

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEEMEETING
Tuesday, May 22, 2012
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

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

The minutes were taken by Jean Curran.

The Meeting Convened at 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

II. Executive Session

The following Motion was made by Mary Ann Stewart and seconded by Margaret Coppe:

I move to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with regard to Exemption 3 – Collective Bargaining and that I as Chair declare that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, and that we will reconvene in Open Session for the purpose of a Public Meeting.

The Motion was unanimously approved by a voice roll call vote:

**Alessandro Alessandrini: aye;
Bonnie Brodner: aye;
Margaret Coppe: aye;
Jessie Steigerwald: aye;
Mary Ann Stewart: aye.**

The Committee went into Executive Session at 7:05 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn from Executive Session and enter into Public Session was made by Bonnie Brodner and seconded by Margaret Coppe.

The Motion was unanimously approved by a voice roll call vote:

**Alessandro Alessandrini: aye;
Bonnie Brodner: aye;
Margaret Coppe: aye;
Jessie Steigerwald: aye;
Mary Ann Stewart: aye.**

The Committee went into Public Session at 8:00 p.m.

III. Return to Public Session and Welcome:

The Committee returned to Public Session. Dr. Ash spoke to the reorganization of the officers of the Committee each year and he called for nominations for Chair of the Committee.

Motion to Nominate Margaret Coppe as Chair of the School Committee.
(Alessandrini, Brodner) **The Motion passed** (5-0).

Margaret Coppe thanked Mary Ann Stewart for her year of service to the Committee and appreciated everything that she has accomplished. She then called for nominations for Vice Chair.

Motion to Nominate Alessandro Alessandrini as Vice Chair of the Committee
(Stewart, Brodner). **The Motion was approved** (4-1; Steigerwald abstained)

The Chair invited public comment. There were no public comments.

IV. Superintendent's Announcements:

Dr. Ash discussed his school visits and how this is part of his new goal to increase his visibility in the schools. He shared his experiences at Lexington High School and the Clarke Middle School. He plans on visiting Diamond Middle School tomorrow and Friday. The following week he will begin his visits to the Town elementary schools. He stated that he also plans to continue this process in the fall and report back to the Committee.

V. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns:

Margaret Coppe announced that the High School graduation is coming up and the next meeting of the Committee will be after graduation and that it is a joyful event for the whole community.

VI. Agenda

1. Social Studies Curriculum Review – Year 1

Jane Hundley, Elementary Curriculum Coordinator – Social Studies, Matthew Mehler, Social Studies Coordinator Clarke and Diamond Middle School and Robert Collins, Social Studies Coordinator Lexington High School presented the Social Studies Curriculum Review to the Committee.

Jane Hundley presented the portion on the history of the Review Committee and its experience and how they created their mission statement as well as defining what social studies comprises (i) history, (ii) civics, (iii) economics and (iv) geography. She then spoke on the elementary level key elements district wide, state standards and how staff increased content knowledge through professional development.

Matt Mehler presented the evolving standards from 1993-2011 which now incorporates the common core state standards and the lack of MCAS data to analyze. He also highlighted how their Committee created research groups to narrow their focus. He then discussed the middle schools district wide leadership, collaboration/PLC and convergence of student and adult data. Teachers collaborate in weekly PLC meetings and use this time to design and implement social studies which provide feedback loops and development practice. He spoke about the need to align horizontally and vertically to the common core standards.

Rob Collins discussed the various groups that were formed (Geography Group, 21st Century Skills Research Group, Global Education Research Group (ELL groups) and Assessment Research Group.) He spoke about how important it is for students to see that they live in a global world and how their choices impact them and the need for respect and civility towards each other is so important in today's society. He then spoke about how the high school is aligned with state standards. He provided examples of the use of rubrics and how the introduction of national history day project helps prepares students for the 11th grade research paper. He also spoke about providing for teacher collaboration with weekly meetings. Finally, the Goals for Year 2 were discussed which included promoting and insuring vertical and horizontal alignment with common core standards, identify professional development programs and analyze data to gauge efficiency.

There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding lack of MCAS data, developing leadership skills, sequencing of student skills, anti-stress initiatives, and the need to map out where the committee is going, finding gaps and how to proceed.

Jane, Rob and Matt each addressed the Committee on how each groups of students will be marking the 300th Celebration of Lexington.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street shared her thoughts about how the Lexington Tourism Committee and school students could work together.

2. Special Education Overview and Discussion of the PreK Program

Dr. Ash began this discussion by sharing how the Committee requested more information regarding the Special Education Department and that tonight, two speakers would present an overview of their department. After the presentations tonight, he would be looking for direction from the Committee on what other areas of this department they would like to see.

Linda Chase, Director of Student Services presented the Student Services Department overview to the Committee. She introduced the leadership team and thanked Mrs. Chris Greeley, Assistant Director of Student Services who is retiring and has done a tremendous amount for the department which has benefitted greatly from her services. She presented the disability categories which include (i) autism, (ii) developmental delay (ages 3-9 only), (iii) intellectual impairment (slower rate of learning, mental retardation),

(iv) sensory impairment – hearing, vision deaf blind, (v) neurological Impairment – traumatic brain injury, (vi) emotional impairment – serious emotional disturbance, (vii) communication impairment – expressive receptive language (viii) physical impairment, (ix) health impairments, (x) specific learning disability (an area of over utilized category and the last several years the Federal government has added more requirements for this category). She then discussed the various programs that are offered which include the pre-school program, Developmental Learning Program (DLP)/Autism Program, Resource Room Services, Specialized Reading and Intensive Learning Program (ILP), PALS (Bridge), CARE (Estabrook), COMPASS - Clark and Diamond Middle School program and MST – Lexington High School Program, Language Learning Program (LLP), Developmental Learning Program (DLP, transition program (students 14 through age 22) helping to planning their core selection and build a transition program once they leave school. Mrs. Chase went on to discuss the major accomplishments of the department which included: Special Education Programs ILP, DLP, MST and LLP; Literacy Leadership Committee; Compliance Review, Anti Bullying Plan/Process; Preschool Tools of the Mind; Behavior Committee; Special Education Committees; Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communications; financial savings to the district and town in-district services vs. contracted services, circuit breaker (to receive more money), finance and operations manager position, data specialist (helps in reporting to DESE and monitor services and student information services; Evaluation Team Supervisors Model; Committee Work; Alpha Program (service to students in crisis for emotional and mental health services through a general education program) and has been very well received by teachers and families; Student Achievement (all students received at level or advanced and is a tribute to staff, teachers and parents). She finished her presentation with future topics such as program highlights by disability category and related services; special education committees; and other student services departments such as (i) guidance services and (ii) nursing services.

Linda Chase took questions and comments from the Committee about identifying disabilities, support services, eligibility and monitoring progress.

Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy, Supervisor – Preschool Student Services, made a presentation on early education and addressed the goals which include (i) fostering positive feelings towards learning, (ii) striving for excellence through a developmentally appropriate nurturing curriculum. She went over the history, staff ratios, and staffing. The various programs were discussed such as Child Find, Transitions and Service Provisions. Also discussed were Integrated Preschool and Intensive Learning Program Preschool (for children on autism spectrum) and in-service trainings around town. She spoke about “Tools of the Mind” by Lev Vygotsky which is an approach to teaching children that changes the way children learn and teachers teach. Liz took questions from the Committee regarding funding of the programs, target areas, children’s play and developing social skills.

3. Discussion of 2013-2014 Recommended School Calendar

Dr. Ash recommended to the Committee beginning the school year before Labor Day, 2013. He surveyed principals and teachers when they would like to open school and teachers were slightly more in favor of beginning before Labor Day and principals are all in favor of beginning before that date. Mrs. Neufeld, President, Lexington Education Association was unable to attend tonight's meeting to provide her thoughts. One principal expressed concern to Dr. Ash that the FY2013/2014 Bridge and Bowman building projects may need extra time and Dr. Ash concurs. By starting after Labor Day, the contractors gain four work days if something goes wrong in the building project. Dr. Ash recommends to the School Committee that school begin for teachers the day after Labor Day and two days after Labor Day for students. There were questions and comments from the Committee with respect to the start date, professional development dates and calendar management.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street, stated her support for beginning the school year after Labor Day.

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Development addressed the Committee regarding Professional Development activities and timing.

Diane Biglow, 15 Bellflower Street stated her support for beginning the school after labor day.

Dr. Ash queried the Committee on their support starting school after Labor Day for FY2013/2014. The Committee supports this recommendation and will vote on the calendar at its next meeting, June 5, 2012

4. Vote to Increase Student Parking Fee

Dr. Ash recommended to the Committee that the parking fee at the High School for students be increased to the same fee charged for bus ridership to \$150 per semester. He stated that this money goes into the general fund and feels that this fee hike will help encourage bus ridership.

Noah Coolidge reported on the student faculty senate recommendations which were (i) resolved that the LHS Student Faculty supports school parking raised fees to the same level as bus fees; and (ii) supports position of transportation options without the need to return home without a car. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Mary Ellen Dunn addressed the Committee regarding the funding of the Campus Monitor position at the High School as well as explaining the reasoning for the fee monies going into the general fund.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street, stated her support of raising the fee.

Motion to Increase Student Parking Fee From \$108 to \$150 Per Semester Starting in School Year 2012/2013. (Brodner, Alessandrini). **The Motion passed (5-0).**

6. **Vote to Accept a \$342 Donation from a Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Lexington Children's Place Gift Account**

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$342 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser To Be Deposited in the Lexington Children's Place Gift Account. (Stewart, Steigerwald). **The Motion passed (5-0).**

7. **Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 27, 2012**

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 27, 2012 (Steigerwald, Stewart) **The Motion was approved (5-0).**

8. **Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of March 27, 2012**

Motion to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of March 27, 2012 (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) **The Motion was approved (5-0).**

9. **Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 9, 2012**

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 9, 2012 (Brodner, Steigerwald) **The Motion was approved (5-0)**

10. **Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 9, 2012**

Motion to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 9, 2012 (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) **The Motion was approved (5-0).**

11. **Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 23, 2012**

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 23, 2012, as amended (Stewart, Brodner) **The Motion was approved (5-0)**

12. **Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 24, 2012**
Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 24, 2012, as amended
(Steigerwald, Brodner) **The Motion was approved (5-0)**

13. **Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 25, 2012**
The Committee discussed holding off on approving these minute until next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn. (Stewart, Brodner) **The Motion passed 5-0.**

The Meeting adjourned at 10:52 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Memo from Robert Collins, Matthew Mehler and Jane Hundley to Dr. Paul Ash dated May 22, 2012 re Summary of the work of the Social Studies Review Committee (Year 1); Memo from Linda S. Chase, Director of Student Services to Dr. Paul Ash dated May 18, 2012 re School Committee Presentation; Memo from Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy, Supervisor of Early Childhood Special Education dated May 17, 2012 re Early Childhood Special Education Presentation Handouts; Letter from Dr. Paul Ash to the Lexington School Committee dated May 17, 2012 re School Year FY 2013/2014; Memo from Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business to Dr. Paul Ash dated April 17, 2012 re FY13 Transportation and Student Park Fees; Letter From Elizabeth Billings-Fouhy to Lexington School Committee dated May 2, 2012 re Wilson Farm Donation; draft Lexington School Committee Executive Session Minutes dated March 27, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Executive Session Minutes dated April 9, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated April 23, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated April 24, 2012; draft Lexington School Committee Minutes dated April 25, 2012.

Voted by the School Committee June 12, 2012