

North Shore Schools
Board of Education
Minutes
Regular Meeting
April 7, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President Webb at 6:45 pm in the High School Alumni Room. Present were Trustees Berliner, Beyer, Genovesi, Kolkhorst, Pombar, and Sharkey. Also present were Dr. Melnick, Ms. Buatsi and Mr. Chlebicki.

Executive Session

At 6:45 pm, on motion of Trustee Pombar and seconded by Trustee Berliner and all in favor, the Board went into Executive Session in the high school faculty room for matters leading to the appointment, employment or promotion of a particular person.

At 8:00 pm, on motion of Trustee Kolkhorst seconded by Trustee Genovesi and all in favor, the Board came out of executive session and resumed the regular meeting in the alumni room. There were approximately 20 people in the audience.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Webb led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Student Recognition

President Webb and Dr. Melnick along with Music Teacher Michael Kerschner, and Director of Fine and Performing Arts Terryl Donovan, recognized student Cal Fish for his achievement of becoming a top 10 finalist in the School Jam USA Competition.

Approval of Minutes

On motion of Trustee Pombar and seconded by Trustee Kolkhorst and all in favor, the minutes of March 24, 2011 were approved.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Melnick reported that New York State has completed its work on their budget for the next fiscal year and the bottom line is that between State and Federal aid we will see a reduction of \$323,030, giving us aid totaling \$3,623,995 or 3.6% of the total proposed budget. He reported that work groups for the Plan for 2020 have been meeting and are progressing towards developing the strategic planning questionnaire that will be distributed to the community in early fall. As part of this plan, we have contracted with *Futuristics* to conduct an indepth alumni study enabling us to gain additional insight into our students' preparation for college as well as their perceptions about their experiences while at North Shore. Spring concerts have begun and he publicly recognized Ms. Terryl Donovan and the music faculty for the superb job they are doing with students. He congratulated senior Charles Sharkey, who won the Yale Science and Engineering Assn. Science Fair Award at the New York State Science & Engineering Fair, as well as junior Samantha Nadel, who was named New York State Class B Winter Track & Field Performer of the Year and Long Island Winter Track & Field Athlete of the Year by Newsday. He also reported that Commissioner of Education, David Steiner, has announced his resignation and it is unsure what implications this will have to the new changes being made to the evaluation of teachers and administrators. He also reported that the new regulations for EBLAR (accrued liability reserve) has resulted in an overfunding in that reserve and the surplus will have to be used to offset the tax levy. Originally this reserve was

established on the advice of our auditors to accrue for all employees' retirement; approximately \$8 million. The reserve is currently funded at \$812,000. It has now become clear that the reserve can only be used to accrue for unused vacation time which only impacts the secretaries in the district and amounts to approximately \$161,749. The approximate \$600,000 difference in the reserve can only be used to offset the tax levy and will be discussed further during the board's discussion on fund balance.

Report of the SGO Representative

SGO Representative, Charles Sharkey reported on the events and activities at the high school including visitation of French students; a fundraising initiative by the Interact Club to benefit a school in India; the Key Club will attend the New York State District Training Conference; and students who study music theory and art history will curate an unusual afternoon of entertainment as they present CAGE MATCH, a recital of avant-garde music in the provocative spirit of John Cage and will also include performances by the Madrigals. Finally he reported that the SGO elections will take place after the April break.

Update on English Curriculum

Andrea Davis, Director of English & Literacy, gave an overview of the current English curriculum K-12, the steps that have been taken to prepare students for the ELA exam and the alignment to the Common Core Standards and 21st Century Skills.

Trustees expressed concern about keeping a balanced approach in embedding test preparation into the curriculum. They cautioned not to shift the focus to preparing for state assessments or making all assessments resemble the ELA exam. They also stressed the importance of distinguishing between formative assessments and state assessments. Trustees were impressed with the structure of the plan and the focus on grammar but were concerned about what seemed to be a lack of focus on reading. Trustees thanked Ms. Davis for her comprehensive report and the plan for the future.

Dr. Melnick added that when test results came in last year it was clear there was a problem that needed to be addressed immediately which may have caused an overreaction. This did not give much time to search through all of the materials available which may have led us to lean in one direction a bit too much. He went on to say that once the results are in this year, the faculty will be engaged to look at what worked this year, and what didn't, which will drive the plan for next year. He also noted that North Shore has always had quality instruction, but the perspective has changed in regard to test scores and how they are perceived in regard to quality learning. He said we need to look forward and will adjust our plan accordingly but feels as a district and board we will find a balance.

Mr. Chlebicki commended Ms. Davis and her leadership of the K-12 English Language Arts & Literacy. He said North Shore is lucky to have such a strong leader who challenges the status quo and bases her decisions on research.

Update on Social Studies Curriculum

Chris Zublionis, Director of Social Studies, reviewed the changes in the curriculum, how it ties into the Common Core Standards and 21st Century Skills. He explained that there is alignment in the elementary curriculum across the grades and schools. There is a focus on beginning the teaching of civics and economics at an early age to prepare students for the 21st century. In line with this, Mr. Zublionis visited senior classrooms and discussed the impact of local and state elections on their lives and reviewed voting procedures. Students were given the opportunity to register to vote during these classes. He discussed the style and purpose of exit assessments in grades 5 & 8 which determine the skills learned at each level and to assess readiness for the next level. He explained this feedback is more valuable for understanding areas of strengths & weakness which helps to determine where services may be needed. With

the elimination of a state assessment in grades 5 & 8 some districts are looking to independent assessments and he has been in contact with his constituents in these districts to investigate what may be beneficial in our district. In the High School there will be a new honors section of Global History & Geography giving 10th graders a choice outside of AP European History. He also noted new electives which will definitely run next year and are driven by student interest, such as The History of Military Conflict and Strategy; AP Government & Politics-US and Participation in Government; and Popular Music & Social History.

The Board had a brief discussion and commended Mr. Zublionis for his thorough presentation and report provided. Trustees noted there seems to be more depth in the curriculum and expressed their belief that a focus on civics and citizenship is important. Trustees also noted the importance of collaboration between the Director of English & the Director of Social Studies and commented on how well Ms. Davis and Mr. Zublionis work together.

Dr. Melnick thanked both Ms. Davis and Mr. Zublionis and shared with the Board his sense of pride in the team that has been assembled. He noted that both Ms. Davis and Mr. Zublionis are accomplished in their fields and always put the focus on kids.

Mr. Chlebicki added his thanks and noted that the curriculum work done with teachers by Mr. Zublionis is exemplary and the supportive approach with Ms. Davis enhances reading and writing across the disciplines. He explained that Mr. Zublionis was an integral part of the district wide community endeavor of aligning with 21st Century Skills and commended him for his work on the exit assessments for grades 5 & 8.

Comments from the Public

Mr. Tim Madden, Sea Cliff, commented on the presentations by the English and Social Studies Directors. He said he was concerned that the district has moved too much in the direction of test preparation and is glad to see that Trustees have brought out the same point. He realizes test preparation must be part of the curriculum but cautioned that this not become the focal point. He would like to see more balance.

Trustee Webb responded they did move quickly to imbed some test preparation and it continues to be a work in progress.

Defining Quality Instruction

Dr. Melnick shared a document with the Board framing the steps taken and future goals for enhancing quality instruction and supporting growth and high performance for all students. It highlighted what is being done currently to provide a well-articulated, challenging curriculum aligned with Common Core Standards, supporting the philosophy of differentiated instruction, using data to inform instruction and next steps in the recruitment & hiring and supervision & evaluation process. After a discussion and input from the Board his intention is to pass this document onto the Curriculum and Instruction sub-committee of the Plan for 2020.

The Board had a brief discussion about the document itself; who will utilize it, how it will be interpreted, whether it will be viewed as another initiative. There was some concern about consistency in curriculum and assessments across grades and schools as well as how individual student growth will be measured and how this data will move from elementary to middle and middle to high school. Trustees asked for a clear indication of what will be seen as a result of the North Shore assessments in regard to student growth. The status of Differentiated Instruction training was also discussed.

Dr. Melnick responded all the historical data for each student is shared in meetings with teachers and guidance counselors between 5th and 6th grade and 8th and 9th grade. He also said one of the administrators' sub groups is looking at the alignment with Common Core Standards and college readiness. He also explained that the idea of this document was to attempt to show how everything we are doing works together and that it can be used as a

roadmap for faculty and administrators. He also suggested sharing it with facilitators and the steering committee of the Plan for 2020. He explained that this is the 5th year in training teachers in Differentiated Instruction and the last cohort of teachers will be trained either over the summer or during the school year. He noted that new teachers always get trained over the summer months but current faculty has the option of training during the school year; this results in pull-outs from the classroom. Finally he noted that if any parent notices inconsistencies in the curriculum across the grade, or with the types or frequency of assessments, they should contact the teacher as well as him.

Legislative Issues

It was noted that there is a State budget and as yet there is no tax cap or mandate relief. It is not evident as yet what the impact will be from the resignation of Commissioner of Education, David Steiner. Trustee Beyer reported that the LEAD group will not meet until after the budget season and the application for the Legislative Action Committee is on the web site; a post card will be going to all residents.

Regular Business

The Board decided to act simultaneously on action items D-K.

On motion of Trustee Berliner and seconded by Trustee Sharkey and all in favor, it was:

Personnel Changes

Resignation for Retirement Purposes - Certified

Resolved: To accept the resignation for retirement purposes of Gail Kirchenberg, Special Education, effective June 30, 2011

Regular Substitute (Leave Replacement) Appointments – Certified

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Megan Doyle, Elementary, on Step 1 of the MA salary schedule effective April 6, 2011 through May 6, 2011

Resolved: To approve a regular substitute (leave replacement) appointment for Heather Makowski, Elementary, on Step 4 of the MA salary schedule, effective April 11, 2011 through May 11, 2011

Approval of Teacher Overages

Resolved: To approve the following overages for Math/ELA AIS Support, effective February 28, 2011

Katelyn Nichols	.08
Gaietrie Parag	.08

Approval of Addition to the Per Diem Substitute List

Resolved: To approve the additional of the following names to the per diem substitute list:

Christopher Claro	Secondary
Lauren Mistretta	Secondary

Approval of Student Worker

Resolved: To approve the appointment of John Walton as a student worker, effective March 21, 2011

Approval of Extra Curricular Activity Coaches

Resolved: To approve the following spring coaches:

Middle School

Baseball

7th Grade Karl Budkevics
Frank Mauro
8th Grade Dennis McEvoy
Harrison Ryan Berglin

Lacrosse

Boys-7th Grade John Pace
Boys-8th Grade Jeff Butt
Girls-7th Grade Kevin Carpenter
Girls-8th Grade Jean Hodermarsky

Softball

7th Grade Christine Hickey
8th Grade Jackie Muscarella
7/8th Grade Keith Slack

Track

John Jackson
Donna Jean Welch

Gymnastics

Melissa Vassallo

High School

Lacrosse

JV Assistant William Madigan

Approval of Spring 2011 Community Education Instructors

Resolved: To approve the following Community Education Instructors for Spring 2011

Brian Suhovsky – SAT II Math I Review Class
Patrick Cassino – SAT II Chemistry Review Class

Approval of Accompanist for Spring Concert Season

Resolved: To approve the appointment of Paul Baserman, as an accompanist for the Spring Concert Season at fees of Rehearsal @\$35 for 40 minutes and Performances @\$50/hr.

Authorization of Petty Cash Account and Supervisor

Resolved: That a petty cash fund be established for the Life Skills Program in the High School and that Dan Adams be appointed as the petty cash custodian

Approval of Budget Transfers

Resolved: To approve budget transfers in the amount of \$87,834, effective April 7, 2011

Approval of Special Education Services Contract

Resolved: To approve an agreement with the Huntington UFSD for Special Education Services for parentally-placed students with disabilities residing within the North Shore School District and attending non-public schools located within Manhasset UFSD during the 2010-2011 school year

Approval of Special Education Consultant/Service Provider

Resolved: To approve an agreement with Lanya Falcicchio, ABA TA Home Services, effective July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011

Approval of Special Education Tuition Agreement

Resolved: To approve a tuition agreement with Eden II School for Autistic Children, Inc. d/b/a Eden II/Genesis Program effective February 3, 2011 through June 30, 2011

Old Business

Dr. Melnick noted that in light of the legislation concerning EBLAR funds, he would like to suggest that the amount currently overfunded in that reserve be used to offset the tax levy. This amount of \$641,000 along with the projected fund balance of \$749,000 currently would enable a reduction of \$1.4 million to the tax levy. The Board briefly discussed this and there was consensus to appropriate the additional funds to offset the tax levy.

The Board had a brief discussion in regard to a budget analysis document to be posted on the website. It was suggested that both a pie chart and a bar graph be used to illustrate budget appropriations, however, it was noted that the state requires a pie chart in the budget newsletter.

Trustee Beyer reported that the BOCES Audit Consolidation Services opened RFPs and our current auditor, Pappas and Company, charges us less than the lowest bid received.

Trustee Pombar asked if the Board is interested in having school email accounts; none of the Trustees were interested.

New Business

The Board had a brief discussion about two letters received from parents opposing the district's selection classification policy. There was consensus on the board that they do not wish to review the policy and would like it to remain as written.

Adjournment

At 11:15 pm on motion of Trustee Kolkhorst and seconded by Trustee Genovesi and all in favor, the meeting was adjourned.

Elizabeth Ciampi
District Clerk