

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, May 8, 2012
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Dr. Paul B. Ash, Superintendent; Mary Ann Stewart, School Committee Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Vice-Chair; School Committee Members Bonnie Brodner, Margaret Coppe, and Jessie Steigerwald, and Noah Coolidge, Student Representative

The minutes were taken by Jean Curran.

The Meeting Convened at 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

II. Executive Session

The following Motion was made by Mary Ann Stewart and seconded by Bonnie Brodner:

I move to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with regard to Exemption 3 – Collective Bargaining and that I as Chair declare that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, and that we will reconvene in Open Session for the purpose of a Public Meeting.

The Motion was unanimously approved by a voice roll call vote:

Alessandro Alessandrini: aye;

Bonnie Brodner: aye;

Margaret Coppe: aye;

Jessie Steigerwald: aye;

Mary Ann Stewart: aye.

The Committee went into Executive Session at 7:05 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn from Executive Session and enter into Public Session was made by Margaret Coppe and seconded by Jessie Steigerwald.

The Motion was unanimously approved by a voice roll call vote:

Alessandro Alessandrini: aye;

Bonnie Brodner: aye;

Margaret Coppe: aye;

Jessie Steigerwald: aye;

Mary Ann Stewart: aye.

The Committee went into Public Session at 8:15 p.m.

III. Return to Public Session and Welcome

The Committee returned to Public Session and the Chair invited Public Comment

Harvey Simkovits, 4 Angier Road, reiterated his comments to the Committee from an earlier Committee meeting regarding the Bruce Wellman Study and Report. He has emailed the Committee with his six point document and recommendations for going forward with the report and the efforts of the school system.

Adam Smith, 74 Paul Revere Road, expressed his concern about the lack of confidentiality with respect to the report. He called for the Committee to begin an investigation and possible censor of the superintendent if it is found Dr. Ash violated confidentiality. He also recommended the Committee conduct surveys regularly so the Committee may stay on top of what is happening in the Schools.

IV. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Ash announced several exciting awards and achievements of Lexington Public School students. He is very proud of the work of the teachers, parents, family and members of the community who have supported these children and have brought them to this level.

Lexington High School placed first in the National Science Bowl Competition held in Washington D.C. The Federal Government's Department of Energy began this competition to promote careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This was the first time in 22 years that a team from New England won the competition competing against 13,000 other high schools across the country.

Lexington High Schools' robotics team participated in the FIRST World Championship in St. Louis MO. The robotics team advanced to this event by winning the Massachusetts State Championships. The team was one of three finalists to be nominated to receive the PTC Design Award which is awarded for incorporation of industrial design. Dr. Ash shared a heartwarming story about how the Lexington students assisted a boy from Saudia Arabia whose coaches were unable to make to the competition in time to assist him. They helped the boy reprogram his robot so that he could participate. Dr. Ash stated these students deserve a gold medal for outstanding character.

James Cullen and Kyle George won first prize in The New England Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences National Student Awards for Excellence Competition. They received an Emmy Award for their public service announcement on texting and driving. Mary Pappas, who teaches TV Production at LHS, was their coach.

Lexington High Schools' Debate team captured first place at The Tournament of Champions - Lincoln Douglas debate is a high school debate tournament held annually at the University of Kentucky which emphasizes logic, ethical values and philosophy. Only

72 entries are permitted in a policy debate and 84 in Lincoln Douglas debate. The team won four huge awards across different disciplines. It is a very proud moment for Lexington.

Dr. Ash provided an update on the administrative searches for positions of Clarke Middle School Principal and the Director of Special Education.

Dr. Ash also updated the Committee on the Bridge and Bowman Projects. He stated that asbestos abatement work has been completed and the final air clearance test is completed as well. Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities addressed the Committee regarding the critical patch schedule and updated the Committee on the construction schedule and state mandates.

V. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Mary Ann Stewart announced that she had been discussion with colleagues regarding reorganization of the Committee. She stated that after 14 months as Chair, she is ready to give the opportunity to another colleague and would like to bring forward as an agenda item or when the Committee wishes. Nominations could be made at the May 22nd meeting. She then announced the meeting being held on May 9th at 3:00 p.m. with the Committee and Town Council to discuss the data of the Wellman Report and how they may or may not use that data for evaluation purposes, or in general, will be held in the Selectmen Meeting Room for approximately 1-1.5 hours.

