

BROOKLINE-NEWFANE JOINT SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Thursday, October 20, 2011

6:30 PM @ *NewBrook Elementary School*

Draft Minutes

Present: Lee Anne Parker, Somara Zwick, Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman, Ken McFadden, Pam Meihak, Brandy Pickering, Board members; Amy Jo Cable, recorder; Chris Pratt, NewBrook Principal, Emily Bullock, NewBrook School Counselor

- I. **CALL TO ORDER & REVIEW AGENDA:** Kim Friedman called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM. Kim Friedman added one item, the date of the February budget vote, under "Short Discussion Items."
- II. **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** No discussion.
- III. **HOW ARE WE DOING?**

Goal: Review desired student outcomes based on retreat

1. Superintendent's Report (Steven was not able to attend the meeting.)
 - No questions were presented to Kim Friedman re. Steven's report to relay to Steven.
 - Somara Zwick gave a summary of the October 5th *Regional Education District Study Committee* meeting (**RED**). Somara noted that the committee agreed conceptually to an article of agreement requiring the vote of a participating town to approve closing any school. Somara also reported on topics that may be discussed at the upcoming RED meeting in November. A lengthy discussion followed.
 - Chris Pratt, per Steven John's request, shared a recent explanation from the VT Department of Education regarding the allocation of Title I funds within the supervisory union and explained that this clarification responded to an inquiry from the Dover School Board. Chris relayed that the "Supervisory Union must distribute funds to eligible schools via what is known as a process of targeting and ranking. In small student populations SUs the superintendent has considerable discretion how those funds are distributed within the schools based upon need. Typically the superintendent and his administrative team in co-operation with the supervisory union board

ultimately makes those Title I decisions.” Kim Friedman explained that the *Dover School Board* has had some questions recently at WCSU Board meetings re. equitable distribution of our supervisory union’s Title I funds.

TASK: Kim Friedman will request a copy of the department of education’s explanation regarding the allocation of title I funds from Steven John to forward to all board members and also Amy Jo Cable.

2. Principal’s Report

- Chris Pratt reviewed last spring’s NECAP Science results released by the state and pointed out that no students from *NewBrook Elementary School* scored below the state average. Chris explained that the test scores did indicate a weakness in the area of *Earth Space Science*.
 - Kim Friedman asked Chris and board members what budgetary implications for FY13 should be considered re. the weakness in test scores in the area of *Earth Space Science*, in the way of professional development, technology, etc.
 - Ken McFadden noted that having a telescope would be one piece of equipment that would benefit the students.
 - Chris pointed out that in November the teachers and students will take advantage of a trial period using “*Discovery Learning*” which Chris explained he has seen used successfully at the *Dover Elementary School*. Chris advised that it is an online program and costs approximately \$1,200 for the school year.
 - Ken McFadden requested that the *NewBrook Elementary School* implement an end of the year standardized NewBrook science test.

TICKLER: After the FY13 budget is approved, discuss how to use test results in a way that allows tracking individual student progress over time

- Chris Pratt recommended that the Board review the *NewBrook Elementary School’s Transportation Policy* so that it is more specific about residential areas that may not have bus stops close to residents. Chris also advised that he has received a bill from the *Putney Central School* for \$11,134.00 for tuition due for a child attending *Putney Central* who resides on Purple Mountain in Brookline (noted above). A lengthy discussion followed which included what is expected of a school as far as transportation is concerned when students do not live on a designated bus route. Chris referred to the *NewBrook School’s Transportation Policy* (F9), which can be found online. It was agreed that it was up to the

tenant to do due diligence before signing a lease. Ken McFadden moved that any student residing on Purple Mountain Road in Brookline, Vermont, and wishing to attend a public elementary school, shall attend the school district's elementary school. Lee Anne Parker seconded. Some further discussion followed. Kim Friedman called for a vote. Motion passed unanimously. It was agreed that Chris Pratt will follow up with Putney Central School.

- Administration's use of remaining technology funds
 - Chris explained that of the \$11,000 put in the budget this year for technology, there is approximately \$2,000 left that will be used as an emergency fund to repair technology or for Title I. Chris pointed out that the majority of the funds have been spent to get the technology needed into the classrooms early in the school year.
- Ken McFadden congratulated the 6th graders on their recent Bake Sale fundraiser where they raised over \$650.00 to be put towards their trip to Montreal.
- Chris advised that the 6th grade bottle collection shed in the school parking lot has been robbed three times recently and he is considering what type of security measures he will take to alleviate the problem.

IV. **FY13 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT**

Goal: Agree on general parameters for Steven, Frank and Chris to use in drafting FY13 budget for consideration at November Board meeting

1. Kim Friedman briefly reviewed the budget-setting process & timeline.
2. Guiding principles for development of FY13 budget
 - The Board agreed to direct Steven John, Chris Pratt and Frank Rucker to use the three "ends" (goals) identified at the Joint School Board's recent retreat to guide development of the proposed FY13 budget.
 - Other priorities in developing the proposed FY13 budget include:
 - i. Inclusion of up to 20 preschool aged children (early education contracts);
 - ii. \$2,000 for Farm to School Program;
 - iii. Regarding the Brookline school, assume projected costs associated with the building's anticipated use;
 - iv. Funding related to PBIS implementation;

- v. Professional development and the necessary tools and equipment related to curriculum development, including but not limited to math skill building and Earth Space Science instruction;
 - vi. Funding to permit more opportunities for parental involvement;
 - vii. Support of student needs as identified by faculty/staff survey;
 - viii. Reinstate funds for areas that have been cut significantly over the last several years, e.g. textbooks.
3. Amount allocated for compensation of School Board officers (fixed vs. hourly rate)
- There was a lengthy discussion. Lee Anne Parker noted that Kim Friedman (chair) puts in many hours doing board work than any Joint Board member. Brandy Pickering agreed and pointed out that when discussing compensation that the Board needs to be sensitive to that fact.
 - It was general agreement that Board members other than the Chair should be compensated at a flat rate of \$200 (the amount Brookline members currently receive). The Chair should receive substantially more than that amount.
 - It was noted that any changes in compensation must be decided by the individual Boards, not the Joint Board.

TASK: Kim Friedman will discuss board member compensation with Steven John and Chris Pratt and report back at the next joint board meeting

TICKLER: Newfane School Board will discuss changes to compensation of school officers.

4. Breakfast/lunch program: Is it feasible to continue in FY13?
- Chris Pratt advised he increased the lunch personnel's hours from 3 hours a day to 5 hours a day due to the volume of paperwork required by the state and the two trips to the *Dover Elementary School* she makes each school day.
 - Chris also suggested that *NewBrook Elementary School* should try to become more self-sustainable by obtaining more kitchen equipment.
 - Chris also pointed out that having the open buckets of left-over food will cause a rodent problem if not addressed.

TASK: Chris Pratt will consult with Steven John and Frank Rucker to explore possible options for an on-site food program and report back to the Board at its November meeting.

5. Consider early education allotment in light of higher-than-anticipated enrollment

- A lengthy discussion took place that Kim Friedman advising that Frank Rucker, WCSU Chief Financial Officer, had suggested that setting aside an Early Education Reserve Fund (Kim's idea) may not be a good option.
- Ken McFadden pointed out that if a student in the 5th grade moves to one of our school districts (Brookline or Newfane) in the middle of the school year, that student is enrolled, but if the student is preschool aged, that student is not able to continue his/her education in the Brookline or Newfane School districts that year, due to not having been registered by July 1st of the school year. Ken expressed that he believed the Board was not serving all children in this way, as he believes the *Board's Oath of Office* indicates should be done.
- Ken McFadden advised there was a cash flow problem in making payments this year to pre-K providers if they are getting paid twice a year rather than three times a year.

TASK: Kim Friedman will follow up with Steven John (Is there a cash flow concern if we pay early ed. programs twice a year before tax revenues have come in?)

- The Board agreed to direct Steven John and Chris Pratt to budget for up to 20 pre-k students for FY13.

6. Discuss future of Brookline School Building

- Kim Colligan advised that several (5) families have expressed their concerns that money is being spent on the former Brookline School building.
- Chris Pratt pointed out that it costs \$13,000 just to have the heat on.
- Lee Anne Parker requested that the Board fund related costs at the school for another year.
- The Board took no action.
- The Board directed Steven and Chris to prepare the FY13 budget based on projected costs associated with the building's anticipated use.

V. **SHORT DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. Discuss ways to make a detailed proposed budget available to voters ahead of the vote: It was agreed to make the detailed proposed budget available on the NewBrook Elementary School's website with hard copies available at the NewBrook Elementary School, Leland & Gray Jr./Sr. High School in Townshend and the Moore Free Library in Newfane.

TICKLER (JANUARY): Reminder to post the proposed budget on NewBrook Elementary School's website with hard copies available at the NewBrook Elementary School, Leland & Gray Jr./Sr. High School in Townshend and the Moore Free Library in Newfane.

2. Newfane Town Meeting Warning: The Board agreed that it makes sense to warn both the Town & School mtng. for same time then recess one until business of 1st has concluded.

TASK: Kim Friedman will contact Deb Luskin and Gloria Cristelli.

3. February budget vote: The Annual Brookline/Newfane School Districts meeting will be held on Saturday, February 11, 2012, at 10 AM (per the Joint Board contract). Location to be announced.

TASKS

- **Kim Friedman will follow up with Gloria Cristelli, Deb Luskin and Karren Meyer.**
- **Lee Anne Pwill contact Bob Litchfield about reserving the *NewBrook firehouse* for the February 11th meeting.**

TICKLER (NOVEMBER): Board/staff communication (best practice)

4. Recruitment of School Board candidates for 2012 elections
 - a. Pam Meihak and Brandy Pickering advised they will not run when their current term ends.
 - b. Kim Colligan stated she will complete her term.

TASKS

- **Lee Anne Parker will ask Steven John to advise on the terms for the Brookline board members and will report back at the November Joint Board meeting.**
- **Kim Friedman will convene the Newfane School Board to discuss recruitment of 2 new School Officers.**

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Kim Friedman asked if there were any requests to move any item off the consent agenda. No requests made. Kim Friedman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. No discussion. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Motion passed.
 - Approve September Board meeting minutes

- Warn Policies E11 & E12 (E11 Banking and Investment, E12 Fraud Prevention)

TASK: Ken McFadden will assure that policies e11 and e12 are properly warned

ADJOURNMENT: Kim Friedman moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:04 PM. No second. Kim Friedman called for a vote. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

ADDITIONAL TICKLERS (NOVEMBER)

- Administration's recommendation regarding additional professional development funds for training on cross-curriculum implementation
- Administration's recommendation regarding increasing the fund balance (both school districts) to minimize the need to borrow

Upcoming Meetings:

- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **November 2**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **December 14**, 2011, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- *Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee meeting (RED), 7 PM on Wednesday, **January 4**, 2012, in the library at Leland & Gray Union Junior/Senior High School.*
- Annual Brookline/Newfane School Districts meeting, **10 AM** on Saturday, **February 11**, 2012. Location to be announced.

ajc 10/28/11

