



School Committee

**Provincetown School Committee Meeting
Veterans Memorial Elementary School
Library Media Center – Room #73
2 Mayflower Lane
Provincetown, MA 02657**

**Tuesday
April 27, 2010
5:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Kerry Adams, Peter Grosso, Carrie Notaro,
Shannon Patrick, and Deb Trovato.

Members Absent: none

Staff: Dr. Beth Singer, Superintendent
Kim Pike, District Principal

Student Reps: Jacob DiPinto and Carlos Sendao (6th grade)
(VMES)

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 p.m.

AGENDA:

Peter Grosso, Chair, said that we will begin with public comments and if anyone has anything to say - now is the time to say it.

Public Comments

Rachel White said that this is very emotional for us. She said that her grandson is going to Nauset because the school is closing. She went to the school play and she got so nostalgic because she felt that this might be the last play. And you know what? I don't get anything from tourism so why do I support it? She next referred to Celia Francis' will and wondered what was going to be done with the scholarship fund - an issue that no-one is addressing – or – would lawyers eat up the

amount in legal fees? She's out of the loop right now because she is a care giver to two people who really need her. She continued in much the same vein for a few minutes more.

Peter told her that the scholarship fund is a whole "nuther" committee. He then thanked Rachel for her time.

Polly Saunders said that she hopes a committee would be formed to do some advertising and she's waiting to hear.

Lisa Westervelt has a child in an elementary grade and she can't tell you the number of people who have said that Truro is wonderful. She vows to stay right here and ride it out. What are we going to market? Is it the Center for Coastal Studies or what? She's ready to step in and help .

PSC Student Rep Comments

The following was copied from the students' notes; they each gave oral presentations to the assembled group.

Carlos Sendao spoke extemporaneously from the following notes:

1. High School Prom is coming up in a couple of weeks.
2. Senior Project is also in a couple of weeks.
3. The 7th and 8th graders have been fundraising for their Washington, D.C. trip.
4. The May SAT's will be taking place this Saturday (24th).
5. The shed built by Mr. Bull and his shop classes has been completed and is at MacMillan Pier.
6. Baseball, Softball, and Tennis seasons have all begun.

Jacob DiPinto gave his presentation following Carlos and his notes follow:

1. Two kindergarteners and one third grade student won the Poetry for Peace contest.
2. Some 3rd and 4th graders received the "most creative" prize in the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center's Bullying Awareness contest.
3. The 5th graders are on Nature's classroom
4. Walking Wednesdays has now begun.
5. Jesus Millan has won the state championship handwriting contest for the Zaner Bloser. He was one of about 300,000 who entered the contest.

Upcoming Events:

1. MCAS is coming up in May.

2. The Great Body Walk will be in the VMES Gym on June 8th.
3. There will be a 3½ mile walk to fundraise the AIDS Support Group.
4. May 26th will be the first campus-wide “Night to Shine.”

Minutes:

Motion: Move to table the minutes of the April 13th meeting.

Motion: Kerry Adams Seconded: Shannon Patrick Vote: 5-0-0.

Superintendent’s Update:

• IB Update

Dr. Beth Singer said that we are pursuing applying for the IB. Kim Pike will be taking 7 teachers with her to train. The training will take place in Princeton, NJ and everyone involved is very excited about that.

In May and the beginning of June, Kim will be visiting other IB sites in the area.

On next Tuesday the middle school teachers will be having a professional day and we will be posting an ad for an IB coordinator.

IB is a worldwide internet program that began after World War Two when people were very mobile and not getting a good education. IB focuses on a global education. It’s a program that is international and focuses on developing good citizenship and moving it out into the world; there’s also a language component. For us the language is English and probably next will be Spanish. This focuses on a good thinker and a good student. The only Cape Cod IB school is in a charter school. The program is more common in the south and west. It is highly supported by President Obama and Federal agencies. The one thing they’re looking for is more IB schools so this will be our focus and our opportunity. We’ll be doing primary years and middle years. It is also our hope that we can eventually become a diploma program.

Kim Pike said that the teachers who are involved in this program are enthusiastic about this opportunity. We have wonderful connections in the community and what this program does is to highlight this. Our plan is to have a family night the middle of May and families will be getting more information about this.

The trip with Kim and 7 teachers is a 3 day happening. You have to go through a series of categories. There are on-line instructions and it’s professional development for us.

Peter is assuming that the teachers will have to be certified? Beth said, “No, they have to be trained as long as teachers are certified, they will have to be trained. They will require a certain level of training and now we will have 7 who will be, but everyone will have to be trained eventually.

Peter then asked, “What is the function of the coordinator?” Answer is - making sure that the curriculum is implemented and available. Beth said that the IB would give us access worldwide and we will do some traveling, however some of it is on-line training.

• **2010-2011 School Year Update**

We now have a calendar and Kim and Beth Francis have been busy developing structures and multiple-aged groupings; the focus is on the upper grades. We will be meeting with families with children in grades 4 through 8 in May and discuss what the school day will look like and some more orientation in the IB program. That will be followed by the K through 3 program. They will have a work day and there will be 4 teachers teaching those 3 grades. The sports for next year are golf, tennis, and basketball.

• **Charter School Information**

A package was handed out because there has been so much confusion and insistence that Provincetown High School become a charter school. It is a lengthy involved process not easily entered into. Bottom line: We, as a body, cannot form a charter school.

Unfinished Business:

**Discussion – Report of the Provincetown Regional
School District Planning Committee**

Peter reminded everyone that before we're finished with this subject, we'll be taking a vote. He then gave an overview of what the Planning Committee has recommended - that the existing freshmen class be given the opportunity to finish their High School education in Provincetown. Peter continued by saying that we plan to keep K through 8 in the system and we would house the K through 8 in the High School building. He concluded by saying that it was an emotional decision but a necessary decision; he's been on the School Committee for 8 years and this is the toughest decision that he's ever had to make. Peter said that Dr. Singer sat in on the meetings and she was very helpful in gathering information for the Committee.

Beth then said, “When you hired me in July - I had no idea that we were going to have this conversation. She is very disappointed; it’s very emotional for the members of the staff and the board but this has been a long time coming and it is the reality of where we are. She wishes it were different - she wishes she had a larger number of students but there’s a point at which it becomes less than productive and also a negative environment. At the high school level it’s even more difficult. The nature of education is that you need a critical mass and for many reasons MCAS is a big part of that. This is not about money because you’re going to have to pay to educate 9 through 12. What’s best for children’s education is to not have a high school and we hope to eventually grow a high school. Beth finished by saying that she agrees with the recommendation of this committee.

Everyone on the School Committee was saddened by the findings of the committee but realized the lack of students drove the issue. There was much blame, i.e., it’s a lack of affordable housing for families, the tourist industry, etc. but in the end we have no year-round employment and have become a second-home community.

Kerry Adams asked members of the committee about the enrollment. There are 36 kids enrolled for next year’s high school. It’s heart wrenching but he has to do what’s best for his daughter. What kind of a Junior prom are you going to have if there are only 4 kids in a class? Kerry said he feels as though he’s “acting in a movie but playing the wrong part.” For years, he said, we walked around with blinders on and this IB program may save us - but we are in this position and we have to decide what’s best for the kids.

Peter said that there are not enough kids and wondered what happens if we make this report and there are only 2 or 3 in a class?

Beth said that you could vote on a one year arrangement.

Kerry wondered - what about voting on an annual basis. He has a niece in Truro who wants to come to Provincetown next year and Kerry advised against it. In years past we had the fishing industry and the Air Force base. We still have 50 Provincetown students who don’t attend Provincetown schools.

Peter said that we can honor the 3 year agreement and then if the parents decide to transfer their children, it’s not on our watch. Peter heard that most of the 8th graders have made their decision, anyway.

Each of the remaining School Committee members then shared their thoughts with each other and the gathered audience.

Shannon Patrick wrote out thoughts based on the K-8 IB program and that should be what we market and she's looking forward to focusing on something positive.

Deb Trovato said that the the town focuses on tourism and she feels the school system is the one link for building the town. They need to help us.

Carrie Notaro also stated her unhappiness with the eventual decision but realized its necessity.

Motion: Move to accept the recommendation of the Provincetown Regional School District Planning Committee and to begin entering into a tuition agreement for grades 8 through 12 for the 2010-2011 school year.

Motion: Kerry Adams Seconded: Deb Trovato Vote: 5-0-0.

New Business:

Teacher Job Description – Amended

This job description was put back on the agenda for one addition (#3 on last page was added).

Motion: Move to accept the teacher job description as amended.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Deb Trovato Vote: 5-0-0.

Wellness Committee Recommendation

The Wellness Committee has recommended condom availability for students.

Beth asked the PSC if they would like her to pursue making a policy.

Motion: Move to ask Dr. Singer to pursue making a policy on condom availability.

Motion: Shannon Patrick Seconded: Deb Trovato Vote: 4-0-0

(KA stepped out for a moment which explains the 4-0-0 vote.)

PSC Comments

Peter Grosso would like to personally thank Deb Trovato for her years on the committee and for a job well done.

Shannon Patrick read a thank you poem to Deb thanking her for all her help over the years.

Carrie Notaro brought in presents for Deb accompanied with a card. Deb opened the one large present which was an athletic jacket in Provincetown's school colors. (Orange and black..... attack, attack.)

Beth Singer also thanked Deb for all her input and found that as a newcomer she appreciated all the support that Deb gave her.

Deb Trovato – after acknowledging the accolades – said that she would like to have parameters for the ad hoc marketing committee. She still thinks we need a marketing committee and IB is what we need to be marketing. The subject of the hastily recruited marketing committee was discussed quite a bit with the final decision as follows:

Motion: Move to rescind the PSC vote on the ad hoc marketing committee and to invite the interested parties to come to the school committee and discuss their aims.

Motion: Deb Trovato Seconded: Carrie Notaro Vote: 5-0-0

Adjournment happened at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Evelyn Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by the School Committee on June 8, 2010

Peter Grosso, Chairperson