Margaret Coppe questioned Dr. Ash on when he would anticipate being able to make a decision for the two open positions.

Dr. Ash responded that the Clarke Middle School Principal position will be early next week and for the Director of Special Education position will be by the end of next week or early the following week.

Bonnie Brodner stated that she had the pleasure of seeing the Lexington High School Spring Musical, Urinetown. She gave kudos to everyone involved.

Jessie Steigerwald agreed with Bonnie that the play was very entertaining. She wanted to acknowledge all the students who have received awards but also wanted to remind everyone that it doesn't mean that the Committee isn't proud of those students that make smaller changes. It is totally appropriate to congratulate those students, but we are equally proud of all students in every small win. The students attending these events must raise the funds to pay for their travel and she believes that the Committee should be thinking about helping to fund these students to travel to these national award opportunities. Finally, she thanked Mary Ann Stewart for her service to the Committee and questioned her colleagues on who would follow through the Bruce Wellman Data Report.

Alessandro Alessandrini is very proud of the National Science Bowl winners and he wished to acknowledge all the artists, writers, and others who have succeeded this past

year. He then thanked Mary Ann Stewart for her service and recognized all she has accomplished during her tenure. He stated that he feels more comfortable reorganizing on May 22nd, when it seems Town Meeting will be concluded. With respect to the Bruce Wellman Report, he stated that the reason the Committee is getting together tomorrow with the attorneys is to see how we can use the data.

IV. Agenda

1. Vote to Approve 2012-2013 LHS Italian and Latin Students' Field Trip to Rome, Sienna, and Florence, Italy

Marie Murphy, Department Head of Lexington High School Foreign Language Department presented the proposed field trip to the Committee. Also in attendance were Maureen Haviland and Maureen Regan, Foreign Language Teachers. There were questions and comments from the Committee with regard to the pricing of the trip, tour operator, travelling with other schools, and the process of how students will be chosen. Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance Operations took questions from the Committee regarding whether school funds have ever paid for student trips. The robotics team chaperones were funded by the school, but most of the funds come from fundraising by the students. She stated that there have been conversations about how to distribute funds raised.

Motion to Approve 2012-2013 LHS Italian and Latin Students' Field Trip to Rome, Sienna, and Florence, Italy (Alessandrini, Coppe) The Motion was approved (4-1 Steigerwald)

2. Vote to Approve 2012-2013 LHS French Student Exchange Trip to Antony, France

Heather Kimura, LHS Foreign Language Teacher and Cynthia Tang, LHS Guidance Counselor presented the LHS French Student Exchange Trip to Antony, France to the Committee. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding pricing of the trip, fundraising, and student financial issues.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street and Chairman of the Lexington Tourism Committee, addressed the Committee regarding the history of the Lexington's sister city Antony and their interest in having a relationship with Lexington. She inquired the Committee about whom and how the Tourism Committee could connect with the High School and how to also engage the entire school system in the Antony project.

Motion to Approve 2012-2013 LHS French Student Exchange Trip to Antony, France and Belgium (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was approved (5-0).

3. English Language Arts Curriculum Review – Year Three

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development was delighted to showcase the work of the Office of Curriculum and Instruction and English Language Arts Curriculum review. She thanked her 42 member committee and acknowledged their hard work and commitment and introduced the three

department heads, Kathy McCarthy, K-5 Department Head - Literacy, Dane Despres, Diamond Middle School English Department Head, and Elizabeth Crowell, LHS English Department Head.

Ms. McCarthy presented to the Committee the development of the curriculum, goals of the Committee, best practices and the evaluation of the existing curriculum. She discussed the Year 3 Goals which included (i) understanding the Common Core Standards and the 2011 Massachusetts Framework, (ii) shift to a standards base curriculum (iii) mapping the curriculum, (iv) aligning the curriculum, vertically and horizontally, and (v) involving all LPS English language arts and literacy teachers.

Dane Despres spoke regarding the implementation and shift of the new curriculum to the teacher and how communication and collaboration will be most the effective plan moving forward. The plan includes (i) developing a shared vision, (ii) aligning curriculum and instruction, and (iii) identifying priority standards at each grade level. He also spoke on the shifting of state assessment, and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), which will replace the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in 2014.

Liz Crowell presented to the Committee what it will look like for teachers and students and how it turns into something in real time. She spoke about the unpacked standards which include annotation, note taking, making claims with supporting evidence, and analyzing selected evidence. She also spoke about assessment, collaboration instruction, freshman teachers, develop priority standards, develop formative assessment, measure student's annotation skills, and providing students with models of annotation.

The Committee had questions and comments for the speakers which included technology, professional development, the need to continue to develop curriculum, exemplars, templates and rubrics, media literacy, and special education.

4. Superintendent's Evaluation – Discussion

The Committee discussed postponing the discussion on the Superintendent's Evaluation until after they meet with School Committee counsel tomorrow.

Motion to Postpone the Superintendent Evaluation by the School Committee to a Later Date (Steigerwald, Alessandrini). **The Motion was approved (5-0).**

5. Vote on School Choice

Mary Ann Stewart stated that the School Committee fulfilled their statutory requirement and offered a public hearing on April 24th regarding School Choice for the 2012-2013 school year. Unless the School Committee votes to formally withdraw from such participation by June 1, 2012 it is deemed to be a school choice district for the coming school year.

Motion that Lexington Public Schools will not be School Choice Community for the 2012-2013 school year (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was approved (5-0).

6. Vote to Award School Transportation Contract for the Period July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2017

Mary Ellen Dunn updated the Committee about the School Transportation Contract with C&W Transportation. The Committee thanked her for her hard work.

Motion to Award School Transportation Contract for the Period July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2017 to C&W Transportation (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was approved (5-0)

7. Vote to Accept a \$626 Donation from a Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Bridge School Gift Account

Motion to Accept, with gratitude, a \$626 Donation from a Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to be Deposited in the Bridge School Gift Account (Coppe, Alessandrini) The Motion was approved (5-0)

8. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 13, 2012

The Committee discussed and agreed to send their individual comments to this set of minutes to the Chair by the end of the week.

9. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 2, 2012

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 2, 2012 (Alessandrini, Brodner) The Motion was approved (5-0)

10. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 4, 2012

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 4, 2012 (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was approved (5-0)

11. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 11, 2012

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 11, 2012, as amended (Coppe, Alessandrini) The Motion was approved (5-0)

12. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 12, 2012

Committee members attended a meeting of the Hastings PTA at the Hastings Elementary School. The meeting was informational only and the Committee wanted to reflect this in their official records.

Motion to Approve the Document Prepared by the Chair for the Meeting held on Thursday, April 12, 2012 to the Hastings PTA (Steigerwald, Brodner). The Motion was approved (5-0)

Motion to Adjourn (Brodner, Coppe). The Motion Passed (5-0)

The Meeting adjourned at 10:24 p.m.

Documents: Written public comments from Adam Smith, 74 Paul Revere Road; Meeting Agenda; Superintendent's Announcements – May 8, 2012; LPS Field Trip Request Form for Trip to Rome, Sienna and Florence, Italy on April 13-20, 2013; LPS Field Trip Request Form for Trip to Antony, France and Brussels, Belgium on February 9-23, 2013; Memorandum from English Language Arts and Literacy Department Heads to Dr. Paul B. Ash dated May 3, 2012 re Executive Summary – English Language Arts and Literacy Curriculum Review Committee Year 3; School Transportation Contract Award to Lexington School Committee from Dr. Paul Ash; Letter from Margaret Colella, Principal Bridge School to Lexington School Committee dated April 27, 2012 re gift in the amount of \$626 from Wilson Farms, Inc.; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated March 13, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Executive Session Minutes dated April 2, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated April 4, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated April 11, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Hastings PTA Meeting dated April 12, 2012.

Voted by the School Committee June 12, 2012