

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, April 25, 2012
Cary Memorial Building, Estabrook Hall
1605 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 6:30 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and announced that the previously scheduled Town Meeting session scheduled for this evening was cancelled by the Town Moderator. Therefore, the School Committee will likely convene this meeting beyond 7:30 PM. The Chair invited Public Comment.

Judy Crocker, 5 Currier Court, announced that the Haydenettes earned their third consecutive World Bronze Medal at the 2012 ISU World Synchronized Skating Championships last week in Gothenburg, Sweden.

II. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Paul Ash had no announcements.

III. Members' Reports/Members' Concerns

Jessie Steigerwald announced that the next meeting of the Youth Services Council will take place on May 2nd. Any student interested in becoming a member of the council should contact Julie Fenn, K-12 Prevention Specialist, or Laurie Henry, Town of Lexington Human Services Department Assistant Director of Youth Services.

IV. Agenda

1. Discussion of FY13 School Committee Goals

The Committee discussed School Committee Goals for the 2012-2013 academic year. The Goals were focused around three primary areas: Operational Goals, High Performance Team Development Goals for School Committee, and Goals to Support the School System Goals (approved at the School Committee Meeting of February 14, 2012). The Committee agreed to prioritize the above list and have another discussion at the next School Committee meeting.

It was also noted that Dr. Ash became ill and had to leave the meeting early.

2. Discussion of Wellman Report

The Committee requested guidance from Robert Fraser, School Committee Counsel from Stoneman, Chandler, and Miller, LLP, on whether comments that staff provided to Consultant Bruce Wellman were subject to production upon a public records request. The Chair read an email sent to her and Dr. Ash from Mr. Fraser expressing his legal opinion on the matter. Mr. Fraser was of the opinion that these statements should be considered personnel records and therefore exempt from publication.

The Committee then continued their discussion about receiving the raw data that Dr. Ash and Phyllis Neufeld, Lexington Education Association (LEA) President, had read. Some members wanted to see all the data while other members were not comfortable seeing the details and were not convinced that they should see the details because of the confidential nature in which they were given. They debated whether to see summations or redacted data and how much work and money that would cost. The Committee asked Ms. Neufeld for her opinion on the matter. She stated that she felt that this was not a decision to be made by one person, but rather by the Steering Committee that was put together for the sole purpose of the Wellman Report.

The Chair invited Public input on the topic:

Steve Shulman, Second Grade Teacher at the Hastings Elementary School, shared it was his impression that the Committee would see the raw data.

Kathleen Rowe, 85 Emerson Gardens Road, agreed with Mr. Shulman and shared that she expected the Committee to see the data.

Kate Woodard, 15 Fulton Road, shared her opinion that the Committee should see the data, especially since Dr. Ash had already seen it.

Katie O'Hare Gibson, Grade 1 Teacher at the Estabrook Elementary School and Bellevue Terrace resident, shared her thoughts as a teacher and as someone who encouraged other teachers and staff to participate in the process. It was never her understanding that her thoughts as a teacher would be shared with Dr. Ash or the School Committee. Her understanding was that the Steering Committee would see the information.

Harvy Simkovits, Angier Road, shared his thoughts on how the data should be handled.

Debbie Zilberman, 16 Parker Street, expressed concern about the next steps and believes that the Committee should receive the data.

Judy Crocker, 5 Currier Court, shared her thoughts on supervision and evaluation and that the Committee should review the report.

Phyllis Neufeld, LEA President, provided an update to the Committee on the work of the Steering Committee after the release of the report following the staff meeting on March 12, 2012. She noted that Principals in each school have met with staff to discuss the

information pertinent to their school contained in the Wellman report and work on recommendations noted in Bruce Wellman's report (and/or brainstormed by the staff/faculty). She stated that some schools have already set up in-house steering committees to begin to prioritize the recommendations.

Motion for the School Committee to receive redacted copy with respect to personal or identifying data on which the Wellman Report was based (Steigerwald, Alessandrini). **The Motion failed (2-3)** (Coppe, Stewart, and Brodner opposed).

Motion that the School Committee receive the redacted data that the Wellman Report was based on that relates to the superintendent's performance only. (Coppe, Brodner)

Following discussion on the above motion, a substitute motion was proposed.

Motion that the School Committee receives the redacted report that Paul Ash has read (Alessandrini, Steigerwald). **The Motion passed 3-1-1** (Brodner opposing and Stewart abstaining).

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Lexington School Committee Draft Goals 2011-2012; Email from Robert Fraser to Paul Ash and Mary Ann Stewart dated April 15, 2012 re Legal Opinion re Public Access to Employee Comments.

Voted by the School Committee June 12, 2012