

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 21, 2013
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, 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: Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. She thanked David Trant for taping the meeting.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Schmertzler attended yesterday's EDCO meeting and commended the Committee and the audience for their respectful and courteous behavior, which he noted does not seem to be the norm in many communities. Discussion at the meeting was about the new evaluation process for superintendents, which is unclear, and the collaborative will send information about how to handle it.

Ms. James, Mr. Sander, Ms. Glass, and Mr. Christenfeld attended the Middle School Musical, which was fabulous. They all congratulated the students and teachers. Tomorrow from 7:45-8:30 am, the PTO is holding Volunteer Day in the tech room for those in the community who would like to volunteer.

Today Mr. Christenfeld attended the band and orchestra rehearsal and thanked Karen Sheppard for making it happen. He and Dr. McFall attended the EDCO Board Meeting. They are looking at their assessments of towns. There is pending legislation at the State House about educational collaborative reform, but it should not significantly impact Lincoln. He also noted that Margo Seltzer, a professor at Harvard, authors a blog about her experience using the flipped classroom. While it is more work than simply teaching in the traditional fashion, it has a huge payoff because she sees where students need extra help and can focus on them.

Ms. Glass attended METCO Lobby Day at the State House last Wednesday. The Lincoln School orchestra played, and conductor Susan Gottschalk did a great job. Students played wonderfully. Social Studies teacher Steve Cullen attended with four 8th grade students—Myles Carter, Mike Ciampa, Tianna Walker, Lia Gallo—who met Representative Arciero to lobby for the METCO program. She thanked all for attending.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Innovative Teaching Practices

Document: None.

Beth Ludwig, Hanscom Primary School Principal, and Erich Ledebuhr, Hanscom Middle School Principal, thanked the Committee for its support. They introduced their teachers and students and said they admired their tenacity and enthusiasm for innovation. Ms. Ludwig stated that the teachers seek out new opportunities to find different practices to improve student learning. She is very proud of their work.

Mr. Ledebuhr noted that his favorite thing is when students or teachers ask him to see something new that they are doing. He said the culture of risk taking in learning has become comfortable, and teaching practices have enabled students to learn more than they all thought they would. Many of these opportunities are given during the extension time. The students are taking ownership of their learning, which is accomplished on many levels.

The presentations demonstrated the work done on the following district goal: Encourage and support innovative teaching and learning practices by fostering growth mindset, risk taking, and reflection.

The Hanscom Middle School Book Club, taught by Loretta D'Alessandro and comprised of 7th grade students Hunter (Nasseem) Sample, Bailey Harris, Pak Slentz, Cassidee Grunwald, Ellie Ferguson, and Caden Skurka, presented their work. The club has met twice a month, but the group has

done much outside that meeting time, and it has enhanced their journey in language arts. The club's goal is to further literacy skills in three areas: 1) real life applications; 2) teamwork and collaboration; 3) critical thinking. Students read a book about bullying and shared with the Committee the lessons learned and the materials they have produced, including a pamphlet, "Lights, Camera, Take Action Against Bullying," a story called "It's Time to Wake Up and Help!" by Cassidee Grunwald, and artwork. Video clips and other items showed Ms. D'Alessandro that students have gone above and beyond.

Josh Gold, 6th grade teacher, presented about the flipped classroom, which he is adapting from its first year last year. He showed students' video clips that showed how and what they were learning. Students had to explain how they came to certain conclusions, which helps them answer the open response questions on MCAS. These video clips are on iPads that are available to parents on the parent portal.

6th graders William Pataki and Ally Harwood presented their work on leadership creating community through communication. Students research events, holidays, traditions and inform the community about them so all can see commonalities. The leadership group has planned events such as recognizing women around the world, celebrating world water week, and will hold an academic talent show in June. As a surprise, the leadership students asked parents serving overseas for video messages and compiled them for the whole school.

8th graders Katie Miller, Michael Pataki, and Rebecca McIllece from the 7th and 8th grade leadership group decide different activities for the school each month and set deadlines and learning targets and get students to participate. Teacher Catherine Martus advises these students. The leadership group considers what students should get from these activities and approaches the activities with an "I can" attitude. Activities have included Breast Cancer Awareness Week, Hunger Awareness Week, Black History Month, and Give Back Month. Ms. Glass indicated that the Black History assembly was well done, and she enjoyed it very much.

Teachers Jenn Williams, Kristy James, Samantha Copplestone, and Ariel Nierenberg have been taking an online course offered by Mount Holyoke College entitled, "Connect Arithmetic to Algebra" and shared their teaching tools and routines from kindergarten to 3rd grade. They work with the growth mindset concept which says that students are not simply born smart, and all students can excel if they work hard. They presented video clips of students learning mathematical relationships and concepts.

