

Deans Mill School SBIT Minutes

Monday 13 February 2006

DMS Media Center - 4:30pm

To increase opportunities for parents to learn about curricula, student learning and ways to support their child at DMS and within the Stonington Public School District.

Ken Sherwood, Andy Robbins, Jennifer Middleton, Susan Lyon, Kathy Irvine, Anna Greene, Greg Duba, Patti May, Gretchen Noonan, Heather Gillies, Morag Morse, Claudia Albert, John Bolduc visitors: Jennifer Robertson-Geary, Sharon Osga-Dugger, Lawrence Monteiro, Katy Vernet

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 pm.

The January meeting minutes were accepted. One amendment is change the year in the date to 2006, A motion was made by Gretchen Noonan and seconded by Anna Greene.

SBIT/BOE REPORTS

SBIT minutes are now being posted on the web

WBSS: parent involvement meeting, student assessments, 'Its up to me', Math Night, Book Chat, CMT night,

WV: Math night, Writing night, Thrilling Thursday,

PMS: none

MMS: after school clubs, academy update

SHS: none

BOE: budget moved forward with a 6.9% increase, principal update on instructional planning, Math Night

OLD BUSINESS

*Science Curriculum Committee

Anna Greene reported on the committee's activities. The committee is trying to coordinate Pfizer parents who bring 'kits' into the classroom. Anna Greene also contacted Christine Greene, a professor who said she may or may not have appropriate programs.

*Parent Corner

Heather Gillies spoke to Betty about a corner in the library. They felt they needed some clarification from the SBIT as to what specifically was wanted in the parent corner. She brought some materials from the Stonington Free Library to get ideas. Questions were raised as to where the funding would be coming from. Heather Gillies suggested getting a grant. Claudia Albert said she could donate a couple hundred dollars. Morag Morse suggested getting donations of books.

*Community Channel Video

Ken Sherwood and Kathy Irvine, finally, got two videos, thanks to Heather Gillies, and will be reviewing them.

*Budget

The foundation budget will affect Deans Mill by 5%. Ken Sherwood has made recommendations to the board for an additional kindergarten teacher, 6th first grade teacher and add a k-2 special needs transition teacher/room. In addition to the 21/2 teachers, three extra classrooms will be needed. The computer lab is one possibility for this space. Greg Duba asked if the SBIT has some input in these issues. Ken Sherwood said that yes, the SBIT will have some input, however Claudia Albert said the final decisions are left to the Board of Education. John Bolduc spoke about the elementary school building projects. He said that in the Spring, after the budget vote, presentations to the community will begin.

*Math Night

Andy Robbins gave an overview of the Math Night that took place Wednesday January 25, 43 parents, teachers and some administrators attended. He has materials available on the web and for the parent corner. An encore presentation may take place in April.

NEW BUSINESS

*SBIT Agenda

Jennifer Middleton asked that if anyone has suggestions for the following months agenda to please contact her via email.

*CMT Night

On February 28, 2006 at 6:30pm there will be a CMT night for parents to better understand the current tests.

*Computer Room

Children should be technology literate by 8th grade. Questions were raised if we can do it in 45min./week. Options are to have mobile computer labs, and a bank of computers in the library that children can access when needed. In terms of computer para-professional (Sharon Osga-Dugger) the position would become more mobile as well. Claudia Albert stated that the Technology Task Force is working on a plan that they will submit to the state to integrate technology into the classroom. A recommendation is for 4 to 5 computers per classroom. In addition, the space the computer lab is taking up right now could be used as an additional classroom. Portable classrooms are expensive and not practical at this time.

VISITOR FEEDBACK

Jennifer Robertson-Geary asked how can parents get involved in the process of budgeting. Jennifer Middleton explained that the purpose of the SBIT is to give a space to parents to speak out and give input. She also asked about classroom space. She specifically asked about preschool classrooms moving to another location to make way for more classrooms. Claudia Albert said we are bound by law to integrate special needs programs in all of the buildings.

Jennifer Robertson-Geary said that she was the anonymous parent who sent the email about the computer lab. Lawrence Monteiro said that he believed that the emails were a response to the lack of information put out to the parents. He is had some concerns about eliminating the computer lab in favor of mobile labs. Sharon Osga-Dugger stated the computer lab is already integrated and the mobile labs have problems in the younger grades. She stated that having a computer lab does not necessarily mean that it is a separate subject. She is concerned that 5 computers per classroom may not be enough. Ken Sherwood said he appreciated all the input and that while the SBIT should clear up its processes of how parents can contact us, he would hope that parents would feel comfortable contacting us when there is a problem. Lawrence Monteiro asked about procedures and if parents will get a vote about these issues. Ken Sherwood responded that procedures are in place and being followed, but parents may not get a vote in these decisions. In addition, there is some information that he may not be at liberty to share. In the end these are the decisions of the Board of Education and dependent on the budget.

Jennifer Middleton said she would write up something to be sent home to parents informing them of the role of the SBIT and encouraging them to contact either the SBIT or the administration.

Gretchen Noonan pointed out that the SBIT is an advisory committee and can only make suggestions.

Jennifer Robertson-Geary asked how parents can support the budget. The first step is coming to the March 8th Board of Finance meeting.

Next Meeting: March 13, 2006

Andy Robbins made a motion to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lyon

