

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 10, 2012
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James.
Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent),
Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and
Finance).

Absent: Carol Perkins (Boston Representative), Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld and Mr. Brandmeyer attended the EDCO Board Meeting, at which they voted to disband EDCO of Greater Boston and undertake an administrative restructuring. EDCO voted to offer the Executive Director position to someone who is currently the director of a North Shore collaborative. She will start work this summer, and they look forward to meeting her soon.

Mr. Christenfeld was a guest lecturer for an introduction to education class at New York University last week. They discussed School Committees and accountability.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Discussion and Vote to Accept Lincoln School Foundation Grants

Documents: 1) Letter to School Committee from Ruth Montero, Lincoln School Foundation, RE: Lincoln School Foundation 2011-2012 Grant Cycle, dated April 27, 2012; 2) Lincoln School Foundation, Approved Grants for 2012-2013, dated April 27, 2012; 3) Lincoln School Foundation, Out-of-Cycle Grants Awarded 2011-2012, undated

Ms. Glass introduced Ruth Montero, Leslie Hunter, Neville McCaghren, and Karen Prince from the Lincoln School Foundation. Ms. Prince said they raise money from the community and award grants to teachers to enhance curriculum, professional development, and community outreach. Their process starts in October. They had 18 trustees who each provided input. Ms. Montero said they were pleased with the quality and array of grants for the Lincoln and Hanscom campuses. They awarded 15 grants—6 to Lincoln, 3 to Hanscom, and 6 cross-campus—for a total of \$36,615. They also awarded 4 out-of-cycle grants for a total of \$2,820 2 to Lincoln and 2 to Hanscom.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked them for their great and collaborative work. Their funding of technology gives the administration and Committee an opportunity to consider an integrated technology plan. He wanted to learn how these pilots worked and whether they are worthwhile to pursue. Mr. McCaghren noted that the people awarded the grants are required to submit a grant review on how things worked. Mr. Brandmeyer noted there will be reports on the use of technology at the Hanscom Middle School on May 31.

Mr. Brandmeyer thanked the LSF for its work noting that the collaboration with the LSF allows the district to stretch dollars. He and the administration meet to discuss the applications, and the district and LSF both get more traction with the money when the projects are aligned with the district's goals. He and Ms. Sterling will meet with the LSF May 23 to improve the process. He highlighted project #19 (whiteboards for the 3rd and 4th grade classrooms), which will be funded by the district, but the LSF will fund professional development, stipends, and other materials for them.

Mr. Creel mentioned the LSF has met with the business office to discuss how the LSF and school can cooperate to procure equipment because the school can receive discounts. The equipment then becomes school equipment. Mr. McCaghren noted that the LSF will have a new treasurer.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to accept the Lincoln School Foundation grants as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the grants.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their collaboration and this great partnership.

B. Report on Implementation of METCO Reorganization Plan

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer from Stephen McKenna and Sharon Hobbs, Re: Evaluation Report on Lincoln School's METCO Program, dated April 26, 2012

Mr. Brandmeyer said Principals Steve McKenna and Sharon Hobbs and METCO Director and Academic Advisor Lateefah Franck have accomplished all of the work and collected information to evaluate the changes to the reorganized METCO program. Last school year, Mr. Brandmeyer decided to use the METCO money to focus on teaching and learning.

Mr. McKenna noted that the committee that hired Ms. Franck was comprised of two parents, a social worker, and teachers, and they kept that committee as the evaluation team, which will meet in June.

Dr. Hobbs said that they used the resources for all students in grades K-8 with the "One School, One Program" idea to have all students be served by the math and literacy specialists and Academic Advisors LaToya Rivers and Ms. Franck. Dr. Hobbs noted the data shows that some METCO students did well but others need more help. They are asking themselves if they are meeting the needs of all students in the right way, and if they are serving them in English Language Arts and Math in the most strategic way.

Mr. McKenna and Dr. Hobbs reviewed the report, which listed the outreach and surveys sent to Boston parents. Mr. McKenna said a small slice of population responded to the surveys. Both principals felt the outreach and relationship building was successful.

