

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 24, 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 7:30 p.m.**

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

The Chair called the meeting to order and invited Public Comment.

There were no public comments.

**II. Superintendent's Announcements**

Dr. Paul Ash announced to the Committee that he met today with Clarke Middle School new principal search committee made-up of teachers and parents and they have identified five candidates to be interviewed next week. They developed interview questions and believe that they have a good pool of candidates. He thanked everyone involved for their hard work. Finalists will be called back for further interviews to be held on May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 11<sup>th</sup>. Parents and teachers will be given an opportunity to meet with candidates and candidates will be given a tour of the school and an opportunity to sit with Dr. Ash and final interview with the search committee.

**III. Members' Reports/Members' Concerns**

Mary Ann Stewart wished the Clarke 8th Grade Team a great trip to Washington, DC. They left early this morning for three days in our nation's capital.

Margaret Coppe announced that the Committee attended the NSBA Conference over the weekend and she found a few resources she would like to share at a future time.

**IV. Agenda**

**1. Public Hearing on School Choice**

The Chair explained that, by statute, each school district must hold a public hearing on school choice before taking a vote on whether or not it will receive students from other Towns into the Lexington Public Schools. There were no public comments.

## 2. Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Dr. Ash turned the meeting over to Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development. Ms. Pilarski, introduced Jennifer Wolfrum, K-12 Assistant Coordinator of Physical Education and Wellness; Mr. Jack McDevitt, Director, Institute of Race and Justice at Northeastern University; and Ms. Amy Farrell, Associate Director, Institute of Race and Justice at Northeastern University. Mr. McDevitt and Ms. Farrell helped develop and administer the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and assisted Lexington with adapting, compiling, and analyzing the results. The YRBS focuses on the major risk behaviors that threaten the health and safety of young people. It is an anonymous survey that includes questions about tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors, dietary behaviors, physical activity, and behaviors associated with intentional or unintentional injuries. Data from the YRBS provides accurate estimates of the prevalence of risk behaviors among public high school students in the Commonwealth, and in Lexington specifically, and are important for planning health education and risk prevention programs.

Mr. McDevitt presented the findings of drug, alcohol and tobacco use. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Amy Farrell, presented the sexual activity portion of the survey. She presented the findings and discussed the impacts that gender and race played in the results of the survey.

Areas discussed were sex, harassment, academic stress, extra-curricular stress, coping with stress, and suicidal tendencies. There appears to be progress in tobacco and drug use, but alcohol use continues to be a big problem and that risky behavior increases with such use. Stress reduction programs are shown to be having an impact on the reduction of student stress. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Jennifer Wolfrum took questions from the Committee regarding how the survey was administered and how families were notified and given an opportunity to opt out. Students were also instructed that the survey was voluntary and anonymous. There will be a public hearing of the School Health Advisory Council on May 14<sup>th</sup> regarding these results. Also, staff at the high school will use these results to begin conversations in health class as well as designing future programs.

Vice-Chair Alessandro Alessandrini asked the Chair to recognize Mr. Bill Blout, Licensed Clinical Social Worker of the Lexington Youth and Family Services (LYFS), who was present in the audience. LYFS provides accessible free counseling to students who need to talk with someone confidentially. They are staffed one afternoon a week (at Hancock Church) and have crisis lines setup for those who feel suicidal. Mr. Blout spoke to the Committee regarding his recent experience with kids who are suicidal. The Committee requested hearing about next steps to address the concerns of alcohol abuse, suicide prevention, and student stress.

### 3. K-5 Standards-Based Report Card

Dr. Ash addressed the Committee regarding report card standards and reporting and how the new report card will provide monitoring in real time. He believes this to be a sound change and recommends that the Committee approve this reporting tool. He gave thanks to the Standards Based Report Card Committee Members (SBRCC), which included teachers, curriculum leaders and administrators, and acknowledged that a tremendous amount of effort and time went into the creation of these report cards.

Carol Pilarski and Louise Lipsitz, Principal Hastings Elementary School, Co-Chairs of the SBRCC, offered their presentation to the Committee. The SBRCC studied research, collected and reviewed documents from other districts, identified priority standards in each academic area, developed pro-social skills, and are now preparing for the pilot implementation scheduled for the 2012-2013 academic year. Their presentation to the Committee included how the change will more accurately and effectively communicate student progress to parents and students, show what all students will need to know and be able to do in each domain, apply the Massachusetts Common Core Curriculum Standards, and address the outdated reporting tool that is currently in place. Also presented were the implementation plans for teacher education and training and parent education. The SBRCC will seek feedback and evaluation from teachers and parents and meet again next year to evaluate the process. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Thomas Plati, Director of Educational Technology and Assessment thanked Mary Radz, Assistant Database Manager, and her team who designed X2 Aspen functionality, allowing teachers to see how well students are performing on a particular skill set or help look at other ways to approach learning using X2.

Eamonn Sheehan, K-12 Coordinator for Physical Education and Wellness, addressed questions from the Committee regarding the differences in measurement between physical education standards and academic standards. He stated that it would be very cumbersome to measure exactly the way classroom teachers measure their students because they see all students at every elementary school in town as opposed to 20-30 students in each classroom.

Kathleen McCarthy, K-5 Department Head/Literacy, addressed the Committee's concerns regarding the proposed book list. She stated that the list is very narrow and is just a suggestion; they will continue to work to identify genres for each grade level.

**Motion to Adjourn** (Coppe, Steigerwald). **The Motion passed 5-0.**

**The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.**

*Documents: Meeting Agenda; Memorandum from Eamonn Sheehan and Jennifer Wolfrum to Dr. Paul Ash and Members of the Lexington School Committee dated April 24, 2012 regarding*

*Stress Reduction; Executive Summary – Youth Risk Behavior Survey Lexington High School 2011 Results from Jack McDevitt, Ph.D and Amy Farrell, Ph.D; Lexington High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2011 Results; Lexington High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2011 Results PowerPoint Presentation handout; Memorandum from Carol Pilarski to Dr. Paul B. Ash and Members of the Lexington School Committee dated April 24, 2012 regarding Executive Summary Standards-Based Report Card; PowerPoint Presentation of the Standards-Based Report Card dated April 24, 2012; DRAFT example of Grade 3 standards-based report card; LPS 2012-2013 School Calendar with reflecting changes due to pilot implementation for the new report card; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Curriculum Framework for Mathematics grades Pre-K to 12 incorporating the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, dated March 2011; Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy for grades Pre-K to 12 incorporating the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, dated March 2011*

Voted by the School Committee \_\_\_\_\_ May 22, 2012 \_\_\_\_\_