

http://www.townonline.com/lynnfield/news/local_regional/nss_newnsshtfoye06272003.htm

Principal of changing tides

By Chad Konecky

Friday, June 27, 2003

The dyspeptic non-renewal of a popular principal besmirched an already-embattled Beverly High this spring

It was the richest untold story of the 2002-'03 academic year on the North Shore. A veteran principal at Beverly High, Bill Foye, intensely popular with a vocal portion of the student body, supported unanimously by the City Council and unreservedly by the city's state representative and the former county DA, yet unceremoniously booted upon his tenure's conclusion tomorrow (June 30).

On April 28, Supt. Bill Lupini made official what Foye supporters suspected for months - the former Manchester High principal's seven-year stint at the Beverly helm was over. The apparent incongruity of the decision, both before and after, stirred sharp tongues around town. Particularly in light of Foye's finalist status among 35 applicants for a Newburyport job in March and his hire by Reading's Parker Middle School within a fortnight of Lupini's announcement.

"This is what happens when there's a personality conflict and one person in that conflict (Lupini) has too much power and is accountable to no one," says Parent Teacher Student Organization member Eileen Lang. "The implications during this process have totally soiled Bill Foye's reputation. I feel like the public has been betrayed by this process. If there are critics of Bill Foye's style, where are they?"

Throughout months of speculation about Foye's future at the school, Lupini refused to comment directly upon his evaluation of Foye's performance, citing the state's 1993 Education Reform Act, awarding superintendents sole authority to hire and fire principals. But general comments Lupini did make were turgid enough to prompt him to pen an open letter on the subject, printed in the Salem Evening News, to "clarify" his remarks.

Previously, Lupini had said his failure to re-sign Foye before the April 12 expiration of his contract "... had to do with communication issues dealing with morale problems and the quality of communication issues dealing with the staff and the public."

In late March, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges voted to place Beverly High on probation in regard to its accreditation standing, principally for structural shortcomings in the aging school's physical plant. The school was already operating under the status of "accredited with warning."

According to Lang, the school saw a "remarkable" jump in MCAS pass rates and curriculum quality on Foye's watch. She added that "90 percent of this year's seniors are going on to college from a very diverse community. Bill Foye is the kind of guy who raises the bar, then gives you a hand."

On May 19, about 100 students rallied at the school's Sohier Road entrance in support of Foye. Some students left signs supporting Foye on Lupini's front lawn. Two weeks earlier, on May 5, the Beverly City Council voted unanimously in support of a resolution asking Lupini to reconsider. A day later, the school's National Honor Society inducted Foye as an honorary inductee.

"We did everything we could as students (to voice support for Foye)," says 2003 valedictorian Jessica Davidson, 18, who will attend Harvard University this fall. "I'm not one to cross the line and try to be an administrator, but I don't know why or how they could have let him go. Life isn't always fair and it's too bad this had to happen to an educator as wonderful as Principal Foye, but I'm glad he got another job. That school is lucky to have him."

Last week, Lupini hired Carla Scuzzarella, one of three assistant principals at Beverly High, to replace Foye. Because the decision on Foye dragged into April, no formal search committee was formed and, according to critics of the process, therefore limited the breadth of available candidates.

"Carla has exceptional communication skills and a great ability to be interested in working with staff and students," says Lupini. "Those were the top two for me as far as what made her the best candidate. A third one was her interest in being principal here, not just a principal. Some have said discussing those attributes is my way of commenting on what Bill was or wasn't as a principal. Well, read into it whatever you want. We're educators. We're always asking how ourselves how we can do our jobs better."

Lupini himself was halfway through a four-year contract in April when he signed a six-year renewal to stay at Beverly High. The contract goes into effect on July 1 and ends on June 30, 2009.

For his part, Foye isn't convinced the kind of process he endured is best for education.

"Education reform legislation is moving us toward a corporate model of operating and I think the question is: Will that model fit education and be productive?," says Foye. "If you look at the shifts along the North Shore - the high turnover in superintendents and principals - they're radical. I think if you talk to any principals with a new superintendent coming into their district, they'll express a lot of anxiety (about their job security).

"Education systems are used to a different model," he says. "Time will tell whether living like this is a good idea, but it appears this it's the future."

http://www.townonline.com/lynnfield/news/local_regional/nss_newsshtfoye06272003.htm



Copyright by TownOnline.com and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc. No portion of TownOnline.com or its content may be

reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)