

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Tuesday, January 3, 2017
Town Hall, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA

Present:

Chair, William Hurley; Vice Chair, Alessandro Alessandrini; Judy Crocker; Eileen Jay; Superintendent, Dr. Czajkowski; Student Representative, Matt Campos

Absent: Jessie Steigerwald

The minutes were taken by Sara Calvino, Executive Assistant to the School Committee and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

The meeting convened at 7pm

Call to Order and Welcome:

Chair Bill Hurley called the meeting to order and introduced committee members.

Public Comments:

Elaine Ashton, 32 Cliff Avenue – Ms. Ashton would like to support Dawn McKenna's opinion that public comments be allowed during School Committee meetings.

Superintendent's Announcement:

- Dr. Czajkowski introduced the new Executive Assistant to the School Committee and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, Kristen Cronin, who will join Lexington Public Schools on Monday, January 23rd.
- Dr. Czajkowski thanked the DPF staff, Shawn Newell and Chris Bouchard for their leadership and organization of the school safety training for custodians and maintenance staff that was conducted by Ms. Trach.
- The two budget hearings will take place on Tuesday, January 17th at 7 p.m. at Battin Hall in Cary Memorial Building and on Saturday, January 21st at 10 a.m. at Battin Hall in Cary Memorial Building. This information has been posted on the LPS website and will be published in the Lexington Minuteman.
- Andrew Baker and Dr. Czajkowski will begin the Homework Listening Tours with elementary teachers on January 4th at 3:45pm in the Fiske Elementary School Library. These meetings are voluntary for all staff.
- Central Registration will begin for all new incoming Pre-K – 5 students and families on February 1st. Ms. Trach will provide further updates in her presentation this evening.

School Committee Member Announcements:

A. Alessandrini: The Community Center Program Committee has requested ideas for the carriage space at the Community Center. Please send Mr. Alessandrini ideas before January 12th. Mr. Alessandrini would like to represent the School Committee on the Lexington Human Rights Committee. Dr. Czajkowski will reach out to Barbara Nobles first to request she represent School Administration on the Lexington Human Rights Committee. Mr. Alessandrini read a paragraph from the Lexington High School Musket Paper regarding METCO.

J. Crocker: Happy New Year Everyone! Ms. Crocker welcomed Kristen Cronin. The sign-up for the day of service has begun for Martin Luther King Day. Ms. Crocker held a moment of silence for the two hockey players from Falmouth who passed away.

W. Hurley: Mr. Hurley read from Public Meeting Law by Martha Coakley, former Attorney General for the State of Massachusetts, regarding public participation. There is no policy that is being violated with how the School Committee is conducting their meetings. The School Committee allows for 10 minutes during the meeting for public comment but is not required to allow public comments during the meeting.

E. Jay: Thursday, January 5th at 7 p.m. in the Science Lecture Hall is the evening session of Life after LHS to hear about experiences that LHS alumni have. We are very grateful to have alumni who are willing to come back and talk to current students. This session is very informative for both parents and students.

M. Campos: Life after Lexington High School panel is very interesting and quite humorous as well. The Musket article does generally reflect the common opinion from all students at LHS regarding the METCO program.

Agenda:

1. – Agenda Item: World Language Update

Catherine Brooks, World Language Department Head, provided an update to the School Committee on the Elementary World Language research.

The School Committee had voted to put a “pause” on the World Language in the elementary level, but had requested that the administration explore further options. Ms. Brooks has been researching programs other districts for different ideas.

Ms. Crocker thanked Ms. Brooks for her research. Two big issues we all have with bringing back world language are finances for the program and time in the student’s day to support this program. Ms. Crocker finds the bi-literacy option very interesting. Her only concern would be that this wouldn’t be another test or one more award for students. In Ms. Crocker’s opinion, the students do not need another test, but that does not mean that it is not a valid program.

Dr. Czajkowski encouraged Ms. Brooks to visit some elementary schools that have a World Language Program in person. After these visits, she will return to the School Committee with an update on how much a World Language Program will cost and the time needed to support this program even if it means looking at the half day Thursdays. This might allow Lexington to bring back World Language in the elementary level even if it’s just for one grade at a time.

During Ms. Brooks visit to the schools, Ms. Jay would like to know if their have experience with how a small amount of exposure to World Language at the elementary level affects entering Middle School World Language.

Mr. Hurley would like to know how these different schools have funded the World Language Program. If these schools had to do it over again with the same financial recourses would they or would they not change anything about the process.

2. – Agenda Item: Enrollment Update

Maureen Kavanaugh, Director of Planning and Assessment, presented a review of longitudinal student enrollment trends and updated annual enrollment projections.

Enrollment snapshots have shown the projection numbers of 84 students for next year, as of right now that number has changed to 169 students. The increase could possibly be due to the highly quality of the schools, the local housing market, local and regional economy, and community proximity to Boston and Rte. 95.

After reviewing these projections, Mr. Hurley feels strongly about submitting the SOI for Lexington High School in the next two years.

Ms. Crocker recommended doing exit surveys for parents or students graduating from LHS. This would be very interesting and it would be useful to know the feedback.

3. – Agenda Item: Central Registration

Sandy Trach, Special Assistant to the Superintendent updated the School Committee on the Central Registration Department.

Central Registration is one strategy that is being used to manage student assignment and space capacity. Registration will no longer take place at the individual schools but rather will be processed in one central location at the Central Office in Room 9.

Central Registration will begin for all new incoming Pre-K – 5 students and families on February 1st. The ultimate long-term goal is to implement an efficient permanent registration process that includes transportation, free/reduced lunch, ELL, form agreements, and back to school updates.

Ms. Trach introduced the newly hired Registration and Enrollment Specialist, Amy Diaz, and the newly hired Central Registration Administrative Assistant, Kristen Merta.

Matt Campos thanked everyone who took part in Central Registration as this will help monitor the enrollment more closely.

The School Committee congratulated the Superintendent and Ms. Trach for their amazing amount of work.

Ms. Crocker is surprised by the .5 FTE Residency Officer. Ms. Trach explained that enough inquiries do happen to necessitate a .5 FTE Residency Officer.

Ms. Trach explained that for privacy there will be a designated fax machine with a specific fax number for health records as well as for 504s and IEPs.

4. – Agenda Item: Coalition Update

Ms. Jay presented an update on the Lexington Community Coalition.

The Steering Committee that oversees the Coalition has continued to meet. There will be a Community event in March around the goals of the committee.

The Bedford Public Schools have been doing a Bedford Unplugged series of events for a few years. The Coalition is currently looking into what a Lexington Unplugged Day would look like. The importance of this effort is not the event itself but in the process of raising awareness within the community and encouraging families to disconnect from technology and spend time with one another.

The School Committee believes the Lexington Unplugged would be very useful for the school and the community.

5. – Agenda Item: FY 18 Budget Presentation

Superintendent, Dr. Mary Czajkowski and Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, Ian Dailey, presented the recommended FY 2017 – 2018 Budget.

One small correction in the budget book on Page 2 of the Budget Overview section; replace this page with the yellow page.

Dr. Czajkowski presented the FY17 school budget in the amount of \$101,850,333, which represents an increase of \$4,557,034 or 4.68%. Dr. Czajkowski reported:

Through the continual assessment of our student needs as well as the review of our programs, resources have been allocated and reallocated to provide all students with an education that ensures academic excellence and support for their social and emotional well-being in a culture of caring and respectful relationships as outlined in our district's mission statement. During the last 5 years, the district has experienced the addition of 685 students representing a 10.6% increase in enrollment. Dr. Czajkowski is confident that this proposed budget is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible. Dr. Czajkowski thanked Ian Dailey, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, our administrative support staff, our central office administrators, administrative team, staff, parents, and school councils for their input in the development of this proposed budget.

The Superintendent's fiscal year 2018 Budget Summary PowerPoint presentation was included in the packet to describe the budget in further detail.

Ms. Crocker would like Lexington to investigate bringing Legal in house. Dr. Czajkowski has spoken to Colby Brunt about possibly joining the administrative team. Colby will be putting together a proposal and Dr. Czajkowski will be reviewing it to bring to the School Committee.

Mr. Alessandrini feels that Lexington should be putting money aside for possible Federal Grant cuts just in case health care is repealed. Dr. Czajkowski explained that the town does set aside a rainy-day fund for the town and the school district.

Mr. Hurley finds the value in what Mr. Alessandrini has said about putting money aside for cuts, but does not believe in upping the budget more for additional money to be set aside because the town already holds a certain amount of money aside already for the school district.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, Ian Dailey, presented the cost analysis for the METCO program and the cost analysis for the Ride After Program.

On November 1, 2016, the School Committee received opinion papers from a citizen regarding the financial impact of the METCO program and the Racial Imbalance Act. The Financial Opinion paper claimed that the total cost to support METCO in Lexington was \$5.6 million, with \$4.2 million in operating cost and \$1.4 million in capital cost.

Mr. Dailey performed a METCO cost analysis for the operating budget and found that the estimated Annual Operating Impact of METCO is \$1,273,144. METCO capital costs cannot be calculated without identifying specific projects that would be impacted by a reduction in METCO enrollment.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, Ian Dailey, presented the cost analysis for the Ride After Program.

Currently, there are an estimated 402 riders. Each student is required to pay the base bus fee plus an extra \$60 for the Ride After Program.

Mr. Dailey reviewed the break down for the total estimated cost of \$372,254 for the Ride After Program. Collection of the extra \$60 fee brings \$24,120 in revenue. Therefore, LPS subsidizes \$348,134 in operating costs.

In the budget book, the Ride After Program will be staying the same but the Transportation Department will be capping riders at 40 students per school.

Motion to adjourn. (Hurley/Alessandrini)

The Motion was approved 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

Meeting Materials: Agenda; **A.1-** Agenda Item Summary, Memo, World Language PowerPoint Presentation; **A.2-** Agenda Item Summary, Enrollment PowerPoint Presentation **A.3-** Agenda Item Summary; **A.4-** Agenda Item Summary; **A.5-** Agenda Item Summary; **H.O.-** Central Registration PowerPoint