

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Wednesday, March 27, 2013
Cary Memorial Building
Estabrook Room
1605 Massachusetts Avenue

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

The Meeting Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 6:33 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and invited public comment.

Noelle Givler, 19 Fair Oaks Drive shared that Ms. Floerke, German teacher, had gotten 25 students to sign up for German 1 next year and she believes that it exceeds the minimum number for class size and assumes that the German program will be back in the fall 2013. Ms. Givler thanked the Committee for offering German and she is hopeful that the German program will thrive at the High School. Ms. Givler also inquired about curriculum review.

Alessandro Alessandrini shared that the Committee is forming a subcommittee for curriculum and working on drafting a policy for class size that will be in a future agenda.

Margaret Coppe shared that we have curriculum reviews run by professional staff but are looking for updates and that can happen more quickly than a curriculum review.

II. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Mary Ann Stewart announced that the Lobby Day on the Hill scheduled for April 30th has been rescheduled as an Advocacy Day on Tuesday, May 21, 2013.

Margaret Coppe announced that the Committee has started process for Dr. Ash's Evaluation and the link for the public will be open until April 5. The link went out yesterday by email on the Town Meeting Members Associations ListServ and the Lexington List

Bonnie Brodner announced that the results of the SEPAC Survey results will be shared with the public on Thursday on April 4 at 7:30 p.m. in the High School Media Room (Room 147).

III. Anticipated Topics

1. Elementary Foreign Language: Subcommittee Update

Mary Ann Stewart shared that Alessandro Alessandrini had requested that this item be placed on the Agenda. Ms. Stewart shared that she and Mr. Alessandrini had met with Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, Dr. Mary Anton, Principal, Bowman Elementary School and Louise Lipsitz, Principal Hastings Elementary School to look at an integration model that would be used for a foreign language program. They reviewed the Fiske Elementary School schedule along with one overview page for all grades at the Estabrook Elementary School and then reviewed each grade and classes for students. The Subcommittee is trying to get an understanding of the schedule.

There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding (i) flexibility in school day schedules; (ii) feasibility study for foreign language in elementary schools; (iii) composition of a subcommittee and who would it be under; (iv) funding; (v) feedback from parents and administration on this initiative; (vi) immersion or proficient for students; and (vii) drafting a charge. The Chair requested Ms. Stewart and Mr. Alessandrini to meet with Dr. Ash and bring back to the Committee a draft process in May.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street, shared her thoughts regarding a prior subcommittee at the Hastings Elementary School. Ms. McKenna also shared that she is contemplating an Amendment to the School Committee FY 2014 Budget to add the funds for have a 1.2 FTE teacher to facilitate an Elementary School virtual connection with a school in Antony, France.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu, 86 Cedar Street, thanked Ms. Stewart and Mr. Alessandrini for their support in bringing back a foreign language program at the elementary school level. Mr. Radulescu-Banu also thanked Dr. Ash for his leadership on this issue. Mr. Radulescu-Banu also questioned the scheduled minutes in the elementary school day and inquired if there was pamphlet documenting the minutes.

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Instruction and Professional Development responded to Mr. Radulescu's comments regarding the scheduled minutes that have now been allocated to social studies, literacy, responsive classroom and open circle. Literacy has increased due to the common core standards.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu then shared his thoughts on the subcommittee and stated that it is very important for the Committee to review the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on how foreign language is to be introduced.

Ashley McKenna, 9 Hancock Street shared her thoughts on curriculum framework and the relationships with Lexington's Antony sister city. Ms. McKenna also shared her thoughts on how to integrate foreign language in a school day and outside the school for success in foreign language.

There were further comments and questions by the Committee.

2. Vote to Approve 2013-2014 School Calendar Revision

Margaret Coppe shared the calendar changes with the Committee and stated that the Lexington Education Association has been very cooperative and their comments were very positive. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Carol Pilarski gave a brief update on the reason for Professional Development Days on Thursdays. Annually there is one full day and the rest of the PD days are half days.

Motion to Approve the 2013-2014 School Calendar Revisions (Brodner, Alessandrini) **The Motion was Approved** (5-0)

3. Update on Legal Counsel

Margaret Coppe and Alessandro Alessandrini have been in contact with eight different school districts asking them about their legal counsel. Every town uses a different firm and most school systems contacted do not use town counsel. Most school districts are splitting up legal work between labor and special education. Ms. Coppe will share with Mr. Alessandrini information regarding these firms.

4. Vote to Appoint Jeff Leonard to the LexMedia Board

Ms. Coppe shared that LexMedia has one member of the Board of Directors appointed by the School Committee and LexMedia is recommending that the Committee appoint Jeff Leonard to the LexMedia Board. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Motion to Appoint Jeff Leonard to the LexMedia Board (Stewart, Steigerwald) **The Motion was Approved** (5-0)

Jessie Steigerwald mentioned that the Master Facilities Committee has questions coming up about alternative choices about how projects are sequenced. Ms. Steigerwald recommended a meeting between Peter Kelley and Joe Pato of the Board of Selectmen. She would like Margaret Coppe to join the meeting.

Margaret Coppe shared that next Monday, Article 4 – Appropriate FY2014 Operating Budget will be coming up and we should be prepared to speak on this Article.

The Chair moved to recess and reconvene on the floor of Town Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Revised Lexington Public School 2013-2014 School Calendar; 2013 Town Warrant

Voted by the School Committee May 14, 2013