

GROTON-DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

High School Library
Business Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2007
(Approved August 8, 2007)

PRESENT:

Ms Cindy Barrett, Chair
Peter Carson
Ms Berta Erickson
Dr. Paul Funch
Mr. Chuck McKinney
Mr. Frank O'Connell (arrived at 8:08 p.m.)
Dr. Forrest Buzan, Vice-Chair (arrived at 10:10 p.m.)

ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Alan Genovese, Superintendent
Timothy Sheehan, Director of Business and Finance
Dr. Susan Rubel, Director of Curriculum/Staff Development
Ms Joan Endicott, Director of Pupil Services

STAFF, PRESS, OTHERS: C. Beckert-Long, Groton Herald; D. Bean, S. Silverman, K. Snow, P. McGrath, L. Kirtman, G. Koocher, S. Byrne, K. Riggert, D. Furciniti, See attached sign-in sheet

CALL TO ORDER:

The GDRSC Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by the chair, C. Barrett.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members read prepared announcements and a copy is attached to these minutes.

Dr. Genovese announced Steven Silverman has been chosen as the new middle school principal. He has over twenty-four years of teaching and administrative experience. Mr. Silverman was introduced and stated he has been very impressed with the energy and dedication of the staff and parents he has met and it is clear that parents want to be a partner with middle level education. He said he is a student-centered, constructivist administrator, who likes to walk around the building and see kids engaged as he is a firm believer in project-based learning and interdisciplinary teaching. He is excited to be part of the district and is looking forward to a year of great challenges and positive changes. He stated he is a firm believer in celebrating accomplishments and continuing to work on those areas that need improvement.

Dr. Genovese recognized several people who are retiring from the district:

David Bean - Employed with the district for almost thirty-five years and held a variety of teaching roles, starting as an elementary teacher. He has taught language arts, math, social studies, science and reading at the elementary and middle school levels and has served as a Team Leader. He also coached many athletes throughout the years.

Sharon Wooding - Employed as an art teacher for twenty-one years and has taught at Tarbell, Swallow Union, Prescott and the middle school. Ms Wooding is a celebrated artist and has had her work published in the nationally recognized children's magazine, Ladybug and has published books. Her paintings have been exhibited in various locations and some of her artwork is on the walls at Swallow Union.

Judith Forkner - Employed with the district for fourteen years as a kindergarten aide at Swallow Union. She participated in various professional development opportunities offered by the district and her original letter of recommendation described her as honest, friendly, cooperative and efficient, with a true love of children. She portrayed all these qualities while working at Swallow Union and will be missed by the children and staff.

Mike Deneault - Employed with the district for nineteen and a half years, beginning as a fourth grade math teacher at Florence Roche. He held a variety of positions, including teaching grade 6 social studies when Prescott was a middle school. He left the district in 1980 and returned in 1988 as a grade one interim resource room teacher. He served as Theater Manager from 1990 until now. Dr. Genovese stated there are opportunities for people to still be involved with the district and he has pursued conversations about this with Mr. Deneault.

Dr. Genovese wished them all great success and thanked Mr. Bean for being here tonight. He stated he learned yesterday that fourth grade teacher Joanne Antonelli will also be retiring. She has been with the district for almost fifteen years, teaching at Florence Roche. She was nominated as Teacher of the Year by her students and Dr. Genovese said she is a tremendous teacher.

Dr. Genovese announced Assistant Principal Tom Murray has accepted a high school principal position in Danvers and he is in the transition stage.

Dr. Genovese announced they are looking at a number of initiatives to save energy this summer and beginning July 2nd, they will be going to a four day week, Monday through Thursday. Administrators will be working a ten hour day and there are a number of staff who will have their hours cut over the summer. Florence Roche will be running their SPED program. The PTYC will be closed for the month of July and while it is expected that the roof will be completed by August, if it is not, they will begin in Florence Roche. He stated they started looking at the food in the various freezers and it will be consolidated into one freezer to save energy. Suggestions for conservation are welcome.

Dr. Rubel thanked the Committee for allowing them the opportunity to have professional development this summer. Over eighty staff members will be participating in various professional development activities over the next week or so, across all grade spans and every content area.

Dr. Genovese announced they will be interviewing two finalists for the Florence Roche principal position and a ConnectEd call will be going out tomorrow, asking parents to come meet them and ask questions on Monday, June 15th. Kathleen McCarthy will meet with parents from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in the cafeteria and Ruthann Goguen will meet with parents from 11:00 a.m. until noon. Copies of their resumes, as well as Mr. Silverman's, were distributed. He recognized and thanked Phyllis Maynard for her efforts in coordinating the on-site visit for Mr. Silverman as well as the off-site visits. He also commended Jeanne Mitchell for her many contributions during the search process.

MINUTES

C. MCKINNEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 6, 2007.
SECONDED BY P. CARSON

In Favor: C. McKinney, C. Barrett, P. Carson

Abstention: B. Erickson, P. Funch

C. MCKINNEY MOVED TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2007.

In Favor: C. McKinney, C. Barrett, B. Erickson, P. Funch

Abstention: P. Carson

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

B. Erickson stated high school students Sara Jordon and Molly Kalter had spent February through May helping with the Prescott school play and sacrificed their trip to Toronto to stick by it. She noted students sometimes deserve accolades as well.

P. Maynard shared a letter she is submitting to the newspapers regarding the process for the middle school principal search. She stated it was a positive experience, the process flowed easily and truly worked. She thanked Ms Mitchell for running a 24/7 Human Resource Department and Dr. Genovese for the open and

democratic process the search maintained and allowing them to do their jobs without interference. She also thanked the members of the search committee, not only for their time but for coming together in a respectful and cooperative manner.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

Dr. Genovese announced the changes in the order of the presentations and stated the MS SIP will be presented in the fall and the State of the District will be discussed at their July or August meeting.

FY06 End of Year Auditor's Report

Members received copies of the report in their packets.

Karen Snow, of Melanson Heath Company and Audit Supervisor for the GDRSD's Financial Statement Audit, reviewed the annual financial statements. She stated the district has a clean opinion, has no reportable conditions and the financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. She stated this is the most important part of the report. The important number is the fund balance of \$1,241,129 which is the unreserved E&D as of June 30, 2006. This is about \$500,000 higher than the prior year and K. Snow thinks it is primarily because the district did not appropriate any E&D money to be used for the FY07 budget. The income statement was reviewed and she noted most of the expenditures are for instructional services and fixed charges. Revenues were up about \$1.5M and expenditures were up about \$1.3M. The largest increases in expenditures were in the instructional services and benefits and there was a small jump in transportation costs. Some of this was offset by a lower cost in debt service because the district received some SBA money. She noted the School Committee had approved to transfer out \$250,000 for the capital needs at Prescott.

K. Snow referred to the excess/deficiency of revenues and other sources, which is the net income or loss for the year, and it is a negative number of \$275,607. She said this is not a concern because the district planned for it and budgeted just over \$800,000 of E&D to help subsidize the FY06 budget. The budget versus actuals was reviewed and she stated a couple of the categories had expenditures higher than what was budgeted. The district came in with a positive of \$500,000.

K. Snow reviewed the Management Letter and stated this brings to the district's attention some of the issues they looked at while doing the audit and things that might be done to tightened up some of the internal controls over the district's finances. She said these issues are not reportable conditions or material weaknesses but are more ways they think the district can make improvements on procedures all ready in place. She noted the district resolved all but one of the prior year Management Letter comments and this is a wonderful accomplishment.

The first three issues for the current year are related as they deal with decentralized departments/receipts. This is an area where there is more inherent risk because people are collecting money outside the business office. They did not find any major weaknesses in this area but they described them in detail so department heads would know how to deal with them. Dr. Genovese stated Ms Snow came to an Administrative Council meeting and reviewed a number of these issues on how they can improve their practices at the site level.

With respect to the process for writing the Management Letter, P. Carson said it appears Melanson Heath says "I think you could do this better" and there is a district response. He asked if this is while they are sitting down together or if there is an initial letter and the district gives an official response. K. Snow said as they do the audit and find things they feel could be improved, they verbally bring it to the attention of Mr. Sheehan or Dr. Genovese. They draft a Management Letter, send it to the district and allow them time to read it and think about it and then they prepare a formal response. He asked if there is an implicit "that is the correct way to address the issue" if they give a response and K. Snow said they read the response and if there is something in there they feel is not getting to the point of the issue, they will discuss it. They follow up on any issues in the next year's audit. Dr. Genovese said it is a real give and take process and having it in writing helps the district to address an issue more specifically because they do not want it to show up in the next Management Letter. K. Snow said it is okay to resolve the issue in a different way than what was recommended.

Some of the rules on Management Letter comments have recently changed and if anything was repeated successively from year to year and not addressed, it would step up to the level of a material weakness or significant deficiency. P. Carson asked who regulates the format of the letter. K. Snow said there is a company through the AICPA that produces reference documentations that regulate the "opinion" page and Melanson Heath has their own standard format for presenting the issues and responses. Dr. Genovese noted a number of audits are performed in the district.

K. Snow stated comment #4 is a standard comment and has to do with the new auditing standards coming out in the wake of high profile fraud cases. Comment #5, also is a standard comment, and is to prepare for the implementation of GASBY Statement 45. The district will be subject to it in FY09 and will take some planning and work. Dr. Genovese asked how much this will cost the district to implement and K. Snow said she has heard estimates of \$7,000 to \$15,000, depending on the size of the district, for the first step of hiring an actuarial firm to come in. Dr. Genovese said they are projecting \$10,000 to \$11,000 and this is a new expense and another unfunded mandate that needs to be in the budget. K. Snow stated they will have to update their actuarial liability every two years.

K. Snow explained the district needs to recognize the liability it has for the benefits it is going to pay to its retirees and what it will be paying in the future to its retirees for other benefits besides pensions. The district currently recognizes the pension liabilities. She stated it is a large dollar commitment on the district's part and a number needs to be put on that liability.

Comment #6 was the only prior year issue not fully resolved and deals with the student activity funds. She noted this is an ongoing issue with all their clients. They are working with Mr. Sheehan to resolve this comment. While this is not what they call a material amount of money in terms of the financial statement, because it is mostly cash, it is inherently open to risk and the school principals are legally responsible for this money. Procedures need to be in place to be sure the money is accounted for all the way down the line.

K. Snow stated it is a pleasure to work with the district and the staff is very helpful and responsive and they are also very open to suggestions for improving procedures. She said they just did an audit of the SPED grants and the district had no findings and noted a clean audit is very unusual.

C. Barrett said she is very pleased with the number of issues all ready addressed and in the process of being addressed. She asked when they can expect the FY07 audit report. K. Snow said they usually do their financial statement field work in mid-September and they schedule two weeks on-site. It takes about six weeks to put the information together. She said the district has an early audit and not a lot of time to close the books and finalize the numbers. She noted the early audits are done by the clients with the cleanest records.

T. Sheehan said the excellent results of the FY06 audit are due to the skills of Mr. Young, Ms McGrath and the members of the business department.

Future Management Systems: L. Kirtman, G. Kootcher Report

Mr. Kirtman, Future Management Systems, and Mr. Kootcher, MASC, were invited to the table. They had met with a group of parents to talk about some issues and to see what they could do to help the district move forward.

Mr. Koocher said they were invited to meet with a small group of people, whom he calls a task force, to talk about some district concerns. They work with school committees across Massachusetts and issues they hear are important to the districts where they hear them but they are not necessarily unique. He stated this is an extraordinarily difficult period for school districts and committees with the pressures of accountability, the economy and the impact of early retirement. He added they are under no small measure of scrutiny and sanctions from any of the fourteen levels of regulations imposed on school districts.

School committee members and the superintendent are public figures and are subject to scrutiny and commentary as people can say anything they want about them and not be held accountable for doing so.

Mr. Koocher said they have some recommendations to help the district move forward. During a transition, he stated it is absolutely standard to see people leaving. It is not uncommon to see principals, members of the central office or administrators leave for a number of reasons such as a new opportunity, a difference in philosophy or being passed over for the position. Morale problems occur during a transition and he said Groton Dunstable has the unique opportunity to look at its long-term planning to see where they want to be two, five and ten years from now and to engage the community in a thoughtful and deliberate strategic planning process. People have very legitimate concerns and feel deeply about what they are feeling. He noted it is very difficult to follow someone who has been in the position for a long time and it is a difficult process. He encouraged the district to just look forward, not look back, cast a wide net and do a well disciplined strategic planning process so they have a good sense of what the legitimate needs and feelings of the community are.

L. Kirtman said he has worked with over 200 school districts in the state and has worked with Groton Dunstable in the past. When working with districts, he said they try to assume positive intent; that everyone cares about the kids in the district and cares about their community and sometimes the motivations collide. He stated there are about thirty to forty districts going through transition with similar issues and you want to deal with transitions at the point someone is hired. He stated it takes time to build trust and communications break down. He stated issues about communications are not about individuals but are about the system. Communication is a legitimate issue and needs a lot of work. He believes in creating new history by going forward and including people, and listening to them, in the process. He agrees with the strategic planning recommendation and has talked with Dr. Genovese and the Leadership Team about designing a process that builds on what has been done in the past, that recognizes the values and beliefs, and to also move on. He stated there has to be good communication with parents and the community and people want to know they have been heard. While he acknowledges there are major concerns, he stated they are not unusual.

L. Kirtman said he would like to work with the Leadership Team and reassess where people are and ask them what they think is working, what they think the issues are and then bring the data back into the room. He stated he will take everything seriously.

P. Carson asked Mr. Kirtman who he is referring to when he says Leadership Team and if that includes the School Committee. L. Kirtman said they are talking about the Administrative Council but they talked about bringing the Council and School Committee together because everyone is not sure what each other's jobs are and this can cause a lot of misunderstandings. P. Carson asked if he is talking about people who are left and L. Kirtman said yes.

With respect to transitions for superintendents, Dr. Funch asked what kind of time period Mr. Kirtman sees before these things work themselves out. He agrees a lot of the problems are part of the transition and not about the capabilities of the person and asked how they distinguish when there are problems with the process and the people within that transition period. G. Koocher said legitimate problems reveal themselves by consensus and after talking with 150 people, they can identify the critical issues with authority and credibility and working on those issues begins expeditiously. With deliberate action and good information to go with, he said you can move quickly, and certainly within a year, to resolve many of their issues. L. Kirtman agreed it can take up to a year. He said they look at three areas - strategically where the district is going, how things are done on a day to day basis and the "people" issues. If they do these well in the beginning, they hope they can cut down the difficulties in districts.

With regard to the management of the transition, P. Carson said clearly, it is the responsibility of the superintendent, with the job of the School Committee being to evaluate that and set their expectations. Since they want to avoid a spiral, he asked if they have examples of districts who have successfully managed a transition where a school committee set expectations and the superintendent's goals in such a way that the transition successfully moved forward. G. Koocher said Oxford was very contentious but with some work, they were able to move forward. If he had more time, he said he could come up with a list of successful transitions.

He stated sometimes, one or two people have to go for a successful transition. He noted an individual, or individuals, can exacerbate a good relationship and said there is nothing like bad economics turning into good economics to make a disproportionate number of problems go away.

P. Carson said they should focus on these issues during their summer workshops and what has been successfully done elsewhere. G. Koocher said they may want to do a district self-assessment to get a sense as to whether some of those issues apply to the School Committee. He said they will have a good grid by the end of the month to help the district look at many areas of district transition leadership categories of issues. L. Kirtman feels the strategic planning is a big piece because it is inclusive and has direction.

Dr. Genovese stated there will be several new administrators that will become part of the process and asked how this will assist in moving forward with the strategic planning. He noted some of the information they have now is not going to be relevant to a new leadership team. L. Kirtman said transitions are ongoing and every time a new person joins, the dynamics change. New people need to feel they are an equal member of the team.

B. Erickson said this process has been going on for a year and she feels an important element has been left out - the School Committee. She said they have some influence over the situation and she would look forward to being involved. C. Barrett said she supports bringing back the suggestion that the Committee work with Mr. Kirtman and have a workshop with the Administrative Council. She feels they did not work very well on their goal to strengthen relationships with their constituencies by clearly defining roles and expectations. They need to bring that goal back and work harder on it.

Dr. Funch agrees the economy significantly affects their job and he said they also need to bridge the gaps with the Boards of Selectmen and FinComs and work more cooperatively with them. G. Koocher encouraged them to build good relationships with the municipal officials and L. Kirtman said they have discussed having focus groups and interviewing people at the town level. B. Erickson agrees there was more tension regarding the Boards of Selectmen and the FinComs but she thinks the Committee needs to say that maybe they are not doing all the things they should be doing themselves.

Facilities Task Force III

N. Bugbee, FTF secretary, stated they were given their charge by Dr. Genovese. They have been meeting since April and there is a good representation from Dunstable and Groton. They were given four charges and they are starting with reviewing enrollment projections and reviewing facility space and identifying potential available space. They set up their meeting schedule through December and they will be meeting in each facility. They will have a tour of each facility as a means of reviewing potential problem areas and identifying needs. They expect this review to be completed by their November meeting.

