

Newport City School Board Meeting Minutes February 1, 2016

Present

Board Members:

Corinna Lancaster – Chair
Jessica Ward
Mary Ellen Prairie

Administration and Staff:

John Castle, Superintendent
Melinda Mascolino, Ass't Principal
Nancy Frenette, Interim Principal
Nancy Griffith, Recording Secretary

Press:

Joseph Gresser**, The Chronicle

**Partial attendees

- I. LANCASTER called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Additions or Adjustments to agenda: CASTLE asked board to add the approval of a special education long-term teacher substitute to the agenda. MASCOLINO also wanted to add the potential new hire of a paraprofessional.
- II. **Approve the minutes of January 11, January 19 and January 25, 2016 (attachments A1, A2, A3). Motion** to approve the minutes – WARD/PRAIRIE – **Approved.**
- III. **Public comments, Communication with Parents/Staff/Citizens:** None.
- IV. **Financial Reports:** No action taken as documentation was not available for review. To be added to the next agenda...
- V. **Principal report (attachment B):** PRAIRIE asked how the Field Review Study had gone. FRENETTE indicated it went very well. The team was made up of educators, students, parents and AOE staff.
- VI. **Superintendent's Report:** CASTLE discussed that the SU is in the process of searching for a new Director of Learning Design. He feels fortunate that they have three viable candidates coming next week for second interviews, and he hopes to bring a final recommendation to the SU board in February.
- VII. **New Business:**
 - A. **Motion** to approve the 2nd grade long-term teacher substitute, Katie Ste- Marie – WARD/PRAIRIE – **Approved.**
 - B. Castle talked about the special educator position that NCES has not been able to fill since the resignation of a special educator this past fall. The school has used various subs, and now he would like to recommend Raymond Mascolino as a long-term special educator substitute thru the April break, and he would be under Frenette's supervision. The current 2nd grade classroom teacher going out on maternity leave, who is also endorsed as a special educator, will move into that position upon her return from maternity leave immediately after the April break. This would mean that the 2nd grade long-term teacher substitute they just approved tonight will remain in the 2nd grade position until the end of the year. **Motion** to approve the

long-term special educator substitute, Raymond Mascolino, until the April break. – LANCASTER stated that she was displeased that the board was not involved in interviewing this potential long-term substitute. She stressed that the NCES Board is always involved in all interviews, and they were not part of that process for both of these LT positions.

Approved.

- C. LANCASTER inquired as to the need for a new paraprofessional. FRENETTE indicated it was a former NCES student that had left, but has returned. And he has very high needs, and his behaviors have escalated. CASTLE asked if the administration has looked at re-allocating existing staff, and they indicated that yes, but they had no capacity. The student is awaiting evaluation, so at this time the para would have to be hired as a regular education para, and potentially will be transferred under special education pending evaluation results. The position will need to be advertised.

VIII. Unfinished Business:

Information/Discussion:

- A. FY17 Budget: It had been approved previously, but the Board had simply wanted a clean final copy. CASTLE discussed how new changes over the weekend from legislation affected the final tax rate repercussions. The legislation now reflects that any school whose FY15 education spending per equalized pupil was below the State average will have no threshold limits for FY17 and FY18. Also, any districts that still have thresholds to contend with will have tax penalties based at \$0.40 versus the initial \$1.00. This most recent change in legislation means that the proposed FY17 budget, which is up 3.55% will represent an estimated tax rate increase of approximately \$0.01. However, once combined with the JHS and SHS budgets Newport City residents will actually see a decrease in their tax rate by \$0.02.
- B. Principal Search Process: LANCASTER indicated that the committee has met, and have narrowed down the list for initial interviews.
- C. Support Staff Terms and Conditions: GRIFFITH indicated that the current policy does indeed offer school year employees benefits if they work more than 30 hours a week, it is in fact the full year employees that need to have their wording revised to meet ACA requirements as the policy currently states 32 hours a week are needed for benefits. CASTLE recommended that the Board wait until the SU policy committee comes forward with other recommendations in April before bringing forward a new draft policy. He also mentioned that the any proposed revised policy will need to be warned at least 10 days prior to any board meeting that may take action on any changes. GRIFFITH then discussed the dental insurance they took action on last fall to offer to support staff. It was never formalized in the board minutes appropriately, so that needs to be clarified. FRENETTE will look into it and report back to the board the current practice that the bookkeeper is applying to the support staff. FRENETTE wanted to also bring to the board's attention that they need some sort of wage grid created to apply to new hires. CASTLE indicated it can be created in a variety of ways and they should not do it in haste.
- D. Monthly meeting schedule: PRAIRIE indicated that she would like to return to two meetings a month, so they are shorter, and would offer more flexibility. CASTLE encouraged them to remain at one, but it is the discretion of the board. **Motion** to go to two meetings a month – PRAIRIE/WARD. They would be the first and third Mondays of the month, but it will have to be re-looked at during the March re-organization meeting. **Approved.**

E. PRAIRIE asked if the neighbor that has been cutting the trees had been notified to stop, and FRENETTE indicated that they had been notified, but that currently they have the right to cut branches that may be on their side of the property line. PRAIRIE simply wanted them to clean up their mess, not leave the branches for NCES staff to pick up.

IX. **Agenda Items for next meeting on February 15, 2016:** Approval of the financial reports, approval of the warrants and the auditor recommendations. The board would like to request that the bookkeeper be at one meeting a month, so that they can review certain accounts to see where they stand in regards to their budget, and how to make it easier for information to be interpreted as there will be new board members soon.

X. Recess to join the Newport City Council at 6:56 p.m. **Motion** to adjourn after the city board meeting – PRAIRIE/WARD - **Approved**.

Newport City Council presentation: LANCASTER indicated it has always been a courtesy to present to the city council. VINCENT asked what the enrollment currently was. She indicated that with PRE-K it was approximately 340. It has been around the 300 mark for the past few years. VINCENT indicated that they were disappointed that the budget was not level funded. ROBERGE indicated that it appeared that the school board did not even attempt to get below the thresholds. LANCASTER indicated that they cut where they felt they could, and that there was lots of support from the community and staff. She mentioned that they had to incorporate the 2.5% increases negotiated for teachers, as well as absorb the 7.9% increase in health insurance, but the council indicated that they had the same challenges. The city council feels like they worked hard to cut their own budget, and the high school did as well, whereas NCES did not. ROBERGE and VINCENT are encouraging townspeople to not approve the proposed school budget. WILSON asked how much the board was involved in the budget development, and LANCASTER indicated that the process was a bit different this year with an interim principal and she felt they had less time to work on it. WILSON indicated that this is the second year in a row with a significant increase. ROY asked how many positions were cut, LANCASTER confirmed that the receptionist position was reduced and the tech support was contracted thru the SU.

XI. **Adjourn:** Meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Griffith

<u>Meetings:</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
NCSU Policy Committee	Thursday	February 18	5:30 p.m.	NCSU A219
NCSU Executive Committee	Thursday	February 18	6:30 p.m.	NCSU A209
NCES Board	Monday	February 15	6:00 p.m.	NCES