

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 3, 2011
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James, Joe Connell (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance).
Absent: Debbie John (Boston Representative), Deb Leister (Hanscom Representative).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Glass and Mr. Brandmeyer thanked 6th grade teacher David Trant who is working with students to tape Committee meetings.

Mr. Schmertzler asked whether there was interest in having the Tuskegee Airmen visit Hanscom. (The Airmen were a separate squadron of black pilots who flew in 1941, see www.redtail.org.) Ms. James noted that her uncle was a navigator for them, and she is happy to provide further information.

Ms. Glass thanked Ms. James for her help with the successful Bingo night. Ms. Glass and Mr. Brandmeyer met in Boston last week with the representatives of the METCO Coordinating Committee, teachers, and parents. They gave the budget overview, and parents had trouble choosing which pieces were critical to a successful METCO program. Mr. Brandmeyer discussed the efforts to hire a diverse faculty. Mr. Schmertzler suggested that no school staff should be separated for METCO or non-METCO students; it should all be based on need for services.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Gifts

Documents: 1) Letter from Carol Rieg, Corporate Foundation Officer, Bentley Systems, Inc. to Brooks Middle School—David Trant and Nick Blaesdell, dated December 31, 2010 RE: STEM Scholarship Grant; 2) Lincoln School STEM Grant Proposal, dated November 22, 2010, by Noah Eckhouse; 3) Letter from Michael Lueders, President, Lueders Environmental, Inc. to Michael Brandmeyer, dated January 13, 2011 with a copy of a check for \$50; 4) Memorandum from Buckner Creel to School Committee, dated January 13, 2011 RE: Gift of Office Furniture

Selectman Noah Eckhouse, who works for Bentley Systems, Inc., organized his colleagues to donate \$3,500 for a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math [STEM] Scholarship Grant targeted to the Lincoln Middle School. Mr. Brandmeyer will send thank-you letters to all donors.

Mr. Schmertzler moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to accept the donations of \$3,500 from Bentley Systems, Inc. for the Lincoln Middle School, \$50 from Lueders Environmental, Inc., and three filing cabinets from Mr. and Mrs. David Levy for the Lincoln Public Schools. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the donations.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Report on Project 351

Documents: 1) Letter from Governor Deval Patrick to Massachusetts Superintendents, dated December 6, 2010; 2) Itinerary and Information about Project 351, The Inauguration of Governor Deval Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, January 8, 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer introduced Lincoln 8th grader Leah Kanzer, who represented the district at Governor Patrick's inauguration for Project 351. Ms. Glass thanked her for sharing her thoughts on the day.

Miss Kanzer said the day was rescheduled to January 15. During the town meeting, Governor Patrick talked to them about how they can help children now and change society. She appreciated how much the Governor cared about students. She volunteered at Cradles to Crayons, where they donate

toys to those less fortunate, and the Boston Food Bank, where they bagged apples and food for students to take home over weekends, and filled food boxes for elders. They met Celtics' star Ray Allen, which "was cool." There are many opportunities for students to become involved in community service, and she helps at a Lawrence soup kitchen and at LoveLane. Helping others is part of what students should do, and she learned a lot and enjoyed it. She's been able to get some of her Lincoln friends to join the Project 351 Facebook group.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her report.

B. FY2012 Budget: Final Recommendation and Vote

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Mickey Brandmeyer to School Committee, dated January 31, 2011 RE: FY12 Budget—Final Recommendation; 2) FY12 Budget—Gap Closing Recommendations as of January 31, 2011, Lincoln Campus

Mr. Brandmeyer said they met with the Finance Committee and with Boston parents. Boston parents were hard pressed to choose which pieces of the METCO program were most important but agreed that academics are first and foremost. They all know there will be hard choices ahead. They have not yet finalized any changes to METCO. The Governor's budget, which level-funds the METCO grant, will probably be cut again. Lincoln does not yet know the amount of money that will be received. They are still negotiating with the Lincoln Teachers' Association [LTA] and are approaching an agreement in principle. Mr. Creel is finalizing contracts with utility companies and needs more time to figure out the financial ramifications. There remains a gap of \$29,000. They've added \$24,000 from the Town budget if Town Meeting approves the Town Hall renovation to compensate the school for using parts of the Hartwell Building for Town Offices during construction. He asked the Committee to vote the budget of \$9,475,105 for FY12 and finalize the \$29,000 of cuts later.

The Committee thanked Mr. Brandmeyer, Mr. Creel, and the entire team for their work on the budget. Mr. Christenfeld asked that they continue the conversation with the METCO parents. Mr. Brandmeyer has not yet formed a recommendation on METCO but will focus resources on academics and will continue the conversation. Mr. Sander asked that they add to a School Committee agenda the longer term discussion on METCO and a strategy for increasing funding for it.

Mr. Sander moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the budget of \$9,475,105 for FY2012, with the proposed reductions shown on the January 31 sheet. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the budget.

C. School Calendar 2011-2012: Review and Vote

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln, Massachusetts, 2011-2012, Draft, February 3, 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer said the LTA voted to approve the pre-Labor Day start to the 2011-2012 school year. He proposed that students start school on August 31 and attend three school days before the Labor Day holiday. Lincoln-Sudbury will start before Labor Day.

Mr. Connell suggested a March vacation instead of the two weeks in February and April. Mr. Brandmeyer said other districts have tried it and switched back to February and April breaks.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the 2011-2012 school calendar as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2011-2012 calendar.

D. Report on Operations of Frontier Academy

Document: 1) Memorandum from Stephanie Powers to School Committee, dated January 28, 2011 RE: Update on Frontier Academy

Mr. Brandmeyer presented Ms. Powers' report on Frontier Academy, a private school located at the Carroll School in Lincoln, as she was attending a family event. Frontier Academy offers the Arrowsmith Program, a cognitive program that works to remediate the causes of most common learning dysfunctions by exercising weak areas of the brain. The Arrowsmith Program, the school from which Program Founders Charles Cherington and Ashley Pettus received the license, has told them that they need to align themselves with a school in order to continue. They are not allowed to enroll new students. Ms. Powers found the program and exercises interesting, but there was some concern that the academics were not as strong as they should be. Students were hard at work, however, and she had a good visit.

They are not sure whether the Carroll School is interested in aligning with the program. Frontier Academy has not integrated with the Carroll School. Mr. Brandmeyer said he did not think Ms. Pettus and Mr. Cherington would come back to the Committee to continue it.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

E. Update on School Committee's Long-term Agenda

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, School Committee Long-Term Agenda, 2010-2011, dated January 31, 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer said they have not added activities, but have moved some reports because they need more time to prepare them. Standards-based report cards will be presented later in the year. A report on the project to assess differentiated instruction will be handled earlier. On February 17, there will be a multi-Board meeting and visioning sessions with the School Building Committee [SBC] and OMR, the design architect. He will add updates on the SBC.

Committee members asked that METCO, the achievement gap, the Finance Committee report, and policy handbook issues be included.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Mickey Brandmeyer to School Committee, dated February 3, 2011 RE: 180-Day Requirement and School Cancellations; 2) Lincoln Public Schools Calendar 2010-2011; 3) Memorandum from Commissioner Mitchell D. Chester to Superintendents and Charter School Leaders, dated February 3, 2011, RE: Student Learning Time: Guidance on the 180-Day Requirement

Mr. Brandmeyer said they submitted their bullying policy to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education but have not heard whether they are in compliance.

Today they celebrated the Chinese New Year at Hanscom and prepared a Chinese lunch. Students received fortune cookies with the message, "Hang in there, it's not over yet!"

He thanked Mr. Creel and Mr. Haines for their wonderful work getting the school roofs cleaned off. The current snow load does not exceed their design. If buildings are unsafe, they will close the buildings or any place where it is unsafe. Mr. Creel said they have enough money to spend on snow removal.

Mr. Brandmeyer called their attention to his memo on school cancellations as they've already used four of the five days. He did not want to disrupt a scheduled vacation if they need to make up one or two days, but if they need to make up three or more days, they can disrupt the April vacation, or they could schedule school on Saturdays. Ms. Glass suggested that they ask for input at the PTA meeting.

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. Glass seconded, the motion that if more than one additional snow date occurs by March 15, they hold scheduled classes on Tuesday, April 19, Wednesday, April 20, and Thursday, April 21 in that order. Mr. Schmertzler abstained, and the rest of the Committee voted in favor of the motion.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling focused on art. The preschool students' art on trees and pinecones is hung upstairs. Kindergarteners made mittens, which are teaching them symmetry and mirroring, first graders have made winter hats to work on accurate color, and third graders made snowglobes and are learning basic shapes and how to place objects in the foreground and background. She thanked art teachers Colleen Peirce and Donna Lubens for their work.

Mr. Schmerzler mentioned the *Boston Globe* article that mentioned their focus on writing. He is impressed with their work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$598,197.00 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$115,408.33 for a total of \$713,605.33. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Ms. Glass moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Sander seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

A. Process for Evaluation of the Superintendent

Document: None.

Ms. Glass explained that she will send the Committee members the categories with the key components to use to evaluate Mr. Brandmeyer's performance. She asked the members to not send her comments via email but make notes and mention examples which will form the basis of the discussion to be held in open session. The evaluation and salary discussion will be done in executive session, and they will come back to open session to vote on the evaluation. They plan to have the performance evaluation on March 3.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes for October 14, 2010; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes for October 28, 2010

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the minutes for the meetings of October 14 and October 28, 2010. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes. They will be posted on the web site.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Ms. James, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary