

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, August 27, 2013
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Dr. Paul Ash, Superintendent; Margaret Coppe, Chair; Bonnie Brodner, Vice-Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart; and Sam A. Lehn, Student Representative

The Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting Convened at 7:36 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and introduced the Committee members and welcomed Sam Lehn as the new Student Representative. The Chair shared the Committee's change to the public comment portion of the meeting which will now include non-agenda and agenda items. Speakers are requested to provide their name and address for the public record. The Chair also explained the new "Consent Agenda" which the Committee will now be doing for some voting items.

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

II. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Ash shared that he and his staff believe this will be a great school year. Dr. Ash thanked the custodians, maintenance staff, the cafeteria staff and their leadership, principals, department heads, other supervisors that were here, central office staff that work on payroll and transportation, the staff that purchase supplies, and the Department of Public Facilities.

Dr. Ash also shared that Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities, will speak to the Bridge, Bowman and Estabrook Elementary School projects and the capital projects that were done over the summer.

Dr. Ash shared that he spoke with Elaine Celi, Manager of Transportation, who told him that as of this morning, there were approximately 2,700 students registered to ride the bus this year. Last year, in June there were 2,729 students. Ms. Celi is confident that we will have more students on the bus when we reach our peak number this coming year. The reduction in the bus fee is working. There is also a significant increase in students who will be using the Flexpass; last year there were 170 students and we now have 100 more students using the Flexpass in the afternoon. Dr. Ash spoke with staff about supplies and materials and the vast majority of supplies will be in the classrooms for use when school opens. Dr. Ash gave special thanks to the custodians and maintenance workers who made the schools look terrific.

Dr. Ash thanked Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development and Len Swanton, Director of Professional Learning and all the other people that helped them launch a vibrant summer for workshops and courses. He also thanked the Lexington Educational Foundation for their support.

Dr. Ash invited Ms. Pilarski to speak about the opening day schedule. Ms. Pilarski shared with the Committee the opening day schedule for K-12 students and stated that the schedule is posted on the school's website.

III. School Committee Member Announcements

Bonnie Brodner announced (i) she toured Estabrook Elementary School last week and thought it looked great; and (ii) Planning Board is having a public hearing for suggestions on medical marijuana distribution centers in Lexington on Wednesday, September 11. She felt the Committee should have a presence there.

Jessie Steigerwald shared that she and Dr. Ash have set September 17 for the School Council orientation meeting with Donna Hooper, Town Clerk. An email will be distributed to council members. Ms. Steigerwald asked her colleagues if they were comfortable having their names on the letter welcoming people.

Mary Ann Stewart announced that she had the opportunity to meet with the new Special Education Director, Ellen Sugita. Ms. Stewart shared that the governor announced September was Arts and Education Month and she thinks that is exciting for the beginning of the year and hopes our schools will participate in as many of ways possible and hopes the PTAs will support where possible.

IV. Agenda

I. Update on K-5 Building Projects

a. New Estabrook School and Bridge and Bowman Renovations

Pat Goddard, Director of Public Facilities shared that last Tuesday there was an opportunity to tour the new Estabrook Elementary School and the Bridge and Bowman Elementary Schools with Committee members, the school principals, the Superintendent and staff. Everyone is pleased with the progress that is taking place at the Estabrook Elementary School. Mr. Goddard is also pleased with status of Bridge and Bowman Elementary Schools. They are on a much better schedule than last year at this time with all classrooms available. Mr. Goddard shared photographs of the new Estabrook Elementary School.

Mr. Goddard shared the Bridge and Bowman Elementary School pictures. He explained that the contractor did phased classrooms so that the least critical rooms were done at the end of the summer and any impact to the educational process was minimized. Two new classrooms will be in the space formerly occupied by the boilers and are scheduled to be ready in October.

b. PCB Monitoring at the Current Estabrook School

Mr. Goddard explained that there is an approved Operations and Maintenance Plan (O&M) with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by adhering to the plan Lexington can continue to use the school through December 2014 without having to remove the PCB materials. Mr. Goddard reviewed the O&M plan with the Committee. He spoke to air sampling, dust sampling and daily checks on ventilation. Mr. Goddard shared that over the past two years there was only one incident reported and that was on January 7, 2013 where his department received a call from school to check on something during the school day. Over a two year period they have kept up with all the requirements. In 2012-2013 they saw a rise in five classrooms but they were below the EPA threshold. Remedial work was conducted in those classrooms and they continue to monitor those rooms. Mr. Goddard reported that there is a link between cold weather and the reduction in PCB levels.

There were questions and comments from the Committee (i) do you get feedback from the EPA; (ii) how is the Estabrook community being updated; (iii) Room 4; (iv) would

Mr. Goddard please provide an update on the schedule for the new and old Estabrook School and how will that impact the takedown of the building and parking; (v) how will demolition be done with students still in school; (vi) what will the containment area look like; (vii) how long will it take to take down the entire Estabrook school; (viii) who is involved in finalizing the plans for the bus loop; (ix) suggestion to take into consideration that Lexington is experiencing more bus ridership when the bus loop is shaped; (x) when will the staff be able to get into the unfinished rooms at Bridge and Bowman to prepare the spaces; (xi) who is working on the details in designing the rooms; (xii) will the gyms be completed by opening day; (xiii) will there be having any way to receive feedback by students and parents; (xiv) the possibility to have a the Town Meeting Members Association bus tour on a Sunday in March to see the new Estabrook Elementary School and the renovations at Bridge and Bowman; and (xv) would it possible to have a school committee meeting at Estabrook.

Ben Esty, 4 Ballard Terrace, shared his concerns on the PCB issues at Estabrook Elementary School and asked that his memorandum regarding room 4 which was sent to Dr. Ash, Committee and others be shown to environmental experts for a response.

Pat Goddard shared that he received a Memorandum from Mr. Esty about Room 4 which is why he included it in his presentation this evening.

Jessie Steigerwald shared that Mr. Esty should also send his thoughts to the Committee email address.

Dr. Ash thanked Mr. Esty for bringing his concerns forward and will share his questions with the experts.

2. Recommended 2013-2014 School Committee Meeting Calendar

The Committee reviewed and discussed the draft recommended dates for School Committee meetings.

Motion to Approve the Recommended Dates for FY 2013-2014 (Stewart, Steigerwald) **The Motion was Approved** (5-0)

3. School Committee Liaison Assignments for 2013-2014

The Committee discussed the new liaison assignments for 2013-2014 which included adding and removing assignments. Ms. Coppe will send the corrections to the School Committee Liaison Assignments to Miriam Sousa, Executive Assistant to Dr. Ash. Leslie Zales, Chair, PTA Presidents Council, thanked the Committee for their responsiveness and welcomes anyone who wants to attend their meeting. She will share the minutes of their meeting with the Committee and will add them to the distribution list.

4. Superintendent Evaluation for 2012-2013

Margaret Coppe presented the summary Evaluation of the Superintendent for FY 2012-2013.

Motion to Approve the Superintendent Evaluation for 2012-2013 (Steigerwald, Brodner) **The Motion was Approved** (5-0)

5. Draft Superintendent Evaluation Process 2013-2014

Margaret Coppe shared that the State has implemented new evaluation processes for the Superintendent as well as for the whole school staff. The Committee is responsible for evaluating the Superintendent and must follow the new State guidelines. The Committee will need to review Dr. Ash's contract to determine if the Committee needs to send Dr. Ash a letter agreement acknowledging his approval of the new evaluation process. The Committee discussed procedures and timelines for the Superintendent Evaluation Process for FY 2013-2014.

Dr. Ash shared his view on the process. Dr. Ash suggested that the Committee approve the evaluation process on September 10 and on September 24 he would present his professional practice goals and his student learning goals and then on October 8 the Committee could vote on his two goals. Dr. Ash reminded the Committee that he has three goals (i) professional practice goals, (ii) student learning goals and (iii) accomplishment of the district goals.

The Committee and Dr. Ash will discuss standards indicators on October 8 and vote on them on October 22.

6. FY15 Budget Guidelines and Timetable

The Committee and Dr. Ash discussed the FY15 Budget Guidelines and Timetable. Much of the discussion revolved around the eight budget guidelines presented. The ideas discussed were creating a transition coordinator position, an arts coordinator position, a special education ombudsman and bringing back the science labs lost in the 2006 override.

Dr. Ash shared that he and Mr. Goddard would present what they believe are the range of costs and timeline at the September 10 meeting and what the two year plan for modulars at the high school will be. The date is important because it will need to be sent to town committees in order to be voted on at the Special Town Meeting in November.

The Committee will vote the FY15 Budget Guidelines at the next Committee meeting.

7. Homelessness Policy – First Reading

The Committee discussed the draft Lexington School Committee Policy on Homelessness, First Reading. The discussion included looking into adding extracurricular activities into the policy for which financial aid is available, providing childcare, and field trips.

Linda Chase, Director of Student Services recommended studying the issue further.

Dr. Ash shared his thoughts on ideas presented during the discussion.

Motion to Approve the First Reading of the Lexington School Committee Policy on Homelessness (Steigerwald, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

8. Lexington High School Class Size Policy – Second Reading

The Committee and Dr. Ash discussed the Lexington School Committee High School Class Size Policy, Second Reading which included exclusions to the policy and class eliminations. Add: There were questions and comments from the Committee, including the request for further information from the principal.

Motion to Approve to Second Reading of the Lexington School Committee High School Class Size Policy (Stewart, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

9. Vote to Increase the School Lunch Online Payment Transaction Fee

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance presented the new online payment system "My School Bucks." The bank fees from the use of credit cards for 2012-2013 will be absorbed through My School Bucks. Ms. Dunn spoke to the charges of credit card costs and stating that there will need to be an increase in the transaction fee from \$1.75 to \$1.95 with a cap of \$125 per transaction which is the requirement of My School Bucks. Checks will be accepted at the cashier and will be deposited in the student's account and no fee would be involved. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Leslie Zales, Page Road, inquired if Ms. Dunn has asked the company if they would waive the charge. She wanted clarity on what the per transaction fee would be.

Motion to Increase the School Lunch Online Payment Transaction Fee from \$1.75 to \$1.95 with a dollar cap of \$125 per transaction (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

V. Consent Agenda

Ms. Coppe reviewed the consent agenda process and inquired if the Committee had any questions.

- 1. Vote to accept a Donation to Lexington High School from Stop and Shop's A+ Program in the Amount of \$3,307.48**
- 2. Vote to accept a Donation to Maria Hastings School from Stop and Shop's A+ Program in the Amount of \$2,948.05**
- 3. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 30, 2013**
- 4. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of May 14, 2013**
- 5. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of May 28, 2013**
- 6. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of June 11, 2013**
- 7. Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 23, 2013**
- 8. Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of June 11, 2013**
- 9. Vote to Approve and Not Release School Committee Executive Session Minutes of June 18, 2013**

Motion to Approve Items 1, 2, 3 7, 8 and 9 Above (Stewart, Steigerwald) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of May 14, 2013, as amended (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of May 28, 2013, as amended (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of June 11, 2013, as amended (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

VI. Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn (Alessandrini, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Meeting Adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2013, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Offices Building, Selectmen’s Meeting Room, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue.

Materials: Meeting Agenda, Draft Recommended Dates for School Committee Meetings 2013-2014; School Committee Liaison Assignments – July 2012; Evaluation of the Superintendent 2012-2013; Draft Superintendent Evaluation – Procedures and Timeline for 2013-2014 dated July 3, 2013; LPS Recommended FY15 Budget Guidelines; LSC Homelessness Policy – Second Reading; LSC LHS Class Size Policy – Third Reading; Memo dated August 19, 2013 from Mary Ellen Dunn to Dr. Ash re Heartland Payment Systems – My SchoolBucks.com Transaction Fee Revision; Memo dated June 27, 2013 from Mary Ellen Dunn to Dr. Ash re Acceptance of Donation from Stop & Shop’s A+ Program to LHS; Letter dated June 21, 2013 to LSC from Louise P. Lipsitz re Acceptance of Donation from Stop & Shop’s A+ Program to the Maria Hastings School; LSC Meeting Minutes dated April 30, 2013; LSC Meeting Minutes dated May 14, 2013; LSC Meeting Minutes dated May 28, 2013; LSC Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2013

Voted by the School Committee November 5, 2013