

ERVING SCHOOL COMMITTEE
FINAL Minutes
September 20, 2011

PRESENT: Jarod Boissonneault, Chair; Mackensey Bailey, Scott Bastarache, Renee Tela, committee members; Charlene Galenski, Principal; Joan Wickman, Superintendent of Schools; Deb Gerry, Director of Special Education; Eugene Klepadlo, Selectman; staff and community members.

A.) The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

B.) Public Hearings – none scheduled.

C.) Approval of the Minutes The minutes of June 21, 2011 were reviewed. On a motion by Scott, seconded by Mackensey **the committee VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of June 21, 2011 as written.** (Melanie Burnett is absent from tonight's meeting and will not be able to attend.)

D.) Warrants Cafeteria and Payroll Warrant #107 were circulated and signed.

E.) Report of the Gill-Montague Representatives: Representative Beth Lux was present to report that the big news of the first meeting is a plan being put together to get out of Level 4. A meeting had been held in the auditorium with speaker Linda Posey from the Department of Education. The discussion was about what the school will need to do to get out of Level 4. Beth noted that it is important to remember, although frustrating to know, that it is not performance that got the school into Level 4. It was determined by the financial status of the entire district. So, although it was not MCAS scores that got the school into this situation it will be MCAS scores that will need to get them out. She also mentioned that preliminary data of 10th grade showed that not a single kid received a warning; Scores and results look good elsewhere, too. Talk was that it will take about two years from the date that the plan is approved for the school to work its way out of Level 4. It was announced that this is the second year that Special Education met criteria for Level 1. Deb Gerry noted that Erving met criteria as well.

F.) Regional School District Planning Committee – The meeting was postponed due to conflicts in schedules. Next meeting date still to be determined. Joan mentioned that Ray DiDonato would like to have a joint meeting of Wendell/New Salem and Erving. The committee discussed whether they would like to meet. Some points in favor of a meeting included that the mission statement of this committee included elementary and that for the timeliness of this matter it would be best to include school committee members along the way. Joan reminded the committee of how Leverett and Shutesbury configured a joint meeting of the two committees by meeting on either side of a combined meeting set in the middle. Jarod will get in touch with Ray to plan something since calendars are not available at tonight's meeting. Possibilities include Union #28 meeting on the 27th or at a regular scheduled committee meeting in October.

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- G.) Strategic Development Sub-Committee Report – Scott reported that there had been no meetings since last meeting. There were some last minute edits to the survey that he did. He was able to get it onto the computer with a member from Shutesbury. A hard copy will be available for review next Tuesday, which Scott will bring to the meeting. A date to release the survey will be set at a later date.
- H.) Franklin County School Committee Caucus Report – Mackensy reported that the committee met yesterday. The focus of the meeting was around an editorial printed on September 12th written by Eloise Michaels of Turners Falls. The editorial spoke to the amount of testing that kids are doing, how testing is affecting teacher evaluations etc. There is a website www.unitedoptout.com that has been circulated across the country and there is significant support of the movement. Potentially this topic could become the focus of the November summit. November 19th is the tentative date of the summit to be held at Greenfield Middle School. The Committee will be working on getting speakers to fill the event to an all day affair. Other discussion at the meeting included how the storm affected the towns and schools as many schools were used as National Guard landing sites and emergency shelters.
- I.) Collaboration for Educational Services Report – Mackensy reported that they met on Wednesday September 14th for the first meeting of the year. Grievances were heard first which made for a long night. Elections were held for chair and vice chair. Mackensy was voted to the Executive Committee as the at large member. TEP is now included in the collaborative services. They are going to remain as TEP, and continue the same focus. Succession planning will be a focus because Joan Schulman will be leaving. Subcommittees will be organized to change the bylaws. Looking for members to join existing subcommittees not creating new other than one adhoc committee.

J.) Principal's Report

1. Enrollment – 157 includes Preschool
2. Personnel – 5 new personnel: Tom Smith, Jr., Computer Technician (M-F mornings); Lisa Nuttelman, 4th Grade Teacher; Julie Wheeler, Paraprofessional; Carol Ortlip, Inclusion Specialist; Lori Hale, Special Education.

*Further discussion followed Principal's Report regarding personnel and a new shared position but will be included in the minutes here.

Joan stated that a new person was hired to fill the position of inclusion specialist which was held by Sean O'Neill. Deb Gerry, Jarod and Joan attended a Select board meeting to discuss the position. This position is shared among all 4 schools and the newly hired employee does need benefits. The Select board voted to share the benefit cost with other towns. In the meantime though, legal opinion is being sought. Jarod added that depending upon the opinion of legal counsel other shared positions could be affected as well. Eugene

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stated that the intent is to find out the definition of shared employees and to determine how they are paid. A healthy discussion was had regarding possible effects of legal counsel opinion and potential preventative measures. This led to an agreement that it is in the best interest of all parties to work collaboratively moving forward as this is both a school and town issue; a monthly meeting of School Committee representatives and Select board is thought to be a means of better communication and will tentatively be scheduled.

3. Computer Update – AC System work began today and should be finished tomorrow. The website has been updated and is a work in progress. Looking to have Tom be part of job alike and curriculum days. Workshop to be scheduled in October.
4. Capital Improvement Update – Last year’s money was used to purchase a new lawn mower and the AC.
5. Lunch Program Update – Donna LaClaire was invited to tonight’s meeting but could not attend due to a family illness. Topics of Discussion were the following:
 - Introduction of Salad Bar two or three days a week as an alternate choice. Discussed the need to educate the children on how to make the proper choices and the amount of time that it may take away from the children’s time to eat in the cafeteria.
 - The committee was able to look at a chart of comparison lunches being offered. Donna provided for Charlene to bring to the meeting a spreadsheet of online menus of other surrounding towns for the month of September. Some discussion about the variety and types of food offered at EES. Many surrounding towns have recently overhauled the lunch offerings.
 - Serve vs. Offer - Currently Erving plates the food ahead of time as there are no choices for a child who gets hot lunch. There has been mention to members of the committee from parents that the food served this way is cold. Charlene mentioned that if food were to be offered as the children come through the line there would be the need for more staff.
 - Donna has mentioned she would be open to having volunteers. Volunteers could also be used to help children at the salad bar and throughout the cafeteria during the lunch period to keep kids moving through lunch and perhaps outside.
 - Kathleen Bridgewater added that it may be exciting to have a nutrition outreach.
 - Joan added that this type of discussion has been happening at all the schools. She will go back to the Administrators and suggest that the Food Service Directors come together and brainstorm possible solutions to the many challenges at the next Job-Alike session (to be held September 28th).

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6. After School Program– There has been a great interest in expansion from three days a week to five beginning Monday. Paraprofessionals will help out the Director on a rotating schedule. Hoping the five day program generates more money and talk is about expanding it into an enrichment program.
7. Class Configuration Update – Meeting for 2/3 and 4-6 grade parent guardians was well attended. Concerns were articulated, letters were sent out to all families from 1-6 grades as to what to expect. Teachers worked hard, main switches happening in grade 2. Trying to keep the number of teachers each child works with as little as possible. Letters were sent home on the first or second day as to teacher assignment.

*Further discussion regarding current class configuration as it pertained to third grade:

Mackensey expressed that having had attended the parent meeting and receiving a letter informing of the expected changes it was anticipated that there would be more switching, intermixing of the children in third grade than is currently happening, which has led to some disappointment. Charlene explained that the second and third grade classes really couldn't be configured in the same way as the skills do not vary as much among the third graders. Mackensey reiterated that it is not a matter of the current configuration, it is just about the way in which it was presented to the class of third graders and their parents/guardians was confusing and misleading and possibly could have been avoided if the communication had been clear from the start.

8. MCAS – AYP was not met due to two years of lower CPI for ELA. AYE was met for math. No formalized report yet. Letter for parents just came in this week. After those letters go out then the info becomes public. Explanation that their CPI (Composite Performance Indices) must improve each year. This did not happen for 2 years in ELA. The Math CPI did improve rather significantly. Already scheduled third through sixth grade teachers to meet for an hour to go over data with consultant on Oct. 13th. Special Education teachers to meet with teachers also. Concern was voiced to the Dept. of Ed. that it doesn't seem fair that one grade can totally affect the AYP. Charlene also stated that many schools that are doing well are in the same situation as EES. The state is sympathetic to small schools.
9. All-School Field Trip – Scheduled for October 12th. Pre-K through 6th grade will attend Creole Choir of Cuba, a one hour performance at UMASS. Buses are all set to include preschoolers; there will be no charge to the children. Forms and info have been attached to the newsletter and will be sent home.

K.) Superintendent's Report

1. Franklin County Update – Superintendents met on Sept. 8th. Caught up with districts that were affected by the storm. Collaborative did a comprehensive report on the TEP merger. Superintendents felt strongly that membership dues should not go up because TEP joined with the CES. They do

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support the merger as long as membership dues do not go up. Joan did mention however that a TEP director did resign and they don't plan to rehire. Perhaps there would be an increase cost to the collaborative should they have to hire someone.

