

REPORT ON THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING OF October 22, 2013

Prepared by Rick Cliffe

Note: (1). These are not official minutes -- -- just notes taken by me. Official minutes will be available from the Town Office and will be posted on the Town web site following School Committee approval at the next meeting.

(2). If anyone wishes to stop receiving these reports, they may simply hit "Reply" and request to be deleted from the list or say "Unsubscribe."

(3). Reports of earlier meetings and some supplementary materials are available at Rick Freeman's Town Meeting website:

www.singingbridge.net

THE MEETING: I was the only member of the public present.

The minutes of the meeting of September 24, 2013 were approved. They should be posted on the Town web site within the next couple of days.

MOST IMPORTANT/INTERESTING ITEMS: In my judgment, the following items were the most important things covered during the meeting.

RECOGNITIONS:

Eileen King recognized Matt Carlson, and his entire staff, for the efforts they made in preparation for students taking the NECAP tests. Teachers help students learn strategy for taking the tests. The staff, including Mr. Carlson, tried to reduce student stress by making a festive (fun) event out of the tests. Grades 3-6 completed the NECAP tests.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Matt Carlson):

He provided an overview of the in-service activities on October 11th. The primary focus was Common Core Standards and curriculum mapping. In the future, Georgetown staff will collaborate with other AOS 98 schools.

He showed a five minute video on EIE (Engineering is Elementary) – a program developed by the Boston Science Museum. The intent is to increase student's understanding of science through hands-on experiments. He indicated that the school would purchase 4 units as a way of trying out this approach.

He described a 45-minute Japanese presentation done by Mr. Kawaragi. The intent was to demonstrate Japanese games and culture.

He indicated that selected classes will get involved in support of the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust water quality and shellfish efforts. Collecting samples and conducting research will be integrated into the curriculum.

He summarized a successful K-3 field trip to visit the Hope Elephants. They plan to setup a service project to support the elephants. Contact will be maintained through the web.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT (Eileen King):

She reviewed the current expenditure status against the 2013/14 budget, noting that as of next week (Nov 1) we will be through the first quarter. She also had detailed analyses of electricity and fuel oil expenses comparing current amounts, rates and cost against the last two years.

She passed out and discussed more information on the Common Core standards and their implementation. At the end, Shawn Carlson made a brief presentation on curriculum.

OLD BUSINESS:

Matt Carlson distributed a draft procedure for student participation in sports. It is intended to address situations where students must miss class time in order to participate in Junior High programs at BJHS or other schools. Ms. King recommended that it be issued to parents in a newsletter, asking that students who intend to play sports notify the school 2 weeks ahead so that staff and parents can review the guidelines.

NEW BUSINESS:

Kristin Malin brought up a program called Globaloria, an award-winning learning network and catalog of digital courses to teach 4-12 grade to design and code educational games advancing students' Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills. She saw it demonstrated at a national event. She asked that the group take a look at it and discuss at a future meeting.

Matt Carlson brought up an issue with the school wireless network. Now that there are so many PCs and IPADs operating on it, they are experiencing some performance issues. Eileen King commented that it is a district-wide issue. Shawn Carlson, as technology coordinator, will be putting together a plan for the whole district.

ITEMS NEEDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

The Committee voted 3-0 approve first reading of the JICK – Bullying and JICK-R – Bullying Administrative Procedures.

Summary (opinion): There was a lot of very interesting information and discussion at this meeting, particularly that related to the Common Core Standards and their implementation. Implementation is a huge undertaking for the school/district administration and staff and it will likely have significant impact on the students. I encourage parents and other community members with interest to attend one or more of these committee meetings so you can hear it first-hand.

The next meeting of the School Committee will be at 6:00 PM on Monday, November 25th at the School Library.

Prepared and distributed by Rick Cliffe