

PCPA Meeting Minutes

February 16, 2011

Attendance: Katie Gillespie, Ang Foley, Kim Shur, Ashley Werhner-Collins, Megan McConagha, Sarah Crawford, Linda Burke, Josephine Yim, Erin Salvador, Lisa Leighton, Elizabeth Scifres, Michelle Kane, Lindsey Tucker

Katie Gillespie called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

1. Ken Murphy

Dr. Ken Murphy, the interim superintendent, introduced himself. He noted that he is impressed with the commitment and genuine desire of the staff and parents of Cape Elizabeth to make the school system the best it can be.

Dr. Murphy distributed a survey to those in attendance. The “Entry Questions” survey is part of Dr. Murphy’s ‘Listening and Learning Tour’, which is his way of trying to understand the issues and concerns of the school community.

After the surveys were completed, Dr. Murphy answered questions from those in attendance.

1. Do you have any plans to stay? Dr. Murphy stated that this is a great place but that C.E. needs someone with stability who is 10-15 years younger than he is. He noted that effective leaders have been in a district for a while.
2. What is the biggest difference between Yarmouth and Cape Elizabeth schools? Dr. Murphy stated that people in Cape have an obsession with perfection, which can be a strength, because people are striving to make things better.
3. What are your objectives? Do no harm. Dr. Murphy also stated that his focus will be on literacy and professional learning communities. In addition, he wants to work on clarification of roles between the school board and the superintendent so that time is used effectively.
4. Do you plan to give the information you gather to the new superintendent and the school board? Yes, the school board and new superintendent need to be working as a team.
5. Do you help with finding the new superintendent or help with having things set for the new superintendent? Dr. Murphy views his job as “setting the table” for the new superintendent. The budget process should be a problem solving exercise. The Federal stimulus money will be going away which will mean that for the next two years we will need to be very aware. The first year \$500,000 will be lost and the following year

\$450,000 will be gone, which means a total of \$950,000 will be taken away from the school budget due to a loss of stimulus funds. Dr. Murphy stated that if the money is taken out of the budget, Cape Elizabeth will not be a high functioning school system. There is a need to at least maintain the quality programs that we have. A maintenance budget cannot make up for the loss. His recommended budget would be to maintain what we currently have.

6. How will you do that? Dr. Murphy stated that taxes will have to go up. There is not much else that can be reduced. That has been done. If we continue to reduce we are going to reduce the quality of the schools.
7. How can you raise taxes if people's wages are going down? Dr. Murphy stated that he does not view it as people's salaries going down. He is taking a very conservative approach to the increase in taxes, roughly 3%. He stated that he can cut \$500,000 from the budget but if he did it will reduce the quality of the school system and it would no longer be similar to Falmouth or Yarmouth.
8. Is school consolidation an issue? No, not a concern right now.

2. School Update: Linda Alfiero

Update on Stan Davis: His fee is typically for six hours but he has offered to be at the school from 9 am to 8 pm. Mr. Davis will meet with a core group of teachers from 9 to 11 am, then he will do a lesson in a 4th grade class, which will be followed by a lesson in a 3rd grade class. He will meet with the entire staff for 1.5 to 2 hours after school and then will meet with parents from 6 to 8 pm. The core group is comprised of 12 teachers and staff members who have volunteered to participate. Each department (allied arts, guidance, social work, etc) will be represented.

One parent asked how the 3rd and 4th grade classes will be chosen. Linda said that they will be the classes taught by the core teachers who will be meeting with Mr. Davis in the morning, because it would allow the teachers to see how he works with students.

Another parent asked if it would be possible to tape Mr. Davis' sessions. Linda said she would find out if it would be possible.

Math Tutor: The new math tutor, Meredith, is working out very well. She has been working with 17 kids and 2 more are on the waiting list. She has been working closely with Debbie Butterworth.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Kim Shur

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November 2010 and January 2011 PCPA meetings. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

4. **Craft Night Recap:** Katie Gillespie

Craft Night was a success. There were 300 kids in attendance. The Craft Night committee is looking forward to another great night next year.

5. **Treasurer's Report- Budget Overview:** Ang Foley

Ang distributed copies of the budget and gave a report:

Directory & Dismissal Pads – PCPA reimbursed the MSPA for 10 directories for Newcomers Packages.

Cape Logowear 2010 – There was \$136 in sales at Craft Night. See Katie if you are interested in purchasing any of the remaining items that are available.

Community Night at the Maine Red Claws – HSPA provided a check in the amount of \$83.33, which was the PCPA's portion of event proceeds.

Member Donations – Several refund checks that were issued (totaling \$105.00) have been returned to the PCPA by members who requested we keep the checks as donations to support future programs. Thank you!

Craft Night – Admissions and Bake Sale revenue of \$973.35 less expenses of \$487.62 for supplies reports a net profit of \$485.73 (not including LogoWear sales).

Pond Cove Challenge 5k – A check in the amount of \$50 was issued to the Town of Cape Elizabeth for the police permit.

Kids' Courier – A check in the amount of \$259.00 was paid for printing the first edition of the 2010/2011 Kids' Courier.

Visiting Artist Contracts – The PCPA Visiting Artist web page, <http://www.capepcpa.org/events/programs/artists.html>, shares how Maine artists enhance grade level curriculum at Pond Cove.

- **Kindergarten:** A check in the amount of \$1,857.70 was issued to the Town of Cape Elizabeth to satisfy Kindergarten's visiting artist contract with Susan Webster.
- **Second Grade:** A check in the amount of \$1,357.00 was issued to the Town of Cape Elizabeth to satisfy Kindergarten's visiting artist contract with Nancy Carroll of Bean Tree Pottery.

Paid Grants:

- **Fourth Grade Flip Video Camera:** The original grant request for 2 flips in the amount of \$150 was for high definition recording devices but it was determined that the high definition would overwhelm the teachers' websites due to large file size. The fourth grade team located a standard definition flip camcorder (U1120) that was more expensive but satisfied the file size requirement and changed the quantity to 1 so the purchase would remain within the \$150 approval. **Total including tax and shipping was \$103.95**

Administrative Expense – One ticket to the PTO Today Expo in Mass was purchased in the amount of \$10.00.

Budget Reporting Correction – Reviewing the November minutes brought this member question to mind: "A parent asked why the money for the math program was coming from the technology budget. It was explained that the money was coming out of the technology budget this year for two main reasons: there was an agreement that if the Math Support Program was funded, the technology budget would be reduced; and this year the school administration did not anticipate needing as much money for technology because last year there was a lot of technology funded."

To correct the reporting of how the funds were appropriated:

- the ACTUAL Budget Technology grant line item 0 with notation that no funds are available (which is in keeping with "the technology budget would be reduced").
- \$5,113 funded for 2010.2011 Math Masters 3rd & 4th Grade Support is reported on a separate ACTUAL budget line item under the *special programs* heading

This corrected reporting provides an accurate representation for future boards when planning their budgets.

Transfer – The \$500 deposit paid by the PCPA to Coffee Pond for the Yearbook program has been transferred to the Fourth Grade Celebration as these funds will remain with Coffee Pond as partial payment towards the Fourth Grade Memory Books.

6. Grants: Ashley Wernher-Collins and Loralee Schaedel

Artwork Grant Request – A grant was written by Maryjane Johnston (Art teacher) requesting money to pay for a piece of artwork to be matted and framed. The artwork will be on display at the Portland Museum of Art. The cost is \$60. A motion was made to approve the grant. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved (10 in favor, 0 opposed).

Visiting Arts Program Grant Requests – Each grade is given \$1500 to pay for an artist for the Visiting Arts Program. The following two grants were requested for additional money:

Kindergarten Visiting Artist: A grant was requested for \$357.50 which is the amount needed to pay their artist's stipend above the \$1500.

Last year there was a lot of debate regarding whether additional money should have been given to pay for the Kindergarten artist or if parents should contribute money to pay for the difference. Some PCPA members felt that the Kindergarten teachers should hire a less expensive artist and the teachers were told that they should not expect additional money for this school year. The artist was asked to do the job for less money last year and she would not. This year the Kindergarten teachers did not find a new artist and did not submit a grant request; rather they asked parents to pay money so they could cover the cost of the artist.

The following statements were made in responses to this grant:

There is concern among Kindergarten parents that they are being asked to pay for this because not all parents can afford it.

There does not seem to be much respect between PCPA and school staff, especially when they have been given a limit and they are purposefully going over the limit.

The PCPA Board felt that perhaps it was not right to stipulate who the kindergarten teachers hire and that the PCPA may need to be more flexible.

The Kindergarten visiting artist has been working with the Kindergarten for years and the teachers are comfortable with how she works with the children. The consistency of the artist may be more important in the eyes of the teachers than the price.

It does not seem right to deny the request if there is money to pay for it. The parents are still paying in the end.

A motion was made to approve the grant for the Kindergarten visiting artist. The motion was seconded. There were 10 people in favor of the grant and 1 opposed. The one person opposed stated that she felt that we live in a community full of artists that could do the program for \$1500 and that we do not need to spend more in these economic times.

4th Grade Visiting Artist Grant: A grant was requested for \$309 which is the amount needed to pay their artist's stipend above the \$1500. The 4th grade has an extra class (7 instead of 6 classes like all of the other grades) so they need more money to pay their artist. It was suggested that for next year's budget the amount should be based on a per pupil number rather than an amount per grade to allow for differences in the number of students.

A motion was made to approve the grant for the 4th grade visiting artist. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. There were 10 people in favor of the grant and 0 opposed.

Wee Needs Grant Request - A grant was written by Tom Eismier (Principal). The grant request was \$500 per grade level (\$2500) to pay for needed classroom supplies, such as tissues, markers, pencils, etc. It was noted that the dollar value is flexible and could be adjusted to a number with which the PCPA is comfortable. Any leftover money can stay in a fund to be used next year. The items to be purchased with the money could be determined by

the PCPA. A motion was made to fund \$300 per grade and that there were no stipulations on items to be purchased with the money. The motion was seconded. There were 10 people in favor of the grant and 0 opposed.

7. **March Programs**

- Movie Night - tentatively scheduled for March 11th in the High School cafeteria
- Pure Art Cards - order forms to be returned by March 15th
- Raffle forms will be distributed this month

8. **April Programs**

- Arts Day will be on April 7th. If you would like to volunteer contact Sarah Crawford sarah@crawfordsonline.net or Kristine Eremita keremita@maine.rr.com. If you would like to become an artist please contact Heather Mullen mhemullen@yahoo.com or Kathleen Curry-Sparks kcurrysparks@hotmail.com.
- Bingo Night will be held on Friday, April 8th from 5:15-7:30 pm. The theme this year will be Mardi Gras.
- F.I.T registration to begin this month

9. **Open Discussion:**

A concern was expressed that some parents perceive the teachers as feeling entitled to money from the PCPA.

A parent asked, “Why is this not a PTO?” The history of the PCPA was explained.

There will be a survey coming out to address concerns regarding the PCPA.

10. **Adjourn meeting:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 am.

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