

To the Newington School District  
Newington, New Hampshire

The Newington School Board met on June 13, 2006, at the Newington Public School.

PRESENT: Jack Anderson, Deirdre Link, Helen Maldini, (Chairperson), School Board Members; George A. Cushing, Superintendent of Schools; Helen Rist, Principal.

ALSO PRESENT: Caylyn Bowser, Kelly MacDonald, Sabina Gessay, Nyita Hooper-Hass, Evan Anderson, Matt Coleman, Kelsy Frizzell, Dan Gokhban, Junior School Board Members; Peter MacDonald and Barbara McDonald, Residents.

#### Call to Order

Mrs. Maldini opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

#### Junior School Board

Mrs. Rist introduced the Junior School Board members and explained their goal today. Each student will share an essay they wrote about why they think their school is 'cool.' After each student read his or her essay, Dr. Cushing recognized the main points that he heard from the students:

- A small school has been a plus for them
- They help one another and work together
- Learning how to solve problems is taught and used everyday
- Respect is seen from staff and students
- The teacher are fun and cool
- Extra help is always available
- They feel that they belong- everyone knows their names
- Field trips are great and they often can all go together
- Everyone is included because you are small
- Students build strong relationships because they know everyone
- The food is great!

Dr. Cushing asked if they had any questions. Caylyn Bowser asked for details about the role of the school board, and how does it work? Each member of the board gave a brief explanation of their role and responsibilities.

Dr. Cushing thanked the Junior School Board members for their time this year at the school board meetings. Certificates were presented to each Junior School Board member.

#### Minutes

Minutes from the May 9, May 19 and May 30, 2006, meetings will be reviewed at the June 2, 2006, meeting.

Workshop session scheduled for June 20, 2006, at 5:00 p.m. at the SAU Office.

Discussion: Goal of Workshop

- Decide to survey town or not-acknowledge and review letters received from residents; each board member will give their views from the public forum; gather a consensus and make a motion
- Discuss the idea of looking at the operating budget with an eye on costs for the operation of the school- Jack Anderson pointed out that this would not be a new approach for the board. He feels the board has always kept a close eye on spending.
- Research tuitioning students into the Newington Public School

Visitor

Mrs. Maldini recognized Barbara McDonald. Mrs. McDonald supports the school. She attended Tuesday's forum because she wanted to know why ten elementary students are not attending NPS. She was concerned about what appeared to her as a gag rule being imposed against one citizen. She recommended that parents of those not attending the school be invited in to talk about their reasons for choosing a private school. She does not want the school board to be seen as not willing to listen. Dr. Cushing acknowledged Mrs. McDonald's comments and told her that they were valuable. He has personally talked with a citizen and invited the family back to NPS, but they prefer a religious education. Dr. Cushing further mentioned that he had sought the opinion of the school attorney on the matter of the public forum. The attorney felt that the board was o.k. in ending the remarks when they turned to a personal nature.

Communication

Mrs. Maldini presented a petition from residents signed by 65 people to keep the Newington Public School open.

Mrs. Maldini has received two letters in reference to the forum as of this date.

School Sign

Mrs. Maldini presented a draft of a letter to the selectman in regard to the new school sign.

Superintendent's Report

- Special Education- no changes in the month of May
- AYP- urgent message from Commissioner of Education, Dr. Tracey- AYP will be revised and the cell size will be lowered.
- Follow the Child- Excellence in Education Awards Dinner- SAU 50 recognized as a participant in the Follow the Child pilot for 2006-2007 school year.
- Principal search for PHS- search is being reopened
- Portsmouth budget process- Dr. Lister will recommend cuts to the budget.

## Principal's Report

- H. Rist voiced the faculty's thanks for the board's support of the school, The Public Forum went well and they felt encouraged about the future of NPS.
- H. Rist recapped events from the past month:
  - 5/6 grade trip to Boston very successful
  - 3 /4 grade trip to Audubon Center- interesting
  - Move-Up Day for all grades- Sixth graders enjoyed spending the day at PMS. Parent tour and coffee with the teachers was very well attended and received. We will continue to make the transition process an easy and pleasant experience.
  - Adventurelore- Outstanding! Jason Holder, the director, "The Newington students always amaze us at how quickly and easily they work together and cooperate. It is unique- we don't see this in other groups that come here."
  - Coffee with the Principal- Attorney James Reams presented great information about Internet Safety for parents.
  - NSS- John Stokel attended the June meeting and presented information about Portsmouth Middle School. He answered questions and offered how assistance in the summer to any students and parents who would like to come by and walk through the building.
- Coming Events-
  - Graduation- June 14 at 6:30 at Town Hall
  - Recognition Breakfast- June 15, 8:30-9:30 at NPS café- to recognize those who have given time talents and financial resources to NPS this year.
  - Fun Day- Last day of school- Student Council plans and runs this event.

## Summer Tutoring

Following up on the board's approval for math tutoring for four sixth graders -- parents have all agreed; tutor in place. Jack Anderson asked what the total cost will be for this service. Mrs. Rist will have this amount at the next meeting; the estimate should be about \$300 - \$400. Jack Anderson asked if there has been written criteria for choosing students who qualify for this opportunity. Mrs. Rist said it was initially a concern from a board member after the nonpublic session that reviewed individual class testing results. There are students who have not achieved Proficient in Math; details can not be discussed. It was a concern that they be given one more review of sixth grade math before going on to the middle school. They will be part of our school's AYP next year too. Mrs. Rist will present written criteria at a future meeting for reference in the future.

### Summer Plans

- Relocate the Library and storage closet
- Create new report cards
- NEASC two year report
- Hire- Technician and Technology Integrator

### Financials

Manifest was reviewed. Mrs. Link moved; seconded by Mr. Anderson to accept the manifest in the amount of \$397,466.80 dated June 3 to June 12, 2006. The vote was unanimous.

### Facilities

*Bathrooms:* Mr. Katkin discussed the bathroom renovations -- 4 firms looked at the project; one bid received for \$64,377.00 from Ricci Construction. Mr. Katkin told the board they have three choices: accept the bid, re-bid project, or do nothing on bathrooms. He asked for direction from the board. Mrs. Maldini felt that this is the year to complete this project. It is long overdue and the next budget year has a teacher contract to present. Further discussion agreed with this idea. Jack Anderson moved to approve the bid; seconded by Mrs. Link, and voted unanimously.

*Door:* Discussion was held about an added request to install a door between the new library space and the Art/Music/Technology room. The bid for this project was \$3,000 and \$1,000 to paint the new library space. Jack Anderson was concerned about the cost of painting, feeling that it was too high. The doorway requires cutting concrete block and that could be the reason for the cost. Mr. Katkin agreed. Mr. Anderson moved to accept the bid for cutting in the new doorway, but not the painting; seconded by Mrs. Link and voted unanimously.

Mrs. Link asked Mr. Katkin if the first school board payment could be included in the August manifest. He would do his best to comply with her request.

### Policy Action

On motions by Mrs. Link; and seconds by Mr. Anderson, and voted unanimously, the board took the following action on policies presented for review:

IHBH, Extended Learning Opportunities, JICH, Student Drug and Alcohol Abuse, were accepted on a first reading with no changes; BDB, School Board Officers; KHB, Advertising in Schools; KHC, Distribution of Notices received first and second readings, with no changes; KH, Public Solicitations in the Schools was tabled; EB, Safety and Risk Management Program; EBBB, Student Injury Reporting; were adopted. EBC, Crisis Management Plan; JLCEA, Student Accident Reporting were removed.

### Adjourn

The board adjourned at 12:10 p.m. on a motion by Mrs. Link; seconded by Mr. Anderson, and voted unanimously.