

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 8, 2009
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

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

The meeting was convened at 7:33 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (Margaret Coppe)

II. Superintendent's Announcements:

1. Honoring Former Fiske Guidance Counselor Freyda Siegel on Her 100th Birthday Celebration. Paul Ash read a letter that he wrote about herms. Siegel. She retired at age 90. She worked for 40 years as a counselor and psychologist for LPS. She also received a letter from President Obama congratulating her.
2. We had a wonderful opening in nine schools.
3. We have two new principals with us: Sandra Trach of Estabrook School and Peggy Mongiello of Diamond Middle School. Paul Ash read a bit about their backgrounds and welcomed them to our district.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns:

Tom Diaz:

- 1). Expressed sadness on the death of Senator Kennedy, a great supporter of public education who will be hard to replace.
- 2). Expressed solidarity with the Boston Public Schools, which were the subject of a lengthy Boston Globe editorial. It is hard to set specific expectations. Boston does extremely well.

Margaret Coppe: Liam Gandelsman is the new student rep to the School Committee. He is a student at LHS. Welcome.

Rod Cole requested a brief update on the MUNIS system from Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent.

Ms. Dunn stated that chart of accounts is not finished yet. She explained the work yet to be done and stated that the work is close to completion.

Jessie Steigerwald:

- 1). Thank you to Dr. Ash and every one who put together the fantastic opening.
- 2). Thanks to all who served on the Ad-hoc Facilities Committee.
- 3). Thanks to the Minuteman for correcting a misprint in the Globe.
- 4). Thanks to Mary Ellen Dunn for working with Chartwells to enable people to order lunch online.
- 5). Thank you to the Safe Routes To School volunteers who have continued to work to improve sidewalk access.

Mary Ann Stewart

- 1). PTAs planned many opening of the school year events over the summer. Thank you.
- 2). Thank you to Jen Vogelzang for the Opening Day message on behalf of the PTAs.
- 3). Most newsletters are going green. I want to urge everyone to join the PTAs and PTOs.
- 4). I am impressed with the farm to school program that Chartwells is implementing.
- 5). I want to encourage people to visit the website of Special Education Parent Advisory Council. The theme this year is parents as partners. The PAC is the law in addition to a good idea and is a tremendous resource to parents.
- 6). Are there parents on a subcommittee for implementing the ILP report recommendations? I would like to know how parents will be involved in the process.
- 7). The School Committee met over the summer to determine team-building strategies.

Margaret Coppe: The Citizen's Academy will be starting soon. It will be a series of educational, informative evenings about various town departments.

IV. Discussion Items:

1. Summer 2009 Professional Development

Presented by Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development.

Two hundred and eighty-one teachers participated in thirty-nine workshops. Ms. Pilarski recognized the LEF for their enormous support-- \$25,500. Ms. Pilarski emphasized how important the summer is for engaging teachers. She explained the broad outlines of categories of workshops and how the various topics are chosen. She also mentioned several specific workshops. We have an opportunity with the stimulus money to create a PD program that will be sustained. Dr. Ash has created a committee under the leadership of Joanne Hennessey, former Diamond Middle School principal, to formulate professional development so as to concentrate on the goals of: equity and excellence, tiered intervention to address the needs of all students, integrating expanding technologies and interdisciplinary curricular goals.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

2. 2009 Enrollment Numbers – Projected vs. Actual

Dr. Ash presented the actual numbers as compared to last year's projected enrollment numbers.

3. Full-Day Kindergarten and Half-Day Kindergarten

Presented by Carol Pilarski. There are currently twenty-one classrooms with 377 children. Ms. Pilarski commented on the article in the Globe entitled, "Pressure Cooker Kindergarten" and reminded the Committee that those connected to our kindergarten program have been very positive about their experiences and that a lot of thought went into planning our program to avoid the stresses that were described in the article. Our teachers want to know the children better and they use the extra time for that.

There were comments and questions from the Committee.

4. There was a brief discussion about the role of site councils, and the time sequence of their goal setting relative to that of the district as a whole. Dr. Ash stated that the role of site councils could be discussed at the next meeting.

5. Proposed 2009/2010 School Committee Meeting Dates and Agenda Items

Tuesday, January 19th is the special election to replace Senator Kennedy so that date should be changed.

March 22, 2010 is not a definite starting date for Town Meeting yet. It may start on March 29th.

A decision was made to add a meeting on October 13th, given the heavy agendas of the other October meetings. School Committee goals will be discussed at that meeting.

6. FY11 Budget Calendar, Including Capital, Grants, and Revolving Funds

Sept 23 should be the 22nd.

V. Action Items

1. Vote to Appoint Carol Pilarski as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development for Three Years. Presented by Dr. Ash.

Motion to Appoint Carol Pilarski as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development for Three Years (Diaz, Stewart). The motion passed 5-0.

2. Vote to Accept \$400.00 Donation to the Harrington Gift Account

Motion to accept with gratitude a \$400.00 donation to the Harrington Gift Account from the Korean PTA (Cole, Stewart). The motion passed 5-0.

3. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 24, 2009
4. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 1, 2009
5. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of May 19, 2009
6. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of June 2, 2009
7. Vote to Approve School Committee Executive Session Minutes of June 15, 2009
8. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of June 16, 2009

Motion to approve the School Committee minutes of February 24, 2009, April 1, 2009, May 19, 2009, June 2, 2009 and the executive session minutes of June 15, 2009 (Diaz, Cole). The motion passed 5-0.

Motion to approve the School Committee minutes of June 16, 2009 (Diaz, Cole).

There was an addendum to the minutes of June 16, 2009, to the effect that there was a decision to put a link on the LPS website homepage to the School Committee page.

The motion passed 5-0.

- VI. Motion to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining and a police matter not to return to open session (Steigerwald, Diaz). Steigerwald-aye; Diaz-aye; Cole-aye; Stewart-aye; Coppe-aye.**

9:20 p.m.: Executive Session