

Roll Call

Notice having been given in accordance with the requirements of law, a meeting of the School Committee was held at 7:41 p.m. on Tuesday, September 28, 2004 in the Lynch Elementary School Library. Present were Ms. Bodie, Ms. Swiger, Mr. Feblowitz, Mr. O'Connor, Director of Finance Mr. Rippin, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kerble and Superintendent Marini. Dr. Kounaves was absent.

Public Comment

Ms. Carolyn Hintlian, co-chair of the PAC, spoke to the committee about the Special Education Program Review and thanked Mr. Robert Belmont, Administrator of Student Services, for including the PAC in the process. Ms. Hintlian stated that the audit is a review of the paper trail, but areas for attention should be focused on the access for special needs children in the general education curriculum as well as the accessibility of the facilities.

Student Representative

Meg MacCaughey joined the committee and provided an update on the activities at the high school for the past two weeks. The drama club tryouts for the upcoming play took place, and a cast list has been finalized. The seniors are preparing for the college application process for those interested in early decisions. The SATs are scheduled for October 9th. The high school open house was held last Thursday evening, and many of the teams and clubs were actively fundraising during the evening. There will be an evening football game on October 8th against Burlington.

Winchester Sports Foundation Donation

Ms. Bodie introduced Mr. Bob Montgomery, President of the Winchester Sports Foundation, along with several other members of the board. Ms. Bodie stated that due to budget cuts this year three of the sports programs would be reduced at the high school. With the generosity of the Sports Foundation Mr. Montgomery presented a one-time check in the amount of \$20,000 to the school department to support the athletic programs, with the hope that the school department and the town will be able to find the means to support all the sports programs in the future.

Glen Marmon, captain of the boys' swim team, thanked the Sports Foundation for their donation allowing the swim team, along with the hockey and JV hockey team to continue through the 2004-2005 school year.

NEASC Report

Principal Thomas Gwin, joined the committee to provide an overview of the NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) visitation that occurred in March of 2004. An accreditation is an agreement to engage in continuous school improvement, be monitored by the NEASC and follow through on recommendations. The final grade of the visitation will be available in November, at which time Mr. Gwin will report back to the school committee. The current report is available on the Winchester High School website's home page.

The school committee was interested in seeing if any cost will be involved in the recommended corrective initiatives by the NEASC.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Marini stated that back in August the school committee had voted to approve advertising on school buses. At the request of Safety Officer Houllihan, Dr. Marini met to discuss safety issues around advertising on school buses. Officer Houllihan conveyed to Dr. Marini that school buses were painted a particular yellow color for safety reasons and covering them with advertisements would defeat that purpose. Upon the strong recommendation of Officer Houllihan, Dr. Marini spoke with the contracted company explaining the situation and they were understanding of the safety issues. The company wanted to be known as a company to help raise revenues in a variety of ways. Dr. Marini stated that there will not be advertising on the school busses due to the recommendation of Safety Officer Houllihan.

Dr. Marini stated that the principals, directors and coordinators and the administrators have been involved in a two-day training entitled Visions – understanding differences. The program is supported by a grant from the Winchester Multicultural Network.

Dr. Marini, along with the high school and middle school principals, will be hosting visitors from China next week. The visitors will shadow the administrators offering them a perspective on American teaching. The Winchester administrators will then travel to China in the spring of 2005 to do the same, hoping to create a bond between the two countries.

Dr. Marini spoke about a serious concern at the high school that required immediate attention. The fire curtain in the auditorium needs to be replaced immediately due to fire safety codes. This is a capital project due to the replacement cost of \$35,000. The capital planning committee will need town meeting approval. Unfortunately the school department cannot wait until fall town meeting and is looking for school committee approval to approach capital for a reserve fund transfer.

On a motion by Ms. Swiger, seconded by Mr. Febowitz, the committee unanimously

VOTED to approve the recommendation from Dr. Marini to approach the Finance Committee with a \$35,000 request for transfer of funds for immediate replacement of the curtain at the Winchester High School auditorium.

Dr. Marini stated that at Monday's Board of Selectmen meeting it was unanimously voted to support an override of \$3.933M for a two-year solution. The Board of Selectmen also unanimously voted to approve one question on the ballot for the December 7th override vote. The Board of Selectmen would like the school committee to support the amount of the override, the two-year solution and the one question ballot vote.

On a motion by Mr. Feblowitz, seconded by Ms. Swiger, the committee unanimously

VOTED to send the Board of Selectmen the school committee support of the \$3.933M, two-year override plan that is to be issued as a single override question on December 7th of this year. By our vote it shows our support and enthusiasm for this plan.

Special Education Program Review

Robert Belmont, Administrator of Student Services, joined the committee and gave an overview of the special education Program Review which took place the week of January 12, 2004. The purpose of the review was to evaluate the implementation of selected criteria in the program areas of Special Education, Methods of Administration (Civil Rights), Safe and Drug Free Schools, Title I and Nutrition. Dr. Kerble, Assistant Superintendent, assisted in the areas of Title I and Safe and Drug Free Schools, and Sam Rippin, Director of Finance, assisted in the area of Nutrition. Mr. Belmont reviewed some of the commendations as well as some of the corrective action plans along with their timelines.

Report on Early Release Day

Dr. Kerble provided the committee with a report on the system-wide professional development activities that took place on September 21st. Included in the program was a presentation to faculty, staff and administration with professional speakers Norman Kunc and his wife, Emma Van der Klift, who have traveled widely throughout North America for the past 20 years, advocating for people with disabilities. They currently focus their dynamic efforts on how schools and communities can utilize the diversity of people to build a sense of belonging.

MCAS Report

Dr. Kerble provided the school committee with an overview of the Spring 2004 MCAS testing results by grade and by subject area. Dr. Kerble will provide the committee with an additional review after further analysis has been completed.

School Committee Reports

Ms. Swiger stated that the first meeting of EDCO was held last Thursday and she invited the school committee members to suggest topics of interests for EDCO's consideration. Current topics include health benefits, testing, and the formula for state aid.

Ms. Bodie invited members to consider the annual convention in Worcester sponsored by MASC and MASS. The MASC offers a service on policy updates, and Ms. Swiger suggested researching the package that the school committee purchased several years ago. Mr. Rippin will follow-up on the MASC package.

Future Meeting Dates

The next school committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 5, 2004. There is a planning meeting scheduled for the school committee on Monday, October 4th at 3:30 p.m. An executive session will be posted for that meeting as well.

Adjournment

The school committee meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Adjourned 10:35 p.m.

V. James Marini
Secretary
Approved 10/5/04