

Carlisle School Committee
Minutes
May 2, 2007
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; Heidi Zimmerman, Business Manager; Paul Graseck, Principal; Patrice Hurley, Principal; Karen Slack, Director of Student Support Services; Claire Wilcox, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Nicole Burkel called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Ms. Burkel opened the public hearing on the school choice for 2007 - 2008. The School Choice law was reviewed and a brief discussion followed regarding Carlisle's participation. Mr. Fitzgerald noted that the only school in the area having this program is Acton-Boxborough. It was noted that a school can set specific numbers of students to take in the program. Ms. Doyle recommended going along with past practice and not participating due to lack of space in classrooms.

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to close the public hearing. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion and all members present voted in favor. A vote on school choice participation will be taken at the May 16th meeting.

Public Comment Period

Ms. Burkel welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked if any members of the public had comments. There were no comments.

Ms. Doyle thanked Christy Barbee for her service on the School Committee. She had written a tribute to Ms. Barbee in which she recognized her many contributions and thanked her for serving. She presented Ms. Barbee with a plant on behalf of the committee.

Ms. Burkel then recognized Claire Wilcox and Heidi Zimmerman for their service to the School Committee. Ms. Zimmerman has done a great job in her first year with a difficult budget. Ms. Wilcox does much work behind the scenes and has made Ms. Burkel's job as chair easier.

Review of minutes

Mr. Sykes made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of April 4, 2007. Christy Barbee seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the minutes, except Mr. Fitzgerald who was not at the meeting.

Communications/Correspondence

The following items were reviewed:

- Thank you letters to Liz Bishop and the Carlisle School Association regarding the budget meeting held at Town Hall
- Thank you letters to the Fine Arts Department for their School Committee presentation
- Letter from David Flannery to the DEP regarding the low pressure alarm for the school water tank
- Letter from Heidi Zimmerman regarding outstanding issues with the Waste Water Treatment Facility
- Thank you letter to the Powell/Rober family for lighting gels
- Invitation to Volunteer Ice Cream Social

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Marie Doyle thanked Mr. Sykes for his presentation at Town Meeting and also thanked him for the many things he does for the School Committee and School Building Committee. She then reported on the following:

- She Two successful community programs held in April
 - April 5th Bear Informational Talk
 - April 11th Sergei Khrushchev Visit
- Student-faculty basketball game
- CSA meeting on the school budget
- DARE graduation
- 8th grade eco-fair
- Step It Up participation
- 6th grade outdoor education
- Kindergarten screening
- Math Review Team activities
- Strategic Planning Committee
- First Grade city project

Administrators' Reports

Middle School Principal Paul Graseck reported on the following:

- Scholastic Writing Awards. Hannah Parra, Lauren Pauplis, and Alex Kinmouth won gold medals in the Scholastic Writing Competition. Hannah won a gold medal at the regional level, and Alex and Lauren won gold medals on the national level. They are two of 300 winners out of 100,000 entries. Mr. Graseck commended all winners.
- Math and science MCAS update
- 6th Grade Outdoor Education trip

Karen Slack, Director of Student Support Services reported on the following:

- Special Education team meetings
- High School transition meetings
- Special Education summer school preparation
- New ELL teacher

Mr. Fitzgerald asked how many students are receiving ELL services. Ms. Slack stated that there are currently 10 students who were identified by the ELL tutor.

(Mr. Koski arrived at the meeting at 7:55)

Members'/Committee Reports

School Building Committee

Ms. Barbee reported that the last Building Committee meeting focused on the problems with the Waste Water Treatment Facility. Following the meeting, Ms. Zimmerman wrote a letter to the contractors detailing all outstanding issues. The letter included four design concerns regarding the facility. These are considered to be the most serious issues. A request was made for a written response with a schedule for dealing with the problems. Once the response has been received, a meeting will be set up to discuss the details.

Ms. Barbee noted that public forums are being scheduled to review the School Building project.

Ms. Burkel asked if it is a requirement for a School Committee member to be on the Building Committee. This is not currently a requirement, but Mr. Fitzgerald stated that it is a good idea to have the School Committee represented on the Building Committee.

Ms. Zimmerman had put an item on the MASBO list serve asking if other towns have other residences in their towns tied into their school wastewater facilities. A couple of municipalities have several town buildings using the same facility as the school, but no one responded that they have private residences using the school septic facility.

Ms. Barbee clarified an item in the Mosquito regarding the amount of overrun in the WWTF operating budget. It was \$21,000 not \$81,000 as reported.

Regional School Committee.

Mr. Fitzgerald reported on regional school committee activities at the Concord Town Meeting. The school budget passed and, after much discussion and a reconsideration vote, the fields were approved. However, there may be a special town meeting to again consider the fields.

League of Women Voters/Finance Committee Hearings

Ms. Barbee reported that she had attended both the candidates' forum and the FinCom budget hearing.

Information/Discussion Items

- A. **Math and Title I curriculum presentation.** Liz Perry, math specialist described the math curriculum and professional development and discussed the Title I program for the year. She noted that the math curriculum review process began in September. The committee is made up of teachers, administrators, and parents. They are looking at the current program through discussions and surveys. She stated that the process could take several years to complete, including evaluation of potential texts if a decision is made to change the basic curriculum.

She described the FasttMath program, which is an addition to the curriculum this year. She stated that it's an excellent software program used in second and third grades. The program involves an initial assessment of both math and typing skills of students. Once the assessments are complete, students work on specific "focus facts." This is followed by practice sessions. When practice sessions are finished, students are rewarded by having the ability to play computer math games. The students are enjoying the program, and there are a number of reports available to teachers and parents. Ms. Perry stated that it would be wonderful to have more time for students to work with FasttMath.

Mr. Sykes described a visit he paid to a 2nd grade classroom in which a second grader demonstrated the product for him. He was very impressed by what he saw.

Ms. Barbee asked if the teachers like the program. Ms. Perry responded that teachers have been very positive, but it would be useful to have more computers available.

In the area of professional development, Ms. Perry reported on four areas:

- Odden Grants to support math league self-study packets

- Odden Pool Grant to support assessment of fundamental math concepts at the primary level through kits developed for each grade level, followed by activities for each concept
- MCAS professional development at faculty meetings
- Carlisle College course, “Connecting Comprehension Strategies with Problem Solving in Math” taught by Ms. Perry and Sue LaPorte

Title I programs include elementary math clubs and middle school support. The program serves grades 2 through 7. The middle school program is an in-school program, while the elementary program involves before and after school support. This program is basically the same as has been offered in previous years.

Ms. Perry then reported on future activities, the main one being a continuation of the math review process.

Ms. Doyle thanked Ms. Perry for the great work she does with all grade levels.

B. District Report Card Review. Mr. Graseck gave an overall summary of the NCLB district report card. He described the testing required by the federal government at each level and noted that we are held to a performance level (Adequate Yearly Progress) in English/Language Arts and Mathematics. By 2014 every student is expected to be proficient in MCAS in these two areas. At this time Carlisle has met the AYP standards in all areas by a large margin both in overall summary and for each grade level. There are also required attendance levels, and Carlisle has met these as well. Mr. Graseck noted that Carlisle is a high performing district.

Mr. Gaseck also reviewed the overall make-up of our faculty as reported on the district report card and noted that almost all core subject area teachers are licensed and highly qualified.

Ms. Burkel asked how much time is involved in providing the data to the state for the report. Ms. Wilcox and Mr. Graseck described how the data is provided. Ms. Burkel then asked if the data from the report is useful for informing instruction. Mr. Graseck stated that at this point it’s not particularly useful.

C. Superintendent’s Evaluation. Ms. Burkel first acknowledged the work of the school committee members. It was agreed that the process this year would be different and would involve a summary of the work done during the contract negotiation process. She thanked Ms. Doyle for her participation in the process.

She reviewed the executive sessions at which an evaluation was done as part of the contract process. Ten criteria were used in this evaluation, and Ms. Burkel read a summary of the discussions that took place at the sessions. The ten criteria follow:

- Effective leadership of faculty and administration
- Progress toward annual contractual goals
- Relationship with School Committee
- Effective advocate for children
- Budget management
- Municipal relations
- Superintendent growth and development
- Staff growth and development
- Ethical and honorable individual
- Relationship and communication with parents

Numerous accomplishments relating to each of the above categories were cited in the summary. Ms. Burkel also offered the following 3 areas for continued work:

- Communication – Continue to build strong relationships with all constituents
- Leadership growth – Continue to build relationships with the larger Massachusetts education community
- Pacing – Establish a reasonable pace for herself and her administrative team

She ended by thanking Ms. Doyle for her commitment and work for the Carlisle Public Schools.

D. Business Manager's Report. Ms. Zimmerman stated that she has been working on a bidding process for electricity and gas services. She discussed some of the possible sources for better pricing.

Ms. Zimmerman noted a few changes in the proposed new lease for the Highland Building. She has included 5 items that should be done as part of the lease terms. These include:

- Repair of the front porch and railings
- Inspection and testing of the fire alarm
- Repairing any and all roof leaks
- Inspection and testing of the fire escape
- Replacement of exterior windows as necessary.

She stated that over the summer she would be working on a bid document for a longer term lease.

Ms. Burkel stated a concern about the conditions in the lease and whether the 5 items will be acceptable to the Emerson Umbrella.

Once the lease has been discussed with Emerson Umbrella, a vote will be taken.

Citizens' Comments

Mr. Krapf of Ice Pond Road commented on the District Report Card and stated that it is not a useful tool for a district like Carlisle. The MCAS, however, can be a good tool to validate the overall work the school is doing. He noted that he has developed a tool that provides very interested data regarding MCAS results. He would be happy to make this tool available.

Adjournment

There was no additional business, and **Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion to adjourn the meeting to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue and a legal issue. Ms. Barbee seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor as follows: Ms. Barbee, yes; Mr. Koski, yes; Mr. Fitzgerald, yes; Ms. Burkel, yes; Mr. Sykes, yes.**

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox
Assistant to the Superintendent