

Carlisle School Committee
Minutes
June 21, 2006
Ruth C. Wilkins Library, Robbins Building
7:00 PM

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

Present – School Administration: Marie Doyle, Superintendent; Steven Moore, Business Manager; Claire Wilcox, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Nicole Burkel called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Volunteer Hall of Fame

Marie Doyle, Superintendent, recognized three extraordinary volunteers: David Dockterman, Stephanie Smith, and Abha Singhal.

She noted the contributions each have made to the Carlisle Public Schools over the past several years. Mr. Dockterman served on the School Committee for 9 years and provided guidance and leadership for the committee during a time of transition. He has been a mentor to superintendents and open to teachers and staff. He always has the best interests of children in mind. He has contributed software from his company to the Carlisle School and constantly shared his ideas about education with the school.

Stephanie Smith has been a strong supporter of the music program and has volunteered in every aspect of the program.

Abha Singhal has contributed in countless ways, including reorganization of spaghetti supper finances and organization of the school and town India celebration. She is a quiet force behind the scenes for the CSA and is always called on when something needs to be done. She has served as the CSA treasurer for three years, and has always been ready to help with anything needed.

The names of the three recipients have been added to the volunteer recognition plaque. Ms. Singhal and Ms. Smith were presented with flowers. The school presented Mr. Dockterman with an engraved clock to mark his extraordinary tenure on the School Committee.

Review of minutes

Christy Barbee made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 7, 2006. Wendell Sykes seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the minutes with minor changes.

Communications/Correspondence

The following items were included in the communications folder for members' review:

- Congratulatory note to Sandy Kelly recognizing her leadership on the Executive Board of the Massachusetts School Library Media Association
- Thank you note to Mr. and Mrs. David Reed for the Old Home Day donation of \$200 to the Middle School art program
- Thank you letter to Cyd McCann and David Zuckerman for advising The Bite
- Congratulatory note to Marcella Pixley for Pandora's Box
- Letter from the MA DEP summarizing the WWTF operating report
- Copy of Pandora's Box
- Copy of the Yearbook

Superintendent's Report

Marie Doyle reported on the following school activities:

- A. Class plays
- B. Spring band concerts
- C. Tom O'Halloran alumni concert
- D. Middle School transition meetings
- E. 7th and 8th grade portfolio reviews
- F. New England Percussion Ensemble assemblies
- G. 8th grade trip
- H. Student recognition assembly
- I. Many class trips to Kimballs to celebrate the final days of the school year
- J. Move up day
- K. Graduation and the graduation dance
- L. Field days

Members'/Committee Reports

- A. **Regional School Committee.** Michael Fitzgerald reported on the regional school committee. He stated that the most recent meeting covered routine issues with the highlight being a report on the Concord Middle School students' trip to China.
- B. **School Building Committee.** Ms. Barbee reported that the building committee had not met but that she, Mr. Sykes, and Ms. Doyle had attended a meeting of the Massachusetts School Building Association. She noted that the recommended make-up of school building committees is excessive for a small town like Carlisle. She and Ms. Doyle also noted that there is not a large amount

of funding available. Ms. Doyle stated that she was disappointed with the progress made by the MSBA. The presenters stated that systems can expect to get 31% of project costs as a starting point. There will be a large amount of competition for funds as projects are currently backed up. Ms. Burkel asked Mr. Moore if he has developed a transition plan for the WWTF with the new business manager. He stated that he has not done that yet.

Information/Discussion Items

A. District Goals Final Report

Ms. Doyle discussed the highlights of the 2005-2006 District Goals Report with the Committee. She showed a Power Point presentation, which summarized the outcome of the goals process for the current school year. She discussed each area of the report and noted specific accomplishments.

She discussed the upcoming strategic planning process and the promotion of diversity and respect on campus.

She then reviewed curriculum highlights in all subject areas.

She discussed the achievements of the student support services department. She stressed the anti-bullying work done, and the parent training programs presented this year.

She noted that the mid-year compliance report was submitted to the state and discussed areas in which we need to improve, including establishment of an ELL program.

She discussed the changes in the Systems Thinking program this year. With the loss of the Waters Grant, we are attempting to integrate Systems Thinking through training teachers.

She noted changes in the technology program and in the area of library and media.

She next reviewed the section of the report called "Sound Instructional Practices." She noted staff development efforts, including the development of the benchmarks in all areas.

The final section of the report discussed managing the operations of the school. Ms. Doyle discussed Business Office initiatives, the mentoring program, the new middle school structure, the reorganization of the administration, facility upkeep and needs, and the increased technical component of school operations.

She then summarized the highlights of the year across all areas of the school and noted priorities for next year as follows:

- Developing a strong leadership team
- Work with staff to build a trusting environment
- Develop a review cycle for all curriculum areas
- Conduct a math review
- Have a year of respect and appreciating differences
- Increase student leadership and anti-bullying
- Begin a strategic planning process
- Conduct parent roundtables on writing
- Update the technology plan
- Determine an assessment process for meeting benchmarks

Ms. Burkel thanked Ms. Doyle for her presentation and stated that much has been accomplished during the year.

Ms. Burkel asked how goals would be developed for next year. Ms. Doyle stated that a challenge is to involve faculty more closely in the process so they all understand the goals.

Ms. Burkel also asked how we might celebrate the completion of the goals for each year. Ms. Doyle stated that she would do a presentation on the District Goals at the opening faculty meeting and in the future would like to have a closing faculty meeting. The document will also be posted on the school's website.

B. Teacher Assignments

A listing of faculty and staff currently assigned was included in the meeting packet and was reviewed by Ms. Doyle. She noted new hires and changes for next year in staff assignments. Seven people have been hired to date.

Ms. Barbee asked how many special educators we have. Ms. Doyle stated that we have 16, including therapists.

C. Summer Curriculum Work Plans Report

Over 220 days of summer work have been approved, and committee members had a listing, which was distributed as part of the packet. Ms. Doyle noted that she has approved all projects and that excellent work is planned.

Ms. Burkel asked what the reporting process was for the projects. Ms. Doyle stated that summaries of the work are prepared. Ms. Burkel suggested sharing the reports among all faculty.

D. John Ballantine – Demographics Discussion

Ms. Barbee introduced John Ballantine, who has done a demographic study of the town. Mr. Ballantine stated that his studies are in line with the study done by the school consultants. He has been collecting demographic data over several years and noted that the largest trend is a decline in the population of child bearing women in town. Without an increased growth rate, there could be a large decrease in the population of the school.

As of April this year, only 18 children were born in Carlisle in contrast to the usual birthrate of 31 in the same time period. He stated that we are in a decreasing birth cycle and the challenge is to plan for this down cycle.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if Mr. Ballantine had reviewed pre-school enrollments. He has not investigated this.

Mr. Ballantine noted that Carlisle has an aging population and that people tend to stay in Carlisle as they age, rather than moving as happens in many communities.

Ms. Doyle asked if there is an increase in adoptions as the population ages. Mr. Ballantine does not have information on this.

Mr. Ballantine distributed several sheets in which he summarized population projections. Ms. Burkel asked him to walk members through the material. He highlighted information on an enrollment projection graph, which shows school populations by 2010 of between 720 and 790.

Other material summarized house sales and inflow of children, which seems stable, and birth rates. He included actual enrollment numbers, current and projected under a normal growth scenario. He then discussed projected enrollment numbers including 40B developments. He stated that unlike some others, he does not think that all 40Bs are bad for the town.

He also discussed a chart showing the age breakdown of the Carlisle population, which has changed dramatically since 1990 in that the largest segment of the population is over 40. The final page of Mr. Ballantine's handout reviewed the tax burden in Carlisle.

Alex Krapf asked if Mr. Ballantine has done any comparisons between projections and actual school population. Mr. Ballantine stated that he has and that the projections are close to actual. Ms. Doyle confirmed this.

Mr. Ballantine stated that the town will have to look at these projections in terms of building projects and capital priorities for the town. Ms. Doyle noted that the Spalding Building is in very bad shape, and needs to be replaced regardless of the numbers of students. She noted that the school is already overcrowded. Ms. Burkel stated that it is also important to have flexible space.

Ms. Barbee asked what the capital planning project status is with the selectmen. Mr. Ballantine responded that the process is not moving as quickly as hoped. A cross-functional team has been put together by the selectmen to carry out the planning project.

Mr. Sykes stated that we may need to consider temporary classrooms if the building project is delayed.

Mr. Ballantine asked about the details of the capital planning process in Concord. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that there were cross-functional teams and a large amount of communication done.

Ms. Burkel stated that we have both a space crunch and a dilapidated building (Spalding), so there are two compelling reasons to begin a building project.

The committee thanked Mr. Ballantine for attending the meeting and opened the meeting to citizen comments.

Ms. Sorn asked how Mr. Ballantine could be sure that there would not be a growth boom. He stated that eventually there would be an increase, but it is uncertain as to the timing of changes. Mr. Ballantine's study covers the short term and does not project out 20 years.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked what the average family size is in Carlisle. Mr. Ballantine stated that it is 2.9.

