put much effort in to the test because they know their final grade will not be impacted by it. Hoping to make a change in the middle school also.

Agenda Item #10: Reports of Standing Committees

- A. Payment of Bills – Mr. Mutter made a motion to pay invoices totaling \$1,657,827.83, 2nd Mr. Fiorillo, approved 7-0.
- B. Fiscal Management Sub-Committee Update – Mr. Mutter said they met 12/10/13 and discussed the Sodexo Report, the wireless initiative, the Communications Coordinator's Agreement, the Cumberland Hill concrete project, the McCourt Middle School parking lot.
- C. Policy and Procedures Sub-Committee Update – Mrs. Teel said the committee met on 12/10/13 and 9 or 10 policies were discussed – they will meet again later in January.
- D. Achievement and Communications Sub-Committee Update – Mrs. Beaulieu said the committee also met on 12/10/13 and Dr. Thompson from Brown University was there and discussed how course work could be created to develop Stem – this will also help with service learning opportunities.

Agenda Item #11: New Business

- A. RIDE School Safety and Emergency Response Plans Update – Dr. Masterson gave the update and noted that new laws have been passed regarding school safety and the Cumberland School District is in good shape. He said we were the envy of some of the other districts – each of our schools have procedures

- in place and he went on to say that we will be updating some of those procedures for roll-out in September, 2014. He feels that we are in good shape due to the fact that Cumberland has a committee that meets on a monthly basis.
- B. Review of High School Level Data – Mr. Tenreiro – CHS Principal – gave a presentation regarding the Review of High School Level Data – he told the SC that if they wanted to sit down and go thru the data more intensely – he would be happy to meet with them. He reviewed RTI – various components of it, reviewed SAT performance, risk factors by category, prevention and support – there were several slides of back-up data and percentages, etc. – Mr. Tenreiro briefly reviewed some reports that are available showing attendance, disciplinary issues, SAT results, test results and information for each student and how it can be helpful in determining what changes need to be made and where more work needs to be done. Mr. Costa also talked about PBIS, Sims Program, Academic Proficiency Center, SAT results with PSAT, Risk Factors. Mrs. Butash talked about check and connect process, freshmen teaming, attendance policy, guidance programming, looking at school data and going back – back levels and fact finding, talking with teachers – why certain students are failing – try to come up with trends, looking to support teachers. Mr. Tenreiro noted that he believes everyone needs to be involved to service the students in a successful way. We need a Literacy screener for grades 9 and 10 – he said teachers and students are working very hard – we have educators who genuinely care. Mr. Tenreiro said that the 9th grade failure rate is at the top of his concerns right now. He said that after reviewing all of the data that is available right now – it shows that all data points are trending in a better direction, an upward direction. He wants to make sure that the data is as see thru as possible.
 - C. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve Communications Coordinator Agreement – Mr. Mutter said that based on a 3-0 vote in Fiscal Management he would recommend passage, but would require a budget amendment – fiscal note for \$12,000(\$7,500 in budget) – Mr. Mutter made a motion to approve the Communications Coordinator Agreement, 2nd Mr. Fiorillo, approved 7-0.
 - D. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve Home School Instruction Requests 2013-2014 School Year – Dr. Thornton said he recommended approval as indicated; Mr. Mutter made a motion to approve, 2nd Mrs. Teel, approved 7-0.
 - E. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve Deleting the Following Policy: IIAA Equipment, Books and Materials – Mrs. Teel made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. DiModica, approved 7-0.
 - F. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve Amending the Following Policies: 1) DLC – Employee Expense Reimbursements Policy, 2) GBAA/JFAA Sexual Harassment Policy, 3) IICA – School Sponsored Field Trips of Long Duration, 4) JBA – Anti-Bullying/Teasing Harassment Policy, 5) IKFC – High School Proficiency Based – Mr. DiModica made a motion to approve, 2nd Mr. Duffy, Mr. Salvatore noted not IICA), approved 7-0.
 - G. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve the Following New Policy: KDB Access to Public Records Policy – Mrs. Teel noted that this was the first reading, no

vote to be taken. Mrs. Teel thanked everyone that works on the Policy Committee.

