

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Tuesday, September 8, 2015  
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room  
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Mary Czajkowski, Chair Jessie Steigerwald, Alessandro Alessandrini, Margaret Coppe, Judy Crocker, Bill Hurley, Student Representative Abby Swartz

ALSO PRESENT: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Bob Harris, Interim Finance Director Ian Dailey, Director of Facilities (DPF) Pat Goddard, Fiske principal Tom Martellone, Clarke principal Anna Monaco, Director of Planning and Assessment Maureen Kavanaugh, Director of Special Education Ellen Sugita, DiNisco Design Partnership Ken DiNisco

The minutes were taken by Judy Crocker.

At **7:00 pm**, the Chair called the meeting to order in open session and immediately went into executive session. The minutes for that session are in a separate document.

At 7:35 the committee returned to Open Session and the Chair called for a brief recess. At **7:43pm** the Chair called the meeting to order and re-introduced those present.

**Public Comment:** Fiske parent Alyssa O'Shaughnessy read a letter sent to the School Committee. Its content contained her great concern over the overcrowded Fiske kindergarten classrooms and the possibility that the school's entire kindergarten grade may be re-organized from 4 to 5 classrooms so soon after school has begun due to growing enrollment.

**Superintendent's Announcements:**

Dr. Czajkowski reported that the first day of school went very smoothly, thanks in great part to the principals, faculty, staff, Transportation Coordinator Elaine Celi and Interim Director of Business and Finance Ian Dailey, and the patience of parents. Interim principal Erin Maguire along with staff, parents, and the police department successfully implemented a new traffic pattern at Bridge.

The Middlesex DA is sponsoring a Middlesex Partnership for Youth Breakfast on September 24 for the 54 towns within the county which the superintendent will attend. Some of the programs offered thru the partnership include bullying, sexting, technology, parenting, and others.

Dr. Czajkowski read aloud a letter from the Massachusetts Inspector General praising LPS Special Education Finance Manager Heidi Zimmerman. Ms. Zimmerman gave a presentation at a local conference on best practices for public procurement.

She is pleased to report that the timeline with opening a new Lextended Day site at Bridge is going well. There should be 60 slots available and she has received many positive parent comments. A special thanks to Jeff Leonard, Erin Maguire, and Ian Dailey for helping to make these changes a reality.

Dr. Czajkowski gave a special thank you for the host of her first in a series of Superintendent House Calls. 25 parents and community members attended a recent meeting to discuss their concerns at the home of Ravi Sakhuja.

At her first PTA/PTO Presidents Council meeting, she shared the aligned district and superintendent goals along with the results of her spring parent survey. The top three concerns were overcrowding, stress, and parents and how best support the needs of the district included by meeting, listening, and acting. Re-evaluating the homework policy will be a year-long goal. At the October meeting, she requested that each PTA receive feedback from their constituencies around the FY17 Budget.

#### **School Committee Announcements:**

Ms. Steigerwald updated the Committee on the interview process for the new School Committee administrative Assistant position. Finalists have been chosen and the position candidate will be named soon. She gave a special thanks to Marianne McKenna for helping to post a large backlog of School Committee minutes. While minutes have been approved, they have not been posted since January 2015. Minutes are available in hard copy form upon request. There is a Summit scheduled for September 16 and the Committee may wish to have an executive session prior. This can be discussed towards the end of tonight's meeting. Lastly, she reported that the next Lexington Community Coalition organizational meeting is being held September 10 at the Community Center. Ann Weiss will be facilitating.

Ms. Coppe reported that the Youth Services Council reviewed how the PSAT exam given by the College Board to high school sophomores and juniors will now be given universally during school time on October 14. There will be no Saturday exam administration. The testing date change has been initiated by the College Board. Students may opt out and the fee is \$15. She also inquired on the best approach for distributing liaison notes. It was decided that they should be given to the administrative secretary for inclusion in the next Committee packet.

She along with Assistant Superintendent Bob Harris and legal counsel Colby Brunt will be testifying before the Joint Council on Education on Senate bill 350. This is an act related to just cause termination. It arose out of a case settled in Lexington in 2014. Lastly, all fourth graders are eligible thru the National Park service for the free program "Ticket To Ride." This allows fourth graders free entrance to National

Park sites. If more information is available, the superintendent will distribute it to fourth grade teachers.

Ms. Crocker exhibited the Lexington Community Education and the Lexington Recreation Fall Catalogues. While the former is part of the Lexington School System, the latter is a town department. Both are wonderful ways to keep learning and registration is currently open. Also, the first Safe Routes To School meeting of the school year will be held September 24 at 9:30 am in room 237 of the new Community Center. She next asked committee members to please give her the policy flash drives each received in early July so that she might distribute the latest updated policy manual. She made a parent plea to please complete all emergency medical and contact forms and to supply schools with the proper medications in case of an emergency. Lastly, she made a request to present the Capital Expenditures Committee executive session update at the Committee's next executive session.

Mr. Hurley reported that a Permanent Building Committee subcommittee comprised of Jon Himmel, Ken DiNisco, Jill Hai, and Pat Goddard reviewed firms who submitted proposals for the position of construction managers for the Fiske, Clarke, and Diamond school capital project. Final interviews will occur later in September.

Ms. Schwartz described the wide temperature variations experienced at LHS. With today's weather being particularly warm, one of her classrooms registered 88 degrees. The high summer and cold winter temperatures are not conducive to learning or teaching. This was not an isolated incident. The superintendent acknowledged that this is a real problem in our old high school buildings and she has spoken with Health Services Director Jill Gasperini about the problem.

Mr. Alessandrini described the wide range of topics covered in the town's Parents Academy that were discussed at the PTA/PTO President's Council. More information will be available soon.

**Consent Agenda:** On a motion from Crocker and seconded by Hurley, the Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Consent Agenda, including:

1. Vote to Appoint Judy Crocker as the Official Voting Delegate to the MASC Annual Business Meeting and Bill Hurley as the Alternate Voting Delegate
2. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of August 20, 2015
3. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of August 25, 2015
4. Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of August 25, 2015
5. Vote to Accept Four \$350 Donations, totaling \$1400, to the French Exchange Program Account

**Agenda:**

1. Vote to Approve a Series of Bridge Fundraising Activities for the Purpose of Raising Funds to Build an Outdoor Classroom

Interim Bridge principal Erin Maguire outlined how one way that the Bridge community wishes to celebrate the school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is to create an outdoor classroom. In order to finance this endeavor, three fundraisers are planned:

- September 19, 2015 – community fun run
- January 29, 2016 – parents night out with a silent auction
- May 2016 – family spring swing event

The classroom is in its beginning stages of design and planning. She has met with Pat Goddard to discuss location and to ensure that it will not impact any possible school expansion; Mr. Martallone and Dr. Anton to discuss the Fiske and Bowman structures; and Shawn Newell of DPF will oversee the installation.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to approve Bridge Elementary School's requests to conduct a series of fundraising events to take place during the 2015-2016 school year in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the school, in order to fund an outdoor classroom. The cost should be between \$20,000 and \$30,000. Mr. Alessandrini seconded. The vote was unanimous (5-0).

## 2. Recommended Dates and Agendas for Future School Committee Meetings

Ms. Steigerwald asked committee members to review the proposed agendas and that items can be added at anytime. New agenda items should be brought to her attention.

Ms. Crocker asked for a Minuteman Tech High School update to be added in the spring.

Ms. Steigerwald also reminded the Committee that it had agreed on a number of hold dates in case additional meetings are needed around Summits or future Special Town Meeting(s). The next proposed Summit is September 16 and she questioned if the Committee needs to meet before that date in order to further discuss the multiple school building projects. The possibility of an additional meeting was agreed upon but the date discussion was tabled until the end of the meeting.

## 3. Preliminary 2015-2016 Enrollment Numbers

Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the September 2, 2015 student enrollment figure and compared them to the same time period as last year, being August 26, 2014. During this time period of approximately one year, Lexington grades K-12 have added 121 students. This is the equivalent of 6 classroom sections spread out over the district.

In addition, the actual and projected enrollments differ by only 6 students. This is very, very close. Director of Planning and Assessment Maureen Kavanaugh was not certain how close these figures are when compared to the Enrollment Working Group (EWG) figures. Both used the Cohort Survival Method in determining elementary projections. She also mentioned that the 122 elementary METCO students add to these overall totals. October 1 actual enrollments which are submitted by all districts to the state as district's official student enrollment

numbers was not used as a comparative baseline for the August 26 date is a closer snapshot of the time period to time period comparison.

Accurately predicting the variation school-to-school is problematic. The current modeling can only indicate district projections. Ms. Kavanaugh is working with members of the former EWG and other staff to develop a more reliable school-based projection method and hope it will be ready for use for the fall of 2016.

#### 4. Vote to Approve FY17 Budget Guidelines and Timetable

Mr. Dailey's goal is to distribute the Lexington Public Schools budget book prior to the December holiday break. Previously, it has been distributed in January.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to approve the Lexington Public Schools FY17 Budget Calendar. Ms. Coppe seconded and the vote was unanimous.

While there were no questions on the proposed timeline, the Committee members shared the reading of the nine proposed Budget Guidelines for the viewing audience. During this time, one small edit was found in item number seven. The item should read:

*7. Identify a small number of high leverage new academic or pro-social programs or supports in anticipation of ~~the~~ potential elimination of some Thursday afternoon half-days at the elementary level, as a result of the potential implementation of a World Language program in FY18 at the elementary level.*

Mr. Hurley made the motion to approve the Lexington Public Schools FY17 Budget Guidelines. Ms. Crocker seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

#### 5. Update on Capital Projects

- a. Special education feeder pattern: Director of Special Education Ellen Sugita summarized her memorandum to Dr. Czajkowski from September 3 supporting the position that Hastings Intensive Learning Program (ILP) students should be re-assigned to their peer's feeder school (Diamond) and not to their current middle school home (Clarke). This is the only Hastings cohort that does not transition with their building peers for middle school. Since inclusion is a focus of the program, losing the opportunity to build upon these connections through middle school and beyond is unfortunate. The Committee has received some parent emails recommending this change.

Ms. Sugita assured that no other special education programs would be moving for this is only a feeder pattern issue. Grades 6-8 ILP students would only move once; beginning with Grade 6, students would move to Diamond one grade/year until after three years, all grades would have transitioned to from Clarke to Diamond.

DiNisco Design architect Ken DiNisco explained the proposed two class room, two-story addition to Diamond would cost \$2 million. This cost would be in addition to the overall building renovated cost. If undertaken, Clarke would gain one classroom from the vacated space. The proposed addition would be located next to the library tower in one corner of the central courtyard. He stated that there is no cost savings in moving the program, only programmatic advantages. If this proposal is not enacted, Mr. DiNisco and Clarke principal Anna Monaco stated that the Clarke program would need to enlarge to accommodate the current lack of space if it were to remain at Clarke.

Ms. Sugita explained that there would be shared resources if both the ILP and Developmental Learning Program (DLP) were to be at the same school. This would be a plus for the educational and pro-social programming.

Committee questions included: sacrificing of natural light in the location of the proposed addition of the interior library tower; would the additional Diamond ILP space accommodate a potentially larger Hastings ILP program if the Hastings feeder school size increases; and are there redistricting options to accommodate the need for more program space without such a large cost.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to consider moving the Intensive Learning Program from Clarke to Diamond and to pursue designs to provide the educational space at Diamond required in a scope of less than \$2 million dollars. Ms. Crocker seconded and the vote was 3-2 (Coppe and Alessandrini opposed).

- b. Fiske Brick & Mortar classrooms: Mr. DiNisco presented 3 configurations of Fiske additions that would modify the school to become a 24, 26, or 27 classroom building. Each included cost estimates with rear only and full site redesigns. The most efficient cost jump involves the 24 to the 26 classroom options. The 27 class room option includes the additional programmatic need of an additional art and music spaces so has a higher associated cost.

Fiske principal Tom Martellone explained that the new configuration would allow grade 5 to have its own wing and provide more flexibility in designing the building grade configurations as the population changes. The current five-pod configuration does not allow this to occur and oftentimes one grade classroom cannot be located with the rest of its cohort. He reported that to date for FY16, 58 students entered Fiske, 21 exited for a net of 30 new students. His concern is that the 24 class room option will only allow for one extra classroom. Given that the dedicated art room is now used as a class room and the Grade K enrollment is close to needing to use the dedicated music room for the same, he believes that one extra classroom will not be sufficient for the school's current growth. He prefers the 26 class room option for the flexibility of two extra classrooms. This would build Fiske closer to the capacity of Estabrook.

Committee questions included: parking additions would include 24 spots for a total of 88 spots for the current 110 staff and faculty; traffic flow is awkward and need to improve pedestrian and overall traffic patterns according to policy; the building would be online for September 2017 with the site following about two months later; Mr. Martellone is working on a Kindergarten parent communication; DiNisco would need to know from the Committee by October 1 if short term leased portables are being considered as a short-term solution to overcrowding; concerns about the amount of money being asked for in general.

Mr. Goddard reported that appropriations requests would be needed for a January Summit followed by a May summit with a town vote possibly in July.

Ms. Steigerwald made the motion to continue to pursue designs for a 26 classroom Fiske School. Mr. Hurley seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

- c. Diamond café location: Mr. DiNisco presented two cafeteria options to be included in the overall project for the Diamond Middle School – its relocation (\$30.8 million) or its expansion (\$28.3 million). The difference in cost between the two proposals is \$2.6 million. The primary concern is that if the needs of Diamond continue to growth past the proposed capacity of the currently discussed school addition, then the current cafeteria will be unable to expand in its current configuration even with a modest space addition due to its kitchen inefficiencies, low ceilings and acoustical problems. DiNisco believes that the relocated cafeteria better supports future expansion.

Committee questions included requesting that the slide bullet referring to after-school programs be removed and commented about costs.

Ms. Steigerwald made the motion to pursue design on relocation of the Diamond cafeteria. Mr. Alessandrini seconded and the vote was 3-2 (Hurley and Crocker opposed).

- d. Diamond mechanical upgrades: Mr. DiNisco explained that the Diamond mechanical system is the original system including the piping and boilers. Classrooms have original unit ventilators. All need to be replaced as the equipment is at its life expectancy and the system is inefficient. This is an item on the Lexington Public School (LPS) 5-year Capital Plan and should be studied in tandem with the proposed building work.

Committee questions included the cost disparity from different estimators between the 5-year LPS Capital Plan and DiNisco quotes.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to pursue the study of the Diamond mechanical systems as described by DiNisco. Mr. Alessandrini seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

- e. Clarke partitions (accordion doors) reconstructed to permanent walls: DiNisco explained that the majority of third floor classrooms at Clarke utilize portable folding walls as classroom partitions. These are not sound proof, which creates distractions for both faculty and students during classroom instruction.

Committee questions included that this item was not contained within the LPS 5-year Capital Plan and who authorized it being brought forward at this point in time.

Kate Colburn, 49 Forest Street - asked if these projects are within the scope of the 2015 March STM funding package to which Mr. Goddard answered yes. However, construction document monies are not.

Ms. Steigerwald made the motion to pursue the study of replacing the Clarke portable walls with a permanent structure. Mr. Alessandrini seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

- f. Clarke science spaces convert into lecture and lab spaces – in line with MSBA: Mr. DiNisco presented the study option to expand current Clarke science rooms and to replace all casework and furniture to add instructional flexibility.

This item was included in the LPS 5-year Capital Plan.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to proceed with the study for Clarke and Diamond science space conversions and to include appropriate science and laboratory space. Mr. Alessandrini seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

- g. Harrington Lexington Children Space conversation into general education classrooms: Mr. DiNisco presented:
- Formally on pause - that funding would be need to be released to develop construction documents for work over the upcoming 2016 summer and spring holiday break for the conversation of the preschool space to general education spaces.
  - Formally on pause – that funding would be needed to be released to complete the preliminary Harrington study for a potential 24, 27, and 30 classroom school.

Mr. Hurley made the motion to approve the request for the release of funding for construction documents for the current LCP location at Harrington and for the study completion for the potential Harrington expansion for 24, 27, and 30 classrooms. Ms. Crocker seconded and the vote was unanimous (5-0).

## 6. School Bus Transportation

Mr. Dailey reported that FY17 school bus ridership is now approximately 15% greater than last year with 3,336 riders. The waitlist has been reduced from 223 to currently 101 students.



The district has a budget for 27 buses and each costs roughly \$80,000. The planning process for ordering additional buses is in early July.

#### 7. Draft Superintendent Performance Goals

Dr. Czajkowski presented a brief overview of her proposed thirteen goals for 2015-16 and the document used the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education formatted chart. Included in the goals is feedback from the August 20 School Committee workshop, the administrative council, and LEA President Andrew Baker. She will be meeting with the School Committee subcommittee on Superintendent Evaluation on September 22 to discuss the draft. Ms. Steigerwald asked that committee members send any comments or questions to subcommittee members Mr. Alessandrini or Ms. Coppe.

Goals include:

- (One) Professional practice
- (Three) District Improvement
- (One) Instructional Leadership
- (Three) Management and Operations
- (Three) Family and Community Engagement
- (Two) Professional Culture

The Committee circled back to the earlier discussion of the need to add an additional School Committee meeting prior to the proposed September 16, 2015 Summit. It was decided that the Committee would meet on September 15, 2015 at 4:30pm at Central Office.

**10:30pm Adjourn:** On a motion made by Alessandrini and seconded by Hurley, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:30pm.

#### Materials:

On-line packet

Updated DiNisco PowerPoint presentation

Middlesex Partnerships for Youth Superintendent and Chiefs Breakfast flier

**Voted approved by the School Committee September 29, 2015.**