

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, June 11, 2013

7:30 p.m.

Lexington Town Office Building

Selectmen's Meeting Room

1625 Massachusetts Avenue

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

The Meeting Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 7:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The Dr. Ash called the meeting to order and announced that this is the reorganization meeting of the School Committee. The members will elect a new chair and new vice chair. The floor was opened for nominations for Chair.

Motion to Nominate Margaret Coppe as Chair of the Lexington School Committee (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

Dr. Ash congratulated Ms. Coppe on her appointment as Chair of the Lexington School Committee. Ms. Coppe thanked Dr. Ash and Committee members for their vote of confidence. Ms. Coppe then asked for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Motion to nominate Bonnie Brodner as Vice-Chair of the Lexington School Committee (Alessandrini, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (4-0-1) Steigerwald

The Chair invited public comment.

There were no public comments.

II. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Ash publically thanked Laura Lasa, Principal, Lexington High School and her entire team that helped put together an outstanding graduation last Sunday in Lowell. 502 students graduated from Lexington High School. Dr. Ash shared that we are very proud of our students and their accomplishments and he was deeply appreciative of the teachers' pre-K-12, the support staff, and everyone else including parents, guardians and residents that made it possible for our students to learn as much as they have learned. Dr. Ash also shared with the Committee that he spoke with Ms. Lasa regarding the all night graduation party and was told it was highly successful.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Jessie Steigerwald updated the Committee on the Ad hoc Townwide Master Facilities Planning Committee (AhTMFPC) which included the completion of an Executive Summary. Ms. Steigerwald gave special thanks to Louise Lipsitz, Principal Hastings Elementary School who attended an incredible number of meetings. The discussion at yesterday's meeting included Finance Director Robert Addelson's financial projections and the sequencing of the projects. Ms. Steigerwald stated that as of today, a new high school in ten years does not look very realistic so the Committee will have to pay close attention as the full report is developed. If the future population counts are accurate, the Committee may need to think about things beyond modulars and possibly consider the need to build a wing or some other type of solution. There may also be a need to have some preliminary consulting work performed with an architect to understand what those possibilities would be. Ms. Steigerwald stated that the Committee will not be designing anything in the near future.

Ms. Steigerwald shared that the School Transportation Committee (STC) met last week along with Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance. Ms. Steigerwald also met with Dr. Ash earlier today and believes that good progress in planning for next year and would email members of the Committee on a few budgetary considerations. The consultant report is due soon and the STC will see the report first and then forward along to Mary Ellen Dunn and then the Committee. Ms. Steigerwald shared that the consultant spent a few days viewing all nine schools and observing traffic and safety around the schools. This should provide us with an objective look on how to improve traffic and safety issues.

Ms. Steigerwald shared that she attended swing night last Friday night.

Ms. Steigerwald shared that she picked up buttons for the Committee that were placed in the time capsule which will be opened in 2063.

Margaret Coppe shared that over the last couple of weeks the national news has had stories on the sharing of student information. She asked Dr. Ash to let the Committee know the policy on sharing student data.

Mary Ann Stewart stated that all she knew was that there was a group called inBloom and they may be partnering with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding student data.

Margaret Coppe shared that the question about our student data has been raised so she thought the Committee should be aware of any inquiry and the Committee would appreciate being kept apprised.

Ms. Coppe shared that she read in today's Boston Globe that there is a business group which is bringing forward a proposal that all schools be required to teach computer science, specifically, computer programming so that there are more computer programmers available for the work force. Ms. Coppe saw the DESE's response to it and the response was not overly enthusiastic because no one knows what this would mean and one suggestion was that there be a pilot program somewhere. Ms. Coppe inquired if any of the members saw this article.

IV. Agenda

1. Vote to Approve 2013-2014 LHS Italian/Latin Field Trip to Italy

Maureen Haviland, Latin Teacher at Lexington High School and Heather Arrigo, Latin Teacher at Lexington High School presented the LHS Italian/Latin Field Trip to Italy to the Committee. They shared that there was a lot of thought about when to hold the trip and when they took a survey it was decided to go back and forth between February vacation and April vacation.

