

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, March 26, 2012
Cary Memorial Building, Estabrook Room
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 6:31 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. Ash provided an update to the School Committee on what has happened since the Bruce Wellman Report to the teachers and staff last week and the presentation to the School Committee. He will be providing ongoing progress reports to the Committee. He highlighted four items that he will focus on and provide progress reports on and they include:

1. Dr. Ash has decided to accept the recommendation with respect to increasing his visibility in the schools. He believes that this is a high priority and he intends to meet each Friday with two academic departments.
2. The Steering Committee met last week to begin prioritizing the fourteen recommendations in the Report. Over the next several months, the plan is to obtain group consensus on priorities and then action items and steps along with means of assessment and monitoring will be established.
3. Staff members at all nine schools met with faculty members to provide feedback on the report and to begin a conversation about each school's needs going forward. The principals put together in-school steering committees that looked at the in-school data and the principals ran the meetings with teachers as partners.
4. He met with his Roundtable which is comprised of teachers who meet once a month and he had opportunity to talk with them about their thoughts regarding the report.

Dr. Ash said he looks forward to ongoing conversations and providing progress reports on the plans going forward.

III. Members' Reports/Members' Concerns

Jessie Steigerwald wanted to take a moment to note that Dr. Steven Flynn is going to move on and thanked him for his service. There will be a search for a new principal.

Dr. Ash reported that Dr. Flynn has taken an administrative position in Saudi Arabia and he has served seven years in Lexington and he congratulated and thanked him for his service. Any parent interested in joining in the search committee should check with his office and the Clarke Middle School office. The search committee will be comprised of teachers, administrator and at least 3 parents. He encourages anyone interested to apply for this position. He hopes to make an appointment by early May.

Bonnie Brodner added that email went out to members of the PTA and if any parent is willing to serve on the search committee, they may contact Kara Brandes or Sue Wilner.

Jessie Steigerwald mentioned that there have been a couple of articles in the newspaper and on Lexington Patch recently regarding the Wellman Report. She would like to see the Committee, as a group, discuss the report and set goals based upon the recommendations.

Alessandro Alessandrini added that he would like to discuss the Wellman Report and appreciates Dr. Ash's goals and feels that the Committee should get their goals together.

IV. Agenda

1. Discussion of Position on Article 17

Judy Crocker, Safe Routes to School Coordinator and Chair of the Ad Hoc School Transportation and Safety Study Committee, shared that Safe Routes to School has received its second State Award. She then gave a presentation regarding Article 17, School Bus Transportation Subsidy. The presentation included the proposed school bus subsidy, value in bus ridership, and how the high bus fee impacts residents. She is asking the Committee to support Article 17 to cap the bus fee/student at \$300. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent took questions from the Committee regarding the bus bid process, ridership numbers and financial projections and impacts.

Dr. Ash stated he supports Article 17 and that he believes that this is the right direction and the safest means possible for student transportation.

Motion to Support Article 17 (Steigerwald, Alessandrini). The Motion passed 5-0.

The Chair announced that Agenda items not covered at tonight's meeting will carry forward to a future meeting to be posted.

The Chair recessed the meeting 7:22 p.m. and to reconvene at Town Meeting.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Draft Article 17 School Bus Transportation Subsidy (Citizen Article); Letter dated March 16, 2012 to Lexington School Committee regarding donation from Wilson Farms; Article 17 School Bus Transportation Subsidy PowerPoint Presentation Handout.

Voted by the School Committee April 23, 2012