

Improvement

Continued from page 1

progress and is performing at a high level."

As a Best Practices Network member, Jamestown will have access to shared expertise and research data from successful schools. School board member Bruce "B.J." Whitehouse added that the program had specific lesson plans, "so we do not have to re-invent the wheel."

In connection with the network, a mentor would be available for the faculty, Lukon added. "Along with a professional development facilitator, we will make significant progress."

Tuesday, Sept. 2, a video of the keynote address at the 2008 Model Schools Conference hosted by ICLE is scheduled to be shown to the Jamestown Schools faculty. The panel decided to offer a public viewing of the video at the school committee workshop on Thursday, Sept. 4.

Energy and cost savings were other highlights of the meeting. "We've all been at work trying to save money," Lukon said. A reduction in staff and bus use were areas where money would be saved. The superintendent suggested a reduction of the late bus as another means of cost savings. "There are some districts that don't run a late bus at all," she added.

In the buildings and grounds report, Lew Kitts listed repairs

and improvements made at the schools, including new lighting in the Lawn Avenue school gym. He encouraged everyone to walk into the gym to see the lights turn on with a motion detector.

Kitts explained that the difference in lighting was that it was more evenly distributed and easier on the eyes. "It should save us somewhere between \$7,000 and \$10,000. We should see a return within the year."

In the superintendent's report, Lukon announced that Jamestown received a First Student Award, which read, "Zero Children Left, Employee Injuries and Collisions." The award recognized the high level of transportation safety achieved. Jamestown also received a department of education grant of \$23,615 to help defray the cost of implementing the Uniform Chart of Accounts, a standardized financial reporting system.

In a food service update, business manager Maria Alfred reviewed revenue and expenses for food provider Sodexo and reported a deficit for last year. Panel members reacted with concerns about the rising cost of food. The committee discussed ways to restructure lunch offerings, such as selling premium food items separately, in lieu of a general price increase. The board agreed to make modification suggestions to Sodexo.

In new business, the committee approved amendments to the su-

perintendent's contract that would expand the number of working days from 90 to 110, with a possible increase to 120 days. Chairwoman Cathy Kaiser said that the original 90-day work year reflected the limits set by the Rhode Island Retirement Board on the previous superintendent who was a retiree. A standard half-time position, nevertheless, is 120 days. As a Massachusetts retiree, Lukon is allowed to work the additional days that the school committee has found necessary for her to fulfill job responsibilities.

The committee also approved a contract salary change for the buildings and grounds director. In light of the town's review of municipal salary adjustments, Kaiser said, "We looked hard at Mr. Kitts' salary and have done the same for him. It will bring him not quite up to state standard, but close." She turned to Kitts and added, "We get back a lot in savings for all you do around the school grounds for us."

After a review of the proposed building use fee schedule as proposed by Kitts, the committee unanimously approved the policy. Kitts said that he checked what other school districts in the state charged for use by outside groups. "We're looking at wear and tear, custodial care and energy use."

In the director of student services report, Robert Fricklas gave an update on program revisions being made to comply with new

state special education regulations. He also reported on successful summer learning programs, including the launch of the Community-based Learning Project at the Jamestown Community Farm.

In a discussion about North Kingstown, committee member William "Bucky" Brennan shared with the committee a newspaper article about the negative impact

on North Kingstown's state test scores of special education students placed out-of-district. Many of the students did not take or complete the required test, resulting in zero test scores. The committee agreed to allow Fricklas to renew his conversation with North Kingstown about the possibility of serving the needs of some of their students in the Jamestown program.



Off to grad school

Melissa Minto said goodbye to teens from the Jamestown Teen Center, who came to wish her well and show their support. Minto was presented with a proclamation from the Town Council for her support as a mentor and a role model for the youth of Jamestown.

Classic yacht events this weekend

On Saturday and Sunday this weekend, the 29th annual Classic Yacht Regatta will grace the bay with an array of world-class yachts.

Hosted by the Museum of Yachting, the regatta's first race begins Saturday morning, Aug. 30, and racing concludes on Sunday afternoon. The regatta's traditional Classic Yacht Parade takes place Sunday, starting at 10:30 a.m., and will trace a course along the Newport harbor front. Race management will be handled by Sail Newport, with assistance from the Conanicut Yacht Club on Sunday.

The fleet will mix restored classics with "spirit of tradition" yachts that are of contemporary build but classic design.

Individuals coming to the museum's home at Fort Adams State Park during the regatta to see the fleet can also tour the three new exhibitions, which are open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The displays span a 100-year period from 1883 to 1983 and are coordinated with boat building and restoration projects. The museum will also host activities for young classic-yacht enthusiasts at Fort Adams during the weekend.

For more information and a schedule of events, visit the museum's Web site at www.moy.org or call 847-1018.

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