As for Regionalization locally, Amherst/Pelham started discussions. Leverett/Shutesbury endorsed having articles placed on Spec. Town Meeting warrants this fall. Erving has already done the school committee votes under legislation C71 S14. Shutesbury Selectboard planning to put article on warrant however, Leverett will not proceed. At Leverett, Farshid supported the idea and endorsed an article about regionalizing with Amherst PreK-12 with intent to become an innovation school.

2. Legislative Update – As for Regionalization at the State level there is still no forced regionalization. Commission created a tool for a school to assess its own capacity. Eugene mentioned that at a regionalization conference at Holy Cross, Legislators there and a rep from the Dept. of Ed. Indicated that grant money (about 8 million dollars) is available to tier 1 schools that are exploring regionalization. Tier 1 schools are guaranteed grant money, tier 2 that are implementing regionalization are seeing even more money. Joan added that one time funding is available to help with the various start up costs, (i.e. settling agreements, creating agreements, collective bargaining, merging of teacher agreements). Of the 5 new schools that have regionalized the primary reason is the district gets money to renovate or build a new secondary school.
3. Superintendent Goals – Joan highlighted some of the goals that were presented on a handout entitled Goals and Activities School Year 2011 – 2012. The goals were developed after reviewing feedback from the School Committee members on the 2010-2011 Superintendent Evaluation form.
4. Union #28 Goals – Handout Erving School Union 28 Goals (2011- 12). Joan explained that as the Union 28 Superintendent she meets with administration over the summer. She added that these goals do not shift much from year to year, what changes is how they are addressed.
- L.) Budget and Personnel Committee Report – Melanie was not present to give report though it was noted that only executive session meetings had been held since last school committee meeting.

Brief discussion of budget handout and request that moving forward and come next September the budget the committee receives will reflect as accurately as possible the current hired staff positions in the correct categories. Summer Program did go over budget this year and it appears that the cost could not have been accounted for but should be in the future. The need was that a child with an IEP should attend the program with a paraprofessional provided by the school. Also noted that this year's program was more intense with longer blocks of time. According to Charlene it was very well received by staff and participants.

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M.) Union #28 Committee Report – no public session since June. Next meeting Tuesday, September 27, 2011 at 7pm at Swift River School.

N.) Old Business

1. Central Office Benefits – Joan spoke on the phone with Paul Dunphey on Sept 15th to ask how and what is happening. It sounds as if the lawyers are tweaking the language to make it legislatively appropriate. It will then get reviewed by the committee and a hearing will be held after review. The timeline looks like late fall or beginning of January, but he was not sure.

O.) New Business

1. MASC Conference– Scott and Mackensy attended last year. Scott mentioned that it is well worth going. A letter was sent asking for extension of early bird registration though no response has been received as of yet. The committee agreed that the budget could support sending two members again this year. At this time the committee did not want to finalize who would be available to attend. On a motion by Scott, seconded by Renee **the Committee VOTED unanimously to approve the attendance of the MASC Conference for 2 members of the Erving School Committee.**
2. Home School Plan to approve – Joan recommends approval of the plan noting that this child was home schooled at the end of last year, returns to receive some services and the family keeps in touch. On a motion by Mackensy, seconded by Scott **the Committee VOTED unanimously to approve the home education plan for Owen Thurber for 2011-2012.**
3. Memorandum of Understanding – Senior Center requesting to share the schools composting services. Agreement that the Sen. Ctr. will pay during July and August as well as if additional expenses result due to the added use. On a motion by Scott, seconded by Renee **the Committee VOTED unanimously to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Erving Elementary School and the Town of Erving for the Senior Center use pertaining to the composting.** Jarod signed the MOU.
4. Erving Teachers Association – Notification was received from Kathleen Bridgewater that she will be the representative to support staff of Erving Teacher Assoc. (Union B)

P.) Policy Review and Update - none

Q.) Future Business Next School Committee Meeting will be held on October 18, 2011

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R.) Executive Session On a motion by Scott, seconded by Mackensey the **committee voted to adjourn from public session at 10:01 p.m. and enter into executive session for the purpose of discussions of entering into negotiations for Unit B of the E.T.A not to return to public session. Roll call vote: Tela – aye, Bastarache – aye, Bailey – aye, Boissonneault - aye**

Respectfully submitted,

Michele M. Turner