

Newport City School Board Meeting Minutes January 19, 2016

Present

Board Members:

Corinna Lancaster – Chair
Vicki Lantagne
Mary Ellen Prairie
Jessica Ward
Karrie Briggs**

Administration and Staff:

John Castle, Superintendent
Melinda Mascolino, Ass't Principal
Nancy Frenette, Interim Principal
Nancy Griffith, Recording Secretary
Jennifer Rotunno**, Teacher
Kristen Morey, Teacher
Christina Malanga**, Teacher
Mary Ellen Maclure**, Teacher
Judy McKelvey**, Teacher
Christina Tetreault**, Teacher
Elizabeth Bemak**, Teacher
Thyra Monaghan**, Teacher
Sharon Pare**, Teacher
Dennis Royer**, Teacher
Karen McMichael**, paraprofessional
Samantha Knight**, Bookkeeper
Cindy Stone**, Teacher
Gina Miller**, Teacher
Jennifer Ingram**, Paraprofessional
Dale Netz**, Receptionist

Press:

Robin Smith**, Orleans Record
Laura Carpenter**, Newport Daily

Parents/Community Members:

Christine Russell**
Rory Carr**
Jaime Comtois**
Jaime Royer**
Carrie Ann Roberge**
Toni Roberge**
Jessica Hinton**
Joe Hinton**
Jennifer Gilson**
Stacy Royer**
Rae Kerwin**

**Partial attendees

- I. LANCASTER called meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
- II. **Public comments, Communication with Parents/Staff/Citizens:** None.
- III. **Approve FY17 budget:**
LANCASTER indicated the main purpose of tonight's meeting was to approve the FY17 budget. She expressed that her priority is that students come first, but that she must also be fiscally responsible to the tax payers. LANCASTER asked FRENETTE if any changes had occurred to last week's proposed budget. FRENETTE mentioned that a classroom teacher has asked to be reassigned to the open Special Ed position, so that will remove the proposed RIF of a classroom teacher.

LANCASTER suggested that they move on to review all of last week's FY17 budget proposals. LANTAGNE asked how reducing the music teacher to a 0.60 FTE would affect State mandates. FRENETTE indicated that teaching time would not be reduced, just prep time. Students would get once a week instruction. LANTAGNE asked if the other music

teacher would then have to help with planning. FRENETTE distributed a proposed schedule for the proposed 0.60 FTE music position. Lower grades would continue to receive 35 minutes of instruction and upper grades would continue to receive 40 minutes, and various planning blocks and lunch break were included. STONE indicated that many of the current schedule's planning blocks are not used simply for class preparation; they are also used for concert preparation. FRENETTE indicated that the proposed 0.60 FTE schedule would also apply to the proposed reduced ART position. LANCASTER asked if a schedule was available this evening for the 1.0 FTE PE teacher, FRENETTE said no but he has 2 classes per week per grade, with only one planning session per day.

LANCASTER moved on to the proposal of reducing the receptionist position from 35 hours a week to 30 hours a week. FRENETTE indicated that the office staff felt that was a feasible proposal. FRENETTE re-iterated that the proposed elimination of one library aide position would not affect the quality of library services. In regards to the proposal of transferring the bookkeeping services to the SU LANCASTER brought up a letter received from the city of Newport stating that bookkeeping services could not be transferred as per the city's charter. The charter was established in the 60s, and CASTLE indicated that there have been numerous legislative changes in school financing since then. He believes that it is the district's statutory authority to decide who does their bookkeeping, but will check with our lawyer. MCKELVEY asked what the savings would be if bookkeeping was contracted with the SU. MASCOLINO indicated that the savings would be \$29,000.

Next was the review of technology services. LANCASTER indicated the proposal was to reduce the current 80% position to 60% and to then transfer it to the SU. This position is not a teaching position, so it does not directly affect students. MONETTE expressed his discontent around some of the rationale stated in the budget proposal for the transfer of services, he felt it was inaccurate. He went on to discuss some of his contributions to NCES over the years. FRENETTE said the rationale was worked on by administration around a service not a particular person. GILSON inquired if technology issues would fall on teachers' shoulders without having an in-house person and FRENETTE indicated that a SU worker would be here 3 days a week. KERWIN asked what would occur on a day that the SU employee was not scheduled. FRENETTE indicated that our contract is based on 3 days but that they are only a phone call away. MONETTE indicated that he often takes phone calls when he is not scheduled to work.

LANCASTER reviewed the reconfiguration of 5th and 6th grades that was proposed last week. Much discussion was had around the smaller class of 5th graders moving up, and acceptable classroom sizes, ensuring that behavior needs continue to be met and preparation for the transition to NCUJHS that occurs in 6th grade. FRENETTE stressed that upper grade students become independent learners by the 3rd or fourth grade and need less individual support, but all intervention support would still be available. PRAIRIE asked where the money for intervention teachers come from. NOLAN indicated that it comes from Title 1 funds which are federal funds. For the current year it funds 4.0 FTE intervention teachers.

There are strict restrictions on how it can be spent. There was a significant bump this year due to the ECP program being disbanded.

LANCASTER briefly reviewed last week's proposed bus leases, various facility needs, and the use of \$35,000 of fund balance as revenue in the proposed budget which would still leave a fund balance of \$71,000 that could be applied to various fund balances. PRAIRIE mentioned there is also \$30,000 in a Special Education fund balance.

