

**LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 30, 2013**  
**Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room**  
**1625 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 7:32 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 shared earlier today one of the METCO busses was in an accident this morning on Route 9 in Newton. The bus rear-ended an automobile. The children on the bus, as a precaution, were all sent to area hospitals to be evaluated. Fortunately, the 34 students on board were not seriously injured. The bus company is investigating the accident. Barbara Nobles, Academic Director of the METCO Program immediately began contacting parents by using global connect.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu, 86 Cedar Street inquired if the bus accident was worse than the bus accident about a month ago. Mr. Radulescu-Banu also shared that some parents have asked about having seat belts on busses.

Dr. Ash responded that he has no way of knowing if this accident was worse than the other because the bus company still has to investigate the accident.

Dr. Ash also announced a week and a half ago, when he learned about the bombings at the Boston Marathon, he knew that it was likely that Lexington families would be affected. Immediately after news of the bombing broke, principals, guidance department and staff worked to put together guidelines, memorandums, and letters regarding how to talk to students, what to expect when the students return to school and to have protocols in place. Dr. Ash later found out that there were some students impacted but those numbers were relatively small. There were faculty and staff who personally knew some of the injured and killed. Dr. Ash is very proud of his staff, principals, guidance and administration. They did a wonderful job with those students and staff who needed assistance.

### III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Margaret Coppe requested a moment of silence in honor of the Boston Marathon victims.

A moment of silence was held.

Jessie Steigerwald updated the Committee on the Ad hoc Town wide Master Planning Facilities Committee (AhTMPFC) work which included looking at the Hammond A. Hosmer House which is located next to the police building and the Waldorf School of Lexington building. Ms. Steigerwald invited Committee members to view these buildings. Last week, Ms. Steigerwald met with Peter Kelly and Joe Pato, members of the Board of Selectmen (BOS), Consultant Ken Buchman, Dr. Ash and Patrick Goddard, Director of Public Facilities and toured both of these buildings. Ms. Steigerwald stated that it is important to have accurate figures when the report is written. Ms. Steigerwald requested that Dr. Ash update the 2009 Space Requirement Report and Heidi Zimmerman, Student Services Financial Operating Manager will identify the square footage needed. The AhTMPFC is planning go before the BOS next week. Donna Hooper, Town Clerk, is following up on materials for the time capsule, and Ms. Steigerwald thought it would be nice to include something from this year such as the Estabrook floor plans or the enrollment figures. This needs to be completed by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Steigerwald also mentioned that the High School's Spring Musical Performance "Miss Saigon" will be performed this weekend. The Special Olympics' Opening Ceremony is tomorrow at 9:00 am at the High School.

Margaret Coppe thanked Ms. Steigerwald for reminding the Committee of the time capsule and the Special Olympics. Ms. Coppe stated that there must be a communication breakdown regarding the Special Olympics and the Committee because this was the second year in a row that that the Committee had not been notified in advance. Ms. Coppe shared that last week the Committee met with Glenn Koocher, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to begin the Committee's training on the new state evaluation procedures for superintendents. The Committee is still waiting for some of the regulations by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). These regulations will be needed in order to complete Dr. Ash's evaluation next year.

Dr. Ash agreed to speak with Patric Barbieri, Director of the LABBB program regarding notification of the Special Olympics to the School Committee.

Alessandro Alessandrini suggested adding the School Budget from this year into the time capsule.

### IV. Agenda

#### 1. Discussion of School Committee Policy, Poster, Drives, and Collections, Section 1.B., Flyers and Notices – Presentation by Lexington Resident, Shane Arnold

Shane Arnold, President of the Lexington Little League presented his ideas and suggestions regarding the ban on flyers and notices for outside organizations in the

Schools. Mr. Arnold shared that, in his opinion, because of the ban on flyers he noticed a dramatic decrease in enrollment for Little League in the K-2 enrollments. Listservs and the Minuteman helped to publicize this year but there was still a significant decrease in that age group. He believes K-2 is a good time to start the kids in these activities. There were comments and questions from the Committee.

Leslie Zales, 7 Page Road, Chair of the PTA/PTO Presidents Council (Council) shared that one of the ongoing discussions is the increasing number of requests that are being funneled through the Central Office, PTA and PTO. The Council went through what forms of communication were available such as the parent listserv and global connect. The Council decided that it would be more efficient to use Dr. Ash and the Central Office staff instead of involving principals and their staffs. Ms. Zales stated that if the request is school related it must go through the Central Office. The Council made the recommendation that outside school activities are not to go through the Central Office, but through the Council and Ms. Zales will coordinate sending out the information. Ms. Zales also shared that she did speak with someone from the Little League but that she never heard back so nothing went out for the Little League. Ms. Zales stated that every club and sport has to go through this channel and she has not heard about any other declines. She recommended to Mr. Arnold to contact her directly.

Mr. Arnold shared that unfortunately some communication was lacking with the Little League and he was unaware of this conversation. He does believe strongly that the k-2 ranges are still not fully wrapped into these communication channels and none of the other youth organizations came tonight but had expressed to him the same concerns he spoke about.

Jessie Steigerwald shared her perspective on the situation and suggested the Newcomers Club would also be able to assist him.

Margaret Coppe thanked Mr. Arnold for all his work and stated that hopefully this will be worked out together and that there are many electronic delivery options to send the flyers.

## **2. Vote to Approve 2013-2014 LHS French Student Exchange Trip to Antony, France, and Brussels, Belgium**

Marie Murphy, Head of the Foreign Language Department at the High School came tonight to endorse these two trips and introduce Béckie Bray and Heather Kimura for the Antony, France exchange trip and Lili Pan and Jieyihg Yow for the China exchange trip.

Béckie Bray and Heather Kimura presented the Lexington High School-Lycée Descartes French Exchange trip on February 5-22, 2014 in which 18 high school students in the French program will spend 11 days in Antony, France with host families experiencing the French culture, visiting Paris and exploring Lycée Descartes. Ms. Bray and Ms. Kimura also shared that a four day trip to Brussels, Belgium has been added to this trip which allows students to explore another French speaking country. Lexington will also be hosting 18 French students and two French teachers from Antony, France on October 10-

25, 2013, so they can experience the American culture, tour Boston and spend time at the High School. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding financing, need blind admissions, scholarships and fundraising

**Motion to Approve 2013-2014 LHS French Student Exchange Trip to Antony, France, and Brussels, Belgium (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**3. Vote to Approve 2013-2014 LHS Chinese Student Exchange Trip to China**

Lili Pan and Jieyihg Yow, Chinese Teachers at the High School presented the Lexington High School Chinese Exchange Trip to China on April 12-25, 2014. Each student will stay with a host family and will attend the XueJun High School in Hangzhou. The cost of this trip will be \$3,000 and only students participating in the Mandarin program are invited to attend. Ms. Pan and Ms. Jieyihg shared that the program began in 2004 and that the trip happens every other year. Chinese students and teachers come to Lexington each year in November over the Thanksgiving Holiday. The Chinese students' trip is much shorter (5-6 days) and they mainly visit Boston and the Lexington Area. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding the increased cost of the trip, fundraising, scholarships, need blind admissions, and chaperones.

**Motion to Approve 2013-2014 LHS Chinese Student Exchange Trip to China (Stewart, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (4-1) Steigerwald opposed**

The Committee further stated that in the future they hope this group considers doing fundraising in order to keep the cost of the trip down.

**4. Update from the Ad Hoc Committee to Reduce Student Stress – Presentation by Lexington Residents, B.J. Rudman and Bill Blout**

Alessandro Alessandrini provided background information to the Committee. Mr. Alessandrini shared that the Collaboration to Reduce Student Stress (CRSS) came before the Committee, and member Jessie Steigerwald suggested that we form a subcommittee in order to focus on student stress. Then, at a School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) meeting, Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance came up with the idea of forming an ad hoc committee where the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the School Committee would work together on this issue. Mr. Alessandrini approached both Chairman Coppe and Chairman Mauger of the BOS and they each were very excited and he returned to the Committee to update the members of the interest in this ad hoc committee. Mr. Alessandrini then met with B.J. Rudman and Bill Blout from CRSS to develop a Charge. Mr. Rudman and Mr. Blout are here this evening to share the proposed Charter and composition of the ad hoc committee.

BJ Rudman shared that he and Bill Blout are here tonight to ask the Committee to endorse the creation of an ad hoc committee, which will be a committee on youth as opposed to a committee on student stress. The proposed charter will be used as a public health issue rather than an educational issue. The Charter states in part "*that unhealthy*

*stress on our youth is a community public health concern whose solution requires a collaborative approach involving the schools, students, parents and the broader Lexington community.”* Mr. Rudman is a member of CRSS and this group is made up of parents and other members of the Lexington community who are concerned about the unhealthy and unnecessary stress that students experience and are also interested in helping build their resiliency. The group also believes that this is an issue with broad support within the town to address and understand that this is a community issue and not just a school issue.

Bill Blout, active community member, reviewed the proposed members and they include:

Voting Members: (i) one member of a community based program serving youth at risk in Lexington; (ii) one member from SHAC; (iii) one member from the Youth Service Council of the Lexington Human Services Department; (iv) two members from concerned community groups including clergy; (v) two parents of Lexington youths; and (vi) two Lexington youths.

Nonvoting Members: (i) one member from the Lexington School Administration; (ii) two school principals; (iii) one representative from the school nursing; (iv) one member from school guidance; (v) one Lexington based therapist; and (vi) one community business leader.

There will be nine voting members in total. There would be one liaison from the School Committee and one liaison from the BOS. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Alessandro Alessandrini stated that Chairman Mauger of the BOS suggested the charge be broad in nature to address the issue as a community. The Committee also discussed the composition of the ad hoc committee.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu, 86 Cedar Street thanked Mr. Rudman and Mr. Blout for their work on this ad hoc committee. Mr. Radulescu-Banu shared his opinion on the ad hoc committee and suggested that they look to the open meeting law and consider having a website to post minutes and agendas.

Leslie Zales, 7 Page Road and also a member of SHAC and the Youth Service Committee shared her ideas on the ad hoc committee’s focus, composition and name of the group.

Alessandro Alessandrini shared that the name was changed to youth at risk and they hope it will be wide safety net for kids. The BOS is waiting for the School Committee to make a decision.

## **5. Public Hearing on School Choice**

Dr. Ash presented the School Choice and stated that the Committee does not participate in school choice. The Committee has rejected school choice in the past due to overcrowding in schools and for financial reasons.

The Chair opened the public hearing on school choice.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu, 86 Cedar Street questioned whether other towns such as Concord, Belmont, Weston, Wellesley and Winchester participated in School Choice. Mr. Radulescu-Banu also questioned if students had the opportunity to apply, would they have to reapply each year. He also wanted to know if it were opened up would it be based on a lottery system.

Dr. Ash responded that he did not have the information on whether other school districts participated in School Choice. Each town makes the decision based on their individual needs. Dr. Ash stated that the School Committee must vote every year. Once a student is admitted into the Lexington School District, that student stays in the school system until graduation. There is no question in his mind that if we opened up slots each slot would be filled and it would be on a first come first serve basis.

Andrei Radulescu-Banu also stated the Minuteman High School accepts students from other school districts and they get reimbursed for each student and capital costs. Mr. Radulescu-Banu was interested in how Lexington Public Schools would be reimbursed for students and capital costs.

Dr. Ash shared that there is a separate statute that accepts reimbursements for vocational schools.

Margaret Coppe stated that the Committee will vote on this item on May 14.

#### **6. Report on PreK-12 Health Services (6)**

Jill Gasperini RN, MN, Nurse Leader, Coordinator of School Health Services Lexington Public Schools presented the Lexington Public Schools Health Services Data Report through a PowerPoint Presentation which included (i) Lexington School Nurses; (ii) 58,940 office visits; (iii) LPS Vision Statement and breakdown of student health issues; (iv) rescue medications; (v) life threatening allergies; (vi) school nurses oversee medication administration; (vii) school nurses screen students for vision, hearing, BMI, and scoliosis; (viii) assessment; (ix) diabetes care; (x) flu clinics; (xi) mental health – number of visits requiring intervention, mental health referrals and techniques used by nurses to calm, cope and reassure students; (xii) school nurses teach – human growth and development, CPR and AED training, life threatening allergies and EpiPens, infection control and universal precautions, and emergency procedures; and (xiii) wellness activities.

There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding (i) number of FTEs and best practice ratios and guidelines; (ii) supplies and equipment; (iii) sufficient

staffing needs when nurses attend field trips; (iv) reporting requirements for acts like cutting and substance abuse; (v) homeless children and vaccinations and immunizations; (vi) high school stress; (vii) adequate space needs at the schools; (viii) barriers to language; (ix) health emergencies on school busses; and (x) mental health issues and communication with guidance department.

Jill Gasperini shared that they are fine with supplies and equipment and a grant pays for one position which would have had to have been funded by the school. The grant has been in place for 10 years and we are in a 2 year renewal period and is projected for another 2 year renewal. Ms. Gasperini would like to see the Hastings Elementary School Nurses Office enlarged. Ms. Gasperini then shared her thoughts on the number of FTEs and best practices.

Susan Kaftan, School Nurse, Lexington High School responded that reporting requirements are not a mandated requirement policy at the High School, but they try to get parents, deans and social workers involved in cases of substance abuse or other mental health issues. Ms. Kaftan shared that the High School works as a team trying to address the issues and the nurses are just one piece of that team.

Mary Ellen Dunn shared that they have been trying to offer EpiPen training for bus drivers, but all bus drivers have first aid training. The protocol for any emergency on the bus is for the driver to call 911 and that most children who need an EpiPen usually carry one in their backpacks. Ms. Dunn shared that her office works with the drivers and encourages parents to disclose directly with the bus driver if their child has any life threatening allergies.

#### **7. Clarke Middle School China Exchange Program**

Anna Monaco, Principal, Jonas Clarke Middle School (“Clarke MS”) presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Clarke MS Mandarin Program which included (i) overview of the program; (ii) history of events; (iii) plans and next steps for Clark MS and the Clark MS community; and (iv) the importance of student travel and having a cultural understanding. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Ruth Litchfield, teacher at Bridge School and resident of Lexington, shared her experiences of teaching in France and Germany and is fluent in French and German and how these trips are powerful experiences for the students. Ms. Litchfield is in support of the Exchange Program.

Judy Healy, 54 Shade Street, parent of 7<sup>th</sup> grader in the Mandarin program shared that she is in support of sending her son on this trip and is comfortable with the security of the trip but is concerned about the cost.

#### **8. FY 2013 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Financial Report (8)**

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business presented the FY2013 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Report which included a projected surplus for FY 2013 in the amount of \$185,400. As of April 22, 2013 there is an unspent balance in program

budgets totaling \$989,311. This is due to normal changes in staffing, lower out-of-district tuition costs, surplus program funds and additional special education circuit breaker funds. \$391,325 is being held in reserve for 23 high risk placements for May and June. \$190,000 is being held in reserve for the use of substitutes in May and June. Ms. Dunn stated that the current FY 2013 projected surplus should rise over the next month when the above funds are released.

Ms. Dunn further shared that (i) salaries and wages has a projected deficit of \$4,112; and (ii) out-of-district tuition has a projected surplus of \$543,223 which supports 127 students. The LABB credit has been reduced from \$250,000 to \$100,000. The difference of \$150,000 will be applied to the FY 2014 budget and will be earmarked for FY 2013-2014 (i) Teacher Evaluation Training (\$80,000); (ii) REMS Training in August (\$30,000); and (iii) other professional development needs (\$40,000).

Ms. Dunn then spoke to (i) regular transportation; (ii) homeless transportation with a projected deficit of \$32,856; and (iii) Special Education Transportation with a projected deficit of \$18,309. Ms. Dunn shared that legal services will have a projected deficit of \$255,640 due to recent personnel and special education legal expenses. Ms. Dunn then recommended transfers of monies. The budget closes tomorrow for budget managers to spend their operating budgets for the Fiscal Year.

The transfers that will need to be voted on tonight include (i) teacher evaluation training (\$80,000); (ii) REMS training in August (\$30,000); and (ii) other professional development needs (\$40,000).

There were questions and comments from the Committee

Dr. Ash questioned on page 4, Teacher Evaluation \$95,000 should be FY 2013 and not FY2014 and he also recommends the transfers on page 4 of the memorandum.

**Motion to Authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance to make the Recommended Transfers as outlined on Page 4 for FY 2014**  
(Stewart, Brodner) **The Motion was Approved (5-0).**

**9. Vote to accept a \$374 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Maria Hastings School Gift Account**

**Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$374 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to be Deposited in the Maria Hastings School Gift Account** (Alessandrini, Steigerwald) **The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**10. Vote to accept a \$462 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Bridge School Gift Account**

**Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$462 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser To Be Deposited in the Bridge School Gift Account (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**11. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 26, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**12. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 12, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**13. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 18, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**14. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 20, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**15. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 27, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**16. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 1, 2013**

**Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 1, 2013, as amended (Steigerwald, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (4-0) Stewart abstained.**

**17. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 3, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

**18. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of April 8, 2013**

The Committee decided to postpone voting on this set of minutes.

The Chair announced the next School Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 14. Ms. Coppe then requested that any changes to the minutes be forwarded to her by May 7.

**Motion to Adjourn (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

**The Meeting Adjourned at 10:45 p.m.**

*Documents: Meeting Agenda; Memo from Shane Arnold to Miriam Sousa dated April 23, 2013 re Flyer Distribution in Lexington Schools; Lexington School Committee Policy re Posters, Drives and Collections Policy; Lexington Public Schools Health Services Data Report dated Spring 2012; PowerPoint Presentation by Jill Gasperini, RN, MN, Nurse Leader Lexington School Health Services; Memorandum dated April 23, 2013 from Mary Ellen Dunn to Dr. Paul Ash re FY2013 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financial Report; PowerPoint Presentation dated April 30, 2012 by Anna Monaco entitled “Clarke’s Mandarin Program; Lexington Public Schools Field Trip Request Form from Lexington High School field trip to Antony, France and LHS French Exchange 2013-2014 Program; Lexington Public Schools Field Trip Request Form from LHS Mandarin Trip and Chinese Foreign Exchange Program; Letter dated April 12, 2013 to Lexington School Committee from Louise Lipsitz re Donation from Wilson Farms; Letter dated April 12, 2013 to Lexington School Committee from Margaret Colella re Donation from Wilson Farms; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated February 26, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated March 12, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated March 18, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated March 20, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated March 27, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated April 1, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated April 3, 2013; Draft Lexington School Committee Meeting Minutes dated April 8, 2013.*

Voted by the School Committee August 27, 2013