

Town of Provincetown
School Committee
Veterans Memorial Elementary School Library
Minutes of September 13, 2005

Members Present: Terese Nelson, (Chairperson), Peter Grosso(Vice Chairman), Debra Trovato, Molly Perdue, Burton Wolfman(Secretary).

Also in Attendance: Superintendent Janice Lachowetz, Anthony Teso, VMES Principal/DSS, Edward Boxer, PHS Principal, Jessica Waugh, Curriculum Coordinator, Betty White, Adm. Assistant/Business & Finance, Peter Borrelli, Center for Coastal Studies, Lynn Stanley Provincetown Art Association and Museum, Pru Sowers, The Provincetown Banner

The Chairperson called to meeting to order at 4.03 P.M.

Public Comments:

School Committee member Debra Trovato discussed her concern regarding the excessive weight of her daughters backpack. She stated that students are expected daily to carry home these extremely heavy back packs in order to complete homework assignments. Mrs. Trovato stated these backpacks weigh in the range of 22-25 pounds each; this is totally outrageous for middle school students to manage. School administrators commented on the larger size of new books and the problem of these books fitting in school lockers. The administration will consider potential solutions.

Minutes:

Debra Trovato moved to approve the June 16, 2005 Minutes. Seconded by Peter Grosso. Minutes were approved 4-0-1. Molly Perdue abstained because she did not attend that meeting.

Peter Grosso moved to approve the June 28, 2005 Minutes. Seconded by Debra Trovato. So voted 5-0.

Debra Trovato moved to approve the July 12, 2005 Minutes. Seconded by Peter Grosso. So voted 5-0

The Committee noted that the presentation by a representative (Mr. Jim Miller) of the Culinary Arts program at Cape Cod Community College originally scheduled for July 12, 2005, will be re-scheduled for another meeting.

Peter Grosso moved to approve July 25, 2005 Minutes. Seconded by Molly Perdue. So voted 5-0.

Educational Update:

- New staff members were identified. The Chair asked that the Committee be informed of other staff appointments in particular coaches. Committee members suggested that new staff members be invited to be introduced to the Committee members at another meeting.

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- Superintendent Lachowetz thanked the School Committee for its support and proceeded to outline an ambitious district agenda by school administration for the upcoming year. She informed the Committee that Mr. Boxer will be responsible for grants management, Mr. Teso for management information and technology. In addition, the high school will be preparing for a NEASC follow-up, and preschool is looking for accreditation through NAEYC will be preparing for accreditation during the coming year. Superintendent Lachowetz informed the Committee that the district will be “raising the bar” for school achievement and assessment. She pointed-out the recognized characteristics of effective schools:

- Clear and shared focus
- High standards and expectations for all students
- Effective school leadership
- Curriculum, instruction and assessment aligned with state

standards

- Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching
- Focused professional development
- Supportive learning environment

High level of family and community involvement

- Report on Mass Sail was presented by Mr. Boxer. He indicated there will be sixteen students, from Grades 9-12, and staff teacher John Hanlon who will set sail today for a five day trip. Mr. Boxer further indicated there will be a 9:00 – 5:00 p.m. sail on Sunday, September 18, 2005 for 7th and 8th graders. This program is part of a new initiative to expand the Academy to the lower grades for interdisciplinary learning of industrial arts, art, music, etc. under the theme “ How are lives affected by living by the sea”.

Peter Borrelli, Center for Coastal Studies, further discussed the summer experience and plans for the future. He stated that the 2005 program provided a total of 70 days of sailing, while the 2006 program is expanding to 100 days. Mr. Borelli further informed the Committee about plans to bring teachers, from other areas, together in order to improve the curriculum and expand the experience. The Committee expressed its interest in expanding this experience.

• School Improvement Plans

Prior to his remarks on the School Improvement Plans Mr. Teso outlined the school’s involvement in enrolling new students arriving from New Orleans after the massive devastation of Hurricane Katrina. To date, there are three students enrolled and more are expected. The Committee discussed fund raising functions to support the relocation needs of the hurricane disaster. The Committee recognized the important role of the Lion’s Club International and the significant role of the local organization in its support of the Provincetown Schools.

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Mr. Teso and Mr. Boxer described the current process and future plans in the ongoing development of the School Improvement Plans. It was also stated that documents describing the process of each school are available to the respective buildings.

The Committee and the Administration entered into a discussion on the requirements of state and federal education mandates (testing, etc.), as well as the expectation of the Committee for a goal of developing a specialized school to stabilize enrollment. The Committee was told that to do both required new fiscal resources. The Committee asked for an explicit fiscal plan and a description of the benefits/outcome for these investments. As a result of this discussion, the Committee and the administration will plan a retreat to pursue these issues.

- Curriculum Update with Ms Waugh The curriculum coordinator reviewed the plans to re-visit the district curriculum guides for all subject areas. She distributed the district curriculum cycle to all members.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

7:1 Job Description: Custodian/Grounds Building Maintenance tabled until next meeting.

7:2 Cape Cod Regional Technical District School. Committee two vacancies were discussed by the Committee. The administration decided to see if parents of currently enrolled Cape Cod Tech students would be interested in applying. It was also agreed to advertise the committee vacancies in the local newspaper.

7.3 Web Screening Committee: Molly Perdue and Terese Nelson agreed to serve on the Web Screening Committee.

7.4 Home Rule Petition: Peter Grosso agreed to investigate issues with regard to Motto Field.

7.5 The Committee discussed options as to how to select and appoint a student representative to the School Committee. It was the feeling of the Committee that a total of three students from grades 10, 11, and 12 be elected by the student body will be investigated and considered.

7.6 The Committee agrees to meet with Dr Ladd on October 11, 2005 for a Workshop.

New Business added:

Mr. Boxer presented a request by Mr. Hanlon for two overnight field trips for his science classes; October 7-8th Monomoy Island; October 10-14th, Baxter State Park, Maine. Molly Perdue made a motion to approve the requests. Burt Wolfman seconded. So voted 5-0.

Board Comments:

Chair Terese Nelson thanked Burt Wolfman, Molly Perdue, and Anthony Teso for their work on the child care grant proposal.

Chair Terese Nelson also asked the Committee members, the administration, and department heads to present at least three initiatives as part of a "business plan" to address the issue of "How do we maintain students in Provincetown?" Ms. Nelson stressed the importance that our schools are at risk and we need to be very serious about finding solutions.

Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned" 6:30 P.M.

Respectively Submitted

Burton Wolfman
School Committee Signature

Date

These Minutes were approved at the School Committee meeting held on:
September 27, 2005.

School Committee signature

Title