For tonight's meeting LANCASTER had asked FRENETTE to give a proposed FY17 budget with all proposed cuts, another with an increase from 60% to 70% for the music and art teachers and then another without any of the proposed certified staff cuts. The 70% art and music modified budget would represent an increase of approximately \$0.01 to the tax rate, the modified budget that had no cuts to certified staff positions would represent approximately a tax rate increase of \$0.02 to \$0.03. CASTLE indicated that NCES penalty is pretty modest compared to other districts. CARR indicated that as a taxpayer she is comfortable with a possible increase of \$0.02 and \$0.03 on the tax rate, RUSSELL agrees. KERWIN asked why we do not return to three 5th grade teachers and three 6th grade teachers by eliminating the math coach position. There was some resistance to this idea as the math coach position was created due to a need. NOLAN explained the role of a math coach and the need for one at NCES. MOREY asked if long-term funding was looked at for the sustainability of the math coach position when it was created. LANCASTER stated that yes, but that ACT 46 has reduced available funding that normally was in the budget. CARR asked if we had teacher feedback on the success of the math coach position. MONAGHAN stated that a new possible math curriculum NCES was looking at implementing might eliminate the need for a math coach. MASCOLINO indicated there was no formal feedback from teachers, but many have expressed they are pleased with the support they have received from the coach.

LANTAGNE stated that she sits on the board as a board member, tax payer and a parent. She has to view this in all three ways. She is not in favor of cutting art and music programs and proposes that the board presents a status quo budget around certified staff and let the tax payers decide. PRAIRIE asked for clarification around the increase in the SU assessment and proposed increases for support staff and administration.

LANCASTER asked the Board to take action on each proposed item in the original budget proposal from last week:

Bookkeeping: no action, leave at NCES.

Technology: **Motion** to reduce position to 3 days a week and contract it out to SU

LANTAGNE/PRAIRIE - Prairie asked for clarification on current days per week and it was clarified that it was 4 - **Approved**.

Grade 5 configuration: **Motion** to have three classes for this grade - WARD/BRIGGS - **Approved**.

Grade 6 configuration: KERWIN asked what happens the following year once that smaller class moves on. INGRIM stated that she feels the 5th grade class moving up has high needs. PARE disagrees, a lot of the high needs have moved out of district. **Motion** to have 3 classes, not to accept the proposal of 2 classes - BRIGGS/PRAIRIE. NOLAN says that there is such a thing as having a classroom size that is too small. At that age students are very social. And if the concern is to prepare them for JHS, classes will be bigger there. As there was a tie, with two of the board in favor of the motion and two against, LANCASTER cast a nay vote which maintains the two classroom recommendation – motion not approved.

Grade 3 configuration: GILSON asked if the 3rd grade teachers were ok with this proposal. MALANGA stated that it would be a bit more challenging, but she cannot anticipate exactly.

Motion to not accept the budget proposal and leave it at three self-contained classrooms - PRAIRIE/WARD. ROBERGE asked why grade 3 was selected to cut down, and MASCOLINO responded that it was because it was the smallest group. **Approved.**

Reduction of 0.7 FTE Intervention teachers to two teachers that want to reduce their FTEs:

Motion to accept reduction - PRAIRIE/BRIGGS - **approved.**

Transportation: **Motion** to go with the proposed action of leasing 2 buses - WARD/LANTAGNE – **approved.**

Art/Music proposal: **Motion** to keep ART/MUSIC at 100% - LANTAGNE/PRAIRIE – **approved.**

Receptionist proposal: **Motion** to accept recommendation to reduce receptionist from 37.5 to 30 hours a week and maintain the same number of days and offer her insurance as it is required by ACA - LANTAGNE/WARD - **approved.**

Library aide proposal: **Motion** to eliminate one library aide position- BRIGGS/LANTANGE – **Approved.**

Fund balance proposal: **Motion** to transfer \$53,000 of general fund balance to the construction fund and \$53,000 into the bus fund - PRAIRIE/WARD – **approved.**

LANCASTER indicated we cannot approve the budget until final figures are calculated.

KERWIN asked if the Parent committee could be informed of the final budget, and that their next meeting is February 9th. LANCASTER indicated that she would try to be there.

Another meeting was scheduled for January 25th at 5:30 for final FY17 budget approval.

- IV. **Approval of principal job description:** **Motion** to approve revised job description. LANTAGNE/BRIGGS - PRAIRIE asked about quantifying the number of administrative experience in the AD. CASTLE recommends leaving it as open ended as possible as the application pool will be very shallow. **Approved.**
- V. **Choose Principal Search Committee members:** Board reviewed the list of interested candidates and selected the following members for the committee: Mary Oliver, Tammy Wiggett, Mary Ellen Maclure, Cindy Stone, Karen McMichael, Tammy Szych, Jessica Hinton, Melissa Lagoy, Aaron Larsen, Jamie Comtois, Mary Ellen Prairie, and Corinna Lancaster.
- VI. **Auditor Recommendations:** Tabled until the February meeting.

VII. Financials:

Action:

- A. Approve signing of warrants from January 14, 2016 in amount of \$247,527.19 (general fund). **Motion** to approve - WARD/PRAIRIE - **approved**.

CASTLE wanted to clarify timeline for principal search. Board would like the process to include viewing all applications with a summary spreadsheet. Meeting will be held potentially on January 28 at 5:30.

- VIII. **Agenda Items for next meeting on January 25, 2016:** Approval of FY17 budget. The auditor recommendations are to be reviewed at the February 1st normal board meeting which will be held at the city clerk's office.

- IX. **Adjourn: Motion** to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. – PRAIRIE/BRIGGS – **Approved**.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Griffith

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	January 21	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A219
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	January 21	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCES Board	Monday	January 25	5:30 p.m.	NCES