



North Shore Schools

Discovering Your Dreams

BOE Meeting Summary

January 7, 2010

Discussion/Presentations:



1. At the January 7th BOE Meeting, President Webb and Dr. Melnick recognized Physical Education teachers Eileen O'Connor and Kevin Mercier. Ms. O'Connor received the Educator of the Month Award from Dowling College/News12 Long Island Award. Mr. Mercier received the 2009 New York State Association for Health, Physical Education Recreation and Dance - Secondary Teacher of the Year Award.

2. Dr. Melnick explained that due to a large shortfall in the New York State Retirement System, the district's contribution will be 9% of payroll next year; an increase from 6% (or approximately \$850,000.) In the past, the district has put forth budget increases of approximately 3 ½ - 4%, however, with this additional mandated expense it will be impossible to come in this low without impacting our current programs and class sizes. If the budget were to fail, we would be required to make drastic cuts to staffing and programs. Unlike other years, the contingency budget for 2010-2011 would require a zero % increase in the budget, without relief in meeting our NY State and federally mandated expenses and our contractual obligations. Dr. Melnick noted that if positions are terminated they must be by seniority (e.g., teacher performance cannot be taken into account.) Trustees expressed their wish to maintain positions, North Shore's strong programs, and current class sizes and reiterated that every line of the budget will be thoroughly reviewed. They encouraged the community to remain informed and attend all upcoming board meetings.



3. Mr. Chlebicki, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, presented an update to the Board on the Ninth Grade Experience. He summarized by highlighting its 3 tenets - inter-disciplinary exploration of curriculum, heterogeneous/differentiated instruction, and knowing students as people & learners. Along with Director of Science Dr. Carol Smyth, Mr. Chlebicki said that the program will continue as planned and will go forward with 80 students.

Parent/student meetings of current 8th graders will be held later this month. Mr. Chlebicki reiterated that there are no additional costs for this program.

4. Track & Field Discussion: Dr. Melnick explained that the track was installed over 20 years ago and while it looks fine to the eye, the subsurface has outlived its natural life-span and will need to be replaced. At this time, it is best to also repair the football field. The ultimate cost to replace the

football field & track will be \$3 million. The Board has discussed funding this in the following two possible ways 1) utilizing existing funds in the capital reserve and 2) with private donations, NOT including it in the budget. Dr. Melnick also stated that the difference between sod and artificial turf is approximately \$600,000. Both estimates include the cost of drainage and maintenance costs over the next 12 years. Additionally, the latest study by the DEC found that there are no health risks with synthetic turf fields.

John Hall further explained that the drainage portion would have to be fixed no matter what type of field is chosen and either field option has maintenance costs. He communicated that synthetic turf affords more playing time with less maintenance costs. He also noted that although a synthetic turf field would need to be replaced in 12 years, only the top layer would need to be restored.

Trustees asked for a timeline for utilizing the capital reserve funds. Dr. Melnick explained the first step will be for the community to approve ADDING this project to the list of projects approved for the capital reserve fund at the budget vote this year. This would NOT increase monies in this fund and will have NO impact on the budget. The next step would be for the community to approve spending the funds which already exist in the capital reserve fund; this would happen at the budget vote in May of 2011.

5. Legislative Action: President Igor Webb communicated that the NS BOE spearheaded a meeting with David A. Little, Director of Government Relations for the NYS School Boards Association, attended by local school boards, business associations, and civic groups. All of the districts reported that they face the same problems with their school budget votes. Most community members are upset about property taxes and they are pessimistic about getting the legislature to bring dramatic change. It was agreed to organize a common lobbying campaign on the Senator Oppenheimer Bill and transportation and try to set up a meeting with Senator Oppenheimer in March. Dr. Webb clarified that we would not be allowed to opt out of state funding and become independent.

(For further information regarding this meeting, please see the North Shore Board of Education Minutes for January 7, 2010 at www.northshoreschools.org)