

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 7, 2013
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Tim Christenfeld, Jen James. Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance). Absent: Al Schmertzler, Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. She thanked David Trant for taping the meeting.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Sander, Ms. James, and Mr. Christenfeld attended the PTO's conversation with candidates for Town offices, and there was a good turnout.

Ms. James said that grades 5 and 6 will have an instrumental music day, and they have invited parents to attend.

Ms. Glass and Dr. McFall attended the Hanscom Middle School assembly about Black History Month on Tuesday, March 5. It was a wonderful event, and students worked hard. Ms. Glass noted that all are invited to the ceremony to celebrate the Month of the Military Child on Thursday, April 4 at 9:00 am.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Math Common Core Alignment

Document: Memorandum to School Committee from Mary Sterling, RE: Report on Alignment to Massachusetts 2011 Standards for Mathematics, dated February 27, 2013

Dr. Sterling introduced Ellen Metzger and Liz van Cleef, Mathematics Content Specialists. Dr. Sterling said the new state mathematics curriculum frameworks integrate with the new national Common Core standards, and while the shift does not require any wholesale change, there are three major shifts, which are outlined in her memorandum.

Ms. van Cleef demonstrated the eight standards for mathematical practice and how students make meaning of what is going on with math. She asked the Committee to demonstrate on graph paper and with base 10 blocks and unit cubes what it means when something ends with a zero, such as 23 times 1, 23 times 10, 23 times 10,000. She showed video clips of students explaining their thinking on how they came to answers with this same activity.

Ms. Metzger said the new frameworks have shifted from breadth to depth; they used to teach parts of statistics during every year in grades 5-8. Now they teach it only in grades 6 and 7 and it is more focused. Grade 8 is the year students learn geometry instead of in every grade starting in grade 4.

Ms. Metzger also demonstrated developmental progression with fractions. They use visual models for students, and by grades 7 and 8, students can use fractions as a tool to understand other content, such as probability. Ms. Metzger noted that there are a few issues with aligning *Everyday Math* with the new frameworks, but they have some new *Everyday Math* materials to use to do so.

Dr. Sterling mentioned that students in all grades need to be able to answer open response questions, and this year is a full pilot year for those math questions; students need to be able to communicate their reasoning. The scoring rubric includes two pieces: 1) problem solving, with interpretation, strategy, and accuracy as parts of problem solving; and 2) communication with completeness and clarity as parts of communication.

Dr. Sterling said that they will revise the report card descriptors, continue to align with the new standards, finalize common assessment questions and tracking system, revise Lincoln learning

expectations, and provide professional development for teachers. The district will have revised the math curriculum for grades K-5 by September 2013 and will then start to revise the curriculum for grades 6-8 with *Impact Math*. They will collaborate with Sudbury K-8.

Dr. Sterling thanked Ms. Metzger and Ms. van Cleef for their time consuming and important work. Dr. McFall commended Ms. Metzger and Ms. van Cleef for their professional development sessions. Their deep thinking has moved teachers forward.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

B. Report on Birches School

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee from Stephanie Powers, RE: Request for an Extension of Approval for the Birches School, dated February 25, 2013; 2) Birches School Emergency Plans, dated March 2012; 3) Letter to Lincoln School Committee from Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, Head, Birches School, dated February 19, 2013 with renewal certificate documents: Letter of Intent from Lewis Lloyd, The First Parish of Lincoln, dated February 12, 2013; Asbestos Inspection Letter from Patricia Riley, Enviro-Safe Engineering, dated June 17, 2012; Financial Statement Letter from Merton Flemings, dated February 7, 2013; Letter and Checklist from Lincoln Fire Department, dated February 14, 2013; Lead Inspection Report, dated August 4, 1986; Certificate of Liability Insurance which expires July 1, 2013; Certificate of Building Inspection from Town of Lincoln, dated May 30, 2012; Application for Certificate of Inspection, dated February 7, 2013; note regarding Status of 501(c)3 Tax Exemption, undated; Playground Safety Inspection Report by Ralph Doe, CPSI, dated August 21, 2012

Ms. Powers is the liaison with the Birches School, approved by the School Committee on May 31, 2012. She has visited and inspected the school and worked with the staff. They have done lots of work on their curriculum for a comprehensive program for children in Kindergarten to grade 3. Head of the Birches School Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, Kate Walker, and Kate Harney attended the meeting. They have two full-time teachers and part-time specialists.

Ms. ten Grotenhuis said their enrollment is growing; in September 2012 they had five students, and now they have eight. In fall 2013 they will have 16 students and are expanding with care. While they are certified to have third graders, they do not have any right now. One third of their students are from Lincoln, and two thirds come from Lincoln's surrounding communities. Students participate in Lincoln Recreation Department activities. They will align with the common core standards.

Ms. Glass thanked them for a thorough job on their paperwork, noting that they have fulfilled the requirements.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the Birches School's request to continue operation as a private school in the Town of Lincoln for the 2013-2014 school year and that this approval expires on June 30, 2014 and at that time be eligible for further renewal. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Birches School for 2013-2014.

C. Superintendent's Evaluation

Documents: 1) Memorandum to Dr. Becky McFall, Superintendent, and School Committee Members from Jennifer Glass, School Committee Chair, RE: Formative Assessment, Superintendent's Performance, dated March 1, 2013; 2) Top 10 Performance Indicators Priorities; 3) Questions for Consideration; 4) Annual Superintendent Evaluation Timeline; 5) Annual Superintendent Evaluation Plan, dated November 1, 2012; 6) Superintendent Entry Plan, dated August 16, 2012; 7) Mid-year Report on Entry Plan, dated February 28, 2013; 8) Superintendent Mid-year Self-assessment, dated March 1, 2013

Ms. Glass said that the new Massachusetts Educator Evaluation model for superintendents will apply in the fall 2013, and she reviewed her memorandum. The district is using the pilot program for 23 teachers and administrators this year, including Dr. McFall. Tonight is the formative assessment of the superintendent, the fourth step in the five-step cycle. The evaluation tool has four parts with 33 indicators, and they chose to focus on ten indicators this year.

The Committee reviewed Dr. McFall's progress on five goals: 1) effective entry and direction setting; 2) maintaining momentum during the transition; 3) new superintendent induction program; 4) fair, effective classroom teacher evaluation; and 5) implementation of literacy interventions for accelerating student progress.

For goal one, Ms. Glass noted that Dr. McFall has done a considerable amount of outreach with all stakeholders in the Lincoln and the school community. She makes good effort to understand the issues and the community and communicates well with faculty. She will continue to develop the core

values and vision and works well with the Committee to communicate those values to the community as a whole. Mr. Christenfeld said there is an enormous amount of work with assessments, reports and meetings and believes that the interesting questions are those of quality, not quantity. He has received positive feedback; the quality is good and that community members feel Dr. McFall is open and responsive. Mr. Sander agreed with all that has been said and noted that the school building process has been interesting, and the feedback he has received is that her leadership on the project has been great. Ms. James noted that Dr. McFall has done an amazing amount of work in nine months, and she is very happy with it.

For goal two, momentum, Ms. Glass said Dr. McFall hit the ground running. The Massachusetts Educator Evaluation requirement is new, and Dr. McFall and the team have worked hard to make sure the evaluation will not only be adopted, but adopted in such a way as to be meaningful. She is addressing consistent use of data tools with the technology support to gather and record student data so it can be used to inform instruction. She came up to speed quickly on the Lincoln school building project and the district is moving forward to submit the Statement of Interest [SOI] to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA]. Mr. Christenfeld noted it is hard to maintain momentum with so many things to do. The Committee needs to figure out how to protect the superintendent's time for the most important priority: educate students.

For goal three, New Superintendent Induction Program, Ms. Glass said the program is valuable. Dr. McFall said it has given her tools to use in her new position.

For goal four, classroom teacher evaluation, Ms. Glass noted that Dr. McFall has led the way to ensure that the evaluations lead to student learning, and is collaborative in her approach to it. Ms. Glass has observed Dr. McFall seeing things from differing points of view, and she is approachable and flexible but is firm when necessary. Mr. Sander values Dr. McFall's view of the new evaluation system as an opportunity to help students learn. It is a collaborative effort, and there is much "wordsmithing" in evaluation documents. Mr. Christenfeld noted she sets expectations and high standards for teachers and students, which is very important.

For goal five, implementation of literacy interventions for accelerating student progress in reading, Ms. Glass noted that all districts are learning how to set these goals. Dr. McFall is honest about the difficulties and is looking for ways to gather helpful data. She also works well with the technology team and School Committee for professional development. Dr. McFall noted that there are many intricacies to understanding this particular goal, and there are challenges and some unexpected outcomes. What role does the Central Office play on accountability for student learning? The data is underwhelming, and they are raising questions on how to work with things to increase progress. The literacy specialists are working on it and will get information on intervention practices to apply. They are not yet where they thought they would be, they continue to work on it. Ms. James asked about higher math classes and a shared vision. Dr. McFall noted that the student data on math placement needs to play out, and they have to put on a lens on their practices for bias to ensure equal access. Dr. McFall noted that parent advocacy can help, but Mr. Sander mentioned that parents cannot always advocate for their children for many reasons. Mr. Christenfeld said they are setting the stage for next year's goals with the process and said that consistent and meaningful assessment of the data and systems to capture it is key.

