

Carlisle School Committee
Minutes
April 5, 2006
Ruth C. Wilkins Library, Robbins Building
7:03 PM

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

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

David Dockterman called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

School Budget Public Hearing

Mr. Dockterman opened the public hearing. Marie Doyle introduced the budget discussion by reading the vision and mission statements of the Carlisle Public Schools. She then reviewed accomplishments of the school over the past year and listed the goals for next school year. Steven Moore discussed the budget to be presented at Town Meeting on May 1st through a set of slides. He also noted that detailed budget documents are on the school website. He opened the floor to questions from the public. Liz Gray questioned the change in the number of 6th grade teachers next year compared to the current year.

Mr. Dockterman asked for a motion to close the public hearing. **The motion was made by Wendell Sykes and seconded by Nicole Burkel. All members voted in favor of closing the public hearing.**

Review of minutes

Nicole Burkel made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 15, 2006. Christy Barbee seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the minutes with minor corrections as noted.

Communications/Correspondence

Ms. Doyle referenced a letter that David Zuckerman sent asking to have his daughter attend the Carlisle School next year.

A memo has been sent to the Board of Selectmen, FinCom, and Long Term Caps Committee inviting them to a meeting on April 6th to review the campus master plan in advance of Town Meeting. Members agreed to hold the meeting in the Auditorium.

Ms. Barbee stated that she had received notification from Cindy Nock offering to train someone to film school committee meetings.

Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the School Committee had received a letter from the CTA expressing concerns about school operations.

Superintendent's Report

- A. **Superintendent for the Day.** Marie Doyle introduced two students, Will Parra and Sam Isaacs, who were serving as superintendent interns for the day as a result of the CSA/CEF Auction.
- B. **Principal Update.** Ms. Doyle noted that Patrice Hurley and Paul Graseck have been hired as principals. She thanked the hiring committee, who devoted many hours to the process.
- C. **Food Service Update.** An internal candidate, Susan Robichaud, will fill the position on an interim basis through the end of the year. Steve Moore has done an excellent job working with her.
- D. **Band Director Search.** This search is nearing an end with 2 finalists coming to school tomorrow for a final visit. Ms. Doyle thanked the fine arts team members, who have been involved in the selection.
- E. **ELA Presentation.** There will be an ELA roundtable sponsored by the CSA on May 16th.
- F. Two **Math Roundtables** have been held and many parents attended.
- G. **Superintendent Coffees.** Both morning and evening coffees were held, and attendance was especially good at the morning coffee.
- H. **CSA/CEF Auction.** The auction raised \$85,000 for the school and was a wonderful event.
- I. **MICCA.** Ms. Doyle congratulated the music department for gold medals won by the senior band and the middle school choir.
- J. **China Trip.** Four teachers and Ms. Doyle will be leaving for China at the end of the week. Ms. Doyle is part of a principal shadowing project and hopes to set up a partnership with a Chinese school. Several Massachusetts' superintendents and principals will be joining the trip.
- K. **Iditarod Breakfast.** The 2nd grade Iditarod breakfast was held this morning, and Ms. Doyle reported that it was a success as usual. It's a wonderful unit of study, incorporating many areas of the curriculum.

Members'/Committee Reports

Ms. Barbee reported on the School Building Committee. The architects have developed cost estimates for three different plans. These estimates and plans will be presented at the public master plan meeting on April 26th. Student interns, Sam Isaacs and Will Parra gave their thoughts on school needs. Sam stated that he thought all spaces should be larger. He said that Ms. Dayson, elementary art teacher, should have more of a classroom rather than a closet as she now has. He also stated that there should be more space, including room for dancing, in the music room. Will Parra said that he

thinks it's too dangerous on the plaza, particularly since it's all pavement, and he hopes that the new school will have a grassy play area. He also noted that the Carlisle Castle poses safety problems, partly because it's a wooden structure. Mr. Dockterman invited the interns to attend the School Building Committee presentation on April 26th. Mr. Fitzgerald asked if SBC would recommend one of the three plans. Ms. Barbee stated that right now they are just looking at the plans and are not yet ready to recommend a single plan.

Ms. Burkel reported that the Regional School Committee has put together a new budget mailer. She also stated that there is a new CORI policy and she brought a copy of the policy and gave it to Ms. Wilcox. She noted that a citizen had come to the meeting and was proposing two Concord Town Meeting articles to limit the use of cameras at the school. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that such a vote would not be binding on the RSC. Ms. Burkel also reported on a new Buddy Program in which high school students are paired with younger students. She described a service project done with the Sharing Foundation to support Cambodian orphanages.

Information/Discussion Items

A. Fine Arts Presentation. Tom O'Halloran began the presentation by noting that curriculum benchmarks have been completed in all fine arts areas. He reviewed the community connections, which enhance the arts program, including the DeCordova Museum, Gleason Library, and Highland artists.

Mr. O'Halloran introduced Kirsten Neale, who has been serving as a long-term substitute for Angela Monke. She reviewed the areas studied in the elementary music program this year. She thanked members of the staff and the larger Carlisle community for the support she has received throughout the year.

Megan Fitzharris began by thanking the CSA for their support in purchasing African instruments. She highlighted 4 program areas:

- The integration of the new African instruments, all of which will be used in the June concerts.
- Development of a music literacy program this year in grades 4 and 5 as part of her Master's degree program.
- Once Upon a Mattress. Ms. Fitzharris particularly thanked the parent producers, choreographer, and the choral coach for their contributions to a successful play.
- The choral program, which has been highly successful. It has grown dramatically, and the choir won a gold medal at MICCA this year.

Rachel Dayson, first year elementary art teacher, described her background and stated that she's thrilled to be in Carlisle. She noted that she's received tremendous support from Marie Doyle, Steve Goodwin, and the entire staff. She

thanked Courtney Hadley for her help as well and said that they are developing into an excellent team. Ms. Dayson had displayed artwork from her students around the library, and she described the lessons used to produce the various works. She noted that she's been amazed at the quality of work produced by Carlisle elementary students. Ms. Dayson is a working artist and said that she will be having a show in Boston in early May. She showed members some of her own watercolors.

Courtney Hadley next discussed the Middle School visual arts program. She stated that she's having the best year ever in her first year of teaching middle schoolers. She's enjoying working with Ms. Dayson and their work has resulted in better integration of the elementary and middle school art programs. She showed a set of slides reviewing the curriculum highlights. She emphasized the value of the DeCordova Gallery on the Go exhibition. She then showed slides of some of the students' work. She also showed committee members tiles her students had made, and noted that she and Ms. Dayson began to use the kiln in the Brick Building. Ms. Doyle commented that the way Ms. Hadley and Ms. Dayson have worked together has been outstanding.

Mr. O'Halloran summarized the status of the instrumental music program. He stated that 239 students are involved in the program. He's confident that the new instrumental music director will have a great base to build on. He offered to serve as a mentor for his replacement. He stated that he's very proud of the consistency of the music program over the many years he's been in Carlisle. He discussed the factors that have made the program successful: parents, administration, in-school instruction, and the incentive basis of the program. He publicly thanked Marilyn Harte for telling him about the opening in Carlisle many years ago. Sam Isaacs and Will Parra said a few words of thanks to Mr. O. Will stated that he loves Mr. O's personality when he teaches. Sam noted the jokes that Mr. O tells at the beginning of each rehearsal.

Ms. Doyle then spoke about Mr. O's accomplishments and his reputation in the state educational community. She thanked him for his many years of service and his master teaching. He has always done an outstanding job.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he is continually impressed by the fine arts program at the school. Mr. Dockterman added that we have a great program, and we are very lucky to have such a program and such an outstanding staff.

- B. Budget Mailer. Mr. Dockterman asked if there was any input regarding the budget mailer Mr. Moore had sent to committee members. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested mailing the Concord-Carlisle and Carlisle mailers at the same time. Ms. Burkel noted that she had a couple of suggestions, which she would pass on to Mr. Moore. Mr. Moore will incorporate changes and send it back out to committee members.

- C. School Committee Website. Ms. Wilcox reported that she had added the town report to the website and asked members how they would like to handle the publication of email addresses. It was decided to set up a single school committee mailbox, which she will check on a periodic basis and forward relevant emails to the committee chair.
- D. Superintendent's Evaluation. Mr. Dockterman asked that members send him input for Ms. Doyle's evaluation by April 27th in preparation for the evaluation discussion at the May 3rd meeting.

Action Items

- A. **Vote to approve the 8th grade trip.** Mr. Goodwin distributed the itinerary for the trip and discussed it with the committee. He stated that students had voted overwhelmingly to approve the itinerary. Mr. Fitzgerald asked about the academic value of the second day of the trip. Mr. Goodwin responded that the second day is not academic in nature, but a day to celebrate the 8th graders' shared experience in Carlisle. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he does not agree with the school sponsoring a non-academic trip. Ms. Doyle stated that she is in favor of the trip, as the social connections and experiences are important for the students. Mr. Goodwin stated that when the trip has been totally academic, it has not worked well. Ms. Burkel asked that the trip be discussed at a School Committee meeting early in the year next year. Ms. Wilcox will add this item to an agenda in September next year,

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the 8th grade trip as detailed. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Citizens' Comments

Ms. Sorn asked about the funding for the 8th grade trip. Mr. Goodwin responded that families pay for the trip, with funds provided for students who can't otherwise afford to go.

Ms. Sorn asked for clarification regarding the elementary world language program for next year.

Ms. Tucker asked how the China trip was funded. Ms. Doyle stated that this is provided through CEF support of Primary Source memberships and a Freeman Foundation grant. Ms. Tucker asked why teachers would be going to China again and not to other countries. Ms. Doyle responded that Primary Source has done the most work in China and that China is recognized by most state districts as one of the most important countries to develop partnerships.

Ms. Tocci would like to have a link on the school website to information of interest to CPAC. Ms. Doyle suggested that she meet with Linda Stapp and Ms. Doyle to discuss this.

Ms. Harris asked for clarification regarding the letter sent by the CTA to the School Committee. Mr. Dockterman stated that the committee is following up on it. Ms. Tucker asked if the letter would be made public. Mr. Dockterman stated that it was not meant to be made public.

Mr. Gushue asked for information regarding the superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Dockterman discussed the process including the information gathered by committee members from teachers and other members of the community.

Ms. Tocci also asked about the evaluation process. Mr. Dockterman described the form used by members to prepare comments, and stated that a summary is then prepared and presented based on the member reports. He noted that the form should probably be discussed and modified in the future and be based more on meeting goals.

Alex Krapf stated that a description of the evaluation process is an example of information that should be added to the website.

Ms. Tucker suggested that a form might be developed to send out to teachers and parents to get additional input.

Ms. Hicks asked when the summary would be presented. Mr. Dockterman stated that this would be done on May 3rd. She then asked about the amount contact the superintendent has with the School Committee and whether they would know enough about her work based on two School Committee meetings a month. Ms. Doyle stated that she has daily contact with School Committee members.

Ms. Driscoll asked if the individual SC evaluations become public. Mr. Dockterman stated that they do not.

Ms. Tocci stated that she thought teachers should be more involved in the superintendent evaluation process. Mr. Dockterman stated that all comments are welcome, but they should not be anonymous. Other members agreed that they would not want to accept anonymous comments.

Ms. Tucker noted that it's important to have a good evaluation process, especially with the possibility of a contract extension for the superintendent upcoming. Mr. Dockterman stated that Ms. Doyle has encouraged members to gather information from all possible sources.

Mr. Sykes stated that he was disturbed by the discussion, because he puts many hours into the evaluation process and takes it very seriously. He has gotten the sense from

the public comments that people do not have understand or appreciate the amount of work done, information gathered, and care taken during the process.

Ms. Tocci apologized and stated that she appreciates the work done by the School Committee.

Mr. Fitzgerald read the introduction to the evaluation form, in response to a question from Mr. Gushue.

Adjournment

There was no additional business, and **Mr. Sykes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Burkel seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.**

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent