

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, May 12, 2015**  
**Selectmen's Meeting Room**  
**Town Offices Building, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue**

**PRESENT: Superintendent Dr. Paul Ash, Chair Jessie Steigerwald, Vice Chair William Hurley, Alessandro Alessandrini, Judith Crocker, Margaret Coppe  
Student Representative Abigail Schwartz**

**The Minutes were taken by Christine Ashness, Recording Secretary  
The meeting convened at 7:00pm**

**Call to order and welcome:** Chair Jessie Steigerwald called the meeting to order, and introduced committee members.

**Public Comments:**

Kevin Johnson, SEPAC Board Member: He spoke about the recent progress LHS has made with posting grades online. As of this past quarter, updates are made bi-quarterly. At the end of this year, the process will be studied and considered for follow up. SEPAC's preference is that progress be updated every 2 weeks, and the Best Practices for School, Family, and Community Engagement Subcommittee made the same recommendation. SEPAC met with Ellen Sugita today and requested a letter be sent to Special Education students to inform them of the existence of the online updates. For those that feel biweekly updates should be required, they requested it happen per the Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Meghan & Pete Soens, 42 Bartlett Avenue: They moved here in December, 2010 for the top notch education. They are here on behalf of the 90 children who need access to before/after school care beginning in fall 2015. They are asking that the School Committee act to allow Lextended Day increased space in school buildings to offer additional before and after school care. Today Lextended Day is limited to 500 children for after school care. There is already a waiting list of over 90 children. There is currently not a before school offering town-wide. 69 % of children in Lexington have parents in the workforce. Many surrounding towns offer it. Ms. Soens shared her thoughts on the plan: identify school space to make room for before care; identify space to do operational pilot; look at adding or offering before school care. By 2016 is the request/goal that they are recommending for herself and other families.

Judy Crocker asked Dr. Ash about the contract, RFP and bid progress. Dr. Ash responded that if the School Committee thinks it is a good idea to consider, he would look into whether space could be added and available. Members agreed that a short agenda item about the topic would be added at a future meeting.

Pamela Tames, 26 Bertwell Road: She is here as a parent of 1 Lextended Day child, and 2 graduates of the program. She has been involved with Lextended Day for 10 years. She has been very pleased and feels fortunate that her children were there. There is a good staff

and environment. The circumstances that Mr. & Mrs. Soens shared are real. Lextended Day really wants to help people, but there is a set amount of space, which dictates the amount of students they can serve. It is within the School Committee's arena to allow them to serve more families. They have been successful and helped families and children and are in a good place to serve more families. They currently serve students from 6 schools at 5 sites. She asked the School Committee to take a big picture view of it, because the families would love to have care on site without busing between schools. They would be happy to pilot it, and to collaborate, as there is a real need. Regarding the middle schools, it works in other school districts and they would be happy to share what they have learned from school districts that have it.

### **Superintendent's Announcements:**

None

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

Jessie Steigerwald: Last week was Teacher Appreciation and Nurse's week. Steigerwald extended thanks to all school nurses, teachers, and to the parent volunteers who took time out to express our community's appreciation for all of our nurses and teachers.

Judith Crocker: June 1<sup>st</sup> at Estabrook, from 4:30 to 6:00pm is Dr. Ash's retirement celebration. Please RSVP if you will attend, and since parking is limited, please consider carpooling. Tonight she would like to celebrate LPS performing arts programs with a highlights of student work from spring 2015: The LHS play Into the Woods; The Clarke play Honk; The K-12 Art Show Reception is May 13th at Central Office; LHS Pops is May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>; LHS Jazz Night is May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The end of the year concerts are also coming up. She then showed some slides of the K-12 Art Show.

William Hurley: He thanked Meghan, Peter and Kim for their presentation tonight. He is looking forward to making a recommendation to the community for space. Space is a challenge and the timing of the request is right on target.

Jessie Steigerwald: Thanks for the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) for organizing Day on the Hill. She and J. Crocker went to Boston and advocated for funds for METCO, and also to restore recent cuts that impact our programs. They will be inviting Representative Jay Kaufman, Senator Barrett and Senator Donnelly to speak at a future School Committee meeting. Monday May 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am is the Memorial Day parade and our students will be participating in the band and in other ways.

### **Consent Agenda**

**Vote to Accept a \$1,000 Donation from United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to the Lexington High School Cradles to Crayons Club**

**Vote to Accept a \$899 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to be Deposited in the Lexington High School Gift Account**

**Vote to Accept a \$1,000 Donation from the Retirees School Volunteer Association to the Lexington High School Robotics Club**

***MOTION to approve Consent Agenda (Hurley, Crocker )  
The Motion was approved 5-0.***

**Agenda:**

**Capital Update**

Some members attended the elementary public forums presented by DiNisco Designs who presented power points detailing alternatives for adding additional capacity to schools. There were approximately 25 parents in attendance the first night, and 40 the second night, and the Principals were also in attendance.

J. Steigerwald and W. Hurley attended the mini-summit last week (on May 8<sup>th</sup>). This included two members of the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Appropriation Committee and Capital Expenditures Committee. Architects from DiNisco shared information. The projects are challenging and that there is a lot to do before the summer Summit. They will continue to attend meetings and will share new information with the committee and the public as new information and decisions are developed and determined.

J. Steigerwald and W. Hurley also met with Selectmen Joe Pato and Suzie Barry and discussed a list developed by the Permanent Building Committee to divide tasks amongst people. They are looking for formal input on redistricting options. They are also trying to better educate the summit participants on better options in the schools for lunch periods. One PBC member asked whether Fiske's approach to lunches could be used at other elementary schools so that existing cafeterias could accommodate more people. Steigerwald expressed concern that it was not the direction she wanted to aim in terms of extra early and late lunch shifts to manage overcrowding. They also discussed the Special Education program – the history of it, how it may grow, and the need for more information about future enrollment projections for these programs.

**Vote to Appoint Permanent Building Committee (“PBC”) Members for School Project**

Very strong applications were received professional ones and active parent participants. The next meeting is May 14<sup>th</sup> and is open to the public. The two appointees will be able to vote on school projects. The appointment period will start at the time of the appointment, and go through fall town meeting. School Committee members or members of the public can be appointed. In the fall when projects are decided, then people can be appointed on each separate project.

Members submitted their top choices to the chair, and two people have majority votes.

Alessandrini said his idea was to have two parents serve because they would be good advocates and hopefully work for override campaigns. School Committee members already have a say, and having two parents would be more open to the community. He felt that having two community members serve as PBC members and two School Committee members as liaisons would mean more voices.

Crocker expressed concern that any volunteer for this position not be expected to take on any role in a future debt campaign. Such an expectation is beyond the scope of this position's charge.

Hurley is interested in being a member. He believes his background as a Superintendent, including his work on construction on four schools in his career, and his work related to Lexington projects would make him as a good contributing member.

Coppe said she expressed an interest weeks ago. There was a mix up, which is why she didn't submit online. Traditionally they have not selected School Committee members, and she was surprised that members were being mentioned.

Schwarz suggested they might pick one School Committee member and one non-School Committee member.

The agenda item is tabled until later in the meeting.

### **School Committee Goals – Invitation for Community Input**

Members have been working on School Committee goals in their retreats. They include academic, social/emotional goal, and infrastructure goals. If the public would like to send their suggestions to be included, she invited them to send email by May 19th and said the School Committee can discuss them at their next retreat May 20th.

Steigerwald noted that the Selectmen were also working on setting their goals for next year. The Selectmen invited the School Committee to share their suggestions with the Selectmen and Steigerwald asked members to let her know what they would like to include. Coppe requested that Steigerwald share with members what the goals for selectmen will be. Steigerwald agreed.

### **Roundtable to Explore Establishing Coalition for Lexington's Youth, June 2, 2015**

#### **Guidance Curriculum Review**

Val Viscosi and Manjula Karamcheti presented the curriculum review.

Members from the Guidance Department in attendance: Hallie LeBlanc, Alpha Program at LHS; Mel Buttarro, Cynthia Tang, Stacy Prosowski, Matthew Willis and Alicia Linsey, Counselors at LHS; Christine Zende, Counselor at Estabrook; Michael Kon, Counselor at Diamond. Elaine Meade and Eamonn Sheehan were also in attendance.

Members had questions and comments regarding the time, energy and importance to reach out to classroom teachers; test stress issues; having teachers trained to identify stress issues; changing the title of guidance counselor to school counselor; making 504 plans a priority; plans for staff to recognize sexual abuse in students; mental health; suicide screenings of each student; registrar/assistant registrar responsibilities; issues for female Asians; correlations between stress and specific high school groups who might need more attention, transgender issues for students; bullying.

Members discussed bringing Andy Beck from School And Main Institute to a future School Committee meeting or roundtable discussion with selectmen, staff members and community members to see if they would be interested in exploring a coalition approach to support students.

***MOTION to authorize expenditure of up to \$3,500 for consulting fees for School and Maine Institute to explore a coalition for Lexington youth. (Steigerwald, Hurley)  
The Motion was approved 5-0.***

***MOTION to extend the Guidance Curriculum Review an additional year. (Steigerwald, Alessandrini)  
The Motion was approved 5-0.***

Hurley asked that they come back at this time next year to update the committee.

What goals do you have for Lexington youth that you cannot achieve alone? We will bring that central question to the meeting with people at the roundtable. That is the community call and we will officially go forward. Mr. Beck will be at Central Office tomorrow (May 13<sup>th</sup>) from 1:30 to 2:30 for those who would like to meet him.

#### **Next Steps Regarding Ad Hoc Committee for Youth at Risk**

Steigerwald expressed appreciation for the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee for Youth at Risk and noted that they had fulfilled their charge. She recommended dissolving the committee with gratitude and hoped that the coalition approach would help make certain the recommendations in the report would be addressed.

***MOTION to thank and dissolve the Ad hoc Committee for Youth at Risk. (Steigerwald, Crocker)  
The Motion was approved 5-0.***

Coppe would like all members of the Ad hoc Committee to be invited to the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

#### **Discussion of Policy FF – Naming Facilities**

Steigerwald noted that a formal request had been made name the gym at Estabrook after an individual. The people who submitted the request want to bring the person to the School Committee to make a presentation. Before setting the date, she asked members to consider whether they had any questions about the practice of naming the gym after someone, or whether they were open to receiving this request at an upcoming meeting. All members indicated they were comfortable having the recommendation for the Estabrook gym being named after someone placed on the upcoming agenda. Steigerwald asked members to get her any comments on the naming policy.

Members took a 3-minute recess and returned at 9:40pm.

## **Vote to Appoint Permanent Building Committee Members for School Project**

Members continued their discussion from earlier in the meeting.

Alessandrini realizes that Hurley has the expertise but believes that the community should participate in this direct way. It would be more beneficial. Hurley respects Alessandrini's opinion, but believes he has specific experience that he brings to the table and wants to be a voting member. He also feels awkward promoting himself.

Ashley Waring, 16 Hathaway Road: She understands that over 5 interested, engaged and qualified community members are interested in this position. She agrees with Alessandrini and is disappointed the committee is thinking of voting one of their own members to it. It is a great opportunity to have community members involved.

***MOTION to nominate Bill Hurley and Kate Colburn to be Permanent Building Committee members. (Coppe, Alessandrini)***  
***The Motion was approved 5-0.***

Dr. Ash informed the committee that DiNisco Design will be at the next School Committee meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **Review and Approve in Form Remaining Policies from Sections K and L**

Dr. Ash gave his recommendation for the listed policies. He suggested that members should think about how to get staff to be aware and able to implement.

KA – School/Community Relations Goals

KBA – School/Parent Relations Goals

KBBA – Non-Custodial Parents' Rights, as amended

KBE – Relations with Parent Organizations

KCB – Community Involvement in Decision-Making

KCD – Public Gifts to the Schools, as amended

KDA – School Policy and Procedures Concerning Release of Information About Lexington Public School Programs and Events

KDB – Public's Right to Know, as amended

KDD – News Media Relations/News Releases

KE – Public Complaints

KEB – Public Complaints About School Personnel

KEB-R – Public Complaints About School Personnel, as amended

KF – Community Use of School Facilities, as amended

KH – Posters, Drives and Collections Policy

KHA – Public Solicitations in the Schools

KHB – Advertising in the Schools, as amended

KI – Visitors to the Schools

KJA – Relations with Booster Organizations

KLG – Relations with Police Authorities, as amended

KLJ – Relations with Planning Authorities

KLK – Relations with Local Governmental Authorities  
LA – Education Agency Relations Goals  
LB – Relations with Other Schools and School Districts  
LBC – Relations with Nonpublic Schools, as amended  
LDA – Student Teaching and Internships

***MOTION to approve in form, Policies K and L, as amended (Hurley, Alessandrini)***  
***The Motion was approved 5-0.***

Dr. Ash: The school improvement plans will be presented on May 19<sup>th</sup>. We have tried different formats to present 18 plans in 90 minutes. That is five minutes per plan and each School Committee member could have one minute per plan. This did not work. Ms. Steigerwald and I (Dr. Ash) thought we should ask the principals what they think is most important. The principals will be prepared to focus on two things: one thing that is a particularly important highlight for the 2014-2015 school year and one thing for their 2015-2016 school year plan they think is particularly important.

In addition to Dr. Ash, there are people leaving/retiring from their central office positions. There are funds available for expenses to related to receptions or other recognition of these staff members.

***MOTION to authorize up to \$2000 for the end of the year retirement reception and departure gift expenses. (Steigerwald, Hurley)***  
***The Motion was approved 5-0.***

In addition to the vote to authorize the expenditures, Steigerwald asked people to please authorize an individual member to administer the expenses. She was willing to serve in this role, but also suggested another member might take it on if willing to help. Crocker said she was willing and Steigerwald said that was helpful since Crocker had also offered to help with coordination of some of the major expenses like Whitsons.

***MOTION to authorize Judy Crocker to be the person authorized to administer the expenses for the school committee. (Hurley, Alessandrini)***  
***The Motion was approved 5-0.***

#### **Liaison Assignments:**

Members discussed and made a few changes to their current assignments. Steigerwald will now be liaison to the Appropriation Committee and Selectmen; Alessandrini would stop with SHAC which usually meets Mondays at 7:00 pm, four times a year; Hurley has done CEC for ten years. Crocker said she would do CEC if someone would take one of her assignments. Crocker will now be liaison to the Capital Expenditures Committee; Hurley would be willing to be a substitute for PTA/PTO Presidents' Council; Alessandrini will now be on the PTA/PTO Presidents' Council and the SEPAC; Coppe would like to become the liaison to the School Health Advisory Council and Youth Services Council. Alessandrini said he had been on School Health Advisory Council and that it met about four times a year. Coppe agreed to serve for this role. Steigerwald said she was not prepared to stop serving

on Youth Services Council at this time as the coalition was being explored but asked Coppe if she would serve as a substitute. Coppe said she would continue serving as the School Committee liaison to the LEA- Unit A Negotiation Committee.

Hurley and Coppe will both be on TMMA Executive Board. Hurley will be there as liaison for School Committee. Coppe will be there in her TMMA role but can substitute for Hurley if needed. Steigerwald asked if anyone else would like a turn receiving Quarterly Curriculum Updates, and if they would like to take her place. Hurley will join Quarterly Curriculum Updates but for the remaining 2015 year's meeting, Steigerwald will continue and Crocker may substitute for Coppe or Steigerwald if they are not able to align schedules with the middle school principals for the final meeting of the year. Steigerwald will do Homeless Families if the group is still meeting.

Crocker asked how members feel about having a clerk on the school committee. She would also like to see a number of other subcommittees (i.e. homework, calendar, and a math taskforce). Site-Based School Council Roundtable will be Crocker and Steigerwald.

***MOTION to adjourn (Steigerwald, Hurley)***

***The Motion was approved 5-0.***

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 pm.

*Meeting Materials: Agenda; Handout on the Board of Selectmen Policy on Naming Facilities; United Way check; Town of Lexington schedule of departmental payments to treasurer; Wilson Farms check; First Robotics account deposit form; Retirees school volunteer check for Robotics club; Guidance Department Program Review Committee memo on progress and next steps; Section K Policies; Section L Policies; School Committee Liaison Assignments; Handout from Kevin Johnson, SEPAC Board Member; Handout from Meghan Soens, Resident*

Voted by the School Committee 2.2.16