E. Awarding of Professional Teacher Status

The following teachers are completing their third year at the Carlisle Public Schools and are being awarded the status of professional teacher, which affords them specific rights in a layoff situation:

- Jenny Bove
- Tracy Cimino
- Bethany Giusti
- Jennifer Lyons Foundas
- Erin McAuley

- Cyd McCann
- Erica Molvig
- Anna Noltz
- Amy Sutherland

F. Set Next Year's Meeting Schedule

Members reviewed the proposed meeting schedule distributed with the information packet for the meeting and agreed to the dates.

G. Set Date/Discuss August Meeting/retreat

It was agreed that Ms. Wilcox and Ms. Doyle will come up with potential dates for a meeting and then send them out to members.

Other Business

Ms. Barbee asked about the periodic water problems that have occurred this year. Mr. Moore stated that a new dishwasher would help, but that usually there is a plumbing problem to explain the shortage. Ms. Doyle suggested purchasing a chemical toilet for backup use in these situations.

Mr. Moore stated that this is definitely an issue and may become worse in the future. The well is not the issue; there is a plentiful supply of water, but it is not always getting to the building as required.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the water problem was addressed in the master plan. Ms. Barbee stated that it was but that more needs to be done regarding interim solutions for plumbing problems. Mr. Sykes suggested adding an hourly flow indicator to the system, which would give the school warning that a problem was developing. Mr. Sykes also stated that when the new boiler is installed, space might be freed up for a new tank. Ms. Barbee asked to meet with David Flannery to discuss the issue, and Ms. Doyle stated that she would schedule a meeting.

Action Items

A. Library Policy Vote

Mr. Sykes made a motion to approve the revised library policy (#4.03.2001) as discussed at the meeting of June 7, 2006. Ms. Barbee seconded the motion and all members present voted in favor.

B. Vote Temporary Change in Signature Policy

Mr. Sykes made a motion to temporarily change the School Committee signature policy to require two signatures during the months of July and August. Mr. Koski seconded the motion.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked that Susan Pray email the entire committee when a warrant is ready for signature.

All members present voted in favor.

Citizens' Comments

Mr. Krapf asked if the benchmarks would be available on line. Ms. Doyle stated that we would get them on-line during the summer.

Mr. Krapf asked who would be responsible for the pre-school. Ms. Doyle stated that this would be clarified between Patrice Hurley and Karen Slack.

Mr. Krapf recommended that a new math program called ALEC be reviewed.

Mr. Krapf asked about French class sizes.

Mr. Krapf stated that he had done a presentation during international week and that he was surprised that students don't know the differences among various western cultures.

Mr. Krapf has noticed disrespect for the playground aides and Ms. Doyle agreed that she is very concerned about this and will ask the principals to address this.

Ms. Sorn asked about the cost of the facilitators for the strategic planning process, and Ms. Doyle stated that she does not yet know the cost but will be developing a budget.

Ms. Sorn asked for clarification about the potential middle school trip to China. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that it is an exchange program between families in the area and families in China.

Ms. Sorn asked for confirmation that a new Spanish teacher would be hired. Ms. Doyle confirmed this.

Kris Tocci asked about the capabilities of the parent module of the student information system. Ms. Wilcox summarized these.

Ms. Tocci stated that she talked with Tony Mariano, a local citizen, who would be happy to share his geological knowledge with school classes. It was noted that Mr. Mariano already works with some classes.

Cathy Fink asked for clarification regarding numbers of teachers achieving professional status. Ms. Doyle stated that we are seeing an increase in the number of teachers achieving professional status.

Mary Storrs stated that this year has been her first experience with the Carlisle Public Schools and that it has been a fabulous year and she is looking forward to many more years. Ms. Fink seconded agreed that her experience has also been outstanding.

Kelly Driscoll asked when the School Committee would vote to accept the CSA funds. Ms. Doyle stated that we need a final list and would put an action item on the agenda in September to approve the funds.

Ms. Driscoll asked for clarification regarding the consulting process for team building and strategic planning. Ms. Doyle stated that the consultants would first work with the leadership team. They will then advise us on the strategic planning process. We may look to community expertise to work on strategic planning.

Ms. Tocci asked the difference between the roles of Cyd McCann and Carolyn Luby. She asked if Ms. McCann will be getting an aide. Ms. Tocci asked for help getting a link to CPAC from the school website.

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter executive session to discuss a personnel issue. The meeting will return to public session. Mr. Koski seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor: Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Mr. Koski, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes; Ms. Barbee, yes.

The committee entered executive session at 9:55 pm.

The meeting returned to open session at 10:05 pm

Mr. Sykes made a motion to approve the superintendent's contract with a 2.5% salary increase with additional compensation of \$1000 each for meeting 3 additional goals. Ms. Barbee seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor of the motion.

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Koski seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The public meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent