

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 14, 1999

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Members Present: Lois Borgesi (Chair), Frank Wills (Vice-Chair), Adrienne Duncan (Secretary), Dana Berry, William Rogers

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Susan Fleming (Superintendent), Mr. Rokicki (VMES Principal), Mr. Marino (PHS Principal), Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary), parents, students and staff.

Call to Order: Chair Lois Borgesi called the Meeting to order at 7:11 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION

VISITORS' STATEMENTS

- Emily Anderson spoke concerning the recent election of the members of the Student Members of the Principal's Advisory Committee. Ms Anderson also spoke about her perceived lack of opportunity to provide input on PSC Policy IKB, Homework. Ms Anderson also presented the School Committee with several petitions.
- Mr. Fox asked about his recent public records request concerning notes taken at the November 23, 1999 joint meeting of the School Committee and the PHS Principal's Student Advisory Council. Mr. Fox also spoke concerning the content of and changes to the PSC Policy IKB, Homework. Mr. Fox also asked about the references to homework policies in the Student Handbook.

Frank Wills requested that Mr. Fox supply the School Committee's with written copies of his comments and Mr. Fox said he did not have the comments in writing, but had read from various versions of the Homework Policy. Lois Borgesi said she had copies of the versions of the Homework policy and would review these with the School Committee during their discussion on the Policy.

MINUTES

November 23, 1999, Regular Session – *Frank Wills moved to approve with minor corrections and changes, Dana Berry seconded, and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 abstain (Adrienne Duncan).*

November 23, 1999, PHS Principal's Advisory Committee/Provincetown School Committee Joint Meeting – *postponed until the next joint meeting with the Principal's Advisory Committee.*

Dr. Fleming commented that she had not kept her notes from the November 23, 1999 joint meeting and that she had constructed the minutes from memory. Dr. Fleming said she supplied those minutes to the Advisory Committee.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Shakespeare Class @ PHS - Dr. Fleming reported on two press release/articles written on classes at PHS.
2. City and Town Newsletter from November 1999
3. Staff Letter – MCAS Results – various letters from Dr. Fleming congratulating staff members.
4. Notes on Work Session of 11/30/99 – concerning the proposed Building Project and Building Committee.
5. Student Writings: Provincetown Middle School – letters of praise from Dr. Fleming to various staff members.
6. Superintendent's Letter to PAE concerning Curriculum Writing – memo from Dr. Fleming in response to PAE Memorandum on curriculum writing.
7. Request for Building Needs Conference - letter from Dr. Fleming to Department of Education requesting a conference date on December 27th or 29th.

8. Copies of media coverage of MCAS results
9. Letter of praise from Town Manager Keith Bergman for favorable MCAS results.
10. Retirement request from teacher Kathy Scouron – has asked for early retirement incentive.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

MCAS Results – Dr. Fleming distributed and reviewed handouts from a presentation given to the staff and commented on the improvements in made in all areas. Next year the emphasis will be to show how individual students have increased their scores between the eighth and tenth grades. Dr. Fleming acknowledged the leadership efforts of the School Committee. Dana Berry expressed his appreciation to the Superintendent, Principals and students for the MCAS improvements and Lois Borgesi said the entire School Committee echoed Dana's statements.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Homework Policy IKB: 2nd Reading – Lois Borgesi reviewed the various changes this policy has gone through during the past several years. Lois Borgesi read from a letter received from Emily Anderson concerning homework. Lois Borgesi also referred to petitions signed by students requesting the formation of a Homework Policy Advisory Committee. The School Committee discussed the purpose and form of the Committee's Homework Policy. Dana Berry commented on the suggestions in Emily Anderson's letter and disagreed with the request for a Homework Policy Advisory Committee.

Frank Wills moved to approve Homework Policy IKB for a 2nd Reading, William Rogers seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.

FY 2001 School Budget – Dr. Fleming discussed a meeting she had had with the Principals on the FY 2001 monies available for building maintenance and said she would provide the School Committee with a copy of a memo summarizing the agreements reached at that meeting.

School Building Project –

- School Building Needs Conference 12/29/99 – Dr. Fleming reported that there has been some swift progress on the project and said a conference with Department of Education had been scheduled in Malden on the 29th. This conference must be attended by, at a minimum, the Superintendent, a School Committee member and a member of the Building Committee. The School Committee must first, however, vote on the educational specifications to be presented at the conference. The School Committee will therefore meet on Monday, December 20, 1999 to discuss these specifications. Dr. Fleming distributed a draft copy of proposed educational specifications and discussed them with the School Committee. Mr. Rokicki commented on the proposed specifications, pointing out that the School Site Council had not had time for review. Dr. Fleming reviewed the Department of Education's funding process and timelines and mentioned that making improvements required by building codes could escalate the cost of the Project beyond reach. The School Committee and the Principals discussed some of the particulars of the proposed specifications. In response to a question from Lois Borgesi, Dr. Fleming explained that the specifications can be changed to some degree after approval from the Department of Education. William Rogers expressed concern that they were moving too fast without getting input from the community. The School Committee discussed various possible future scenarios. Dr. Fleming said that she was becoming increasingly convinced that it was absolutely necessary to build a broad-based consensus and to keep the public well-informed. Mr. Marino said he was uncomfortable in setting the educational specifications in only one School Committee meeting without seeking input from teachers and the school councils. By consensus, the School Committee agreed to go ahead with the meeting on December 20th. Lois Borgesi commented that the minutes of that meeting do not have to be approved on the 20th, but can be delayed until December 28.
- Appointment of School Building Committee – Dr. Fleming referred to her memo containing recommendations for membership on the Committee. By consensus, the School Committee agreed to convene the Building Committee and see if anyone would be willing to serve as chair. ***Adrienne Duncan moved approve the composition of the Building Committee as proposed in Dr. Fleming's memo, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***
- Educational Specifications – Dr. Fleming explained that the School Committee needed to vote on the Maguire Group proposal and sign the contract for Master Planning Services. ***Dana Berry moved to approve and award the Master Planning Services contract to the Maguire Group, Adrienne Duncan seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.***

Proposal for Partnership with National Faculty for Professional Development, January 1999 - Dr. Fleming distributed materials on the proposed partnership and said that the budget would need to be negotiated, as the National Faculty was proposing a larger budget than had been expected. Dr. Fleming then reviewed and explained the various initiatives and the proposed funding sources through FY 2002. In response to a question from William Rogers, Dr. Fleming explained how the budget difference had arisen, explaining that it was her understanding that the National Faculty had agreed to do some fundraising. By consensus, the School Committee members said they felt unprepared to make a decision without more information.

Other –

- None

NEW BUSINESS

VMES Overnight Field Trip Request: Nature's Classroom, Jan 24 thru Jan 28, 2000 – *Adrienne Duncan moved to approve the Field Trip Request, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted, 5-0.*

OTHER –

- None

Adrienne Duncan moved to go into Executive Session at 9:30 P.M. for the purpose of discussing non-union personnel contracts and to approve previous executive session minutes, Dana Berry seconded and it was so voted unanimously by a roll call vote of all five School Committee members present.

The School Committee emerged from Executive Session at 10:10 P.M. and Chair Lois Borgesi reconvened the Regular Meeting.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

- None

ADJOURNMENT

Adrienne Duncan made a motion to adjourn at 10:11 P.M. and it was so voted unanimously.