

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, March 2, 2010
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Margaret Coppe, School Committee Members Sandro Alessandrini, Rod Cole, Jessie Steigerwald Mary Ann Stewart and student representative Liam Gandelsman. The minutes were taken by Leora Tec.

The meeting was convened at 7:35 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (Margaret Coppe)

II. Public Comment

Leora Tec (precinct 1): I was contacted, as a former ELL tutor and Site Council member, by someone from the Harrington Site Council with a concern about how we communicate both in emergency situations and through documents with non-English speakers.

Margaret Coppe: Commented on this as it relates to the town. The police and fire departments subscribe to a translation service.

Paul Ash commented that all of our handbooks are translated into the major languages. Dr. Ash believes that each school has identified people that could be brought in to translate when needed, for an IEP meeting for example.

Margaret Coppe: Supported Leora Tec's suggestion of mentioning the date in the emergency phone calls.

III. Superintendent's Announcements:

1. One of our former students, Ramone Daley, was tragically murdered over the weekend in Boston in a senseless shooting. He was in his early 20s. Dr. Ash read a statement about Ramone Daley.

The School Committee then observed a moment of silence in Ramone Daley's memory.

2. Our Department of Energy National Science Bowl Team competed in the Massachusetts Regional Science Bowl. Our A Team will advance to the national competition. Team members are: Jaeyoon Lee, James Zhang, Lisa Liu (co-captains), as well as Welkin Uttaro and Amy Zhang (team members). Nick Gould and Ryan Grams were the coaches.

IV. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Sandro Alessandrini: The Chyten letter is a little thing that could become a distraction. Some parents did not like seeing a for profit company on LPS letterhead.

Dr. Ash stated that he strongly supported the letter going out on letterhead. Chyten was offering a free service. The criteria regarding these things have always been: is it local, school related, and does it benefit students? It met all the criteria. If the School Committee has a policy view on it that would be fine.

Mary Ann Stewart: The fact that we don't have a commercialism policy causes problems. I agree with Sandro.

Jessie Steigerwald: The policy sub-committee should look at this. It seemed to some parents that the administration was preferring Chyten over other services.

There were comments from the audience.

Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart reported on the training that they held for site council members.

Margaret Coppe: We need to go over the liaison list soon.

The School Committee is charged with evaluating Paul Ash every March. Do we want to get back on schedule with doing the evaluations in March?

The Committee discussed this issue. Dr. Ash commented as well.

V. Discussion Item

1. FY10 2nd Quarterly Financial Report. Introduced by Dr. Ash. In the expenses section of the budget we have a projected surplus \$687,657. We will bargain in good faith with all of our unions. We will end the year in surplus.

Paul Ash commented on the money saved by the collaboration in SPED bussing, on which we took the lead. This year we project a \$408K surplus in this line. This is just one of the places where we have saved money. Thank you to Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance Mary Ellen Dunn for making this happen. We are projecting a \$600K surplus in out of district tuition (that could change) as of today.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Motion to transfer \$112, 372 in expenses from the transportation revolving fund to the operating budget (Stewart, Cole). The motion passed 5-0.

VI. Motion to go into executive session for the purpose of collective bargaining, not to return to public session (Stewart, Alessandrini). Stewart-aye; Cole-aye; Steigerwald-aye; Alessandrini-aye and Coppe-aye.