

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, August 28, 2012
Cary Memorial Building, Cary Hall
1605 Massachusetts Avenue

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

The minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting Convened at 7:35 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 that today's school opening went extremely smooth. He spoke with principals at every single school and they reported a smooth opening as well despite the inclement weather. He then stated that he would address any glitches that took place today as well as discuss the specifics of the Bowman/Bridge school projects and the Estabrook school project. Dr. Ash also mentioned that Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance Operations will address the transportation portion of the agenda.

Mary Ellen Dunn provided the Committee an introduction of Kevin Silvia, the new Food Service Director for the Lexington Public Schools. Kevin has been with Whitsons Culinary Group for many years. She then noted that John Frontellio will be the Assistant Director of Food Service and he comes from the Boston Public School System and his primary focus will be in the elementary schools.

Dr. Ash addressed Michael's Law, new legislation which requires schools to develop efficient medical emergency response plans. Schools will now be required to implement the following steps in addition to the required multihazard evacuation plan: (1) a method for establishing a rapid communication system and protocols, (2) a list of relevant contacts, (3) a method to efficiently direct emergency medical services, (4) safety precautions for injury prevention, (5) a method of providing access to CPR and first aid training, and (6) the location of defibrillators and personnel who are trained in their use. He noted that Lexington has submitted their plans to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, addressed the Committee regarding an error with the current school

calendar. The last day of school was incorrectly listed as June 19th. The final day of school, barring any snow days will be June 18th. The website will be updated to reflect this change and parents will be notified of the change.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Jessie Stiegerwald thanked Kevin Silvia for the free lunch provided to students today. She also noted that she had received several emails from people regarding the reason for the later (after Labor Day) start to the FY 2013-2014 school year. She suggested a note on the website explaining the change of the start date.

Bonnie Brodner shared that she toured the Bridge and Bowman schools and was in awe of the way the teachers handled the delay in construction. She acknowledged that the town is lucky to have these teachers and leaders in our school system.

Mary Ann Stewart thanked the principals, teachers and staff at these schools for their flexibility and creativity. She stated that it is great to be back and hopes everyone had a relaxing summer and hopes first day experiences were all good despite some of the glitches. Mary Ann also reminded everyone that September 6th is the general primary and there will be no meeting that evening and urged people to vote.

Alessandro Alessandrini thanked the teachers and staff for their enthusiasm and noted that his son had a wonderful day at the Bowman Elementary School.

Margaret Coppe thanked all the principals, teachers and staff for all their hard work to make opening day a success. She also noted that Lexington's 2020 Vision Committee is working on a town wide survey to be distributed online and in public in early 2013.

Margaret Coppe then invited Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment to show a video he made based upon the ABC's Good Morning America "Your Three Words" to the Committee.

IV. Agenda

1. Update on Bridge and Bowman Renovation Projects and Estabrook School Project

Dr. Ash introduced Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities to update the Committee on the Bridge and Bowman School renovation projects and the Estabrook School building project. He also noted that Meg Colella, Principal, Bridge Elementary School and Dr. Mary Anton, Principal, Bowman Elementary School will provide the Committee updates on what school is like for faculty and staff.

Patrick Goddard provided the Committee with an update on the Bridge and Bowman renovation projects. He shared that the renovations to the Bridge and Bowman schools are running behind schedule due to TLT Construction (TLT), the contractor hired for the project. Mr. Goddard shared with the Committee the reasons for the delay and the attempts to work with TLT over the summer to complete the work necessary to enter into the Phase I portion of the project by the August 17th deadline. After realizing that the work would not be completed in time, the Permanent Building Committee (PBC), School

Committee, and Robert G. Fraser, School Committee counsel met on August 2nd to discuss the contract with TLT and try to bring the project back on schedule. As a result of that meeting, the PBC is now working more aggressively with the contractor to get more resources on site and the principals of Bridge and Bowman came up with a contingency plan to enable those schools to open on time. The facilities team, principals, teachers, staff, and the food service department worked extraordinarily hard to accomplish this endeavor. He expects the work to enter into Phase I in the next two to three weeks. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding costs associated with the delay in construction, the bidding process for the project, availability of heat at the schools, and legal options.

Meg Colella, Principal, Bridge Elementary School addressed the Committee on the renovation project at the Bridge Elementary School, opening day and shared how everyone at her school pitched in to make the contingency plan possible. She thanked Dr. Ash, School Committee and the PBC for their continued support of the project.

Dr. Mary Anton, Principal, Bowman Elementary School addressed the Committee regarding the renovation project at Bowman Elementary School, opening day and how the faculty and staff are coping during the process. She also shared a PowerPoint presentation that she and Meg Colella put together depicting the progress at each of the schools. She too appreciates the support of Dr. Ash, School Committee and PBC for this renovation project. She and Meg both believe that the final product will be worth the wait.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Dr. Ash praised the principals, teachers, staff, and the Facilities Department for all their hard work and creativity. He also thanked the police, fire and inspectional services departments and parents for their contributions.

Margaret Coppe invited public comment.

Jeff Crampton, Precinct 5 and Town Meeting Member, shared his support of the debt exclusion and inquired about the number of students impacted by the delay in construction, and what exactly caused delayed and inquired if the Committee and Town should have known more about the contractor hired.

2. Transportation Report

Dr. Ash stated that Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance Operations would present the Transportation Report to the Committee and noted that there were challenges today which included the weather, parental drop off issues and bus questions. There was a severe parking issue at the Estabrook Elementary School today due to parents parking on both sides of the street and busses were not able to get by. The police ticketed those cars, placed more signage on the street and he hoped that by tomorrow the parking issues would be resolved.

Mary Ellen Dunn provided the Committee with a transportation report, stating that the first day of school each year is typically hectic and challenging and it can take a couple of weeks to settle into a routine. She reported that there are approximately 100 students on a waiting list for bus passes despite the efforts for early sign up. There were also students who had signed up but had not received their passes yet and reported that this might be due to nonpayment, registrations not being mailed in and in some cases a student may have moved and the pass was sent to their former address. Mary Ellen explained the process for wait listed students and families. She also encouraged families to submit bus stop changes to the school and those requests would be reviewed by the school. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding sustainability for bus ridership, impact of the lower fee on bus ridership, flex pass and Lexpress, refunds, bus route schedules and the possibility of instituting a higher rate for anyone signing up after the deadline.

Harvy Simkovits, 4 Angier Road, thanked the School Committee, Dr. Ash and Mary Ellen Dunn and her staff for all their hard work on school transportation for the community. He also inquired whether the Committee had a transportation goal they were working towards and urged them to continue to encourage the community to use the bus.

Judy Crocker, Safe Routes to School Coordinator commented on the time the schools had to address the bus issues with the parent community.

Jeff Crampton, Lockwood Rd, commented that he would like the option of families signing up for the bus once and be signed up until they notify the school otherwise.

3. Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology Policy (New Policy) – Second Reading

Margaret Coppe commented that the first reading to the Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology was last done in 2010. Marianne McKenna, Director of IT/MIS/Technology and Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment took questions and comments from the Committee regarding the need for the updated policy, legal review of the updated policy, privacy concerns, enforcement and suggested changes to the Second Reading.

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development commented on the policy.

Sanjay Sarma, 7 Phinney Road, suggested a change to page 1, line 26.

Motion to Approve Second Reading of the Policy on Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology In the Lexington Public Schools, as amended (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was approved (4-1) Stewart opposed.

Jessie Steigerwald excused herself from the meeting.

4. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) Policy (Revision of Existing Policy) – First Reading

Margaret Coppe presented the changes from the existing policy which dates back to 1995. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Motion to Approve the First Reading, as Amended (Brodner, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (4-0) Steigerwald absent.

5. Use of Drugs and Alcohol on School Premises Policy (Third Reading)

Margaret Coppe reviewed the policy and there were questions and comments from the Committee. It was decided that the Committee would take no action on this policy until there is a legal review of the policy.

6. Recommended Dates and Agendas for Future School Committee Meetings

The Committee discussed proposed dates and agendas for the future Committee meetings and suggested changes in dates.

Carol Pilarski, requested the Committee to allot 45 minutes for the teacher evaluation process.

7. Vote to Accept a Donation of 25 TI-84 Plus Graphing Calculators to the Lexington High School Mathematics Department

Motion to Accept, with Gratitude, a Donation of 25 TI-84 Plus Graphing Calculators to the Lexington High School Mathematics Department (Alessandrini, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (4-0) Steigerwald absent.

Motion to Adjourn (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (4-0); Steigerwald absent

The meeting adjourned at 11:06 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Memorandum dated August 23, 2012 from Dr. Paul Ash to School Committee regarding School Committee Agenda for August 28, 2012; Memorandum dated August 23, 2012 to Dr. Paul Ash from Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance Operations and Elaine Celi, Transportation Coordinator regarding update on bus ridership; Lexington School Committee Policy on Standards for Acceptable Use of Technology In the Lexington Public Schools (Second Reading); Lexington School Committee Policy on Aids and HIV (First Reading); Lexington School Committee Policy on Use of Drugs and Alcohol on School Premises Policy (First Reading); Draft 2012-2013 School Committee Agendas; Letter dated August 22, 2012 from Kevin Kelly, Mathematics Department Head 9-12 regarding an anonymous donation of 25 Texas Instruments TI-84 Plus graphing calculators.

Voted by the School Committee December 18, 2012