

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 14, 2016
Upper Level Conference Room
146 Maple Street, Lexington, MA

Present:

Chair, William Hurley; Vice Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini; Judy Crocker; Eileen Jay; Jessie Steigerwald; Superintendent, Dr.Czajkowski; Consultant Facilitator, Rob Evans PhD.

The minutes were taken by the Chair, William Hurley

The meeting convened at 9:05am

Call to Order and Welcome:

Chair, Bill Hurley called the meeting to order, and introduced committee members.

Mr. Evans opened the session by asking members to provide a check in regarding how the committee felt things were progressing since the last retreat. Members expressed progress to some degree but with continued concern about how messages between themselves and the superintendent are expressed.

Rob revisited his earlier comment of distinguishing between content and intent of message. Members shared examples of communications through texts and emails and oral communication that were perceived differently by the sender and the receiver of messages. Rob and members shared how these examples have the potential for misinterpretation and false assumptions. These kind of incidents lead to distrust that participants acknowledge they sometime experience. The candid dialogue that continued led to further exploration of how to avoid these pitfalls so that the group can work more effectively in the future. Specifically, it was suggested that meetings with individual members and the superintendent periodically to have check in time with each other to keep lines of communication open and that there be clarity of intent.

It was agreed among the members that this applies as well for members to have individual conversations with each other, not to deliberate on specific topics reserved for open school committee meetings, but to better clarify assumptions from past communications in different forms that might have been misinterpreted.

Rob emphasized the importance of what he heard all committee members and the superintendent state during the morning retreat, that they each believe that each person really cares about the work in which they are all engaged on behalf of the children and staff of the school system. He also expressed that the norms of the committee which he had read were good norms, but that norms, in general, only have meaning in how people act. He offered to be available to meet with the committee and superintendent if and when it is considered appropriate.