

Carlisle School Committee Minutes
September 21, 2005
Robbins Library, Carlisle Public School

Present – School Committee: David Dockterman, Chair; Nicole Burkel, Vice-Chair; Michael Fitzgerald; Christy Barbee, Wendell Sykes.

Present – School Administrators: Marie Doyle, Superintendent; Stephen Goodwin, Principal; Steven Moore, School Business Manager; Michael Giurlando, Assistant Principal.

David Dockterman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Review of Minutes

Mr. Dockterman asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 7, 2005 meeting. Christy Barbee noted that the minutes should include a reference to the discussion about posting the school committee policies on the school's website.

Ms. Barbee made a motion to approve the minutes of September 7, 2005 as amended. Wendell Sykes seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.

Communications/Correspondence

Mr. Dockterman reminded the members that there will be a meeting for all Carlisle town boards with the Selectmen on September 29th. He is planning to attend and asked members if there are particular matters they would like to have him present. Marie Doyle asked him to remind those at the meeting about the presentation by NESDEC and the architects, HFMH, on October 19th. Ms. Doyle also suggested that Mr. Dockterman inform the group about other school matters, including the world language initiatives in the lower grades, the Middle School structure, the contract negotiations, and the energy cost concerns.

Ms. Barbee reported that she is working with a group from Acton to collect material for victims of Katrina. She has been collecting textbooks this week, and area schools have been very helpful.

Ms. Doyle stated that Michael Giurlando has been spearheading a fundraiser at the Carlisle Public Schools to put together backpacks for students in Louisiana.

Superintendent's Report

- A. **Parent coffees.** Ms. Doyle noted that the parent coffees had gone extremely well. Administration may re-structure the Middle School coffee next year to allow parents to more easily meet teachers.

- B. **CCPI.** A planning meeting for the Concord-Carlisle Parent Initiative was held on September 21st in Carlisle. There are excellent programs available, and Ms. Doyle is working on offering some of the programs in Carlisle as most are currently held in Concord.
- C. **Ethics Meeting.** Administrators attended a meeting in Concord with Concord Administrators and the state ethics commission. This was a valuable discussion regarding school ethics.
- D. **Finance Committee liaison.** The new liaison to the School Committee on the Carlisle Finance Committee is David Model. Ms. Doyle and Mr. Moore met with him on September 21st to begin to discuss school finances.
- E. **Middle School Writers' Guild.** Marcella Pixley is starting a writers' guild for the Middle School, and they will be producing a literary magazine.
- F. **Fall sports teams** are underway with large numbers of students participating.
- G. **Student Council** elections are in process. Student speeches and balloting took place this week.
- H. The School will conduct a **lock-down practice** on September 22nd.

Members/Committee Reports

Michael Fitzgerald discussed his interest in getting the Concord and Carlisle School Committees more involved in each other's activities. He suggested that the two School Committees should meet in a joint session to discuss building programs and educational issues in the lower schools that affect high school programs. Ms. Doyle stated that this is a wonderful idea. All members agreed, and Mr. Fitzgerald will continue to pursue this.

Mr. Moore discussed a plan put forward by MSBA to assess school buildings throughout the state. They will be hiring consultants to visit schools and rank buildings in terms of educational adequacy. The results will then be used to rank local projects for state funding.

Mr. Dockterman stated that a meeting was held with representatives from the Carlisle Teachers' Association and the Massachusetts Teachers' Association to begin the contract negotiation process.

Information/Discussion Items

- A. **Proposed slate of policies for review.** Ms. Doyle presented a list of policies for School Committee review. It was agreed that the Administrative Team will review the policies, draft changes, and present the drafts to the School Committee for review and approval.
- B. **Annual Teacher Evaluation Plan.** Ms. Doyle reviewed the evaluation process. It is essentially the same type of process as followed last year. One change is that new state guidelines regarding professional development in subject areas will be introduced to faculty this year.

C. District Goals. Ms. Doyle reviewed the draft of the 2005 – 2006 District Goals with the members. She noted that the School's mission and vision statements have been added to the document and will be reviewed during the year by the new Strategic Planning Team. She stated that the focus of the planning effort will be on respecting differences. She reviewed each curriculum area, described the benchmark work done to date, and noted that the goals mirror the benchmark work done in each area.

The world language program was discussed in detail, and Ms. Doyle noted that there has been much interest in the Chinese language programs. Mr. Fitzgerald expressed his interest in making sure that the School also continues to teach European languages in addition to the focus on Chinese. Ms. Doyle stated that community interest is driving the Chinese language program, and that the School will continue to be guided by input from the community. The intention, however, is not to eliminate other world languages, but to enhance the offerings.

Mr. Sykes asked how the District Goals and the School Improvement Plan developed by the School Council are related and noted over-lap in the two documents. Ms. Doyle stated that there have been discussions regarding the two documents, and that ideally there will eventually be one document.

Ms. Barbee asked about the new 6th grade structure. Stephen Goodwin stated that teachers have been very positive about their ability to make individual connections with students. Both the team and parents agree that the structure is working very well. Ms. Doyle noted that she has heard nothing but accolades from parents and teachers. Ms. Burkel has also gotten good feedback from several parents.

D. 2006 and 2007 Budgets and Energy costs. Mr. Moore discussed the impact of rising energy costs on the school budget. He expects the excess cost to be about \$58,000. He noted that the Administrative Team had discussed some ideas of ways to conserve energy, but that even with taking these steps, there will still be a significant budget impact. Mr. Sykes suggested that the town might use free cash to fund the shortfall. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the best thing is to work with the Finance Committee to come up with a solution. Cuts in the curriculum should be a last resort.

Mr. Moore also distributed the budget timeline he had received from the Finance Committee. He noted that the timeline this year is very aggressive, and that he will not have final budget numbers until past some of the dates set by the Finance Committee.

Citizen Comments

Cynthia Sorn asked for clarification on meeting dates.

Ms. Sorn also asked whether MCAS will cover the Mayan and Incan culture studies, which are being added to the third grade social studies curriculum. Ms. Doyle stated that this material will be part of MCAS.

Ms. Sorn asked about the school's sports fees and whether the fees are similar in other towns. Mr. Moore explained that in general our sports fees barely cover the costs of the programs. The Cross Country program is very popular and helps support other teams. The Carlisle fee is \$180 per student per sport, and the total cost of the programs for the year is about \$35,000.

There was no additional business, and Mr. Dockterman asked for a motion to hold an executive session. He stated that the executive session would be convened to discuss two issues: possible litigation, and contract negotiations. The meeting would not return to open session. **Ms. Burkel made a motion for the meeting to enter executive session. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion. The roll call vote follows: Mr. Dockterman, yes; Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes; Ms. Barbee, yes. The School Committee adjourned into executive session at 9:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent