

Brookline-Newfane School Board

June 17, 2010

Minutes

Present: Kim Colligan, Ken McFadden, Kim Friedman, Pam Meihak, Lee Anne Parker, Brandy Pickering, April Wellman, Bill Anton, Dover Principal; Bruce Garrow, Newfane Principal; Steven John, WCSU Superintendent; Bettyann Runge, Brookline Principal; Amy Jo Cable, recorder.

Members of the Public: Cynthia Nau

- I. **Call to order, introductions and agenda review:** Kim Friedman called the meeting to order at approximately 6:36 P.M. and made introductions and welcomed Mrs. Nau to the meeting. Bruce Garrow requested time to present a proposal along with Bill Anton for a meal program for the *Newfane Elementary School* (which will, effective July 1, 2010, be known as the *NewBrook Elementary School*).

- II. **Proposal for Meal Program**

Bruce Garrow explained how a hot meal program at the *Newfane Elementary School* would benefit the children of the school and how working in conjunction with Bill Anton's help from the *Dover Elementary School* would be beneficial to the *Newfane Elementary School*. Bill Anton then pointed out that he has a large kitchen at his school and the school's chief is willing to help provide more meals. Bill explained that his chief is efficient and Bill would need to pay him more for the extra work needed to provide the additional prepared food. Bill then discussed the financial risk involved with such a program and how a minimum of \$2,000 is needed from the Board for start-up costs with a quarterly financial commitment. Bill also explained how different state organizations would support the program financially and in other ways.

Bruce pointed out that the meal program would be a lot of work and essential to the success of the program is the Board's support. He went on to say that this type of program would help combat child hunger in our school and explained that approximately 50% of the school's student body is eligible for the state's free lunch program. Bruce said that he has done an informal poll in which he asked parents if they were in favor of a hot meal program; most of the parents who responded were in favor. Bruce explained that some of the start-up costs would make it possible to purchase a thermal container, a freezer, flatware and three sets of trays that were needed. Bill also explained that with this hot meal program the school, by law, is not allowed to make a profit; all money made must be put back into the program.

Kim Friedman stated that she felt that having such a program is worth the risks that Bruce and Bill had mentioned. A discussion followed regarding how the Board would address possible financial problems that might arise in the event there was insufficient participation by the student body in the hot meal program. Bill reminded the Board that, financially, the hot meal program only required a quarterly commitment from the Board.

Brandy Pickering moved to accept Bruce Garrow and Bill Anton's proposed satellite meal program through the Dover School beginning August 31, 2010, with the understanding that this is being undertaken on a trial basis and that details will need to be worked out as the program evolves pursuant to food service authority regulations. Lee Anne Parker seconded. No further discussion. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All (7) were in favor. Motion passed. Kim Friedman requested to go on record in these minutes thanking Bruce and Bill very much for their creative thinking and cost effective proposal.

III. **Community Engagement:**

- Members of the Public: Kim Friedman again greeted Mrs. Nau and asked if she had any concerns or questions for the Board. Mrs. Nau advised that she did not.
- Discussion of ways to improve communication with broader community (*What more could we be doing to inform community members of our work and get their input?*)

Kim Friedman pointed out that the Board has good intentions, but she believes all agree that the Board could do more in this area. Kim pointed out that the Board is looking for ways to keep the community informed on what the Board is doing and how can the Board get more input from the community. Kim Colligan and Brandy Pickering discussed their ideas and a discussion followed with suggestions offered by Board members for possible solutions to the problem. Board members liked the idea of contributing to a town newsletter (as well as Brookline's) but agreed the board cannot take on start-up or maintenance of such a newsletter. **Specific contacts and ideas were suggested which Board members volunteered to follow-up on.**

TASKS

- Pam: talk with Newfane Business Association about starting a town-wide e-newsletter
- Kim Colligan: talk with Meris at Moore Free Library and Williamsville Hall Committee about starting a town-wide e-newsletter

TICKLER (AUGUST): Kim Colligan and Brandy Pickering will report back on progress at our next meeting.

