

North Andover School Committee

Regular Session

Date: March 5, 2009

Present: Members Allen, Limpert, Nobile, Ormsby and Whidden. Also present Superintendent Marini, Assistant Superintendent Hutchinson and Business Manager Fortado

Location: Town Hall

Call to Order

Chair Whidden called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Chairman's Report

Chair Whidden informed the Committee that the date for MASC Day on the Hill is May 7th.

Chair Whidden discussed the joint meeting held with Andover to discuss possible ways to save money through collaboration. She stated that another member of the Committee will need to take over on this issue when she retires.

Ms. Allen gave an update on the health insurance process. She encouraged the advisory committee to get together again and remain proactive on how we should proceed.

Recognition

Dr. Scuzzarella introduced Wei Zhang visiting Principal from China.

Dr. Scuzzarella recognized Terezia Cicolova, Rebecca Ely, and Kevin Kinneman as National Merit Scholar Finalists

High School Schedule

Dr. Scuzzarella and members of her staff including Karen Lahey, Sara Kipp, Nicole Caniff, Pete Concannon, Steve Nugent and junior class president Zac Horman discussed the process used to select the new schedule and the benefits of the new schedule.

Chair Whidden stated that Dr. Scuzzarella has come before the Committee over the last two years to discuss scheduling.

Ms. Allen questioned whether Science AP courses would be starting at 7:00 a.m.

Dr. Scuzzarella stated that they would be starting at 7:00 a.m. and this was necessary in order to complete the national curriculum for AP. She noted that the issue has been addressed with the union. She stated that the cafeteria would be opening early.

Mrs. Allen asked whether students taking AP and honors courses and in music would be able to take music all year long.

Dr. Scuzzarella stated that she and Mr. Nugent would need to work with individual students next year to try to make all of the schedules work.

Dr. Ormsby expressed concern that increasing electives will somehow cause core academics to suffer. He questioned how two trimesters of an honors course would compare with four quarters of the same course. He also expressed concern about the issue of time away from a course. He gave an example of a student taking math the first two trimesters and then not again until the second trimester of the following year.

Dr. Scuzzarella stated that there is some lost class time. However, the staff is encouraging students to look at planning their schedules over the full four years. The new schedule will actually allow for more overall time in subject areas. Dr. Scuzzarella noted the importance of essential standards and common assessments in the trimester schedule and stated that it is the staff's goal that no student will have the long break between core academic subjects. She stated that she is not sure that it will be possible in every case, but the staff will work towards that goal.

Mr. Nobile suggested that the administration put together some sample schedules to help students and families make informed choices when planning and mapping schedules. Mr. Nobile also asked Dr. Scuzzarella to provide information on how the administration would obtain feedback on how the new schedule impacts academic scores.

Dr. Scuzzarella stated that she would be happy to put together sample schedules. Dr. Scuzzarella stated that the scheduling committee will look at how students are doing on teacher examinations as well as standardized tests.

Mr. Limpert asked if the administration thought colleges would look less favorably on North Andover students because of the trimester schedule versus the semester schedule.

Mr. Nugent advised that colleges are more interested in the rigor of the course program than the schedule.

Chair Whidden asked how faculty were allowed to give input into the process.

Ms. Kipp discussed the process used by the scheduling committee to obtain staff input.

The Committee discussed concerns for those students taking the early morning AP classes.

Dr. Scuzzarella stated that there is no perfect solution but that the administration would try to assist in providing information to students about possible carpools. Dr. Scuzzarella stated that she would have no problem if the Committee chose to change the bell times at the high school until later in the morning.

Chair Whidden opened the meeting to public comment.

Ms. Jalbert had a list of questions from high school parents who could not attend this evening's meeting.

Dr. Marini suggested that another meeting be held at the high school to respond to the parent questions.

Ms. Lamonias discussed her concern regarding her son being able to participate in early morning AP classes when his bus is not making it to school on time now.

Dr. Marini stated that he would ask transportation to look into the concern.

Ms. O'Grady stated her concerns about teachers' ability to condense curriculum into two trimesters. She stated that she would like the Committee to evaluate and review the schedule after the first year.

Dr. Marini stated that he would ask Dr. Scuzzarella to schedule another parent meeting and that he would attend the meeting and report back to the School Committee.

Warrant Article for Modulars at Kittredge

Dr. Marini stated that on the advice of Representative Torrisi and counsel he would be asking the School Committee to approve a warrant article for town meeting as a place holder for the modulars at Kittredge.

Mrs. Allen moved to suspend the rules in order to vote on warrant article submission for the modulars at the Kittredge School. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Dr. Ormsby and Ms. Whidden.

Dr. Ormsby moved to place an article on the warrant to approve appropriation of funds for procurement of space by lease or purchase of one or more modular buildings. Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Dr. Ormsby and Ms. Whidden.

Redistricting

The Redistricting Committee gave a presentation regarding the options for redistricting. The goal of the committee was to maintain neighborhood schools, maintain/reduce class sizes, equity of program space at each school and maintaining k-5 at each school.

The Committee discussed a proposed transition plan for students.

Dr. Hutchinson distributed and discussed the draft procedures for out of district placement. The Committee agreed to review the procedures and bring back any questions or concerns to the next meeting.

Chair Whidden opened the meeting up to comments from the public.

Adele Ballacker asked for clarification on out of district students. Dr. Hutchinson explained that except under NCLB school choice there are no guarantees that a student will be allowed to stay at a school out of district. The decision will be made based on class sizes.

Kim Remlee asked that because of the high percentage of renters in the Atkinson and Thomson schools that out of district requests be reviewed thoroughly as numbers are tight and we need to be sure that class sizes do not jump up over the average.

Helen Pickard thanked the committee for their responses to her concerns to date. She stated that her next request is that it be written somewhere that a priority was moving the fewest students possible. She requested that a policy be implemented that says that an effort will be made not to redistrict students in the next redistricting that had already been redistricted.

Laura McMillian thanked the Committee for supporting modulars at Kittredge.

Christie McQuade asked that the Committee look at rerouting the students currently riding a bus to get to Thomson rather than students who walk and/or look at a lottery system. She also asked for consideration from the Committee on bussing fees for students being redistricted.

The Committee agreed to discuss the bus fee issue again.

Susan McLean asked that the Committee look again at redistricting students who live so close to the Thomson School. She expressed concerns about the safety of students walking from her neighborhood to the Atkinson School.

Maria Rogers expressed concern that students who are within walking distance of Thomson are being redistricted and expressed concern about the safety of the walk from her neighborhood to the Atkinson Elementary School.

Dr. Marini stated that he will review locations of crossing guards and bring that information back to the Committee.

Central Office Lease

Mr. Fortado and the Committee discussed the responses to the RFP for office space. The Committee discussed the cost savings, the cost of the move, concerns regarding Osgood Landing being at the far end of town, and the benefits of the facilities that would be available for use by the school department and parent groups at Osgood Landing.

Dr. Ormsby moved to suspend the rules to vote on accepting the lease offer for Osgood Landing. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 4-0-1 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, and Dr. Ormsby voted yes, Ms. Whidden abstained.

Dr. Ormsby moved to authorize the administration to enter into a three year lease with Ozzie Properties for proposed space of 1,600 square feet at an annual cost of \$68,324 for FY10 and \$91,098 for FY11 and \$91,098 for FY12, beginning on June 1, 2009. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Dr. Ormsby and Ms. Whidden.

2009-2010 School Calendar

Dr. Marini discussed the two options for the school calendar and stated that the NATA had not agreed to a calendar that had students returning before Labor Day.

Ms. Allen moved to approve the 2009-2010 school calendar as presented. Mr. Limpert seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Dr. Ormsby and Ms. Whidden.

Executive Session

At 10:52 Mr. Nobile moved to adjourn to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation, not to return to regular session. Mr. Limpert seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile, Dr. Ormsby and Ms. Whidden.

Approved 4/2/09