

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
 Thursday, June 21, 2012
 Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
 OPEN SESSION

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

Absent: Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Perkins noted that the last METCO Parent group met on May 15, and they introduced Dr. McFall at the meeting. The group also held their successful multicultural book fair in Lincoln on June 4 and 5 and had an end-of-year celebration on June 8.

Ms. Glass thanked Ms. Perkins for her service as she is unable to continue as the Boston Representative to the Committee next year. Ms. Glass asked that she talk to other Boston parents to find someone who would like to become the Boston representative.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

Document: Copy of check from Al Bjork

Mr. Schmertzler moved, and Mr. Christenfeld seconded, the motion to accept the donation of \$500 for the Betty Bjork Professional Development Fund. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the donation.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that they will make \$2,000 of the Betty Bjork fund available to teachers for mini grants for professional development for technology, and Ms. Sterling, Dr. McFall, and Mr. Bjork will meet to decide who will receive the grants. Mr. Brandmeyer will write a thank-you letter.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Retiree Recognitions

Document: Letter from Michael F. Brandmeyer to Denise Gilbert and Nancy Pollack, dated May 9, 2012

Ms. Glass welcomed Ms. Denise Gilbert, who was retiring after 38 years of teaching, 16 of them in Lincoln. Mr. Brandmeyer presented Ms. Gilbert with her traditional retirement chair, and read Principal Sharon Hobbs's remarks as she was unable to be there: Ms. Gilbert has an artist's sensibility and often displayed in the classroom small photos and representative student pieces of artwork. She was calm, centered, and always present, and added much as a colleague. She served on the diversity committee and wanted to work as inclusively as possible. She was flexible and for her first 11 years in Lincoln, she taught 3rd and 4th graders; the last five years she taught 5th grade. They wish for Denise that she does something artistic in her retirement and thanked her for her service to Lincoln and to public education.

Ms. Gilbert was pleased to have worked in Lincoln, with its commitment to diversity, which is very important for all of the students. She said while it is sad to leave, it is exciting at the same time, and it has been an honor to teach Lincoln and Boston students. She will continue to work with children and the arts in some way.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her service and wished her the best.

B. Report on Professional Development Program for Paraprofessionals

Document: Memorandum to School Committee from Stephanie Powers, RE: Report on Paraprofessional Development, dated June 7, 2012

Ms. Powers reviewed her report on professional development for paraprofessionals during the 2011-2012 school year. Ms. Sterling noted it is their second year they've offered professional

development in-house to the paraprofessionals to develop their skills. Ms. Powers said they offered 11 workshops, with English Language Arts [ELA] and Math workshops in the Fall and specific needs, such as behavior management strategies and supporting students with autism spectrum disorders, in the Spring. The district's teachers led many of the workshops. There was a high level of participation, and each paraprofessional was paid to attend up to three workshops.

Ms. Powers and Ms. Sterling will meet this summer to plan next year's workshops. Ms. Glass and Mr. Sander agreed that it's a great investment for the district and thanked them for their work.

C. Food Service Breakfast Program Update

Document: Memorandum to Buckner Creel from Cathleen Higgins, Food Service Director, RE: Hanscom Café Breakfast Review, dated June 7, 2012

Mr. Creel reviewed the memo on the Hanscom Middle School breakfast program. This was an experimental service, but there was insufficient participation to make it viable since families on the Base wanted their children to eat breakfast at home. They will keep it on the back burner as an available tool.

Ms. Glass thanked Ms. Higgins and Mr. Creel for their work.

D. Review of Letter from Linda Genovese Regarding Use of Legacy Fund to Support Financial Aid for Transportation

Documents: 1) Letter to Mickey Brandmeyer from Linda Genovese, dated June 4, 2012; 2) Attachment: Excerpts of Minutes from September 16 and 30, 2010 School Committee meetings

Ms. Glass welcomed Linda Genovese, the 8th grade parent volunteer and fundraising committee chair for the Legacy Fund, established in 2010 to help financially needy middle school students attend school field trips. Mr. Brandmeyer was enthusiastic that this year's 8th grade has continued to support the Fund. He stated that Ms. Genovese was concerned that the Fund was used for transportation fees, which was not the original intent.

Ms. Genovese indicated that they started the Legacy Fund because there was a possibility that field trips would be discontinued. As the district's policy is to have all students participate in field trips, the parents established the Fund to provide financial assistance on these trips. Athletic fees and music fees, in addition to transportation fees, have been paid out of the fund. She does not think that the Legacy Fund proceeds should be used for transportation since those buying raffle tickets were told that ticket proceeds would be used to pay for field trips, athletic fees, and music fees for needy students. She would like the money that was used for transportation fees for needy students, \$2,581, to be reimbursed to the Legacy Fund.

Mr. Brandmeyer mentioned that when the district received funds that were not earmarked for any specific purpose, they deposited them into the Legacy Fund account to distribute the financial aid objectively. He thanked Ms. Genovese for bringing the issue to their attention, and agreed to return the \$2,581 to the Legacy Fund.

E. Enrollment Update: Lincoln School Kindergarten

Document: Memorandum from Mickey Brandmeyer to School Committee, RE: 2012-2013 Enrollment Update: Lincoln Kindergarten, dated June 13, 2012

Mr. Brandmeyer said that across the district, all grades' class sizes except for the Lincoln Kindergarten are at or below their class size. They budgeted for three kindergarten sections with 18 students in each section, which is the preferred size, and the maximum number of students is 20 per section. There are 56 students currently enrolled in kindergarten. While he originally wanted to discuss the possibility of opening a fourth section, the numbers have moderated a bit and he recommended that they keep the three sections and monitor enrollments.

The Committee wanted to avoid the situation of having to open another section too close to the beginning of the school year or once the school year starts. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that Mr. McKenna works hard to hire quality teachers, and they could adjust the current staffing if needed. While the bigger pool of teachers happens in the spring, there are still good applicants later in the year. Ms. Glass asked if they could have a date before the first day of school to communicate to parents if they need to open another section, and Mr. Brandmeyer will ask Mr. McKenna for an August date.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

F. Discussion of 2012-2013 Goals

Document: Draft, Lincoln Public Schools, District Goal Setting, dated June 14, 2012

Ms. Glass said they met with Dr. McFall, the administrative team, and the Committee to discuss the goals for the next year. They have slowed the process to give Dr. McFall a chance to get up to speed. At their meeting, they discussed their philosophy of when an item rises to the level of a district goal. They want to make sure that the goals are the most important items for the administration to work on.

She asked for suggestions on Dr. McFall's draft. Mr. Sander wanted the document to note that all district goals require reports on progress to the School Committee, but tasks do not necessarily require such reports. Ms. Glass noted that the goals will be discussed at the August 23 School Committee meeting.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Ms. Glass said there was one more retirement to mention this evening. This meeting was Mr. Brandmeyer's 200-plus School Committee meeting in Lincoln, and she recognized and thanked him for his work over the last 10 years. She hopes he will have time to play before he decides his next step. His retirement is bittersweet.

Mr. Brandmeyer reported they received the final signed off copy of the Hanscom budget. They have received a change order of \$194,054 in FY13's contract from DDESS to do the temporary kitchen in the Hanscom Primary School gym and to move the students to the temporary school. They will meet in early July with DDESS and Designer Ewing Cole.

On a personal note, Mr. Brandmeyer has attended some 600 School Committee meetings in his career. All members were nice, and it has been a humbling experience. He thanked Ms. Sterling, Mr. Creel, and Ms. Powers, the teachers and the staff. He thanked the Committee for its support of the district and noted that it is not as common to have a Committee that can reach consensus. While he cannot say that all School Committees operate in the same way; Lincoln has been great to work with because they solve problems and find resources. He said that nothing that has been accomplished has been his alone.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling has attended many end-of-year events. She and Mr. Brandmeyer attended the 6th grade breakfast at Hanscom. Each student had a notebook of their work with them. One student enthusiastically showed Ms. Sterling her work, and it was clear that the student took ownership of the progress she made during the year. She saluted the 6th grade team, saying the students had learned a lot.

Mr. Brandmeyer said the breakfast was a leadership opportunity and was impressive; the students ran the entire thing. Ms. Janice Fairchild introduced the students, and the most powerful moment was when each student spoke about their favorite moment of the year.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$632,014.82 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$96,425.76 for a total of \$728,440.58. 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.

B. FY12 Projected End-of-Year Budget Status

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer from Buckner Creel, RE: FY12 Budget Status, dated June 12, 2012

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that they need to end the budget year in the black, and tonight's report will focus on the Lincoln budget. They want to position themselves for success in FY13, and with any surplus, they would pre-purchase special education out-of-district tuitions and transportation and

technology, as they have in previous years. They will use a similar strategy and roll Hanscom's funds into the Reserve Fund.

Mr. Creel presented his report on the FY12 budget status. He noted that if they prepay the items he suggested in his report, they would have flexibility for next year, enabling them to open a fourth section of kindergarten, or deal with other issues that occur during the year, such as needing to shovel off roofs.

Mr. Sander wanted to make sure that they are investing in the school and pre-purchasing enough to provide a reasonable cushion for next year, but also acting as stewards of the Town's dollars and giving money back to the Town if they had a larger surplus than is needed for next year, which he said they did. He applauded their management of the budget and recommended that they return 50% of surplus funds (before pre-purchases) to free cash via the Finance Committee.

Mr. Brandmeyer wanted enough of a cushion to enable the new superintendent to be flexible as needed. The new educator evaluation will need resources that they've not yet put into their budget.

Mr. Schmertzler would vote against giving money back to the Finance Committee as it is a very uncertain time with the school buildings, and he does not want to establish a precedent.

Ms. James arrived at 8:20 pm.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they would take off the list the items that are in next year's budget. They still have two payrolls to process and do not yet know the exact amount that they will have.

Ms. Glass was concerned that they not hamstring the administration. Mr. Brandmeyer said the Committee can act on July 25 to decide what amount to give back to the Town.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to authorize the pre-purchases of \$180,000 with the bulk of the money to be spent on special education out-of-district tuitions and transportation, computer purchases, and \$2,581 to be transferred to the Legacy Fund with the remainder of unspent funds to be returned to the Town. Ms. Glass, Ms. James, and Mr. Christenfeld voted yes, Mr. Sander voted no, and Mr. Schmertzler abstained. Mr. Sander voted no because he thought that more money could be returned.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work, and Mr. Brandmeyer thanked them for their support.

X. Old Business

A. School Building Committee [SBC] Update

Document: None.

Ms. Glass noted the next School Committee meeting will be July 25 at 7 or 7:30 pm. Mr. Sander and Ms. James will not be at the meeting.

Ms. Glass and Mr. Brandmeyer attended the session at the Council on Aging and had a lively conversation with 15 people who were generally supportive of the project. It was a positive engaged group, and some of them thought they would be crazy not to do it because the Town would receive some funding from the MSBA. They will continue outreach with a group marching in the July 4th parade. Information on the Lincoln school building project can be found at www.lincolnsbc.org.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that OMR submitted the Schematic Design Report to the MSBA, and they received questions yesterday. He will meet tomorrow for a meeting on Thursday, June 28. July 25 is the project scope and budget meeting with the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] Board of Directors.

In July, Ewing Cole and DDESS will do the final review of plans for the Hanscom Middle School. The contract will be awarded in the fall, and they will start building the temporary school across the Shawsheen River.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of February 16, 2012; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of March 15, 2012; 3) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of March 29, 2012; 4) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of April 12, 2012; 5) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of April 26, 2012

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. Glass seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the meetings of February 16, March 15, March 29, April 12, and April 26, 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 Ms. James, the Committee voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations. Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Ms. James, yes; Ms. Perkins, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 9:10 pm.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary