

APPROVED BOARD MINUTES

ASD Board Meeting August 8, 2012

Board Members Present: Heather Bobbitt, William Bonner, Thomas Frischknecht, Kent Glossop, Karen Graham, Idina Holden, Patty Humphrey, Brandon Jackson, Heather MacDonald and Dale Reddington.

Board Members Absent: Matt Collins, Kim Lavalley, and Michael White.

Non-voting Members Present: Jennifer Cava, Dominique Dadekian and Andrew Myers

Others in Attendance: Danielle Curtis – Nashua Telegraph

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

1. Public Comments

None.

2. Approval of Board Minutes from the Prior Meeting

Ms. Holden moved to approve the minutes from the June meeting with one change noted. Ms. MacDonald seconded. All voted in favor.

There was a 2nd meeting by conference call on July 22. The minutes from that meeting were approved immediately following.

3. Items of Board Business – No comments

4. Board Chairman – No Comments

5. Board Treasurer – No Comments

6. Director's Report

a. Operations & Personnel Report

- End of year reports are being filed with DOE.
- Jason Baker has been hired as the new guidance counselor
- The master schedule is in the final stages of development. Teachers have been given their list of courses.
- Ms. Cava is working with Nashua Community College to set up classes for Advanced Chemistry, Visual Basic and C++.
- Mr. Glossop has agreed to lead the planning and implementation of the "Bring Your Own Device" initiative. There have been few responses to the policy change – most have been positive. Most concerns to be addressed are around security.
- Ms. Cava has decided not to go ahead with an after-school program, because setting it up felt too rushed. School will now end at 4 p.m.
- The school anticipates 436 students. There is a waiting list of 6th graders and some room left for the higher grades.
- The Nashua school district will be providing busing for students in town.
- The school will add advisories this year. The schedule will allow one advisory period per week. Advisories will be assigned randomly and according to student interest in high school. Teachers will be given a curriculum and activities for advisories. Students will stay with that teacher through their career. The advisories will address personalized learning and provide support while the student pursues a career in a STEM discipline. Each student will have a guidance counselor in their advisories every few weeks.

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- Welcome back celebration will be August 26 at 4 pm, hosted by ASDEF.
- Ms. Cava offered a tremendous thank you to Mr. Overman and the parents who have been working on the move. The staff has been doing a tremendous amount of work to get ready.
- Major construction in 6th grade area is complete. The carpets have been patched. Vinyl will be in starting Saturday, for the cafeteria and the lab.
- Ms. Cava handed out financial statements: The cash balance does not reflect an anticipated check from the state for last year of approximately \$115,000. The first major payment for the new school year will be received in September. A bridge loan was approved last month to bridge the school's cash flow needs until September.

7. Faculty & Student Affairs Report

- Faculty* – Ms. Betournay and Mr. Myers have applied to the Department of Energy to run a northern New England middle school science quiz bowl. Two years ago the school's middle student team entered a tournament in Connecticut, won and went to DC to compete nationally. If approved, the quiz bowl would take place tentatively on March 2.
Ms. Cava reviewed the qualifications of the new teachers. She is still looking for part-time assistance for art or design with 6th graders.
- Student Affairs* – No update: It's summer.

8. Committee Organizational Review

- Communication* – The committee had its first meeting. The committee would like to have a Board table at the Open House with information on the schedule. They would also like to have sign-ups at the Open House to collect parent volunteer names. The committee talked about having an 'opt-in' list so that interested people can find out when committee meetings are being held – a push instead of having to look for the information. The committee is also suggesting a Board newsletter on a monthly or quarterly basis. Ms. Humphrey recommended that there be a push for parents to volunteer for Board committees. Ms. Holden raised a question about putting information about the Board in writing. The Board members discussed in greater detail what that could look like.
The next committee meeting will be next Tuesday at 6-7:30 p.m. in a location to be announced. The ongoing schedule will be 3rd Tuesday of each month 6-7:30.
- Outreach* – Mr. Collins was not in attendance.
- Personnel* – No meeting this month.
- Policy* – No meeting this month.
Ms. Bobbitt asked when the committees meet. Ms. MacDonald explained that some committee meetings have repeating schedules set up on the ASD calendar. Mr. Glossop suggested putting the yearly committee schedules and committee chairs in the packets that are handed out at the Open House.
- Strategic Planning & Finance* – The committee recommends that the Board approve the audits that were performed by external auditors. The auditors presented their results to the Strategic Planning Committee. Mr. Frischknecht said there were no significant audit findings and no surprises. They were positively surprised at the order and the accessibility of information. They specifically noted that the school is lucky to have Barbara Tierney and Kym Harmon running the business office. Ms. Holden requested an electronic copy of the auditors' recommendations.

Mr. Jackson moved that the auditors' report be approved. Mr. Glossop seconded. All voted in favor.

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The committee discussed the possibility of applying for a Bridge loan through HEFA, which is an organization that assists schools with financing. HEFA needs Board approval before the school can file an application. The committee recommends that the Board approve this to move forward.

The Colebrook bank loan is short-term. HEFA would provide a longer term opportunity to manage cash flow. It would be \$100,000 loan, 1% for up to 5 years. This is the next step in building credit history for the school. Up until now the school has not been able to take on long-term debt. Colebrook is a 5-month loan and not a line of credit. The purpose in the loan would be to create a relationship and to provide a cash flow tool in the future. The intent would be to use the loan to pay back Colebrook as soon as possible.

Ms. Holden stated that she would not be able to support the HEFA loan because of concerns that \$100,000 could remain untouched in the bank. Ms. Bobbitt clarified that ultimately the goal is to have a line of credit when needed. Mr. Glossop added that it is not clear now that \$100,000 will be enough for next August. The difficulties in getting a line of credit have been having audits for the prior years and a history of paying back loans on time. Ms. Cava suggested that the money be kept separate from the school's checking account.

Mr. Jackson moved that the Board authorize the Board Chair to apply for the HEFA direct loan program for \$100,000 at 1% for 5 years. Ms. Bobbitt seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-1.

Mr. Frischknecht said HEFA had asked that the Board give authority to execute the documents. Mr. Jackson hesitated to give that authority, because he also has concerns about how the money is used. The Board discussed how to address the concern.

Mr. Glossop moved that the Board authorize the Board Chair to apply for and execute documents for the HEFA Direct Loan Program of up to \$100,000 at 1% interest for up to 5 years to finance, on the condition that the proceeds are segregated as a Board Emergency Reserve account and can only be drawn on by further authorization of the Board. Dr. Graham seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Holden moved that this motion replace the earlier motion. Dr. Graham seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

9. Policy Review/Approvals

At the prior meeting the Board reviewed policies DZA and DIH.

Ms. Holden moved that DZA and DIH be approved by the Board. Ms. Bobbitt seconded the motion. All voted in favor, except for one abstention.

10. Other Agenda Items

Ms. Holden requested an update on the school management software system. Mr. Glossop said this was put on hold until October due to a limited amount of resources to address this. As a result, the school management system is likely to remain in place for the full school year. The survey remains open.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 12, at 6:30 p.m.

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The Board meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Idina Holden
Secretary