Ms. Franck reported that the year has been a whirlwind, even with the supports Mr. Brandmeyer established, and she balanced the work of the half-time Director position with the half-time Academic Advisor position. She knew the goal was to increase the academic performance of the Boston students, and they shifted delivery of services were delivered to meet that goal. She also encouraged Boston students to take advantage of METCO, Inc. resources. While they have not focused on the social-emotional piece for Boston students this year, she noted that they will work on it next year and will fine tune the academic piece to increase academic achievement for Boston students. Boston students need to be successful in the two worlds of Boston and Lincoln. Boston students feel they can get help from all Lincoln staff, but the parents still want to talk to METCO staff. Ms. Franck said a huge bridge has been crossed, and they continue to do more outreach to parents. There have been more meetings in Boston with parents, the PTA, and the school administration. She also works with counterparts in other districts to get their ideas and practices.

Dr. Hobbs also noted that the achievement gap is narrowing for the Boston students, but the gap exists in other places than for the Boston students. They will increase professional development to enhance the teaching of literacy and math.

Dr. Hobbs said it was premature to recommend changes now, and they will continue with the current plan for at least one more year and keep the implementation and evaluation team intact.

Mr. Brandmeyer commended Mr. McKenna, Dr. Hobbs, and Ms. Franck for their work on the reorganization. He noted that Ms. Franck has the right skill set and has led the METCO program well and that Mr. McKenna and Dr. Hobbs have been great mentors. He said the evidence shows they are heading in the right direction, there have been fewer issues with METCO, and they have done great planning and interventions to help students. Mr. Brandmeyer congratulated them for their great work.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

C. Report on Lincoln's Process of Alignment to the National Common Core Through the New State Standards

Document: Memorandum to School Committee from Mary Sterling, RE: Report on Alignment to National Common Core Standards through New State Standards, dated May 1, 2012

Ms. Sterling showed the green [English Language Arts (ELA)] and blue [math] handbooks of the 2011 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in ELA and mathematics. The state revised the state frameworks in ELA and math to incorporate the new National Common Core Standards and distributed these standards to districts in August 2011. Ms. Sterling said Massachusetts already had some of the most rigorous standards and helped to put together the national standards. She noted that military families will benefit from national standards, and the coherence and consistency is promising. She introduced ELA content specialist Judy Merra and math content specialist Ellen Metzger to review some of the changes via PowerPoint presentations.

Ms. Merra showed the shift in emphasis in certain areas of ELA. There are now four strands: 1) reading, 2) writing, 3) language, and 4) speaking and listening. They have College and Career Ready [CCR] standards and have listed the steps to take to meet those standards. With grade 4, they had emphasized narrative writing, but they have added two additional types of writing—informative and explanatory texts and opinion. Students will learn media literacy and the skills to use digital texts and resources. Students in grades 6 through 8 will have new reading and writing standards in history, social studies, and science and technical subjects. They will learn the skills to write in those subjects.

Ms. Merra said teachers will need to revise the report card descriptors and develop their practice with the shift. The curricula will be adjusted to reflect the new emphases. The Lincoln Learning Expectations will be revised this summer. Ms. Sterling noted that 90% of the new ELA standards are embedded in the old ones, and the skill levels are being raised.

Ms. Glass suggested that they write a top ten list on the new standards, explaining what is different for the community.

Ms. Metzger noted a helpful website: www.illustrativemathematics.org, which is interactive. The new standards have strands of different types of math through the grades; geometry is the only strand that runs through grades K-8. They have limited the number of standards at each grade level, but each concept is covered more deeply than before. For example, for grade 4, there will be three critical areas: 1) number and place value, 2) fractions, and 3) geometry. They are shifting the emphasis to mathematical habits of mind for math practice, and these are repeated at each grade level. These are not study habits, they are thinking habits. One standard is to construct viable arguments and critique others. One example is what shape gives the greatest space? Students need to look for structure, and utilize repeated reasoning.