The Committee had comments and questions regarding whether (i) this was a yearly trip, (ii) how many students will go on the trip, (iii) how many students are on the waiting list, (iv) what was cost of the trip and was fundraising conducted, (v) how much fundraising was done last year, (vi) what kind of fundraising, and (vii) what is number of students do they expect if the trip is offered every other year.

Motion to Approve 2013-2014 LHS Italian/Latin Field Trip to Italy
(Stewart, Brodner) **The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

2. Youth Risk Committee

Alessandro Alessandrini announced the following changes to the Youth Risk Committee (YRC): (i) the elimination of the distinction of voting and non-voting members, and (ii) the elimination of clergy as members. Hopefully all the changes that were made are to the Committee's approval.

Bill Blout, LICSW at the Lexington Youth and Family Services, Inc. and a member of the YRC took questions from the Committee regarding (i) what community based programs serving youth at risk would be and could he provide some examples of what he envisions, (ii) how will the YRC decide which community groups will be invited to join, (iii) which two Lexington school principals or their designees (i.e., teacher or assistant principal) would be members of the YRC, (iv) is the PTA community being represented in the YRC, (v) who would choose the student representatives, (vi) can there be three student representatives, (vii) should there be milestones that the group should work towards, (viii) how does the Board of Selectmen feel, (ix) would the YRC provide updates frequently, (x) when would people be appointed as members, and (xi) would it be possible to have the group selected by September.

Phyllis Neufeld, President Lexington Education Association (LEA) shared that she was asked by several teachers who were curious as to why there were no teachers selected to be members of the YRC and questioned what the reasoning why no teacher was recommended to be a member of the YRC?

Mr. Blout responded to Ms. Neufeld's question that the YRC felt that the school was well represented and they would be open to having a teacher as a slot too. Mr. Blout stated that it's a good suggestion and the YRC could add that and go to 18 members. When they chose two principals they thought not only the high

school principal but one of the middle school or elementary school principals as they are trying to get representation from all age groups.

BJ Rudman, member of the Collaborative to Reduce Student Stress and a member of the YRC was asked how many times the group would meet. Mr. Rudman responded that the YRC would meet a minimum of once a month and he envisions working groups to form which would meet more frequently. From his own perspective he would hope that the YRC could come back with recommendations to the Committee and Board of Selectmen (BOS) within nine months if not sooner. Mr. Rudman shared it is an ad hoc committee and should be short term and focused and along with the milestones there would be policies and programs to share with the Committee and BOS.

The Committee discussed a time frame for reporting back on the YRC's work. The Committee suggested a preliminary report in December, Interim Report in March and a final report in May 2014. Mr. Alessandrini will coordinate and lead the process. The Committee would like to add to charge instead of having a motion.

Bill Blout suggested having a youth advisory committee to the YRC instead of having two youth representatives. That would ensure a broad range of youths.

BJ Rudman stated that the title of the group came from Deborah Magur, chair of the BOS, in order to target all youths and not just students.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu, 86 Cedar Street, Precinct 8, thanked the YRC for working on this item. Mr. Radulescu-Banu shared his observations on the YRC and suggested that they place in the charge a definition of what a quorum is. Mr. Radulescu-Banu stated that the YRC should be careful if they break into subgroups and keep the open meeting law in mind. Minutes and agendas and meetings will be public and it would be nice to include a sentence for parents who are not Lexington residents and foster parents (i.e. METCO students).

Motion to Establish the Ad hoc Committee on Youth At Risk
(Alessandrini, Brodner) **The Motion was Approved (5-0).**

3. Lexington High School Class Size Policy

Margaret Coppe apologized for not sending the editorial comments from the last Committee meeting to all members. Ms. Coppe inadvertently only sent them to Mr. Alessandrini. Mr. Alessandrini presented the Second Reading of the Lexington High School Class Size Policy. There was discussion among the Committee. The Committee decided to postpone the vote on the Second Reading.

4. Update on the New K-5 Standards-Based Report Card

Dr. Ash requested Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and Louise Lipsitz, Principal Hastings Elementary School to come forward and present the update on the first year of the K-5 Standards-Based Report Card. Their presentation included (i) review of project and a definition of a standards-based report card. The three categories of their presentation included (i) highlights of the program, (ii) challenges of the program and (iii) next steps, including a parent online survey to be completed by July 15, 2013. (Anyone without internet access can pick up a hard copy at the Central Office.).

Ms. Pilarski thanked all the principals, program leaders, teachers, staff and community/members who helped with this process. Ms. Pilarski recognized the following Program Leaders in the audience: Laura Lees, SPED Teacher, Bowman School; Len Swanton, K-5 Professional Development Coordinator Response to Intervention Specialist, Bowman School; Mary Yardley, Kindergarten Teacher, Harrington Elementary School; Kathy McCarthy, K-5 Department Head – Literacy; Jane Hundley, K-5 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator, Hastings Elementary School; Karen Tripoli, K-5 Department Head - Mathematics, and missing tonight Karen McCarthy, K-5 Curriculum Coordinator – Science.

The Committee thanked everyone for all their hard work this past year. There were comments and questions from the Committee including (i) support for having a consultant come in to evaluate the challenges for learning and special education; (ii) subjective elements such as homework being turned in on time and classroom participation; (iii) emerging practices coming out of this process; (iv) update for the Committee (v) creating a tip sheet for parents with conferencing and guidelines; (vi) outreach to families in Boston; (vii) the collaboration process; (viii) common core standards; (ix) objective standards and the benefits of common standards; and (x) report cards distribution.

Len Swanton, K-12 Professional Development Coordinator Response to Intervention Specialist at the Bowman Elementary School shared that collaborative conversations have been taking place on report cards in PLCs.

Mary Yardley, Kindergarten Teacher, Harrington Elementary School shared that the guide for each grade level binder has been broken up into subject areas in which the standards are listed and what it means to achieve mastery in that subject.

5. Climate Survey

Dr. Ash and Phyllis Neufeld, President, LEA presented the Climate Survey Results. Dr. Ash shared how the Climate Survey came about two years ago. Last year Dr. Ash reported on some of the efforts of Year one and Ms. Neufeld will address what we did this past year.

Ms. Neufeld shared the highlights of the major elements of their work this past year which included (i) two days of leadership training to build professional relationships with consultant Cathy Lassiter with Central Administration and building principals on August 7 and 8; (ii) two days of leadership training to build professional relationships with Cathy Lassiter for LEA Executive Board and Representative Council training on October 22 and 23; (iii) two days of combined leadership training with consultant Cathy Lassiter with Central Office Administration, building principals and the LEA Executive Board and Representative Council on February 11 and March 18; (iv) establishment of written goals by principals and Central Office Administration targeted at building professional relationships; (v) establishment of written LEA Goals to building professional relationships; (vi) work by the Ad hoc Committee to Building Professional Relationships (AhCBPR); and (vii) Next Steps.

Dr. Ash presented Building Trust on Teams portion of the presentation and included the twelve factors of trust. Dr. Ash then shared the top sixteen results of the Professional Climate Survey. There were 913 responses out of 1,000 employees who were eligible to respond. Tonight the Central Office results are being released publicly and tomorrow all staff will receive copies of the central office results and also get their individual school results. The principals will send out letters letting school staff know dates to discuss the results.

There were comments and questions from the Committee regarding (i) appreciation for conducting the survey; (ii) how the survey was administered and whether it anonymous; (iii) how will AhCPBR delve more deeply into the areas identified as needing further work; (iv) curious about what the results would be if the neutral option was removed from the survey; (v) will the survey be given next year; (vi) how was the link to the survey sent out; (vii) who sent the email to the staff; and (viii) how come certain schools were lower in responses and could the AhCPBR look at this in more depth; (ix) this is a good response to what took place two years ago and the Committee is glad of the strong role the LEA has played in the process; (x) was there a comment section; (xi) how many people took time to comment; and (xii) Committee looks forward to hearing from both parties next year.

6. Superintendent's Evaluation

Margaret Coppe shared the process of the Annual Evaluation of the Superintendent form which was sent to individuals for completion. The completed forms were then sent to the Chair who combined the results and prepared a composite report which was distributed to Dr. Ash and Committee members in advance of a public meeting with the understanding that no Committee member expresses an opinion on the draft prior to the public meeting either publicly or to one another. There have been no conversations with each of the Committee members regarding their private evaluations and the composite report. The Superintendent's Evaluation has been posted on tonight's Agenda.

The Committee discussed the draft composite report and proposed revisions and take action with respect to a final evaluation report that will subsequently be placed in the Superintendent's Personnel File. The individual evaluations, the draft composite report and the final composite report will be attached to the minutes and publicly released upon request. The Chair inquired if there were any questions from the Committee members about the procedure that was followed. Each Committee member shared their individual evaluation of the Superintendent. The Committee then discussed the draft composite report. Ms. Steigerwald and Mr. Alessandrini will submit their comments on the draft composite report to the Chair. The Committee will vote on the draft composite report at the next Committee meeting.

7. **Vote to Accept a \$271 Donation to Lexington Children's Place from LEXFUN Representing Proceeds from Their Annual Consignment Sale**

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$271 Donation to Lexington Children's Place from LEXFUN Representing Proceeds from Their Annual Consignment Sale (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

8. **Vote to Accept a \$4,350 Donation to Lexington Children's Place from the LEXFUN Tuition Reimbursement Program**

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$4,350 Donation to Lexington Children's Place from the LEXFUN Tuition Reimbursement Program (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

9. **Vote to Accept a \$2,000 Donation from an Anonymous Donor to Support the SADDD Club Activities**

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$2,000 Donation from an Anonymous Donor to Support the Lexington's SADD Club Activities (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

10. **Vote to Approve School Committee Meeting Minutes of Aril 30, 2013**
The Committee decided to postpone a vote on the April 30, 2013 revised Minutes.

11. **Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 28, 2013**

Motion to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 28, 2013 (Stewart, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Chair inquired if members were interested in having a summer conference with consultant Susan Lovelace and would members please email her their availability.

V. Executive Session

The Chair called for a motion to move into Executive Session.

Motion to Move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining regarding the following bargaining Units: LEA Units C, D, and Tech Unit not to return to open session. Further, the chair declared that meeting open session would be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Town.

Ms. Steigerwald moved, and Mr. Alessandrini seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Alessandro Alessandrini	“Aye”
Mary Ann Stewart	“Aye”
Bonnie Brodner	“Aye”
Jessie Steigerwald	“Aye”
<u>Margaret Coppe</u>	“Aye”

The Meeting Adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Document: Meeting Agenda; 2014 LHS Field Trip Request Form for the Latin/Italian trip; Draft Ad Hoc Committee on Youth At Risk; Second Reading of the LHS Class Size Policy; Memorandum dated June 11, 2013 from Carol Pilarski to Dr. Paul Ash regarding Standards-Based Report Card: Status Report Year 1; Memorandum dated May 8, 2013 from Phyllis Neufeld and Dr. Paul Ash to All LEA Members and Administrators re Update: Building Professional Relationships; 2012-2013 Draft Composite Report for the Superintendent’s Evaluation; Letter dated May 31, 2013 from Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy to School Committee Members re \$271 Donation from LEXFUN’s Annual Consignment Sale; Letter dated May 23, 2013 from Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy to School Committee Members re \$4,350 Donation to Lexington’s Children’s Place from LEXFUN; Memorandum dated June 6, 2013 from Mary Ellen Dunn to Dr. Paul Ash and School Committee re Anonymous \$2,000 Donation to the SADD Gift Account.

Voted by the School Committee August 27, 2013