Teachers Mary Keane, Diane Mitton, Stacey Foresman, and Elissa Berry presented their work with AGART action research and how teachers can develop the behaviors and beliefs in students to have the growth mindset. They develop students to be resilient, to persevere, and to practice, which builds independence. Students are taught that it is okay to make mistakes because that is how one learns. They showed video clips of students working. The teachers shared that the vocabulary they use to provide feedback to students is important, and one of the taboo words is smart, as there is always a place to progress with learning. The feedback students receive not only comes from teachers but from their fellow students. One video clip showed two students, one practicing reading out loud, and one listening to provide the reader with feedback that was respectful and helpful.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their enthusiasm, passion, and dedication to all students and for their exciting presentations and work.

B. Community Forum on Capital Warrant and Statement of Interest [SOI] Process

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee, School Building Committee, Becky McFall, and Buck Creel from Jennifer Glass, RE: School Building Committee, dated March 15, 2013; 2) MSBA School Building Committee Template

Ms. Glass recognized the members of the School Building Committee [SBC] and thanked them for their support. For three years, they have taken much time from their lives to assist the Committee and have operated openly, wrestled with tough decisions, and worked very hard to do something about the condition of the school buildings. The members of the SBC are: Co-Chair Gary Taylor, Co-Chair Al Schmertzler, David Bau, Owen Beenhouwer, Peter Braun, Buckner Creel, Andrew Glass, Michael Haines, Eric Harris, Sharon Hobbs, Rebecca McFall, Stephen McKenna, Laura Regrut, John Snell, and Sheila Webber. Ms. Glass also thanked Mickey Brandmeyer for his work on the SBC. She expressed her gratitude to each of them.

Now that the School Committee will need to submit another Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] to see whether the Town will be invited to

participate in the MSBA process, Ms. Glass said the School Committee will dissolve the SBC for now. They will reconstitute the SBC, and those who have served should let the School Committee know if they would like to serve again.

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to dissolve the School Building Committee with plans to reconstitute it in the future with interested current SBC members and new members able to apply to serve. The School Committee voted unanimously to dissolve the School Building Committee.

Ms. Glass said the deadline to submit the SOI is April 10, 2013, and the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee need to vote affirmatively to submit it. The Board of Selectmen had their second reading on the Statement of Interest on Monday evening and provisionally agreed to approve it as long as the School Committee voted to submit the Statement of Interest. Mr. Creel noted that the current Statement of Interest is mostly unchanged from the one submitted to the MSBA in 2008; they have removed items that have since been repaired, such as the Reed Field House roof, and the MSBA has changed some forms and required additional information, which has been included. The question is whether the community supports sending the SOI to the MSBA.

Ms. Glass said that a warrant article for Town Meeting for design expenses for the school, originally thought to be \$400,000, is now contingent upon the Town being invited by the MSBA into the pipeline, and the amount has changed to \$17,700. Ms. Glass said they would probably hear from the MSBA in the September 2013 to January 2014 time frame whether the Town is invited back to the table.

Harriet Todd asked for the Committee to consider alternatives to the MSBA process and to keep costs down, and Sara Mattes said there was sentiment during the last four months that wanted to keep the school campus the way that it is. Ms. Mattes asked that they consider a professional survey to the Town to discern the Town's thinking and stated the surveys were not expensive. Peter Braun of the Board of Selectmen said the Committee needs to keep the options open and submit the SOI as it costs nothing and does not commit the Town to anything. Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Glass noted that they expect the community to remain involved to help weigh the different factors. Mr. Sander said they want to find as cost-effective way to fund the project but warned that construction costs and interest rates are increasing, and they do not know how these factors will work together with any possible savings from the new building approach to affect the total cost.

Ms. Glass noted the wide range of opinions about what should be done with the school and its needs.

C. Lincoln Sudbury High School Performance Data

Document: Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School 2012 Annual Performance Report

Superintendent of Lincoln-Sudbury Scott Carpenter and Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee

Representative Patty Mostue presented the Annual Performance Report, which can be accessed at www.lsrhs.net and will be available at Town Meeting on Saturday, March 23. They will provide level service in FY2014 and have not cut teachers but would like to cut class sizes. Mr. Carpenter noted that while they have cut staff in previous years, they have to place students who need special education services in out-of-district placements more often. The Lincoln enrollment has a slight trend down.

The Committee thanked them for their work.

D. Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] Statement of Interest: Second Reading and Vote

Documents: 1) Resolution about Statement of Interest for the Lincoln School, Lincoln, MA; 2)

Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority, dated March 14, 2013

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the following motion: Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on March 21, 2013, the School Committee of the Town of Lincoln, Massachusetts, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated March 14, 2013 for the Lincoln School located at Ballfield Road, Lincoln, MA which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

1) Replacement or renovation of a building which is structurally unsound or otherwise in a condition seriously jeopardizing the health and safety of school children, where no alternative exists.

Deficiencies include:

- a) High ground water leading to flooding
 - b) Wooden structure with no sprinkler system leading to safety concerns
 - c) Non-compliant septic system operating under variance
 - d) Asbestos-containing materials and lead in water supply pipes
 - e) Deteriorating and failing exterior window walls
 - f) Accessibility issues
 - g) Lack of security, uncontrolled site access and difficult traffic circulation
 - h) Leaking roof conditions
 - i) Obsolescent and under-capacity electrical system and controls
 - j) Moisture, mold, and ventilation problems
- 5) [sic] Replacement, renovation, or modernization of the heating system in a schoolhouse to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in the schoolhouse. In spite of energy conservation programs the school continues to generate low scores in EPA's Energy Star rating system, and exceeds the energy usage of comparable schools by 25% or more. The Town has adopted an aggressive energy conservation by-law, and the current school building will prevent the Town from achieving its goals.
- 6) [sic] Short term enrollment growth. The Lincoln School anticipates receiving additional students from near-term shifts in demographics caused by the generational turnover of housing stock.
- 7) [sic] Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements. A study by Symmes, Maini & McKee Associates, confirmed by a subsequent MSBA Senior Study and a survey of existing conditions by the Office of Michael Rosenfeld, identified deficiencies, inadequacies or absence of the following spaces required to meet the School Committee's desired program of instruction:
- a) Size of selected classrooms in each of the schools
 - b) Shortage of special education classrooms and tutorial rooms
 - c) Lack of cafeteria and insufficient kitchen area
 - d) Few teacher planning spaces
 - e) Poorly organized and located administrative areas
 - f) Inadequate art and music spaces
 - g) Health suite
 - h) Insufficient support and storage areas

and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town of Lincoln to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The Committee voted unanimously to authorize the Superintendent to submit the Statement of Interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall turned her time to Ms. Powers to report on the Coordinated Program Review, during which they welcomed staff from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to the campus. They conducted 32 interviews, toured facilities, and made observations of the special education program. Ms. Powers reported they received much positive feedback, and the visit was well run. While they will receive a report on the district's work at a later date, Ms. Powers stressed that the preliminary indications are that the state is looking at having only one finding on civil rights—gender identity requirements. There are no findings on special education or English language learners, which is remarkable. The district may receive two areas of commendation: 1) professional development, and 2) least restrictive environment. Ms. Powers is cautious until they receive the final report, but all indicates a success.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her incredible work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling said she could not be more proud of the students and teachers who presented this evening. Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

A. English Language Fluency Policy: Second Reading and Vote

Document: Policy, "English Literacy for Teachers of English Language Learners," undated

Dr. Sterling noted that in line with the Coordinated Program Review preparation, the policy on English fluency for teachers of English Language Learners was drafted and remains the same as was presented at the first reading. They are working on the letters for the File.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the English Literacy for Teachers of English Language Learners policy as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the policy.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$663,042.84 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$157,370.43 for a total of \$820,413.27. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

A. MSBA Release Letter

Documents: 1) Letter to Rebecca McFall from Mary Pichetti, Director of Capital Planning, Massachusetts School Building Authority, RE: Lincoln Public Schools, Lincoln K-8 School, dated March 13, 2013; 2) Capital Pipeline Program, Declaration of Removal of a Statement of Interest

Dr. McFall indicated that they need to take the original Statement of Interest [SOI] out of the MSBA pipeline before they submit a new one or the MSBA will not accept the new SOI. She noted the Declaration of Removal of a Statement of Interest needs to be signed by the Chairs of the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen and herself. Mr. Eckhouse will sign the declaration. The Declaration must be submitted to the MSBA by March 26, 2013.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to authorize the signing of the Declaration of Removal of a Statement of Interest for the Statement of Interest that the Massachusetts School Building Authority approved in September 2009. The Committee voted unanimously to authorize the signing of the Declaration of Removal of a Statement of Interest.

Ms. Glass mentioned that graduation dates have been a hot topic of interest, and they will discuss them at the next meeting on April 4, 2013.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Document: Draft of Multi-Board Meeting Minutes for March 6, 2013

The Committee tabled the minutes until the April 4, 2013 meeting.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, 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. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 11:08 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 4, 2013 at 7:00 pm.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary