

*Arlington School Committee meeting Approved by School Committee April 8, 2008
Tuesday, March 25, 2008*

HONORING THE RETIRING SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Susan Lovelace

Sean Garballey

7:00 PM

On behalf of the entire committee, Mr. Jeff Thielman presented Sean Garballey and Susan Lovelace beautiful Arlington Public School chairs. Former committee member and past MASC President Paul Schlichtman presented MASC plaques that included their names and the three years of outstanding service they have provided to the Town of Arlington.

THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2008

7:30 PM

Present:

<i>Susan Lovelace, Chair</i>	<i>Denise Burns</i>
<i>Sean Garballey, Vice Chair</i>	<i>Joe Curran</i>
<i>Jeff Thielman, Secretary</i>	<i>Ronald Spangler</i>

<i>Superintendent:</i>	<i>Nate Levenson</i>
<i>Asst. Superintendent:</i>	<i>Kathleen Bodie</i>
<i>Interim Sp. Ed. Dir:</i>	<i>Gerald Kupperschmidt</i>
<i>Student Rep</i>	<i>Callie McHugh</i>
<i>Student Rep:</i>	<i>Bobby McWatters</i>

Absent:

	<i>Sue Sheffler</i>
<i>Chief Financial Off:</i>	<i>Sue Mazzarella</i>

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

CONSENT AGENDA – *all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the Committee so requests, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.*

**Approval of the minutes from March 11, 2008*

**Approval of Warrant # 08124 dated March 11, 2008 amount of \$581,648.02*

On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Mr. Curran it was voted to approve the consent agenda.

Vote: 6-0

RECOGNITION

Susan Lovelace acknowledged the Bracket School students in grades 1-4 on the outstanding artwork displayed in the School Committee room from students of Deb Chisholm.

Ms. Burns thanked the lacrosse parents who had to clean up graffiti on the press box at the Arlington High School field.

WALKER REPORT

Dr. Jim Earley, from Walker Partnerships along with Interim Ottoson Principal Dr. Malone Neville, presented on the Special Education Programs and Services at the Ottoson Middle School. Superintendent Levenson requested this review for the focus on current effectiveness and status of programs and services provided by the Department of Special Education. The purpose is to provide a report to identify areas of strength, need and recommendations.

The committee members responded to the review with various questions and Dr. Earley and Dr. Malone Neville responded that some issues that were recommended are already being addressed and other issues could be 3-5 years away. Superintendent noted that a major schedule overhaul is needed and would have to be built from scratch. Dr. Malone Neville noted, English, Math and other departments can be integrated in for the professional development and this should be mapped out before school starts in September.

UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF 21st CENTURY EDUCATION PLAN

Mr. Skidmore reported that Arlington students are prepared for social, emotional and vocation success when they graduate from Arlington High School. This is possible with the very talented teachers at Arlington High School, the addition of two new hired social workers and the collaboration of administrators all working towards better communication. Teachers take their position very seriously and have found that students are becoming more responsible, creative thinkers who respect learning and complete their homework, participate in athletics and school activities as well as work after school.

SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION REPORT

Chairwoman Susan Lovelace reported on the committee member's evaluation of the superintendent. The completed evaluation will be posted to the website for public review.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Levenson and Assistant Superintendent Kathy Bodie had set up meetings last week to meet and ask question with the candidate of Director of Special Education, Mark L. Ryder. Superintendent Levenson noted that Arlington Public Schools is fortunate enough to ask the committee to approve the contract agreement of Mr. Mark L. Ryder as the Director of Special Education for three years and shall be employed starting July 1, 2008.

On a motion by Mr. Thielman and seconded by Ms. Burns it was

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Voted and approved to accept the Employment Agreement of the Director of Special Education between the Arlington School Committee and Mark L. Ryder.

Vote 6:0

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Policies and Procedures

Ron Spangler

First Readings:

Policy Dissemination, School Committee Legislative Program, Budget Transfer Authority, CJ: Administrative Intern Program deletion, BIE: School Committee Member Insurance and BIA-E: New School Committee Member Orientation

On Mr. Spangler's first reading on Policy and Procedures, Mr. Thielman moved to suspend the rules on policy and would move to vote now on the changes of the above policies. Ms. Burns would prefer to table the vote with Ms. Lovelace seconding to table the first readings until the next School Committee meeting.

Vote 6:0

SECRETARY REPORT

Mr. Thielman reported on correspondence received by the committee, the Stratton Scene, the George Washington reports, and the letter from Pat Tassone.

NEW BUSINESS

On a motion by Ms. Burns and seconded by Mr. Curran it was voted to put pressure on the State House and submitted the following letter to the Arlington Advocate signed by the full committee.

We, the seven-independent members of the Arlington School Committee, are of diverse points of view and while often it is our differences that are highlighted, we do have common values and concerns.

We do all agree on the following:

We agree that all Arlington Children deserve a first class education.

Requiring program fees, increasing class size, and cutting programs are unacceptable solutions for addressing our budget problems.

The Commonwealth is failing in its responsibility to fund education. Taking inflation into account, Massachusetts is still spending nearly half-a-billion dollars less on education every year than in 2002, thanks to devastating budget cuts during the last recession.

To change the way we fund education it will take all of us-School Committee members, educators, parents and concerned citizens- to make our voices heard on Beacon Hill. Together we need to Stand for Children.

We all urge our friends, supporters and all those who care about quality public education to join with us to Stand for Children at the "Day on the Hill" on April 15 from 9:30am-12: 20pm at the Massachusetts State House. You can register for this event by going to www.stand.org/ma/davonthehill or by calling 617-417-8141.

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In the words of Tom Brokaw “There is a place in America to take a stand: it is public education. It is the underpinning of our cultural and political system. It is the great common ground. Public education after all is the engine that moves us as a society toward a common destiny...It is in public education that the American dream begins to take shape.”

Please take a stand with us.

Sincerely,

Susan Lovelace, Chair

Sean Garballey, Vice Chair

Jeff Thielman, Secretary

Sue Sheffler

Denise Burns

Joe Curran

Ron Spangler

Vote 6:0

The committee members thanked Susan and Sean for all their dedication and commitment to Arlington Public Schools.

ADJOURN

***On a motion by Mr. Garballey and seconded by Ms. Lovelace it was
Voted to adjourn 10:23 pm***

***Submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee***