

Carlisle School Committee
Minutes
January 18, 2006
Ruth C. Wilkins Library, Robbins Building
7:00 PM

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

Present – School Administration: Marie Doyle, Superintendent; Steven Moore, Business Manager; Stephen Goodwin, Principal; Michael Giurlando, Assistant Principal; Linda Stapp, Director of Student Support Services.

David Dockterman called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Review of minutes

Nicole Burkel made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 4, 2006. Wendell Sykes seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of approving the corrected minutes.

Communications/Correspondence

- A. A copy of a letter sent to the Board of Selectmen and to the Finance Committee was included in the meeting packet emailed to School Committee members. The letter asked for the support of the two boards for the Acton Chapter 70 Funding Proposal. Marie Doyle will be attending meetings of the two boards to ask them to vote to support the new funding formula.
- B. A letter from Lynne Carmel, Physical Education teacher, requesting that her daughter attend Kindergarten at the Carlisle School was reviewed.
- C. The third item of correspondence was a letter describing the EQA Audit process, which was distributed to all members. The system for audit has changed and the information and standards have been reduced. It is expected that the Carlisle School will be audited next year.

Superintendent's Report

- A. The parent program, "It Takes a Village" had its first meeting on January 11, 2006. The program discussed parenting teens and pre-teens, and it was a great success. Ms. Doyle noted that the presentation was excellent, particularly the demonstration of the fatal vision goggles.

- B. Louise Thompson came to Carlisle for a follow-up visit to work with faculty teams on benchmarks and on the development of Essential Understandings.

Members'/Committee Reports

Wendell Sykes reported on a joint meeting of the Long Term Capital Requirements Committee and the Finance Committee. The Recreation Commission presented their plan for the Banta-Davis land. Mr. Sykes noted that the FinCom was particularly interested in discussing recreational opportunities for all citizens, not just children. Committee members stated that they would like the Recreation Commission and School Committee to agree on a long-range plan for Banta-Davis.

Christy Barbee reported that at a recent School Building Committee meeting, the architects asked for a sense from the committee of what they thought should be done with Highland, in order to continue their planning. After a discussion, the SBC voted 5 to 1 to recommend that the building not be used to meet school needs. Ms. Barbee asked to have a discussion on the Highland Building on the agenda for the February 1, 2006 School Committee meeting, followed potentially by a motion regarding the building at the following meeting. Mr. Dockterman agreed that this should be an agenda item and asked to have information from the School Building Committee with specifics for the discussion. Ms. Barbee stated that she would have this for the meeting. Mr. Sykes emphasized that the space the building occupies on the campus might be needed for school expansion.

Ms. Barbee noted that parent forums would be held on Thursday, January 19th and Friday, January 20th to get input from the community regarding the master plan. Ms. Barbee and Mr. Moore presented a series of rough conceptual drawings from the architects, who had been asked to present options to the committee.

Ms. Barbee also reported that the assessor from MSBA had met with the team and confirmed that the Spalding Building really should be removed. She stated that the process was very thorough, and the person doing the assessment was very knowledgeable. Next on the agenda for the SBC is a discussion of the necessity for modular classrooms for next school year.

Information/Discussion Items

- A. **8th Grade Field Trip.** Skip Avery and three 8th grade students, Mairead Murphy, Tasha Bjork, and Tracy d'Arbeloff, were present to discuss the purpose and plans for a field trip. As background, Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed a previous discussion about the field trip from the December 7, 2006 School Committee meeting. He noted that committee members were concerned about a possible change in the focus of the trip with the inclusion of a full day spent at Six Flags. He asked Mr. Avery and the students what the class expectations were for the trip. Mr. Avery gave some background on the trip, and described how it has

evolved from a completely educational trip to one combining fun activities for the 8th graders along with educational activities. The social component has become an important part of the trip, and this year's 8th grade students have suggested spending an entire day at Six Flags, rather than just part of a day as in the past.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated a concern that what started as an academic trip may have migrated to a social experience. Mairead described the Carlisle Middle School experience, which begins with the Outdoor Education program in 6th grade and is followed by the 7th grade play. The 8th grade trip brings closure to the MS experience. She expressed a concern that the trip might not be approved. Mr. Sykes stated that the trip is not in question, but rather that the activities and the goal of the trip need to be considered. Mr. Dockterman agreed that it's important to celebrate the completion of Middle School, and would like to have a goal for the trip. It should be more than an opportunity to visit Six Flags.

Ms. Barbee stated that there are many social activities and celebrations at the end of 8th grade. She noted that if the trip is completely social, it should not take place under the purview of the school, but should be outside of school time, and organized by parents. Mr. Avery responded that the first day the class would visit museums. Mr. Goodwin noted that when he attended the field trip, there was a great deal of concern on the part of the adults about the night hours. He felt that if the second day were student driven, there might be fewer problems at the hotel. Ms. Doyle stated that she feels it's important that the class have time together at the end of 8 years. She supports the idea that they should spend the second day at Six Flags.

Mr. Sykes stated he would like to hear more from the students. Tasha stated that the students had researched museums on line and thought that it would be valuable and educational to visit the Norman Rockwell Museum. They also found a Butterfly Conservancy on-line that they would like to visit. Tracy thought that if the students are well behaved they deserved to have a fun day for the second day. Mr. Dockterman stated that he was pleased to hear that students have been involved in the planning of the trip. Mr. Avery stated that there has been a great deal of positive feedback on the trip from previous students and parents. Ms Barbee suggested that the 8th graders might produce a report at the end of the trip, a lessons learned document, for the next year's class. Mr. Avery stated that they are still working on the logistics of the trip with the bus company. Mr. Dockterman stated that the School Committee looks forward to receiving a final plan for the trip.

- B. **PE/Health Curriculum Presentation.** Margaret Heigl began the presentation by thanking the School Committee for their support and by acknowledging the support of the CSA, CEF, and the School Administration. She introduced the other members of the department and noted the roles of each member. She particularly expressed appreciation to Phil Lapalme, who will be retiring this year after an outstanding career of over 20 years.

Ms. Heigl discussed a new inter-disciplinary social studies unit, which will involve the study of different communities in social studies classes along with learning games and dances from the community in physical education classes. She also described a community service project done by the 8th graders, Mackenzie Dray and Erica Pernice. The students painted a mural of the United States on the wall of the gym. Ms. Heigl ended her presentation by showing 3 public service announcements developed by the 8th grade health class last year.

Mr. LaPalme followed and discussed dance instruction. He taught traditional dances to 3rd and 4th grade classes for the first time this year. He also taught country and western line dancing to 5th grade. Seventh and eight graders are developing their own dances. Friday Night Live has started to include some of the line dances Mr. LaPalme has taught in class.

Ms. Carmel described the work she is doing with heart monitors in one of the sixth grade classes. She showed printouts from the monitors for two students over the course of a class. She also uses digi-walkers in class to track miles walked

Linda Stapp described the work of the newly formed Wellness Committee. The charge of the committee is to develop a wellness policy, as part of a federal mandate. In addition, the committee will eventually be working on wellness programs to address all aspects of wellness, including nutritional health. Ms. Burkel suggested that the group look into federal grants for after school programs targeted at overweight children. Dr. Stapp responded that they would plan to do this in the future.

Ms. Doyle took a moment to recognize Mr. LaPalme for his teaching over the years. He is a tremendous teacher and the School is going to miss him very much.

Mr. Dockterman asked Ms. Heigl to summarize the needs of the department. She stated that they would like to have drinking water on the field as well as a call box. There is also a space crunch in the gym area. It would be ideal to have an additional part-time teacher to increase the department's offerings. Ms. Doyle said that she would talk to the Recreation Commission about having water on the field.

Mr. Dockterman asked about the integration of Second Step into the curriculum. Ms. Heigl stated that the best thing about the program is its integration, and she gave examples from the 6th and 7th grades which incorporate anti-bullying into their studies.

- C. **School Council Update.** Stephen Goodwin distributed an update report on School Council activities. The main focus of the group has been to read and discuss "Schools Where Everyone Belongs" by Stan Davis. Sharon Grossman

and Jenny Bove recommended the book, which addresses all forms of bullying and describes the Olweus bullying prevention system. Included in the handout was a description of the many components of the Olweus system. On the evening of May 10th, Carlisle Public School staff members will facilitate a discussion regarding the book. The discussion will be open to all members of the school community. Ms. Barbee noted that everyone in the school community must be involved in an anti-bullying program, including adults in their interactions with students. Mr. Dockterman agreed that the prevention of bullying must be pervasive throughout the entire school at all levels.

- D. **Energy Cost/Budget Update for 05 – 06.** Steven Moore discussed the chart and graph, which were emailed to committee members as part of the packet. He also distributed updated graphs for electric and natural gas costs, which included the most recent bill. Mr. Moore noted that we would be joining the EDCO Collaborative for the purchase of natural gas. This will save the school about 15% in natural gas costs. At this point we will be well above this year's budget for natural gas. Electricity will likely top off at about \$20,000 above the budgeted amount for the year.

Mr. Sykes asked about the status of the boilers. Mr. Moore stated that he has been working with a vendor, Richard D. Kimball, to determine the best approach to fixing or replacing the boiler. David Flannery has met with the original manufacturer of the boiler, and they are providing quotes for repairing the boiler.

The current year's actual expenses are running under budget by about \$200,000. Mr. Moore stated that the budget is in good shape at this point. He noted that the Waste Water Treatment Plant might come on-line in May. If it doesn't, a decision will have to be made about the best timing for this, since it's necessary to have maximum flows when the plant first comes on-line.

- E. **Potential Warrant Articles.** Three potential warrant articles were discussed: modular classrooms, a new boiler, and a potential override to support the operating budget, once it is finalized. Mr. Moore will contact Madonna Mackenzie to ask her for placeholders for the articles and to find out the timetable for finalizing articles.

Action Items

- A. **Mr. Sykes made a motion to support the Acton Proposal for Chapter 70 minimum funding of \$2000 per student. Ms. Barbee seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.**

Citizens' Comments

Ms. Sorn asked if it might be better to wait to address the Highland issue until later in the school building process. Ms. Barbee responded that in order for the process to go forward, it's essential to resolve the Highland question. Mr. Dockterman agreed that the committee needs to determine the educational value of the building, and that will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Sorn noted that the students are ready to dance at the 7th grade play try-outs because of the successful PE dance program.

Adjournment

There was no additional business, and **Ms. Barbee made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussion negotiations. The meeting would not return to a public session. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion, and members voted as follows: Ms. Barbee, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes; Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Dockterman, yes.**

The public meeting was adjourned at 10:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent