

March 6, 2013

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the Wareham Middle School Auditorium. Present were Geoff Swett, Michael Flaherty, Rhonda Veugen, Cliff Sylvia, Kenny Fontes and Cindy Pham, Student Representative, as well as Superintendent Dr. Rabinovitch, and recording secretary, Mrs. Ruiz.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Swett at 7:00 p.m.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Sarah Gallagher, Middle School student, stated that as part of the Wareham Middle School Week of Appreciation she thanked the members for their work and gave each one a token of thanks. A token of thanks had been given to other staff members this week by the Student Council.

Mr. Brian Fitzgerald, WEA President and Grade 5 Teacher, stated that the educator and the student in the same room is where it happens in the buildings as slogan say "It's All About the Learning". He invited the members to his classroom and stated that the Committee has a lot of tough budget decisions to make.

#### **GOOD NEWS**

Dr. Sylvia – Our boys' basketball team is in the South sectional finals this Saturday morning. He gave kudos to our students' enthusiasm and much needed pride to our system.

Mr. Flaherty – Attended a successful JROTC fundraiser at Red Robin.

Mrs. Veugen – She took a class at the Parent Café in our Beyond School Time Program and reported that this is an amazing resource to parents and kids. Some of the upcoming programs are Financial Literacy Couponing, Mosaic Madness, and Book Club.

(Mr. Fontes and Miss Pham entered the meeting at 7:12 p.m.)

Miss Pham – DECA State Competition is next week, the Drama Club play is tomorrow evening, and the Book Club has chosen their book.

Mr. Swett - thanked all those parents and community members who commit to attending the School Council meetings.

#### **Minutes of the Meeting**

Mr. Flaherty suggested bulleting the items.

Mr. Fontes moved to approve the February 13, 2013 joint meeting with the Finance Committee minutes, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain -1 (Dr. Sylvia)

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the minutes of February 13, 2013, seconded by Mr. Flaherty

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain -1 (Dr. Sylvia)

Chair Swett put a hold on the February 27<sup>th</sup> minutes until later in the meeting at the request of Mr. Flaherty.

#### **Wareham High School**

- a. Senior Privileges for the Class of 2014 – The class officers and Advisor, Marge Rakoski, requested Senior Class Privileges.

Mr. Fontes moved approval, seconded by Mrs. Veugen

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain -0

Class of 2014 Senior Prom – The class officers requested the Senior Prom to be held on May 17, 2014 at Putnam Lounge at Gillette Stadium. The class had opted out of a Junior Prom to attend a Senior Class Trip.

Mrs. Veugen moved approval, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain -0

- b. Universal Grad Bash 2014 Trip – The class officers requested a trip the first weekend in May a Thursday through Sunday missing 2 days of school. Ms. Rakoski stated that there is no cap on the number of students as long as each meets the criteria with multiple fundraising to allow all children to attend. Chaperones going are the SRO, the Senior Class Dean, 2 teachers, and Ms. Rakoski and her husband. There needs to be 1 chaperone per 10 students. The cost is \$850 per student plus their own meals.

Mr. Fontes moved approval, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain -0

Dr. Sylvia thanked Ms. Rakoski and other staff members for their dedication and commitment to the children.

Ms. Rakoski shared good news that her granddaughter, a sophomore at Bentley, has been accepted to the London School of Economics and an exchange student in Australia this summer due to the dedication of High School teachers, Mr. St. Julien and Ms. Sylvia.

- c. Course of Studies 2013-14 – This document is informational this evening and will be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **Report on Mass Common Core Information on DESE Website**

Mrs. Rotella distributed documents:

- Mass Core High School Program of Studies outline and overview
- Percentage of High School Graduates who Completed MassCore – includes all graduates who were Wareham residents in 2008-2012 comparing the state, Wareham, and area communities. DART and EPIMS is a check and balances and this data will be more reliable in 2 more years when 4 years of data is available; meanwhile, we are relying on secretary input. The 2012 data is accurate.

The state is not mandating Mass Common Core, only recommending it. The School Committee has mandated Mass Common Core over time in the requirements for graduation of the Class of 2014.

- Summary Overview WHS Courses, Sections, and Enrollment – DRAFT

After the Course of Studies is approved, guidance counselors will give the document and a schedule to students with a sign off by parents.

There was discussion on the requirements of US History and World History and students receiving academic support at the High School but not at the Middle School due to resources.

#### **Presentation on District Review Report**

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that last February there was a state review of the district based on a group of standards using data from 2011-12 school year. The document is on our website and on the DESE website. Summary pages with findings and recommendations:

- Leadership and Governance – focus on fewer initiatives, implement more deeply and completely with a commitment to excellence and give highest priority to improving the quality of instruction. We have addressed a number of identified needs but problems with funding, capacity, planning, as well as the inability to resolve differences with teachers' association, have weakened potential effectiveness.  
Recommendations by team were stated and the School Committee made comments and asked questions.
- Curriculum and Instruction – implement a cyclical process for updating and completing its curriculum guides, increasing academic expectations.  
Recommendations by team were stated.  
We have addressed this recommendation by including STEM and Mass Insight training with AP teachers, and aligning Math new standards using grant funds.
- Curriculum and Instruction – make engaging, active learning a district priority and create a structure that places primary responsibility for implementing curriculum and instructional supervision on school principals.  
Recommendations by team were stated. It was agreed that principals should be the ones responsible with centralized development of curriculum.

Mr. Flaherty expressed concern in the report “not rigorous, engaging, or student centered” – state telling us our students are not being challenged.

Dr. Sylvia stated that we need to give our principals the capacity to succeed if we hold them accountable.

Mrs. Veugen was looking for documented feedback on teacher improvement plans.

Mrs. Rotella stated that TeachPoint is an online document for teachers with recommendations for improvement.

- Assessment – continue efforts to acquire and use technology for data collection, dissemination, and analysis and increase time for teachers to meet with specialists.  
Recommendations by team were stated and addressed by starting to upgrade technology but we have limited resources and continuing working with the union on common planning time.
- Assessment – institute a formal evaluation cycle to improve effectiveness of programs and services. A representative district data team might conduct this cycle.  
Recommendations by team were stated and Dr. Rabinovitch suggested having a review from an outside source.
- Human Resources and Professional Development – district should ensure all educators have a meaningful professional practice and student learning goals and consistent, timely feedback and that professional development is aligned with the evaluation system.  
Recommendations by team were stated and a new evaluation system has been implemented.
- Human Resources and Professional Development – work with teachers association to clarify collective bargaining agreement language or its interpretation that has led to confusion as to what feedback may be given to teachers outside of the formal evaluation process.  
Dr. Rabinovitch stated that this has been accomplished through TeachPoint.
- Human Resources and Professional Development – prioritize its professional development needs, provide continuous supervision to help teachers implement strategies and methods, and evaluate the professional development program whether initiatives have improved student achievement.

Dr. Rabinovitch, Mr. Louzan and Mrs. Rotella each stated ways these recommendations are being met. Resources are needed for summer professional development as recommended by the team and there is a cost for subs when taking teachers out of the classroom.

Dr. Rabinovitch agreed totally with making the elementary Instructional Leaders full-time but this is a budget item.

Dr. Sylvia stated that he was aggravated that this report is a testimonial for the new evaluation system by the state. We should build a culture of high expectations and commit as a system. All teachers should be on an improvement plan as a committed educator for quality improvement.

Mr. Flaherty addressed the effectiveness of the Instructional Leaders, the barrier with the teachers association, and a system of mediocrity with new good teachers being laid off. It's not about the learning.

There were further comments made on the Instructional Leaders improving the evaluation with honest meaningful dialogue in the evaluation process.

Dr. Sylvia moved to go past the hour of 10:00 p.m., seconded by Mr. Flaherty

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

(Miss Pham left the meeting at 9:57 p.m.)

- Student Support – make it a priority to review and evaluate current suspension policies and practices and develop a plan to reduce suspensions.  
Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the district is currently working on implementing a behavior system.
- Student Support – undertake a thorough, data-driven review of its current model of sped services to determine overall effectiveness and subsequently initiate, redesign or discontinue specific programs or services based on analysis of this data.  
Recommendations by team were stated and Mr. Louzan responded that we have had outside consultants evaluate certain programs and services.  
The committee asked for the next steps on this recommendation.
- Financial and Asset Management – school committee should work with town officials to ensure an agreement on municipal expenditures in support of schools and establish structures that allow increased communication and understanding on both sides to present a clear picture of district needs.  
Dr. Rabinovitch stated that three communication challenges have been hindrances to ensuring financial support for education: 1) turnover in town positions; 2) strained relationship between the school committee and the selectmen; and 3) school committee's advocacy for the schools has not always been strong and effective enough.  
Dr. Rabinovitch reported that things are getting better with the town and schools with the new administration. Some members of the committee agreed that they need to improve as well.

In conclusion this information will be given to the new administration for planning.

#### Acceptance of Gifts

Dr. Rabinovitch recommended acceptance of the following gifts:

- a) \$1,500 from Patricia Wylde towards the Global Education Cape Verdean Trip. Dr. Sylvia moved acceptance of the gift, seconded by Mrs. Veugen.  
VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0
- b) \$700 from Target to support the Minot Forest Grade 2 field trip to the Zeiterion Theater.  
Dr. Sylvia moved to accept the gift, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.  
VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0
- c) U.S. Flags from adoptaschoolflagpole.com program and Franklin Flags as follows:  
Dunkin Donuts of Wareham – Wareham Middle School

Longhorn Steakhouse – West Wareham Academy  
Community Mini-Storage – Wareham High School  
Music of the Bay – East Wareham School  
Wareham Barber Shop – John W. Decas School  
Kool Kone – Wareham Jr./Sr. Cooperative High School  
Need an additional sponsor for Minot Forest School

Dr. Sylvia moved to accept the donations by Franklin Flag Co., seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

### **Superintendents Report**

In his absence at the last meeting, there was a discussion on the budget recommendations the Superintendent had made to the Finance Committee. Dr. Rabinovitch proposed a line-by-line discussion of the FY14 budget at the April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. He stated that he was not in favor of any cuts to the budget but wanted to give the committee an opportunity to have a say on any cuts.

After discussion the Chair set a workshop meeting on Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> for this budget item only with the regular meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Minutes of February 27, 2013

Mr. Flaherty questioned the item Discussion of Educational Vision as a School Committee and wanted the votes stricken.

Dr. Sylvia stated that as one voting in the affirmative, he can vote to reconsider the votes and will do so at the April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Change “genetic” to “generic” on page one.

Mrs. Veugen moved to approve the minutes of February 27, 2013, as amended, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

The votes taken on February 27<sup>th</sup> will be reconsidered on April 3<sup>rd</sup> as an agenda item.

### **School Committee Reports**

#### Superintendent's Search – Membership of Screening Committee and Job Description

Mrs. Veugen suggested a 13 member interview committee with appointed members and applicants.

Mr. Flaherty moved to approve the make-up of the screening committee as listed for discussion, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

After discussion on the composition of and number of members on the screening committee, a vote was taken.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 1 (Mr. Fontes); abstain – 0

Non appointed members will submit a letter of interest and that the five appointed screening committee members or School Committee could decide.

Mr. Flaherty moved to have the School Committee appoint the other eight members of the screening committee, seconded by Dr. Sylvia.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain – 0

There were no changes on the job description. A letter of interest must be submitted by March 21, 2013.

Budget Negotiations with Town Leaders

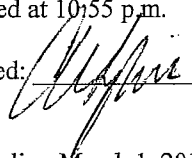
Chair Swett reported on the meeting he had with Dr. Rabinovitch, Mr. Sullivan, and Mr. Slavin. It was agreed that neither the town nor school would over spend; FY14 budget request by Upper Cape is a problem, and each group will contact their counterparts. The Town Administrator will take any increase requested by Upper Cape and put it in a reserve fund and level fund at \$500,000. It was also agreed that this is a revenue problem and additional revenue is required. The unity of town and school leaders with a long-term plan is needed to obtain more revenue from citizens and/or businesses. There was agreement that school transportation would be improved with a three-tier plan and that Chapter 70 funding is still looming. There was no commitment to an agreement to go into town meeting with a balanced budget but would go into this budget process on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and go into town meeting with a budget we can be proud of.

**Any other business - None**

Dr. Sylvia moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Flaherty.

VOTE: yea – 5; nay – 0; abstain - 0

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:  \_\_\_\_\_

**List of documents:**

Memo Principal Palladino March 1, 2013 School Committee Proposals  
WHS Program of Studies 2013-2014  
MassCore  
WPS District Review conducted February 7-10, 2012 & Powerpoint  
Memo Principal Seamans February 21, 2013 Acceptance of Gift  
“In Appreciation” 2012/2013 U.S. Flags  
Superintendent Search Screening Committee  
Correspondence – Newsletter, Notice of Vacancy Listing, Personnel

