

Board of Education Meeting (Thursday, September 17, 2016)

Members present

Scott Jackson, Rene Borgella, Heather Cooper, Paula Miller, Jennifer Pawlewicz

Members absent

Linda Korbel, George Wiltsie

Meeting was called to order by Rene Borgella, President, at 6:31 pm.

Privilege of the Floor was offered to all in attendance.

There were no Board of Education Comments.

Reports and Discussions

C. Brockner was present to give the Transportation Department Report. He reported that all buses were cleaned over the summer. The District took delivery of two small buses, with one additional bus on the way. Opening day went very well. The new traffic flow in the parking lot has helped to relieve bottleneck in the morning. R. Borgella had a question about the door-to-door policy.

The administrative team joined the Board at the table for a discussion of District Goals for the 2015-16 school year. C. Thomas reviewed NYS Assessment results at the elementary, middle and high school levels. She suggested that the administrative team focus on academics since the results show that there is a lot of work to do. She felt that the following would be reasonable, achievable goals:

- Elementary: Math and ELA achievement will, at a minimum, equal NYS percentages
 - Middle School: All classified students meet AYP; Math and ELA achievement will, at a minimum, equal NYS percentages
- High School: Meet accountability standards in ELA and Math; Minimum of 90% passing and 50% achieving mastery on all Regents exams; 100% graduation rate

Board members asked what is currently being done to address these issues? Administrators listed several ongoing efforts including changes to the co-teaching model in special education, changes to curriculum, responding to data from assessments. Almost all teachers in elementary and middle school rated effective or highly effective based on growth scores of students from year to year.

H. Cooper asked about professional development for teachers. This too is ongoing and includes training in Foundations, Expeditionary Learning and many workshops offered through BOCES. R. Borgella asked about differences between grade levels. V. Volpicelli and C. Griggs explained that grade levels are going through NYS modules at different paces and students have different exposure levels depending on grade. The new modules have only been around for less than three years. Opt-out numbers also affect results. Some grade levels have a higher percentage of classified students. NYS Assessments are forever changing targets and tests are also changing.

C. Thomas asked if the facilities and school environment goals could be removed for this year in order to concentrate solely on academics. R. Borgella commented that great strides have been made in the area of facilities, in large part to S. Yaple. He suggested weighting the academic goal but not eliminating other two. H. Cooper expressed concern about letting other important factors that influence student learning slide. C. Thomas commented on difference between vision and goals. What do you want to accomplish this year? What is the Board's charge to the administration this year? R. Borgella suggested "understanding that a clean, safe, welcoming environment contributes to academics..." in place of "100% focus on academics." H. Cooper would like to add "attract and retain high quality educators." R. Borgella commented that many factors affecting retention are outside of the District's control. When polled, all were in favor of eliminating the focus on goals 2 and 3 this year.

The discussion then turned to specifics of the wording of the academic goal. S. Jackson would like to change the "minimum of 90% passing." J. Pawlewicz likes the specific and measurable goal. Remove "100%" from the title.

Motion by Paula Miller, second by Jennifer Pawlewicz, to amend the agenda to add the adoption of District Goals as an action item. Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

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Administrative Reports

The administrators present expanded on their written reports. R. Hawk reported on opening day in the high school. Students and staff were excited about the new electives of Digital Literacy, Film History, Public Speaking and Graphic Design. New faculty members have rich technology backgrounds. 280 pounds of produce were donated to community food bank from the pool garden.

C. Griggs commented on integrated co-teaching at the middle school and the addition of more time for Math and ELA. The new testing room is in use. The Middle School Open House and community resource fair included offerings from many local agencies.

V. Volpicelli mentioned physical education at recess and the opportunity for students to advocate for themselves.

M. Jasinski reported on the growth of the After School Program and the tentative approval from NYS of the expanded Pre-K grant. The new grant would make additional \$174,000 available to cover staff and extend program and free some money for professional development.

Superintendent's Report

C. Thomas gave an update on the boiler replacement project currently in progress. Contractors have been jack-hammering for the past two days to remove cement pads. The project is ahead of schedule and under budget. The target date for completion is the end of October.

Consent Agenda

Motion by Scott Jackson, second by Heather Cooper, to approve items 3-9 on a consent agenda:

3. Approval of Payroll through October 15, 2015
4. Approval of attached CSE/CPSE Recommendations (Attachment 15-16-23)
5. Approval of the following requests for non-public school transportation:
 - North Spencer Christian Academy - White
 - New Roots - Elia/Testa
6. Acceptance of the following resignation(s):
 - Senica Moseley's resignation from her position of Student Aide effective September 15, 2015
7. Approval of the Superintendent's recommendation of the following appointments:
 - Holley Searies - part time 10-month position of Teacher Aide effective September 21, 2015 at the rate of \$9.00/hr.
 - Karen Moseley - part time 10-month position of Teacher Aide effective September 21, 2015 at the rate of \$9.00/hr.
8. Approval of the following extra-curricular appointments for the 2015-16 school year or season:
 - JV Volleyball Coach - Renee Christopher (.5) and Vicki Tibbels (.5)
9. Approval of the updated substitute list(s) (Attachment 15-16-24).

Motion to approve items 3-9 on a consent agenda carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion by Paula Miller, second by Heather Cooper, to approve the attached Claims (Warrants #13-14, 16-17). Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Action Items

Motion by Jennifer Pawlewicz, second by Paula Miller, to adopt the proposed 2015-16 District Goals, as amended (Attachment 15-16-25). Discussion followed. J. Pawlewicz commented on retention of staff, morale and communication. P. Miller felt those were not measurable and therefore not appropriate as district goals. H. Cooper felt that it is important to find a way to measure, exit interviews when staff leave District for example. J. Pawlewicz wants to add a human component. R. Borgella agrees on the importance of job satisfaction, but doesn't know how to quantify. He suggested that this might be a topic for the upcoming Board retreat? H. Cooper said that she would love to have a continuing conversation on the issue, if the goals could be amended later. R. Borgella commented on balance of representation of students, community and staff. Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

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Motion was made by Paula Miller, second by Jennifer Pawlewicz, to approve the first reading of the following policy additions, revisions and/or deletions:

4316 Physical Education
5020.6 Student Gender Identity
9260.1 Probationary Employment

Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Motion by Paula Miller, second by Jennifer Pawlewicz, to delegate authority to the Business Administrator to award the \$600,000 serial bond to the lowest responsible bidder.

Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

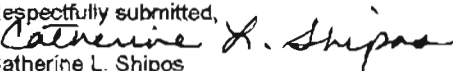
Privilege of the Floor was offered to all in attendance. C. Githler spoke regarding retention of teachers and the value of face to face conversations rather than relying on letters. Since Newfield is one of the lowest paying districts, we need to make it attractive in another way. Teachers should be part of the discussion.

Motion by Paula Miller, second by Jennifer Pawlewicz, to enter Executive Session at 8:41 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue involving particular people. Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:52 p.m.

Motion by Heather Cooper, second by Paula Miller, to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. Motion Carried 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Respectfully submitted,


Catherine L. Shipos
District Clerk