Ms. Glass summarized Dr. McFall's work. Dr. McFall has made considerable effort to learn about the Lincoln Public Schools and is committed to her role. Ms. Glass has observed her ability to push thinking with her colleagues and faculty. Dr. McFall has a collaborative and inclusive style that is good at listening to feedback and is professional about it. She works with Ms. Glass to keep the Committee informed on all issues. Ms. Glass encouraged her to find ways to focus her efforts on student learning as the highest priority. Dr. McFall has made significant progress on her goals, and the Committee looks forward to working with her.

Mr. Sander and the other members thanked her for her Herculean efforts.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion that the Committee enter into contract negotiations to discuss a raise based on Dr. McFall's performance to date. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: Draft of Statement of Interest for the Lincoln School, Lincoln, MA, dated March 6, 2013

Dr. McFall thanked Mr. Creel for the short turnaround on the draft of the Statement of Interest [SOI]. He noted that they updated the 2008 version with pictures of the flood in 2010, and they have included the issues that have been abated, such as the Reed Gym Roof and the VAT. They need to send a copy of the SOI to the Board of Selectmen tomorrow. Mr. Creel said the fire alarm panel and energy management systems are worse than they were in 2008; there is also a need for better air quality. They have updated the short-term enrollment piece. The Board of Selectmen and the School Committee would need to sign the SOI. Mr. Creel said that the vote authorizes the Superintendent to send the SOI to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA].

Ms. Glass noted that they will have a second reading of the SOI at the March 21 meeting, and there will be a community forum for discussion. She also encouraged interested parties to attend the Selectmen's meeting.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling attended the Hanscom Middle School's outstanding assembly entitled, "Black history is American history."

She also attended a community meeting at the Hanscom Primary School where they celebrated Dr. Seuss and *The Cat in the Hat*. Principal Beth Ludwig read the story while Hanscom Middle School Principal Erich Ledebuhr played his trumpet for sound effects.

Dr. Sterling was also a guest at morning meeting for 5th graders. Each school day begins respectfully and collaboratively. Students take turns commenting and have a sense of fun. The Responsive Classroom pays off every day.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

A. English Language Fluency Policy: First Reading

Document: Memorandum to Jennifer Glass, School Committee Chair, and Becky McFall, Superintendent, from Mary Sterling, Assistant Superintendent, RE: Policy on English literacy for teachers of English Language Learners, dated February 20, 2013

Every six years, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE] conducts the Coordinated Program Review to make sure that the district is following all state and federal regulations and requirements for education. Dr. Sterling said that the district does not have a policy regarding English fluency in teachers who teach English Language Learners, and it is required.

Dr. Sterling said they will have a second reading of the policy at the next meeting. She asked that they review the document; the language came from the Wellesley School District. Dr. Sterling will also have the appropriate letters for the policy to be put in the manual.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$625,164.31 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$154,589.92 for a total of \$779,754.23. Ms. Glass said that Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. James seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. RFP for Pod C After School Program

Document: Draft, Request for Proposal, After-School Care Program For the Lincoln Public Schools, dated March 1, 2013

Mr. Creel noted that the lease of Pod C in the Hartwell complex expires on June 30, 2013. The space is currently leased by LEAP, which runs an after-school care program. The district is required by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30B, Section 16 to initiate a formal Request for Proposal [RFP] process to lease the space again as the rental value of the property will exceed \$25,000.

Mr. Creel noted that the changes from the last meeting's discussion have been incorporated into the draft. He noted that they used the same language that was used for the RFP for the space leased to Magic Garden.

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion that the Committee release the Request for Proposal for an After-School Care Program for the Lincoln Public Schools. The Committee voted unanimously to release the Request for Proposal.

Mr. Creel noted that the RFP will be published in the Central Register and in the *Lincoln Journal*. The RFP document will be available on March 13, and they will have the mandatory walk through on March 22.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Document: Draft of School Committee Minutes for December 6, 2012

Ms. James moved, and Mr. Sander seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2012 meeting. 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 go into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations. Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Ms. James, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 9:25 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2013 at 7:00 pm.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary