

Winchester Public Schools
Winchester, MA 01890
October 8, 2002

Roll Call

Notice having been given in accordance with the requirements of law, a meeting of the School Committee was held at 7:34 p.m. on Tuesday, October 8, 2002, in the Lynch School Library. Present were Chairman Haley, Ms. Swiger, Ms. Bodie, Ms. LaDow, Mr. Feblowitz, Director of Finance Mr. Rippin, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kerble and Superintendent Marini.

Public Comment

Diane Wheeler, chair of the Lynch Safety Committee, reviewed several safety issues that concerned Lynch parents. Areas of concern were unlocked doors during school hours, and traffic hazards due to the lack of signage and marked crosswalks in the parking area. Some progress has been made to date, but the parents are asking for a quick resolution to these issues. Ms. Wheeler stated that a meeting has been scheduled for October 17th, with members of the DPW and school department to discuss the concerns and to develop a timeline for resolutions to these safety hazards.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Marini reported that Friday, October 11th is the first all-day professional development session for the system. Dr. Kerble has done an excellent job in preparing for this event, and Dr. Marini thanked Dr. Kerble for his efforts.

Dr. Marini stated that Rich Burchill, principal of the Lincoln Elementary School, is currently in Washington with a delegation from Massachusetts. The delegation will be meeting with the Federal Department of Education regarding the bill "No Child Left Behind." The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how this bill will impact the public schools. Dr. Marini will ask Mr. Burchill to present his findings at a future school committee meeting.

Dr. Marini stated that the Lincoln open house that took place on Sunday, October 6th was a success. The committee was delighted to hear that the sod had been installed in the play area, unfortunately, not in time for the open house.

Dr. Marini has been meeting with the Multicultural Network on a forum regarding human rights for gays and lesbians in Winchester. A public forum called Safe Town/Safe Schools will take place on November 6th from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. at the Winchester High School. Dr. Marini recommended the school system's support on the event.

On a motion by Ms. Bodie, seconded by Ms. Swiger the Committee unanimously

**VOTED to have the Winchester Public Schools
share in the sponsorship of the forum taking place
on November 6th.**

Dr. Marini will contact Ms. Sandy Thompson and inform her of the School Committee's vote.

Dr. Marini stated that he continues to visit schools and will be organizing meetings with PTO presidents and school councils. Dr. Marini is in the process of sending letters to members of the community inviting them to meet with him to discuss their views of the school system.

Ms. Swiger invited members of the school committee and community to a blood drive in honor of Sue Morse, Winchester High School principal, on October 22nd from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Town Hall auditorium. If you are interested in donating blood please call Jan Byford at the Board of Health 781-721-7121 to schedule an appointment.

Mr. Haley commended the Youth Basketball Association for their efforts in constructing the basketball courts in the far corner of the McCall field. The grand opening was held on Sunday, October 6th and was attended by many members of the community.

International Trips

Fran Lanouette, Director of Foreign Languages, joined the committee and described the four trips requiring school committee approval. Mr. Haley questioned if appropriate insurance and waivers were in place. Mr. Haley also inquired about financial support for students who could not afford the trip. Ms. Lanouette stated that there is not anything in place for students who are in need. The school committee expressed their concern for students who would be excluded for attending a trip due to lack of funding. The school committee also had concerns of students missing school and if the international experience was curriculum related.

Dr. Marini stated that he will be working with Ms. Swiger on policy for all foreign trips. Mr. Haley suggested a form including information regarding insurance, costs, chaperones, dates, etc. be designed to help streamline the request process.

Dr. Marini recommended approval of the four trips presented to the school committee.

On a motion by Ms. Bodie, seconded by Ms. LaDow, the Committee unanimously

**VOTED to approve the four trips outlined in the memorandum
dated September 17, 2002.**

Ms. Lanouette invited school committee members to visit the new language lab at the high school. Mr. Haley suggested a mini open house for members of the community to view the lab.

Class Size Update of Winchester High School

Mr. Olson, interim principal of the high school, joined the committee and presented a report on the 2002-2003 class sizes. A discussion took place around the rationale of class sizes in AP classes, Honors, C1 and C2 classes. Mr. Olson stated that students in C2 classes generally require more support, which is why class sizes are lower. The school committee would like to establish guidelines for class sizes at the high school in order to assist them in building the budget. Dr. Marini will discuss class sizes with the administrators at the next administrative council meeting.

Mr. Olson encouraged parents to return the NEASC survey that was mailed to their home in order to assist in the accreditation process for the high school.

Summer Professional Development Report

Dr. Marc Kerble thanked Eileen Moore, his administrative assistant, for her organization and handling of all the paperwork that goes into the professional development procedures.

Dr. Kerble reviewed the courses that were offered and the number of teachers participating in the programs during the summer. A discussion around column moves and credits for teachers took place. Consideration of offering a stipend for a course versus a column move was discussed and is something that would need to be bargained for in a future contract.

Capital Presentation of the Five Year Plan

Mr. Rippin stated that FY2004-2008 Capital Budget Submission was submitted on September 13, 2002. The focus of requests are on health and safety issues, handicap accessibility, preparing for the high school NEASC visitation and increasing the capacity for technology usage in schools with funding for additional hardware and connectivity. The total capital planning request is \$2,609,750.

Recess

FY30 Budget Update

Mr. Rippin presented a spreadsheet projecting the school department's FY03 expenditures compared to FY03 budget by functional area. As of September 30, 2002 actuals, Mr. Rippin projects a \$179,737 deficit. The deficit is attributed to four major factors: column moves, sick leave unbudgeted, negotiated settlement and legal costs. Two additional items not factored in are adding a 6th bus for transportation in the amount

of \$31,360 as well as adding a 1.0 FTE for guidance support staff at McCall at a cost of \$20,578. To offset the deficit it has been recommended to hold vacant a teaching assistant to be shared at Lincoln and Muraco and a Special Needs Instructor position at the high school for a total of \$47,584. By holding off on hiring these two positions it would reduce the \$231,675 deficit to \$184,091.

In order to cover the expenses for the additional bus, Mr. Rippin suggested a reserve fund transfer. Mr. Rippin has been in touch with the Finance Committee regarding this request and looked to the school committee for a recommendation.

Mr. Haley stated that in the future when projecting busing costs a cushion should be allowed and not project to the dollar. The school committee would like to track professional development credits to help project the costs. The school committee agreed that they did not want to purchase an additional bus unless a transfer of money actually took place. Mr. Haley suggested asking Kids' Corner if they would be willing to split the additional cost of a bus. Mr. Rippin will contact Kids' Corner with Mr. Haley's recommendation. Ms. Swiger was not willing to ask the Finance Committee for additional money to purchase an additional bus stating that this is not an emergency need. With the current freeze, Mr. Rippin stated that technology would feel the brunt of the impact. Mr. Rippin will be meeting with the Finance Committee in the next few days and will report back his findings to Mr. Haley and Ms. LaDow. If needed, an additional school committee meeting will be scheduled.

FY04 Budget Assumptions

Dr. Marini stated that he has been working with the Administrative Council regarding budget priorities. To date class size is on the top of their list. Elementary class sizes should be kept lowest, under 20, middle school class sizes at 22-24, and high school class sizes at 25 and under. Another priority is maintaining quality staff. Dr. Marini cautioned that if programs were cut, students would still need to be serviced.

The process of redistricting will be discussed further, which will include how long does it take for a redistricting plan.

The school committee is scheduled for a Planning Session on Wednesday, October 9, 2002 and many of these assumptions will be discussed in detail.

Future Meetings

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for October 22, 2002.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

V. James Marini
Secretary