Enrollment projections are usually done by an independent consulting firm but in light of the current budget deficit, N. Bugbee said they have decided to take a lot of this on as a committee with the goal of generating a realistic and informative demographic assessment which will allow them to make the best decisions for future facility needs. They are researching historical and projected census data, birth rates, housing development and issued building permits, population migration factors and grade retention.

In an advisory role, the FTF III has begun discussions around the handling of engineering, architectural and construction contracts with regard to liability for the services provided or work performed. They are discussing a means to add a clause to all district contracts that will hold the contractor liable for not only their work but any subsequent problems that arise from the work they did. The Task Force is targeting the beginning of 2008 for their short-term recommendation report and a mid-year 2008 time frame for a long-term recommendation report.

P. Carson said he is glad to see the population migration factors in there and stated the projections are not at all credible. He is concerned they are not hiring a consultant and asked how much they are saving. Dr. Genovese said it can cost between \$8,000 and \$15,000. N. Bugbee said they are looking at all their options including the renovations for Prescott, which include ADA compliance, as well as the historical aspect. She said a few members were on the previous Task Force and they have the notes and recommendations from the two previous committees. They can see where some of the projections were off and they know they have to be extremely accurate.

T. Sheehan said the hardest projection is kindergarten and first grade enrollment because they simply do not know where those children are until they show up for registration. Dr. Genovese said a firm did those projections but they did not hold true; they targeted that the growth would continue and they would be building a new elementary school. He noted someone with expertise can also miss the mark. A critical piece of information is what the maximum growth is for buildable land in both communities and what the plan is for this happening over time.

Playground Equipment/CPA Grant Application

L. Zimmaro said Project Playground began about four years ago and there has been a steady, determined effort by parents to revolutionize the Florence Roche playground and it has been transformed. She acknowledged the members of the original core team and introduced Laura Lefebvre.

L. Lefebvre showed the conceptual plan developed by Mr. Yenchenko in 2005. Last summer the district remediated high levels of arsenic that were found in the soil. With the money they had, they were able to install a basketball court, a kickball diamond and four squares in the fall. The older children have been thriving in the environment but the younger children would benefit from playground equipment and there is a "wish list" of equipment they would like to see. They are working with a number of vendors to get designs and detailed proposals. They have the funding to do the priority equipment and they will get the rubberized surface installed before school starts in September. She stated Mr. Byrne will oversee the installation and the PTA will pay for the vendors and the removal/disposal of soil.

With all the blacktop, trees are needed for shading and they are thinking about two shading structures. Since this is a priority but they do not have the money, they are applying for CPA funds. Members had received a copy of the draft application and the deadline for filing the draft application with the Community Preservation Committee is July 1st and the final deadline is August 1st. As the owners of the property, they need a letter of support from the School Committee. They are requesting about \$6,000. If the Committee considers this, Dr. Genovese said the application would be submitted and then feedback is given and if necessary, they rework their application to make it stronger.

Dr. Funch asked what the shading structures are and L. Zimmaro said they are similar to an umbrella but they do not open and close. They go over the tables but go into the ground and are removed during the fall and winter months.

B. Erickson asked if they have thought about replacement costs and if it would come out of PTA funds. L. Lefebvre said they dedicate \$5,000 to the playground every year. L. Zimmaro added that the trees will eventually fill out and provide some shade. L. Lefebvre said they hope to select a vendor by the end of next week.

C. Barrett said their packet was very informative and complete and it was enjoyable to read. She stated they have a vote later in the meeting to accept the playground equipment and they can decide at that time whether they need to vote to endorse the CPA application or just have a consensus agreement.

SpedPAC Survey

J. Endicott introduced members of the SpedPAC and stated they are an incredible group of women who have

made a commitment to represent parents and children of the district with special needs. She believes the tasks they have undertaken are groundbreaking for a district to do. The Department of Education has recently mandated that schools start doing surveys with parents and their PAC was ahead of the times. This was a two year project and the creation of the survey was done in collaboration with Dr. Genovese and herself and the final survey was 17 pages. They will be presenting a summary synopsis of the mass quantities of data. She stated Ms Squeglia put all of the data into charts and color-coded all of the data and thanked her and her team for their good work for the district.

The purpose of the parent survey was to get feedback on how special education was going in the district and to identify strengths and areas of concern in the implementation of SPED services. The PAC assumed a lot of responsibility in being a resource for parents and they wanted to give parents the opportunity to express their concerns and share their experiences. The process began in 2005 with the development of the survey and in 2006, 318 surveys were sent out to parents with a special needs child as well as to any parent who had been part of the eligibility determination process during that year. Parents received several prompts to remind them to return the surveys and by September, they had received 100 responses. In December 2006, the results for five key questions were shared with the School Committee. Data was tabulated per school site and in the spring of 2007, the PAC compiled and summarized the data.

Responses per site were reviewed. Information received on out of district placements is tabulated separately because the experiences are quite different. At Boutwell, the most predominant responses came from parents whose children were diagnosed with developmental delay, autism or neurological impairment. Of all the other schools, the most predominant responses came from parents whose children were diagnosed with a specific learning disability. J. Endicott said this represents the SPED demographics as well. She stated specific learning disabilities have to do with the processing of information and children in Boutwell are not exposed to a lot of written information.

The most predominant responses that indicated the majority of services provided at each school were reviewed. P. Carson asked for an explanation of "academic pull-out". J. Endicott said it means a student's disability requires they be taken out of the general education setting so they receive intensive, specialized instruction in a small group setting. He asked if it is the district's goal to support inclusion and J. Endicott said the philosophy is to support inclusion to the maximum possible but at times, a student needs to be pulled out for intensive instruction.

N. Bugbee reviewed the sources of referrals to determine a student's eligibility for SPED services. With respect to assessment information, she stated all schools indicated the district was in compliance with the time lines for the completion of assessments. She reviewed the areas where most assessments were being done and stated the majority of the assessments provided meaningful information for the parents and were helpful in assisting with identifying the student's needs with the exception of Florence Roche and Prescott where parents indicated dissatisfaction with behavioral observation evaluations and OT evaluations. N. Bugbee clarified a student needs to go through an eligibility determination process before they receive special needs services.

M. Squeglia said parents can seek independent evaluations and 50% of the parents whose students are assessed actually go outside the district and commission their own independent evaluations. This number was higher at the middle school (65%), and reasons included the finding that their child was ineligible for SPED services or to probe for more information. While going outside the district may sound like a negative thing, all independent evaluations were shared and considered by the Team and this is a positive thing. There was close to a 90% response that indicated satisfaction with the Team's eligibility decision and most people were happy with the way they were treated during the assessment process, which can be emotional and very time consuming.

After eligibility is determined for a student to receive SPED services, M. Sweeney stated an IEP (Individual Education Plan) is developed by a team which includes the parents. Feedback from parents showed there

were strengths seen in the appropriateness of the accommodations, methodology, placement services, access of information and receiving a completed IEP in a timely manner. Weaknesses included the development of measurable appropriate goals, understanding of the service grid and receiving a completed IEP in a timely manner from Swallow Union. J. Endicott said she was surprised by this information because she monitors the time lines for teachers submitting completed IEP's and Swallow Union has been very responsive.

Dr. Funch asked what the "understanding of the service grid" means. J. Endicott said it means the Team did not do a good job in helping parents to understand all of the labels and how it would be implemented. She said the grid is hard to understand and they need to name the specific type of service. N. Bugbee said an IEP can be very complicated to wind your way through and understand.

M. Sweeney said the majority of parents indicated they gained a better understanding of their child's disability through the Team process. The exception was at the middle school, where only 50% felt the process helped them. Parents considered regular ed teachers to be most knowledgeable except at the middle school, special ed teachers, except at Florence Roche, and principals, except at the middle school. Areas of concern regarding knowledge and skill of staff included speech at Prescott, guidance at Florence Roche and Swallow Union and occupational therapy, physical therapy and paraprofessionals at the high school.

S. Campbell said communication was the underlying purpose of doing the survey and the process of putting it together was informed a lot by the Coordinated Program Review that arrived in the summer of 2005. She noted everyone laid out their priorities but communication was at the top. They received the most specific responses on communication and it was considered satisfactory for all schools except Florence Roche and the middle school.

Staff considered most helpful in communicating information to parents about their child were the regular ed teacher, the SPED teacher and the guidance staff at Florence Roche, the middle school and the high school. S. Campbell said guidance is key in the line of communication and is really where regular education and special education meet. Teams chairs were not considered to be as helpful but they are administrators responsible for the service delivery grids and are not in the classroom every day. She stated it is hard to negotiate who will solve your problem and Ms Endicott has been actively trying to make that process smoother. The majority of parents consider sharing of communication about their child's IEP to be good except at Florence Roche and the middle school. S. Campbell noted they have a two year continuum and many of these things are on their way to being addressed, or have been addressed.

Consistent comments about communication concerns include getting details and advice from staff about what is going on with their child, getting communication only when parents ask for it, confusion over schedules and needed materials, knowing who to communicate with and miscommunication among teachers regarding IEP and services to be delivered.

J. Endicott said some great information was generated and overall, the survey was a vehicle to identify strengths and areas of need in order to make positive changes. There was a high degree of satisfaction overall with the range of services. They have been working as a department, jointly with the PAC and the superintendent's office, to address many of the things that kept coming up. She said they want to revisit the middle school concerns. Because of the Coordinated Program Review recommendations, the district was eligible to apply for a corrective action grant and they have hired an independent agency, Walker Partnerships, to come in and do a program evaluation. Dr. Genovese identified the middle school as a target area for doing more evaluation. This has been ongoing since April 2007 and they will receive their report by the end of the month.

J. Endicott said they definitely need to improve in the areas of communication and stated because they are so busy doing things, they often overlooked the obvious such as telling parents when a child's schedule was changed. They also need to have administrators seen as key people in the information chain. She said there is no question that the children will succeed when the parents, teachers, children and administrators form partnerships and work together as a team. Parents recognize that many of the staff do not have expertise in

some of the areas of disability their children are having difficult with and their recommendations for training include inclusion, differentiated instruction, understanding a reading disability and making curriculum modifications. They have written a grant for opportunities to promote differentiated instruction, specifically in math at the middle school, and Dr. Postel spoke with teachers and they plan to have her come in the fall to speak with parents about executive functioning. She said they have done some good work and they need to do some more and it will be an exciting movement forward for them.

N. Bugbee thanked Dr. Genovese and Ms Endicott for taking the time with them, month after month, to develop the survey and said tallying all the raw data, school by school and question by question, was truly a collaboration. She also thanked Ms Squeglia for the endless amount of time she put into doing all the graphs. She said they will miss Ms. Endicott as she brought the administration, parents and special needs community together. Ms Endicott thanked her and said she does not think there is any special ed administrator that has had the opportunity to work in such a positive and collaborative way as she has and she knows it will continue.

B. Erickson told Ms Endicott it will be very tough to fill her shoes and she has been outstanding in her position.

Dr. Funch asked if they hear more complaints than general from the 2/3rds of parents that did not respond or if they are just silent. He thinks it is good for those parents to see that concerns are being addressed. He asked how much they think they are missing by those that did not respond. J. Endicott said that is always the question but they have to praise the 100 that did send it back because it is 17 pages, back to back, with questions that required them to do a lot of thinking over the summer.

Parents do write letters praising various teachers and accomplishments and those come in throughout the year. She said there are situations where some unresolved conflicts occur but it is less than 1% of the population. As a team, they have worked to create a table environment to promote healthy discussion and to agree to disagree but for everyone to go away feeling they have been heard. Dr. Funch asked if they are really missing information from those 2/3rds or if they are really happy and satisfied or so disappointed, that they do not respond. N. Bugbee said she was told there a couple of parents that are so disappointed they did not want to fill out the survey. S. Campbell said as a PAC, they wanted a reality check and they can only respond to people they hear from. They felt they could identify real issues that need to be addressed from the responses they received. She said they will never know if the other 200 are happy because some are so unhappy that they are not willing to fill out a survey. N. Bugbee said they need to brainstorm on how to reach out to parents who have problems and are unhappy. S. Campbell said they did an aggressive lecture series this year and tried to target populations of people who fit into the larger categories like specific learning disabilities. Next year their lecture series is concentrating on the middle school and high school population needs.

C. Barrett asked how they are going to share this with a bigger population. J. Endicott said they have not had the opportunity to share it with the Administrative Council and she is excited with the new principals coming on board and having this information. She said the results could be put on the website but production costs of the information members received are prohibitive. In terms of the raw data, Dr. Genovese said a packet could be available in the buildings for people to come in and look at. C. McKinney suggested putting articles in the newsletters.

S. Campbell stated aide support in the classrooms is key to the successful delivery of services and with the recent budget situation, this is something that is going to suffer and is something they hope the administration and School Committee pay attention to.

**C. MCKINNEY MOVED TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO AND ADVANCE FOR IMMEDIATE
CONSIDERATION THE ACTION ITEM OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SCHOOL PHYSICIAN.
SECONDED BY P. FUNCH
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY**

J. Endicott said they have the responsibility to have a school physician and this comes out of the PPS budget. When Dr. Staub retired, he recommended providing services to the district by combining the consultative services of a physician along with a nurse practitioner. The nurse practitioner would do the required sport

physicals, provide in-service training, as desired by the nurses, and provide consult services to the nurses regarding practices and procedures for various medical interventions. The nurses have access to the physician as well. Nurse coordinator B. Ireland has major contact with both the physician, Dr. Dickinson, and the nurse practitioner, Amy Stevens. They would like to recommend continuing that model as they feel there is enough diversity in that format to help the nurses with any issues that come up and provide the necessary medical assistance. They also have protocols for crisis management.

C. Barrett asked if the contracts and stipends would be the same and J. Endicott said yes and they would run July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

F. O'CONNELL MOVED TO APPOINT DR. DICKINSON AS THE SCHOOL PHYSICIAN AND AMY STEVENS AS NURSE PRACTITIONER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008. SECONDED BY C. MCKINNEY

In Favor: F. O'Connell, P. Funch, C. McKinney, C. Barrett, B. Erickson

Abstention: P. Carson

Fundraising Donation Gifts for Athletic Teams Cut for FY08

Dr. Genovese referred to the Budget and Finance Sub-committee meeting minutes of June 12th and stated there was extensive discussion around this issue. There was a proposal that a fundraising group should only be required to fund only the difference between the full cost of the program and the sum raised through user fees for that specific sport. For freshmen soccer, that differential was estimated to be about \$3,000 per team compared to a fully loaded cost of the program of \$6,000 per team. The consensus of the sub-committee was to require outside groups to fund only the differential. He said one of the focuses was around the existing sports they had in the existing school year and accepting help from organizations, at least for a one time deal, to be able to provide those opportunities to student athletes in the coming year. C. McKinney, F. O'Connell and Dr. Funch are on the sub-committee.

B. Erickson asked the reasoning behind only having the fundraising groups fund the differential rather than the whole thing if they were willing to do so. C. McKinney said as a group, the School Committee decided it was going to charge user fees and the Administrative Council made a recommendation on how to handle relative budget cuts. There are a few sports that did exist that will not exist under the FY08 budget and an outside group wants to come in and support it but the participants are still paying user fees. He said currently, sports are one big group and are not split into individual cones.

If a fundraising group comes forward and pays for a team to be reinstated, C. Barrett asked if they all agree those athletes should be paying user fees like the other athletes. Members agreed with this. With respect to a fundraising group paying only the differential, C. Barrett believes it would lead to a deficit in the athletic budget because the way the budget is written, some of the soccer user fees pay for basketball. If they got rid of the sport, P. Carson said they would not be collecting those user fees and they had to be part of the budget cuts. If they reinstate the sport, the expense will be the donated money plus the user fees.

While he agreed with the Budget and Finance Committee on Tuesday, after thinking about it, Dr. Funch feels what is really fair is not to have a private group fund the programs that have been cut. It was explained these sports would not be funded if the override did not pass. He feels going to a private source for operating expenses sets a really bad precedent and opens them up to anything else that was cut being auctioned off to someone wanting to keep that part going. He thinks they should not do this as it says they had to cut the budget but they found the money and didn't have to cut this sport. The public said they are not going to pay for an override, but then they have the same programs as before and the public will say they won't have to do this again. He does not believe using donations of any kind for operating expenses is a wise practice. He suggested they not consider this proposal at all.

P. Carson asked if there was discussion about money being donated and the person not being able to dictate where that money was to be spent. C. Barrett said the policy technically says the Committee determines

where any donation can go and their practice is to honor that request. She noted when GDEF gives a grant for a certain program, the Committee agrees the money goes to that program. P. Carson said if they felt the money should be better spent in reducing class sizes, then they should not support it. He has concerns about accepting outside funding to reinstate a cut sport.

Dr. Genovese said this does get into a philosophical discussion - do you form partnerships to help offset expenses or to fund some things the district has funded in the past? He noted people saw this as not a trend but as a one time opportunity to provide this sport as the reality sets in that the district may not be able to fund these in the future. This was a way to allow athletes to still participate while the larger discussion needs to occur for the FY09 budget. This was looked at as a compromise position. While it was his recommendation for it to be the full cost of the program, he supports it from the perspective that it provides the athletes with the opportunity and it buys them some time while they figure this out. He supports doing the differential from a big picture perspective rather than it has now set a precedent.

P. Carson said he would be concerned that they have people willing to fund their athletic programs and at the same time, their academics are receiving less funding. He asked if this is something they would want to have happen and stated he would not. Dr. Genovese said there is an opportunity to sort that out as they go through the budget cycle.

B. Erickson thought she understood Budget and Finance recommended this and then heard Dr. Funch changed his mind. P. Funch said he recommended the differential as it seemed fair and an economical way of doing it, but upon reflection, does not think it is a good idea to do in general. B. Erickson said she agrees with him on where the "slippery slope" will lead them but coupled with that, she does not know how they will solve their problems in the future unless they do something about athletics in the future. She said they are still an academic institution and they need to concentrate on the academics but if the demand is great enough to continue with the athletic programs, they may need to relegate themselves to private funding. She said she has no idea what to do.

P. Carson asked if they need to vote on this tonight. Dr. Genovese said it would help Mr. Twomey to know before the end of this month as he tries to plan schedules.

C. Barrett asked if enough students signed up to field a varsity team, a JV team and a freshmen team (three boys teams and three girls teams). Dr. Genovese said he does not know. She said the proposal was to combine the JV and freshmen into a single team and if there are enough students to field three teams, this action item is important. Should the Committee formulate an affirmative vote, Dr. Genovese said it should be contingent upon the participation rate warranting the reinstatement of the programs.

B. Erickson asked what stops them from combining the two teams as a practical solution. C. Barrett said that is the proposal and it means there are just enough spots for just enough athletes or you have to cut people.

Dr. Funch said they have a strong athletic program and the freshmen program is nice to have but the financial reality is they do not have the money for it. The plan is to move as many freshmen as possible onto the JV team but they may not be able to absorb all of them. A small number of kids will be impacted by this but lots of kids and teachers will be impacted in general because of the lack of an override. He said it is not a good precedent to set for a small number of kids. In terms of fairness, it is only helping kids this year and not the ones after that. He does not think it is an appropriate stop gap measure to make an exception on. He said the impacts have to be known and covering them up does not help.

C. McKinney thinks Mr. Twomey has been forthcoming in giving the Committee comparative data on the number of athletic opportunities provided by the district relative to other districts of the same size and it is clear, we are behind with fewer opportunities. He does not see the fairness doctrine applying and what they are doing is punishing a specific group of kids and soccer is a dominant sport in this area. He thinks they are throwing the kids onto the side of the road in order to prove a point and thinks they are suppose to be looking after the kids the best they can. He feels they should look at the opportunity that will help them maintain

If the district is committed to an athletic program and not a fee based program, and now they are half and half, Dr. Funch said they have to make a decision as to whether they are going to fund it out of the operating budget. He said they do not go out for private donations to supplement their operating budget. Dr. Genovese said that decision needs to be debated and discussed in the larger community and if someone wants to make a donation, he would hope by the end of the budget cycle, by being inclusive, they would have an answer to that question. He feels this is a different place from where they are this evening.

Dr. Funch said there is an impact throughout the district because of the lack of the override and he does not think that it is appropriate to have their operating funds supplemented by private donations. He said it is not the way to fund a district and covers up the problem they have of not having enough money.

F. O'Connell said it is an opportunity to save a program for a limited number of kids and he understands the point behind donations versus the operating budget. He said this is exactly what they need to be looking at and they can look at it as test. As the funding formula continues to kick in, their financial standing will continue to decline and he said these are the things they will need to take advantage of. He said they have a little bit of time to put the appropriate policies in place.

SC Annual Goals Review

Postponed to the July or August Meeting

Union Building Roof

At the most recent meeting of the Budget and Finance Sub-committee, T. Sheehan stated this issue was discussed and if the School Committee intends to use E&D funds to pay for the recommended structural repairs, they need to vote to do so tonight because once the fiscal year ends, the funds are not available until the new amount is certified sometime in October or November. He stated this has not gone out to bid and they do not have a timetable for doing so but they would like to get this project finished before the onset of winter. They would need to send this out to bid over the summer and have funds available to pay for a contract before the E&D amount for FY07 is certified. The consulting engineer's estimate is \$65,000 - \$85,000 for structural repairs and particularly to the supporting beams of the roof. An independent structural engineer concurs with the recommendations and proposed methods. Dr. Genovese noted the report said the repair should be made before winter so they do not have another snow load on that roof.

If the bid came in lower than \$85,000, P. Carson said they would not have to take the extra out of E&D and T. Sheehan said they would vote "not to exceed".

Donation to Business Office

Since their last meeting, Dr. Genovese said there was a lot of research and discussion about this and naturally, there were pros and cons anytime you are looking for additional funding and how it would be applied. While an incredible gesture on Mr. Sheehan's part to offer the funds, he and Mr. Sheehan came to the conclusion that overall, it is probably not in the best interest of the district. Mr. Sheehan has said he would be comfortable withdrawing this item from the agenda as an action item and Dr. Genovese recommended the Committee pass over it.

Dr. Funch said Mr. Sheehan made a very commendable offer but is glad the decision was made to withdraw it because he thinks it is a bad place to get into in terms of putting funding into the operating budget that is not there. He commended Mr. Sheehan for the confidence he has in his staff and the desire to do it.

Dr. Genovese said it will be difficult and people will focus to get the work done with reduced hours during the summer.

Exit Interview

Dr. Funch said he will be making a motion later tonight to have the School Committee conduct exit interviews with the former Administrative Council members. Background information was provided at their last meeting and he would have liked a vote tonight so the exit interviews could be scheduled before the administrators left their jobs with the district but he learned tonight the timing would be difficult for them. He said he would like to have a discussion tonight but there is no rush to vote on it.

Dr. Funch said the motion offers exit interviews for all members of the Administrative Council, since July 2005, whose employment has ended or is about to end. The School Committee would do the exit interviews. He said the superintendent is the Committee's only employee and the exit interviews would predominantly be for the Committee's benefit. He does not believe it would be proper for HR, who reports to the superintendent, to conduct the interviews for them and feels it is within the Committee's responsibilities to understand how effectively the Administrative Council is operating and what dynamics, both positive and negative, may exist within the Council. He feels the Committee can obtain a necessary understanding of the problems that have occurred and what efforts have been made to address the problems. He thinks the exit interviews will provide valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses of Dr. Genovese's academic and managerial leadership of the district and they need this to do their evaluation of his performance next year. He feels the exit interviews will help establish a performance baseline upon which future improvements or slippage can be assessed.

Dr. Funch said the value of an exit interview is that it allows for more candor and reflection than is possible while the job responsibilities are still being carried out and they will provide a single source of information for the entire Committee on a very important topic. He feels the preference of each administrator should be respected for when and where the interview is scheduled. The attorney has said they must be conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting laws and the Open Meeting Law allows anyone to record the meeting. Dr. Funch suggests the meeting be taped and transcripts be provided to Committee members as a whole. He recommends the chair appoint a sub-committee for each interview and that the interview date be posted as a School Committee public meeting so any number of members could participate in the exit interview.

P. Carson asked if Dr. Funch foresees having a fixed set of questions for each administrator or if whoever did the interview would just ask questions. Dr. Funch thinks it could go either way but they can discuss it.

P. Carson asked if this will carry forward forever and Dr. Funch said he would not preclude it from happening again in the future.

B. Erickson said her instinct was to agree with Dr. Funch, especially after the resignation of their first principal, Joe Dillon. With permission from Dr. Genovese and then chair C. McKinney, she said she spoke with Mr. Dillon but she did not get any more information than what had all ready been made public. With Ed Reform, she thinks there is a distinct delineation between the responsibilities of the superintendent and the School Committee and she does not think it is the Committee's job to do the exit interviews. She asked their MASC representative Mike Gilbert if other school districts have utilized this and she got the gist that if they do have them, they are not very successful. Since the interview would be subject to Open Meeting laws, she said it is bound to get into personalities of either the person leaving and/or the superintendent. She feels this is borderline as to whether or not it should be done in executive session. She feels they may be opening themselves up to a possible lawsuit, either as individuals or as a committee, when they get into these different things.

B. Erickson said if they continue with the attitude of "gotcha" or "we think you are wrong Mr. Superintendent about the way you do your business", they are going to continue to do damage to the district. They will be looking for an override again very soon, and if they are going to spend their time and energy bickering about these kinds of things, she feels they will do themselves, and the kids, in. She asked Dr. Funch what he hopes to accomplish and where it will lead them.

Dr. Funch said it is for common information and to understand the dynamic of the Administrative Council. He

said they have one employee, and the Committee should know how he is performing. Being the leader of the Administrative Council is one of the critical roles he plays. He said it is not looking for negatives but looking for positives as well and it is information rather than speculation. He noted the administrator would not have to do the exit interview and he would not see a problem along the lines of libel.

Dr. Funch said the administrators are professionals and he does not feel there will be anything that will come out that would be damaging to the district. He said they have had difficulties over the past couple of years and the Committee does not understand that.

B. Erickson said it was explained tonight that people leaving is the nature of the game when there is a transition. If they were to set this up as a precedent, she asked Dr. Funch if he has given any consideration to how it would affect the superintendent's ability to do his job later on. She said she is against this.

C. Barrett thinks Dr. Funch's energies would be better directed at creating an evaluation document and process that the Administrative Council would participate in, in a collaborative manner, while they are active employees in the district. She said they want to get the Council members input while it can do some good and work as a team to make improvements moving forward. She thinks they need a new process for next year that will let all AC members bring their expertise and knowledge to the table to share in a constructive manner.

Dr. Funch said exit interviews are standard in public businesses and they provide different information because the business relationship is over and they can be more candid. The interviews are for the managers of the employee so they can help them understand the performance of the employee. He sees both as being useful inputs.

P. Carson sees there is a potential to get information by speaking with these people as to how to make the Committee's goal such that they can make the transition succeed. He feels they have to give themselves the benefit of the doubt that they will not turn it into a personal matter and that they will ask questions in such a way as to make it constructive and do it professionally.

If they were going to do this professionally, C. McKinney said they would use a School Committee process and establish a policy that would set this forward. They would ask Policy to study and look at other districts and take the time to think about the questions. He does not know if this exit interview would replace or supplement the current exit interview. While the idea may be well intended, he said it has not been studied and feels Policy should study it and sort it out. He said there is a litany of issues and he has not even begun to come up with a list and feels it is disrespectful to the Committee to make a motion that establishes policy and completely ignores their policy development cycle.

F. Buzan said they would have someone being evaluated in public and his/her entire performance is a public record but no one below that level is and it is an unbalanced system in that sense. He is not clear why they would interview these people in particular and not do the entire Council although they know from what they do, that the 360 evaluations have issues and no other districts seem to do them. He said they are creating an entire public record of someone and there is no opportunity for rebuttal in the process and that would have legal issues that might involve other people's personnel records. If they were to do it, he agrees they need a policy. He noted at some point they could get an employee that just wanted to publicly vent issues that would not be balanced and fair. He had hoped they were going to work with Mr. Kirtman to create a closer relationship with the AC but this seems to have been shot down due to lack of funding or other things. He does not think the exit interview will get them where they want to go and they need to recognize the School Committee has a lot of work to do and they need to move on and focus on what it is going to take to take the district forward. A lot of that work falls on the superintendent and he needs to be focused on that. He said he would be in disagreement with this and if they want to do it, they should do it through policy and look at it more thoroughly.

F. O'Connell said he agrees with a lot of what he has heard and stated earlier Mr. Kootcher said real problems will become apparent over time and Mr. Kirtman pointed out some of those problems they need to work on:

communication, a sense of trust and a plan and that is where the Committee and the superintendent need to focus.

F. O'Connell feels if he does not support this, it could be viewed as disrespectful by the AC. He said that is not the case but he is not prepared to support this tonight. He stated they did say during the review process that they do not have intimate knowledge of that relationship but they also said they know there are differences and problems there so even without interviews, he said his eyes are wide open in all directions.

If they focus on their goal of strengthening relationships with constituencies, including the AC, he feels that will give them a lot of insight. He said he would be happy to look at a comprehensive plan regarding this but he cannot support it as it sits right now.

REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

Policy - P. Carson reported they met last night and focused on three problematic policies. B. Erickson has agreed to do some research on the kinds of advertising they all ready have in school and the kind of advertising they could potentially have in school and then they would put them above a line, under a line or in a gray area and they would focus on the gray area. He said this has been under discussion for a long time and they have not made progress but they have a plan. F. Buzan has been working on the travel policy and his draft will be presented at their next meeting. P. Carson said he will be looking at the Nepotism and Ethics policies as there is information in both that is either contradictory or repetitive and they want to separate the two pieces so one refers to the other. He said they will remain chair-less and B. Erickson will take the minutes.

Budget & Finance - A meeting has not been scheduled for July but T. Sheehan recommended they meet on July 10th when he hopes to have the end of year projections finalized. C. Barrett asked if they will be electing a chair and secretary and C. McKinney said perhaps. She said she is concerned they will lose some organizational control without sub-committee chairs.

Report of Director of Business and Finance

Preliminary Quarterly Report - Q4

Even at this late date, T. Sheehan said it is very difficult to come up with a final end-of-year projection because of the uncertainties of the amount of the SPED legal bills they are going to be paying. Ms. Endicott is working with the lawyers to try to negotiate these bills in a downward direction but they have put the worst case scenarios into their projections. They do not have the final payroll and another part of the projection involves the amount of day-to-day substitute expense they incurred in the last few weeks of May and first weeks of June. He believes they will have a very modest surplus, in the neighborhood of \$10,000 to \$20,000, and noted this is very tight for a \$30M operating budget. He believes the E&D balance for this year will be between \$100,000 and \$120,000 over last year and this is being driven by the fact they received \$96,000 in income over and above what they projected. Some of this was interest, some was regional transportation and some was miscellaneous sources and typically they do not apply that income to the fiscal year in which they find themselves, they allow that to roll into E&D for the next year. He is projecting E&D for this year to be in the neighborhood of \$875,000 to \$890,000.

For the FY08 budget, they are trying to implement the budget cuts that were on the table if the override votes did not pass and T. Sheehan said it is not an easy task to take the list of cuts and reduce that to specific budget transactions. He stated they implemented, and put into the budget document, the \$350,000 cuts the School Committee adopted. There were eight to nine cuts and that ended up being sixty-five transactions to specific budget accounts and it will be very involved to reduce \$1.2M in cuts to specific budget transactions. He said they are well on the way to achieving that and expect to produce a budget document within the next week or two that agrees with the bottom line voted by the Committee.

PTYC Roof Repair

T. Sheehan reported they opened the bids on May 30th and the architect is reviewing them. They received six bids, which is more than they expected. The apparent low bidder was \$25,000 to \$30,000 below everyone else and with some urging on the district's part, has withdrawn his bid due to a mathematical error.

The architect is reviewing the second low bid and looking at references and documentations and expects to have a recommendation by next Tuesday. They do not have to select the low bid, but if they do not, they have

to have very detailed reasons for not doing so and the architect is consulting with attorneys from the Division of Capital Asset Management because he does have some reservations about the second apparent low bidder.

Dr. Funch asked if the Committee should adjust the amount of money they voted on since they do not need to borrow the entire \$250,000. T. Sheehan said the Committee authorized the district to engage in short-term borrowing of \$250,000 and all of the bids came in under that and under the architect's estimate of \$160,000. He does not know if it requires a vote of the School Committee to borrow less money or if the district would only borrow the money it needs. He did make a recommendation to Budget and Finance and to Dr. Genovese that they establish a contingency fund of approximately \$20,000 for unanticipated expenses. Dr. Genovese said the Committee does not have to take any action since they all ready made a motion to borrow up to the \$250,000 and they are not going to borrow more than they need. T. Sheehan said it is important with any capital project to have a contingency so they can move ahead expeditiously if they encounter unanticipated conditions.

Update of Prescott Air Quality

T. Sheehan reported he has been reviewing the money left in the maintenance department budget and they are hoping to be able to allocate approximately \$12,000 right at the end of the fiscal year to continue to make improvements. They plan to spend about \$9,000 to install a self-contained ventilation supply and exhaust system in the music and art rooms as well as in the cafeteria and the first level of the basement of the building. They are going to modify the kalwall windows that extend across the full length of the back of the building so there will be panels, one in the cafeteria and one in the art room, that can be opened to allow fresh air in. Mr. Byrne has the quotes ready to go so he will be able to execute a purchase order at the last minute if the financial picture allows them to do so. There is a FTF III meeting tomorrow night at Prescott and T. Sheehan said he will be explaining that to the committee.

P. Carson asked what they are trying to keep each room below and T. Sheehan said there are a number of different standards for carbon monoxide. He stated the building does not have a CO² problem but rather has a problem with the adequacy of ventilation exhaust and supply. He said it is not necessarily the CO² readings themselves that are the issue but there is not enough exchange of fresh air in and out of the building. The State Department of Public Health uses a standard of 800 parts per million for publicly occupied buildings in general and they prefer to see 600 parts per million for a school but that is also dependent on the outside readings. He stated the Society of Mechanical Engineers uses a rating of 500 to 700 parts per million over and above the outside ambient reading so for Prescott, that would be a reading of 1000 to 1200 parts per million. P. Carson said he has looked at studies that show between 1000 to 2000, you start to see situations where people lose attention span. T. Sheehan said at times, they have had ambient readings of 500 and up to 600, depending on the time of day, traffic and the weather. He said the Department of Public Health is saying if your readings are over 800, you need to be looking at your ventilation system. It does not mean the building should not be occupied and it does not mean that there are health problems for the children and it is an unsafe condition. He said their goal is to do the best they can to bring those readings down but believes it is unrealistic to think they will achieve an 800 reading and he would be reluctant to say that is their goal because he is not sure they will quite get there. He stated there are a lot of things they can do to improve the situation and they are doing what they can with the funds that are available but there is significant expense involved in implementing all the recommendations and implementing those recommendations needs to be a discussion that takes place in the context of the future of the building.

Update of High School Water Situation

T. Sheehan reported as they are sitting here, they are flushing the pipes and expect to take another full round of twenty samples on Friday to be sent out for testing. At the last testing, he stated they met the standard for lead, which is the more difficult, and just failed the copper. They have been tinkering with the system ever since and they will have to see what the next round of readings tell them.

Report of the Chair**Summer Business Meeting and Workshop Schedule**

C. Barrett said she would like to know if members would like to meet once in July and once in August.

B. Erickson said she would like to take July off, and the other members feel they have a lot of business they need to stay on top of and should meet in July and August. C. Barrett said she would recommend July 25th and August 22nd. After reviewing their calendars, it was agreed they will meet on July 11th and August 22nd although Mr. O'Connell is not available on July 11th.

Members agreed to hold their workshop on Wednesday evening, August 8th at 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Funch asked if the Committee would be interested in MASC doing a training to review norms and what their roles are so they all hear the same information and try to get their collective act together. C. Barrett said she will ask Mr. Gilbert if it is possible to have such a workshop. Dr. Funch said he spoke with Mr. Gilbert and he is willing to do one.

Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Genovese reported the AC revisited one area of cuts that had to do with the curriculum team leadership and a lot of concerns were raised about the district moving forward in the curriculum areas but particularly focused on new leadership coming into the district and particularly at the middle school, high school and Florence Roche. The consensus was that these positions were pretty important to provide the tools and resources for these leadership positions to be able to better understand where their school is and to have a group of people to work with. He said pretty much of the cuts they had in place will be implemented but they revisited the one around curriculum team leaders and to offset that amount, they revisited technology and cut the \$40,000 to \$20,000. They will also look at the slight differential between the present principals and new principals and they made another reduction in stipends at the high school. As they do the hiring process, he stated they will have to be really disciplined around finding a differential between people that are leaving and bringing qualified people in at differentials they can put toward this.

Class List Postings

Dr. Genovese reported there was a question about class postings and now that they live in a world different from twenty to thirty years ago, it is a practice he does not support. He has let the administrators know that and if there are other ways they can get the information out, that is fine, but he did not want to see class lists posted on doors with the kids names and where they are. One principal says she only uses first names and that works and another has a book in the office.

Assistant Treasurer

Dr. Genovese said he spoke with Joan Campbell and she is willing to be the Assistant Treasurer but only to sign something if she needed to because she does not have the experience. Mr. Aponte thinks this is a good idea because there are rare times when it is impossible for him to make that connection to the office.

Dr. Funch understands that in the past, it has been the School Committee chair who has that authority and asked why they would not use Ms Barrett. C. Barrett, C. McKinney and Dr. Genovese were not familiar with this practice but P. Carson said when he was on the Committee before, the chair had the authority to sign if the Treasurer was out of town. Dr. Genovese said the efficiency is in the office but he comfortable either way. Dr. Funch said he would feel more comfortable if it was not an administrative staff member.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

C. McKinney said he had a medium standing belief that the high school budget adequately provided textbooks for all of the classes and noted Ms Moskow was one of the people who tried to redirect his knowledge on that topic. He thought he knew what was going on but it was recently brought to his attention that the high school budget does not cover the costs of AP textbooks in at least some areas, and science in particular. As heartbreaking as it is that they did not garner the support for an override, he said it is equally distressing that they are not even pushing into the site budgets and making the Committee aware of the base needs of the academics. He would encourage that for the FY09 budget process, which begins in September, that they

include the cost of textbooks for every class they intend to teach in that timeframe as an absolute base cost for education.

Dr. Rubel thanked Mr. McKinney for bringing this to their attention because she also was not aware. They do a textbook inventory every year and on that inventory, they ask what the needs are. She said they can only present a budget based on what they think their needs are. She has put a process in place to work with the new high school principal and making sure they have confirmation from every curriculum leader in all the disciplines. Dr. Rubel understood it has been an option as to whether students can purchase the AP textbooks and they are encouraged to purchase them so they can write in them. C. Barrett said the AP English students also purchase their own books. Dr. Rubel agreed many do but they were always told that was their option. C. McKinney said he has no problem if a student wants to buy one but there should be one waiting there for every student in the class.

B. Erickson asked why they do not vote on items right after the discussion as she feels it would be a more efficient way of doing business. C. Barrett said this is just the format of the agenda and the key part is the two Questions/Comments periods so they have questions and comments before the presentations and then questions and comments before the vote.

B. Pine said she is in favor of exit interviews. She stated she sat through the evaluation of the superintendent and remembers Ms Erickson making the statement that the "jury was out" and when they created the document, the Committee said they had no way of knowing how the superintendent worked with the Administrative Council. She thinks this is an opportunity to get informed about that and capture information that will not be available after the people have left and those are the people that perhaps, should be heard from.

During the report from Mr. Kirtman and Mr. Koocher, B. Pine said they heard about the need to improve communication and the need to listen, especially to help with a smooth transition and several members said they should have been more of the process of some of the transition issues and she thinks this is a way for the members to be involved. It has been said repeatedly this year, ever since the first administrators started leaving, that departures are normal in transitions but she said they do not have any data to know whether these departures are normal for their district. She thinks it is too easy for this to just be kept being said and it seems dismissive to the community and makes it look like the members are not interested in why these people are leaving. She said no one has ever said what the range of normal, expectable number of administrators to leave is. She said they are losing three principals this year and another principal next year. She said they are also losing a similar number of assistant principals and she believes the number of administrators who have left are fifteen and it may be growing. She said this is worrisome and it appears the Committee is not interested in finding out why that is happening. If the Committee is serious about improving communication with the townspeople and doing the outreach, she said deciding not to do exit interviews is the opposite of what they should be doing.

B. Pine said these things take a lot of time to think through and stated tonight is the not first time the Committee has been asked to do so. She stated she was part of a group that came before them in February and March and there is a lot of discontent and questions in the community and they would like the Committee to help the community understand what is going on. They asked for a public forum and she said she is disappointed in the Committee's lack of response to that despite their efforts to work with the Committee. She hopes no one thinks that the concerns in the community have died out and she feels they have gotten more pronounced and more wide-spread. When they do their goals, she hopes the Committee will make it more of a priority to do more outreach and listening to help rebuild trust in the district.

With respect to the user fees and taking outside funding, L. Moskow said they have the cheaper sports basically subsidizing the more expensive sports and spreading it over all the kids so it is equitably distributed. If they start partially funding some sports through outside donations and cutting some and leaving some, she said this is not equitable at all and is not fair. She said they might have cut a less expensive sport that was

subsidizing a more expensive sport but now the expensive sport is more expensive. She feels this is a bad idea. She said members have said this will be a one time thing and not a trend but they have all ready said they will need overrides for the next several years so doing it now, sets a precedent. She said they cannot "have their cake and eat it too", they have to support the entire budget. She said otherwise, they will have people saying they do not need to support the budget because they know they have a group of people who will support soccer, AP Latin or whatever it may be. She said they would not have public education anymore, they would have pockets of private education.

P. Maynard said the point that is being missed is that they have had funding coming from outside sources since she has been at Groton Dunstable and for all different levels of things happening at the schools, whether it is painting the buildings or doing landscaping. When she was on the PTA, she said they moved hundreds of thousands of dollars through Florence Roche and Boutwell. She said they are being unfair to pick on one group and noted an action item is for the Committee to accept playground equipment that is not coming from the operating budget. She feels some of the members are unfairly penalizing another group of students. With respect to a public exit interviews, she feels this would be counterproductive to the statement by Mr. Kirtman and Mr. Koocher that they have to move on.

D. Furciniti said he is the president of the organization proposing the donation. With respect to the exit interviews, he said every company he has worked for has HR do the exit interviews and they report to the upper management. He said when you do public information, you tend not to get the truth or you get slanderous truth. He feels having a committee that is not public, represented by the School Committee, is okay and having them report back is okay.

D. Furciniti said the Soccer Club donated uniforms and goals for freshmen soccer last year and they approached Mr. Twomey when they found out freshmen sports were going to be cut and they wanted to know more about it. D. Twomey told them the amount of money it costs to fund the program, they discussed where the money was coming from and talked about the minimum number of players required to have the program go through and with that number, what the delta would be they would need to come up with as a club. The minimum number of players would be thirteen per team and they had the sign-up on Friday and Mr. Twomey told him they had over seventeen for both boys and girls and they met the minimum requirement. He said they did not find it fair to their organization that they would be funding a program and the kids would still be charged user fees that would go to fund all the other sports.

C. Barrett asked if the Soccer Club agreed to the user fees and the differential. Mr. Furciniti said the \$250 user fee would go toward freshmen soccer and come off the gross and they would fund the delta for this year. If they want to keep the program active, they need to do it now. They voted, as a board, to support it this year with the hopes that discussions would go on with Budget and Finance on how they would fund sports in the future. He said there is an unfair user fee today but this has to be an FY09 discussion.

D. Furciniti noted if the program goes away, it becomes a new program if you want to re-introduce it and that becomes a problem as well.

P. Carson asked if some of the students that signed up would want to try out for JV and D. Furciniti said generally for the boys, if they do not make varsity, they play freshmen. JV is usually sophomores and juniors. C. Barrett said sometimes the freshmen will be swing players and will be invited to play on a JV team for a game or two. D. Furciniti understands that varsity players are chosen from the whole pool. He noted that if they go to a system where JV is made up of juniors, sophomores and freshmen and coaches are allowed to select the players, there is a possibility the juniors will not play. P. Carson asked if they know that they have enough to field a JV team. D. Furciniti said there were 30 boys on varsity, 22 boys on JV and 15 on freshmen last year and they only lost twelve.

ACTION ITEMS

VOTE: To Accept Playground Equipment

P. CARSON MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE DONATION AS OUTLINED IN THE DOCUMENT DATED JUNE 18, 2007 FROM DR. ALAN GENOVESE AND THE TERMS ON HOW THE

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT WILL BE INSTALLED. SECONDED BY F. O'CONNELL
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL

C. McKinney asked if the School Committee wished to endorse the CPA application concurrent with the playground equipment. Dr. Genovese said he would be comfortable making the recommendation. It was the consensus of the Committee to endorse the application and Dr. Genovese will write a letter on the Committee's behalf and get it to the group by June 24th.

VOTE: Accept Donation to Business Office

Action item withdrawn

VOTE: To Encumber \$85,000 From E&D for the Union Building Roof

C. MCKINNEY MOVED THE GROTON DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ENCUMBER \$85,000 FROM EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPAIRING THE UNION BUILDING ROOF. SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL

VOTE: Differential Between User Fees and Donations to Support Soccer

C. MCKINNEY MOVED THE GROTON DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCEPT A SUM OF MONEY FROM THE GROTON DUNSTABLE YOUTH SOCCER CLUB TO PAY FOR THE DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN USER FEES AND THE ACTUAL ESTIMATED COSTS OF FRESHMEN GIRLS AND BOYS SOCCER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008. SECONDED BY F. BUZAN

So voted by Roll Call

In Favor: F. O'Connell, C. McKinney, F. Buzan, C. Barrett, P. Carson

Opposed: P. Funch

Abstention: B. Erickson

VOTE: Appoint Sue Smith, Secretary

C. MCKINNEY MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPOINT SUE SMITH, RECORDING SECRETARY, FOR ALL OF OUR REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR.

SECONDED BY P. FUNCH

SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY

VOTE: Appoint Howard Greenspan, Attorney

C. MCKINNEY MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPOINT HOWARD GREENSPAN AS THE ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT. SECONDED BY F. BUZAN

In Favor: F. O'Connell, P. Funch, C. McKinney, F. Buzan, C. Barrett, B. Erickson

Abstention: P. Carson

VOTE: Appoint Assistant Treasurer

C. Barrett recommends they appoint Joan Campbell to be the Assistant Treasurer since she is in the Central Office and that is where the signature would be needed.

C. MCKINNEY MOVED THE GROTON DUNSTABLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPOINT JOAN CAMPBELL TO BE THE ASSISTANT TREASURER FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008.

SECONDED BY B. ERICKSON

In Favor: F. O'Connell, C. McKinney, F. Buzan, C. Barrett, B. Erickson

Opposed: P. Funch

Abstention: P. Carson

VOTE: Appoint School Physician

See earlier vote

VOTE: To Accept Donation to ECC at Boutwell

P. CARSON MOVED THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE AMOUNT OF THE \$1000 DONATION TO THE ECC AT BOUTWELL FROM MARY AND KEITH SLATTERY. SECONDED BY F. O'CONNELL
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL

C. Barrett stated they really appreciate their donation.

VOTE: Regarding Exit Interview

P. FUNCH MOVED THAT AN OFFER OF AN EXIT INTERVIEW BE MADE TO EACH MEMBER OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL, SINCE JULY 2005 AND HENCEFORTH, WHOSE EMPLOYMENT WITH THE GROTON DUNSTABLE SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS ENDED, OR IS ABOUT TO END. EACH INTERVIEW IS TO BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW BY A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE, WITH LOCATION, DATE AND TIME MADE AS CONVENIENT AS POSSIBLE FOR EACH ADMINISTRATOR BEING INTERVIEWED. THE SUBCOMMITTEE SHALL REPORT BACK TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE WITH A WRITTEN TRANSCRIPT OF THE EXIT INTERVIEW FOR ITS DELIBERATION. SECONDED BY C. MCKINNEY

In Favor: P. Funch, P. Carson

Opposed: F. O'Connell, C. McKinney, F. Buzan, C. Barrett, B. Erickson

While it is not on their agenda, C. Barrett said she would like a motion to revise their motion to borrow money for the PTYC roof. They voted \$250,000 on May 16th and the bids would recommend an amount of \$180,000. She feels it is good practice to change the vote. P. Funch said he just brought this up. C. McKinney said Budget and Finance discussed this in the context of revising the request. He was given a copy of the previous motion. C. Barrett said she knows Dr. Funch had asked this question but because it was a recommendation by Mr. Sheehan, she had e-mailed Budget and Finance and asked if one of them would make a motion tonight.

P. Funch said that is why he brought it up but was told it was not appropriate to make that motion. He asked if there is a different explanation. Dr. Genovese said they all ready authorized up to \$250,000 and he sees this as an informational item with the Business Administrator informing the Committee the bids came in substantially lower and they would borrow the lower amount. Dr. Genovese said sometimes there some incidentals when you go through this process and he would hate to have them do a \$180,000 and it ends up being \$185,000. He stated Budget and Finance will be meeting and kept abreast as this develops and he does not see this as an action item that needs to be taken tonight.

The motion does not say "up to", it says "is authorized" but C. McKinney said it is very specific on its purpose for roof repairs to the PTYC and is self-limited all ready.

C. Barrett asked if Budget and Finance thinks it is not necessary to revote and F. O'Connell said he does not think they need to. C. McKinney said they did not talk about it in the context of whether they needed to revote it or not and there was just the natural flow of "they are not going to spend that much, how much do you think it will be and should we revise it?" and based on what he knows now, he is comfortable in letting the motion stand. He said it is a very particular vote to be able for their financial advisor to go out and get the short-term bonding.

P. Carson asked if it allows them to borrow less and Dr. Genovese said it is specific to the borrowing for the roof and they will only let you borrow what you need. Mr. Sheehan said he is comfortable with not changing the motion. C. Barrett said she will take it off her list.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 12:00 A.M. SECONDED BY P. CARSON
SO VOTED IN FAVOR UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Smith
Recording Secretary

With attachment

(Transcribed from video tape)