Ms. Metzger said they have to modify the curricula; the materials the district uses are strong but are not completely aligned. As with ELA, they will revise report card descriptors and rewrite Lincoln Learning Expectations. Ms. Sterling noted that the math standards changed more than the ELA's. Ms. Metzger is working with other districts that use Everyday Math and Impact Math to share resources and ideas. She is mapping everything out.

Ms. Sterling reviewed the timeline for implementation making the changes, which is in the report. She tips her hat to the literacy and math specialists as implementing the standards is a big undertaking. They are interviewing for an additional part-time math specialist. They will be working on this during this summer and will use the Wednesday afternoons for professional development to teach the new standards. Ms. Sterling said they are lucky to have Ms. Merra and Ms. Metzger leading this effort.

Ms. Glass asked Ms. Sterling to convey to all that the Committee appreciates all of the thought and time spent on this shift. It is exciting, but she knows how much work it will be.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer said the LSF technology grants helped the district to do a major technology adoption. They have the opportunity to use resources for systems and software upgrades and are looking at the structure for email and tools for teachers and students. They might use Microsoft Office or iWork Suite for Apple. They want to avoid different platforms across campuses to reduce glitches. He has a team working on the issue that will report in June.

Mr. Brandmeyer has had productive meetings with Dr. Rebecca McFall. He said she is well on her way to starting, has good insights, and asks good questions. She will attend next week's Administrative Council meeting.

Mr. Brandmeyer gave the update on personnel hiring. They have appointed two 5th grade teachers for Lincoln, the preschool has hired a part-time speech and language specialist. They are in the final stage of hiring a 2nd grade teacher at Hanscom, and Ms. Powers is in the final stage for two school psychologists. Ms. Fagan is looking for a preschool teacher who may be part time or full time. Ms. Sterling is looking for a math specialist. Mr. Brandmeyer is confident that they will select the best candidates and the hiring process will be completed by the end of May. He is very pleased.

Mr. Brandmeyer said there will be four sections of 1st and 2nd grades at Hanscom. Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling gave three snapshots of social studies classes for 3rd, 5th, and 6th graders. 3rd graders from Lincoln and Hanscom will visit Flint Farm next week. Judith Broggi made a pre-visit appearance in class, dressed in colonial garb. She presented the students with a brochure that explained the farm's history. Students are very involved with the roles of farmers in colonial times. The visit is funded by the Warren Flint Memorial Fund and the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust [LLCT].

5th graders were separated into two groups, separated by masking tape. One side was happy, the other side angry, and the teacher was King George. The students were the colonists and British, and the lesson was what was not fair.

6th graders were writing compare and contrast essays about Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$591,845.00 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$167,356.37 for a total of \$759,201.37. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. Glass seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

A. School Building Committee [SBC] Update

Document: None.

Mr. Schmertzler mentioned the repair analysis study effort by the Finance Committee and CapCom. On Monday, the group plans to recommend to the Finance Committee whom they should interview to be the consultant for the effort. They hope to hire the consultant in the next week or so, and the RFP listed many sets of standards.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted the meeting between OMR and the Disabilities Commission. The discussion concerned resolving the issues needed to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA]. They would like to do more than code requires to ensure that all have access. OMR had helpful suggestions and will need to seek waivers for some parts of the building, such as the science wing. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the meeting will serve them well.

Mr. Brandmeyer talked about the two sets of cost estimates that are currently being reconciled by Skanska, USA and OMR, the architect. The two groups will present their work at the SBC's May 22 meeting. The SBC will review the construction budgets, value engineering items, and add alternates. On May 29, the SBC will approve the construction and total budget. OMR has to submit the Schematic Design Report on June 6. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that in the last half of the year, projects are coming in higher as building is picking up and is more competitive.

Ms. Glass mentioned that the community coffees, open to the public, are listed on the website is www.lincolnsbc.org.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of November 17, 2011; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of December 1, 2011; 3) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of December 15, 2011; 4) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of January 5, 2012; 5) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of January 19, 2012; 6) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of February 2, 2012

Mr. Sander moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the meetings of November 17, 2011, December 1, 2011, December 15, 2011, January 5, 2012, January 19, 2012, and February 2, 2012. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes. They will be posted on the website.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Sander, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary