

**MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT #51
CUMBERLAND / NORTH YARMOUTH
Board of Directors
P. O. Box 6A
Cumberland Center, ME 04021
Web site: www.msad51.org - Phone: 829-4800
Board of Directors**

July 5, 2012 Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jim Bailinson, Chair, at 7:00 PM. School Board members present were, Bill Dunnett, Virginia Dwyer, Martha Leggat, Jim Moulton, Jeff Porter, Bill Richards and Bob Vail. Administrators present were Bob Hasson, Carol MacArthur, Scott Poulin, Dirk Van Curan.

Jim Bailinson opened the meeting for public comment. A community member could not find the meeting agenda on the district website. It was located under the 'School Board' link located on the district homepage.

The dates of the annual School Board Retreat were confirmed and it is scheduled on July 25 & 26, 2012, 4:00 PM until 9:00 PM both days.

The Chair was authorized at the June 18, 2012 School Board meeting to negotiate a contract extension with the Superintendent up to 3%. The discussions took place and a 3-year contract was agreed upon. The Superintendent declined an increase for the coming year in view of concessions made by other employee groups in the district and the financial challenges the district continues to face.

It was noted the IB diploma exam test scores were in and the scores look good. More on this subject will be discussed at a meeting in the fall.

Turf Field Fundraising and Other Fundraising Needs:

Jim Bailinson opened the discussion on Turf Fields and the Board developed the following questions:

- 1). What is the initial cost?
- 2) What is the time span before replacement or significant refurbishing is required?
- 3) What is the cost of refurbishing or replacement?
- 4) What are the comparative maintenance costs for a turf field and the current field?
- 5) What are expenses for students if shoes worn on turf is different from grass?
- 6) What is the fund raising strategy?

Bob Vail, Athletic Advisory Committee member, added it was suggested by the AAB that the turf field be privately funded. He is in favor of getting the process started. Martha Leggat would also like to see the process started and commented she does not

want to see students currently participating in schools sports burdened with fund raising. Bill Dunnett, AAB member, described a prior effort approximately 4 or 5 years ago to acquire a turf field. The community would like to be reassured the School Board and Administration want a turf field and would welcome fund raising before they begin the process.

The cost of a turf field and maintenance was discussed. It was pointed out that in view of the Superintendent declining a salary increase for this year and the need for increased funding for technology and academic programs, the Board must examine the expenses of a turf field and how will it be funded in the future. Fund raising might cover the initial cost, but it will be a budgetary item in the future and additional information is required to better understand initial and ongoing costs.

Outside groups or organizations with the expertise to suggest whether or not the communities could raise the required amount is an option that could be used by whatever community group forms to raise funds. The discussion of turf fields possibly could be combined with other community discussions over the years for a performing arts center. The pool could be another item that could require substantial investment. If NYMS is closed, the district loses a major indoor recreation space used by both communities. The question was asked if the high school is the only location where a turf field would be installed. Looking at turf fields with other issues in the district might serve the community better.

The suggestion was made to limit the discussion to fund raising for a turf field at the high school as was presented by the Athletic Advisory Board. Answers to the questions about cost, maintenance expenses and future budget requirements should be answered with a focus on the high school field. A feasibility study was suggested to understand whether funds could be raised for one or two fields.

The Board asked the Athletic Advisory Board to research answers to the questions discussed this evening and provide the answers to the Board.

North Yarmouth Memorial School Task Force – Next Steps:

The Board has not taken specific action since they received the recommendation from the North Yarmouth Memorial School Task Force. The Board discussion at this meeting is an opportunity to review the report, ask questions and seek additional information, if needed. The Board anticipates making a decision in the fall.

The NYMS Task Force final report suggests grades 4 & 5 are moved to Greely Middle School and closure of NYMS. Some Board members are concerned with parking congestion at GMS. Additional parking would be added at GMS as presented to the NYMS Committee when this concern was raised during committee meetings.

A survey of North Yarmouth residents was discussed and because of a low number of responses, the survey was viewed as more anecdotal than comprehensive. The NYMS

Task Force identified a projected savings of \$550,000 annually and weighed the savings against the concern of 4 & 5 grades combined with grades 6-8. Educational issues take precedent and more information is necessary to convince some Board members that educating grades 4 & 5 with grades 6-8 is in the best interest of the students. A Board member suggested waiting until the student population declines by a significant number before closing NYMS. If a significant reduction in student enrollment does not occur, the district will have held on to a valuable asset.

Enrollment trends were discussed noting enrollment has increased and decreased over many years. A projected enrollment report for the next 5, 10 or 20 years would be helpful. It was suggested the NYMS Task Force recommendation should not be looked at as a North Yarmouth or Cumberland issue and use the task force's work and the \$550,000 identified projected annual savings as the basis of making a decision.

Mark Girard, North Yarmouth Memorial School Task Force Chair, discussed the work of the task force and what information was gathered, from whom, and how they vetted the information. The task force feels the numbers reported are credible. He further stated all information could be examined at yet another level. He encouraged the Board to read the report and minutes and use the information to inform their decisions.

The Board discussion concluded with one member opposed to closing NYMS, some members requesting more information, and others concurring with the NYMS Task Force recommendation. It was decided to continue the discussion at the July 25 & 26, 2012 Board Retreat. Building plans, financial data and educational outcomes will be reviewed at a more detailed level at the retreat.

10. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM.

MSAD #51 Board of Directors

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- Attend School Board meetings and the calendar is on the web site, www.msad51.org
- View meetings live on the TV2 channel or watch replays. The replay schedule will be posted on TV2
- On demand or streaming by VIMEO. You can watch meetings on your computer after they are posted to the MSAD #51 web site and the link is, <http://vimeo.com/msad51tv>
- Borrow a DVD of a School Board meeting through a loan & return program from the MSAD #51 Superintendent's Office located at 357 Tuttle Rd., Cumberland Center, ME 04021
- Read School Board meeting minutes, available on the district web site, www.msad51.org. Select 'School Board' from the 'District' box on the left side of the home page and select 'minutes'.

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