Agenda Item #12: Personnel Recommendations

Mrs. Fogell had the following personnel recommendations:

Resignations

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the resignation of **Christopher Skurka, Boys Indoor Track Assistant Coach, at Cumberland High School, effective 11/20/2013. (budgeted)**

Appointments

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Matthew Campanelli, Boys Indoor Track Assistant Coach, at Cumberland High School, effective 11/20/2013. (budgeted)**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Wayne Hemond, Custodian - nights, at Wellness Center - CHS, effective 11/19/2013. (FTE: 1.0; Step n/a; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 13.0%; budgeted) Benefits effective 5/1/2014**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **William Hemond, Custodian - nights, at Cumberland High School, effective 11/18/2013. (FTE: 1.0; Step n/a; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 13.0%; budgeted) Benefits effective 5/1/2014**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Christopher Kublal, Custodian - nights, at Cumberland High School, effective 11/18/2013. (FTE: 1.0; Step n/a; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 13.0%; budgeted) Benefits effective 5/1/2014**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Richard Masnyk, Custodian - nights, at Cumberland High School, effective 11/18/2013. (FTE: 1.0; Step n/a; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 13.0%; budgeted) Benefits effective 5/1/2014**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the appointment of **Francisco Rei, Custodian - nights, at BF Norton/Cumberland Hill Schools, effective 11/18/2013. (FTE: 1.0; Step n/a; Lane: n/a; Co-pay: 13.0%; budgeted) Benefits effective 5/1/2014**

Leave of Absences

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the Unpaid leave of **Stefanie Amaral, Teacher Assistant, at Ashton Preschool, effective 1/6/2014. (budgeted) Unpaid 1/6/14 to return 4/4/14.**

I request the advice and consent of the School Committee on the FMLA of **Melissa Kusnitz, English Teacher, at Cumberland High School**, effective **2/3/2014. (budgeted) FMLA 2/3/14 to return 4/14/14.**

Mr. Mutter made a motion to approve all personnel recommendations, 2nd Mrs. Teel, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #13: School Committee Comments (School Liaison Reports)

Mr. Duffy noted that every school participated in the Hour of Code – students in front of computers for one hour – he thanked administrators, teachers and students. He also thanked the members of the SC as far as SBG goes – he hopes they can find a consensus soon so they can move on – he believes they need letter grading.

Agenda Item #14: Vote to go into Executive Session for Discussion on Items Referred to in R.I.G.L. 42-46-5: Mrs. Beaulieu read the following prior to going into Executive Session: Before going into executive session, the school committee shall state for the record that any persons to be discussed pursuant to subsection (1) have been notified and this statement shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

- A. Student Matter – Exception (8) – 1) reconsideration and vote on request for tutoring, in accordance with December 9, 2013 order of the Rhode Island Department of Education.
- B. Personnel Matters – Exception (1) – 1) CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing: Teacher A. 2) CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing: Teacher B. 3) CTA/ICSE
- C. Negotiations/Litigation – Exception (2) – 1) CTA/ICSE 2) Litigation Update/Potential Litigation
- D. Discussion and/or Vote on Superintendent’s Recommendation of CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing: Teacher A
- E. Discussion and/or Vote on Superintendent’s Recommendation of CTA Employee Disciplinary Hearing: Teacher B

Mr. Fiorillo made a motion to go into Executive Session, 2nd Mrs. Teel, approved 7-0. The SC went into Executive Session at 9:16 p.m.

The SC reconvened into Open Session at 9:45 p.m. There was a vote of 4-3 to deny reconsideration for tutoring.

Agenda Item #15: Adjournment

Mr. Fiorillo made a motion to adjourn, 2nd Mr. Mutter, approved 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Linda A. Jackvony