IV. Discuss governance proposal (How can we as a board contribute to a more efficient and effective supervisory union?)

Kim Friedman proposed that our board change how it functions. As a member of the Windham Central Supervisory Union Board's *Ad Hoc Governance Committee* for approximately the last year and a half, she offered suggestions on what directions the Board should take in an effort to contribute to a more efficient and effective supervisory union. Kim referred to her *Governance Proposal* dated June 12, 2010. A discussion followed regarding an *Ad Hoc Governance Committee* suggestion regarding voluntary board collaboration. Kim Friedman discussed Act 153 and possible tax breaks involved for school districts.

Kim then asked the Board to approve numbers one through six on her *Governance Proposal*:

1. **Move as a joint board towards operating based on the policy governance model.** This is consistent with Laura Soares' emphasis on the role of boards, whereby we focus on "going first" (establishing clear and specific goals and expectations) and "going last" (monitoring and evaluation to ensure we are making progress towards our goals and expectations) and spend much less on the nuts and bolts of operating the school. This would require training of board members.
2. **Give the Superintendent the authority to make system changes to increase consistency of operations.**
 - a. Policies
 - Required
 - i. when at all possible keep uniform across boards
 - ii. one policy document with all boards listed rather than multiple documents for same policy
 - iii. authority to SU policy committee- become a consent items at local boards
 - Other Policies
 - i. justify why we have them
 - ii. proactive versus reactive
 - iii. values versus issues
 - iv. policy versus procedures
 - Procedures: vary according to needs of particular schools and communities
 - b. Services: WCSU staff could be 'hired out' to various districts on pro-rated basis to provide some services, e.g.
 - all special education and compensatory services
 - financial services for both school districts via joint contracts with member districts

- c. Contracts: What steps could we take to become more centralized?
- d. Hiring Practices: What steps could we take to become more centralized?
- e. Purchasing: Purchase all contracted services, equipment, and materials through the central office.
- f. Transportation: already part of WCSU contract
- g. Other?

3. Establish goals and based our work on those goals

- a. Use the September retreat to:
 - i. develop annual plan to meet goals
 - ii. create an annual plan to achieve goals

4. Plan meeting agendas based on annual plan

5. Share goals and plans with all boards within the supervisory union

6. Consider joint agenda meetings of chairs

Kim Colligan made a motion to accept numbers one through six on Kim Friedman's Governance Proposal, effective immediately (pages three and four). Pam Meihak seconded. No further discussion. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All (7) were in favor. Motion passed.

Steven John discussed briefly a resource he has which is available to board members called *The School Board Development Library* which is available to board members on CD. Steven advised that interested board members contact him if they wish to sign out any of the materials for their use.

The Joint board then directed Kim Friedman to contact the Chairs of the Dover, Jamaica, Leland and Gray, Marlboro and Townshend boards regarding a possible collaborative meeting together in August of this year. The Joint Board approved by unanimous consent. (7 in favor)

TASKS

- Kim Friedman will draft a proposed plan for implementing recommendations 1-6 above for discussion at the August joint school board meeting.
- Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman and Lee Anne Parker will follow up regarding the planning of such meeting.

V. Approve early education contract with Timson Hill Preschool (*Are we providing increased access to high-quality early education while also supporting high-quality, community-based early child development programs?*)

A discussion followed regarding Steven John's *Public Preschool Partnership Draft Contract* pertaining to *Timson Hill Preschool* located in Newfane. The contract involved Windham Central Supervisory Union entering into a one-year contract with Timson Hill Preschool for the purpose of ensuring high-quality, developmentally appropriate early education services to identified preschool children who are residents of Brookline, Marlboro and Newfane.

Kim Friedman proposed that the board direct Steven John to amend the contract so that the allocation to contracted programs is based on a percent of the actual cost of providing early education services. Kim Colligan seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. Brandy Pickering abstained. All others (6) were in favor. Motion passed.

Kim Friedman made a motion that the Brookline-Newfane School Board direct Steven John to withhold 10% of funds allocated for early education to cover administrative expenses associated with Act 62. Lee Anne seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. Brandy Pickering abstained. Ken McFadden opposed. All remaining (5) were in favor.

VI. Reports:

What are the highlights of activities?

Is there anything to add to the reports?

Are there any questions about the reports?

- Superintendent: Steven John brought forward the auditor's bids that were approved at the WCSU Annual Board meeting on May 26, 2010, for Brookline and Newfane School Districts but which needed this Chair's signature.

Brandy Pickering made a motion to accept the bids from Sullivan, Powers and Co. for the audits for the Brookline School District at \$6,500 and also for the Newfane School District at \$9,500. Kim Colligan seconded. No further discussion. Kim Friedman called for the vote. All (7) were in favor. Steven John then briefly discussed a few points of his Superintendent's report with the Board.

Given that Kim F. will be on vacation, Lee Anne will represent the joint board at the 8/11/10 WCSU Executive Committee meeting to discuss the WCSU's response to the Department of Education's recommended reductions in education spending for FY12 (due out August 1st).

- Newfane Principal: Bruce Garrow passed out the *School Report Card* he had sent home to both Brookline and Newfane Elementary Schools which was

part of the Title One qualifications since it is not school-wide. Bruce stated that the *School Report Card* was also part of the Action Plan. Bruce also pointed out that the school has had two resignations:

- Margo Neal who was the school's Title One staffperson. Bruce added that he has asked Steven John if he can take this vacant Title One position which is about fourteen hours a week and Ann Kennedy's position (since she has decided not to come back next year as well) and combine the two positions into one which would equal approximately thirty-five hours a week.
- A Central Office position is vacant due to Jeannie Deyo's resignation.

Bruce then talked about the wall in the Newfane School building which will be taken out to make an Art and Music room space. Work is due to begin in about two weeks to remove the wall. Also, Bruce advised that on June 21, 2010, staff will begin moving items from the Brookline School building to the Newfane School building for the anticipated new year.

Bruce also noted that he plans on having the locks changed in the Brookline School building by July 1, 2010. April Wellman asked who should be contacted to request permission to use the Brookline School Building in the future. Steven John advised that Bruce Garrow would be that contact person since he is the Principal of the *Newfane Elementary School* (which effective July 1, 2010, will be known as the *NewBrook Elementary School*).

- Brookline Principal: Bettyann reported that the Brookline teachers are working hard at packing materials to be moved to the Newfane School and mentioned that many of the Brookline School students have helped the teachers with that packing. Bettyann reminded us that the Brookline School building is still an educational building and that she, Ken McFadden and Dan Seiden are on a committee which she believes should try to come up with ways to use the building first and then look at the costs that would be needed for those possible uses. She is hoping to have a meeting regarding possible uses for the Brookline School building in the near future.

TICKLER: Betty Ann, Ken and Dan report to joint board at upcoming meeting on their progress.

Kim Friedman requested Bettyann to come back to the board when the committee had suggestions for possible uses for the building. Kim Friedman also thanked Bettyann for her incredible service in Brookline and her dedication to so many children for so long. Kim wanted to acknowledge that there is excitement but also a real feeling of loss in Brookline which Kim understands. Kim also thanked Bettyann for being a wonderful collaborator

and educator and thanked her on behalf of the Board for her vision, her leadership and her support of this collaborative effort.

VII. Consent agenda: approve May 20, 2010, minutes

Brandy Pickering noted one change which Kim Friedman advised she would change and then send to Melanie to be posted. Brandy Pickering made a motion to approve the May 20, 2010, Joint Board minutes as amended. Lee Anne Parker seconded. No further discussion. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All (7) were in favor.

VIII. Next meeting: It was agreed not to meet in July. Kim Friedman advised that further information would become available regarding the possible collaborative meeting in August.

IX. Adjourn: Kim Friedman made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 P.M. Pam Meihak seconded. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All (7) were in favor. Motion passed.