

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Tuesday, January 23, 2018
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA

Call to Order 6:00 p.m.

Move to go into Executive Session:

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini moved that the School Committee go into Executive Session under Exemption 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining Unit A

Executive Session adjourned and the committee returned to open session.

Present:

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini; Vice Chair, Eileen Jay, Kate Colburn; Kathleen Lenihan, Jessie Steigerwald, Superintendent, Dr. Czajkowski

Absent:

Student Representative, Rosana Jiang

The minutes were taken by Kristen Cronin, Executive Assistant to the School Committee and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

7:21 p.m. Return to Public Session and Welcome:

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini called the meeting to order, and introduced committee members.

Public Comments:

Judy Crocker, 5 Courier Ct. – Commenting in regards to Saturday, January 20 public hearing on the budget. Expressed concern about school committee not proceeding with an SOI in January, respectfully disagrees with this decision due to HVAC system at high school that is long overdue to be replaced.

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini informed Ms. Crocker that school committee had until April 8, 2019 to vote and move forward with an SOI for 2019.

Superintendent's Announcement:

Dr. Czajkowski thanked all that were involved on the Superintendent search committee. Administrative council was very appreciative for the feedback they were allowed to provide to school committee on the candidates. Spoke with Julie last night and congratulated her and looking forward to a smooth and successful transition.

The Diversity Task Force received over thirty-five applications. Dr. Czajkowski is working with Town Manager, Carl Valente on identifying and interviewing eleven of the candidates. Will send school committee members copies of applications once interviews are complete.

Dr. Czajkowski attended the Harrington PTA meeting on Monday, January 22. Discussion involved the homework policy and feedback on the policy as well as homeschool communication. Parents would like

more communication on the progress of their child. Will include homeschooling on agenda for the next Principal meeting.

School Committee Member Announcements:

All members welcomed and congratulated Dr. Julie Hackett and extended thanks to staff and the community who took part of the search committee by providing feedback, completing the online surveys and coming out to visit the candidates during the site visits. Additional thanks went to Kate Colburn and Eileen Jay for co-chairing the Superintendent search.

Jessie Steigerwald: Would like to ask for a moment of silence to observe the school shootings that took place the last two days and recognize those children's lives that were lost in Marshall County high school in Kentucky and Italy high school in Texas, as so many people across the country work to make sure schools are safe, and this is completely unacceptable.

- Community Coalition will be holding a welcome coffee on February 14. Theme is focused on looking at resources in the community that are focused on arts for children and new residents for all ages.
- Coalition, thanks to Lana Bastianutti in particular, who interviewed Eamonn Sheehan on health & wellness and Tom Martellone, Principal at Fiske along with a teacher.
- Reminder for parents to provide feedback regarding the homework policy and to ask questions if unsure if the homework policy guidelines.
- Noticed discussion on *Lexington List* about snow days. It may help people to consider that some of our students travel from Boston and not all staff live in Lexington, so the decision must be announced early in the morning. Timing of storm can make it difficult to decide the night before and safety is the number priority. It is not always an easy decision for a Superintendent to make.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of School Department Payroll Warrant dated January 5, 2018

Move to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated January 5, 2018 in the amount of \$3,415,846.25

2. Approval of School Department Accounts Payable Warrant dated January 12, 2018

Move to approve the School Department's accounts payable warrant dated January 12, 2018 in the amount of \$832,879.39

3. Approval of School Department Payroll Warrant dated January 19, 2018.

Move to approve the School Department's payroll warrant dated January 19, 2018 in the amount of \$3,541,628.09

4. Motion to Accept a Donation from the Maria Hastings Elementary School in the Amount of \$154.00 from the Box Tops for Education Organization.

**Motion to Approve Consent Agenda Items 1-4: (Alessandro/Colburn)
Motion Approved (5-0)**

Agenda:

1. FY2019 Budget Public Hearing and Discussion

Chari, Alessandro Alessandrini moved to Public Hearing on the FY2019 Budget.

Mr. Peter DiSalvatore, 15 Battle Green Rd.: Spoke in support of the proposal for Health Education position at the Elementary Level. Below are some highlights from Mr. Desalvator:

- Chance to start building a cohesive K-12 model of character education. Model that particularly needs to be strong when our children are young.
- Activate effective domain, positive feelings, by engaging students and teaching them at a very young age how to manage their emotions.
- Starting to help develop empathy and a sense of responsibility for others.
- Skills need to be taught to our youngest; processed & practiced
- Restoring the elementary health education would add structure to educate the whole child in Lexington Public Schools.
- Chance to develop system wide core values & community wide.
- Allows for highly visible partnership and collaboration between the counseling department, the wellness department and the elementary staff that can strengthen the social emotional initiatives already present in each elementary building.
- An attempt to fit academic excellence into a socially, emotionally healthy child

Valerie Overton, 25 Emerson Gardens Rd: Also speaking in support of K-6 Health Education funding for this budget.

- Many studies show that early health education fosters improved learning in elementary school and later, as well as healthier choices with less bullying.
- Research shows, not only does early health education improve social and emotional and mental health outcomes for students, but also academic outcomes from learning.

Mona Roy, 36 Bertwell Rd., SEPAC Liaison to School Committee: Also in support of Health Education in Elementary level.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street: Coming to School Committee to reinstitute Elementary Foreign Language. This topic has been discussed for years, and now another generation of Lexington students has missed the opportunity to be global citizens by not starting the language skills early. Feels there is no excuse for not putting money into the budget to make it happen.

Karen Lynn, 9 Nyles Rd.: Echoing support for Health Education at the Elementary Level.

Judy Crocker – Safe Routes to School: Ms. Judy Crocker gave a brief historical background on how Safe Routes to School started. Believes “Safe Routes” will have a dramatic impact if fee increases. If you make a choice to raise the bus fee, there will be unintended consequences. Encouraging members to give more thought before raising the fee.

Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini closes public comment to return to School Committee meeting to continue discussing the budget.

Dr. Czajkowski thanked the school committee for providing feedback on the recommended budget. A meeting is being scheduled with elementary principals, Director of PE & Wellness, Eamonn Sheehan, along with Assistant Director, Julie Fenn and the Director of Counseling.

Dr. Czajkowski provided an update on the feedback from Saturday’s public hearing on the recommended budget in regards to health education at the elementary level:

- \$15,300 is being recommended to be added to the FY2019 budget for elementary health education. This will allow for teachers from departments to participate in meetings (providing 60 days of paid time over the summer) to address consistency across the buildings in anticipation of the 2018-19 school year.

Members had some questions on how health education would be implemented across the elementary levels in order for each school to have the same curriculum/consistency.

Members also requested to see a transition program at the High School in regards to Special Education added to the budget.

Mr. Ian Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration provided an update on the feedback on Transportation Fees:

- Reviewed a FY2018 Transportation Fee Survey of 25 surrounding towns to members

After some discussion members were all in agreement in raising the bus fee to \$330 (early registration/discounted fee) and raising the middle fee to \$550.

2. Multiple School Construction Project Update – Discussion of Mast Plan

Donna DiNisco, DiNisco Design and Mike Cronin, Director of Facilities discussed a revised scope and fee proposal pertaining to Lexington’s Multiple School Projects. This revised scope and fee proposal focused on updating the District’s Master Plan from 2012.

3. TBA Proposal – LHS Space Planning

Andrew Stephens, Principal at Lexington High School and Mike Cronin, Director of Facilities, gave a brief presentation on the LHS Space Planning options, specifically within Science classrooms.

Topics of Discussion:

- Review process to develop/refine estimate of need
- Review Space Shortfall & Ideas
- LHS Construction options to meet capacity

- Decision timeline

Members and Dr. Czajkowski had questions and further discussion with Mr. Stephens on ideas and options regarding spaces within the science building.

4. Municipal Modernization Act – Special Education Stabilization Fund

The new legislation established language under MGL Chapter 40, Section 13E, which allows for a Special Education reserve fund to be established by vote of Town Meeting. This fund allows School Committee to transfer money to the reserve fund to be utilized in upcoming fiscal years, to pay, without further appropriation, for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs of special education, out-of-district tuition or transportation. In order to spend these funds, it requires a majority vote of the School Committee and the Board of Selectman.

5. Policy Reading #2 JJF: Student Activity Account

Move to Approve Updated Policy JJF; Student Activity Account, as amended (Steigerwald/Colburn) 5-0

6. Discussion on LHS Athletic Fields & Lights

Alessandro Alessandrini gave a brief update to members on the proposed FY19 Capital Request for the Center track and light replacement project and how this project may relate to a future high school renovation alteration project. Estimated cost is between 3 and 4 million dollars. Members expressed concern over the cost of the project due to the possibility of a new high school in the near future.

Naomi Martin, Director of Athletic Department informed members that beginning in the Spring of 2019 Lexington would no longer be able to host track events at the field because it does not meet the current safety standards.

Members had some questions for Naomi Martin and further discussion and comments on this topic. Community members also spoke in support for the need of funding this project.

Motion to adjourn (Alessandrini/Steigerwald)

The Motion was approved 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Meeting Materials: Agenda; A.2-DiNisco Scope & Fee Presentation A.3-Presentation on LHS Space Planning A.5-Student Activity Account Policy JJF