

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, November 1, 2012
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 7:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Principal Sharon Hobbs and her team for the 6th grade "bring your parents to school" morning. He noted that sitting in classes was fun and valuable and thanked teacher David Trant for his emphasis on the meaning of standards-based reporting. The English class had 15 students that participated in a 45-minute discussion about books, and each student was respectful of the others. Mr. Christenfeld added the social studies class used iPads to read President Obama's and Mitt Romney's websites, but it took 13 minutes of preparation to use the iPads.

Ms. James said the 8th graders planted lilies in the school garden whilst speaking French. The kindergarteners made an impromptu garden visit and are very knowledgeable about the garden. The garden goes to bed for the season next week.

Ms. Glass thanked Police Chief Kevin Mooney and Fire Chief Steve Carter for their help to get through Hurricane Sandy. She appreciated their efforts at keeping Dr. McFall informed about conditions in Town. She also thanked the central office for taking her in the past couple days as she was without power at home.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Presentation of FY 2014 Preliminary Budget

Documents: 1) Printout of PowerPoint Presentation: FY 2014 Preliminary Budget, undated; 2) Memorandum from Lincoln Finance Committee to All Budgeting Agencies, Town of Lincoln, RE: FY 2014 Budget Guideline, dated October 11, 2012; 3) Annual Town Meeting Planning Calendar—March 2013 (FY2014), undated; 4) Budget Book, FY2014

Dr. McFall presented the PowerPoint presentation about the FY2014 budget, noting that this is a transition year, and therefore, there are no major changes. The process gives them a chance to revisit priorities and consider the district's vision, mission, goals, and core values and to ask that as they allocate funds, they align with those core values. The budget document will be posted on the school website, www.lincnet.org. The Lincoln Finance Committee has given each Town department a 2.5 percent increase in operating expenses for the FY 2014 base (non-Proposition 2½ override) budget. The proposal for the Lincoln schools is \$10,008,928 with \$144,820 in improvement initiatives. The proposal for the Hanscom schools is \$11,426,485 with improvement initiatives of \$180,778, and the Band 3 price is \$11,259,242, making a gap of \$167,243.

Dr. McFall said grant revenues are projected to be at level funding for FY2014, and while the METCO grant is below the FY2006 funding, it has increased from FY2012, and the Title I grant, which only the Hanscom schools receive, has increased. The main budget driver is personnel at 76%; class size is another. They will ask for a 2.4 FTE increase in staffing for two classroom teachers at Hanscom and a special education tutor and PT assistant.

Dr. McFall, Dr. Sterling, Ms. Powers, and Mr. Creel mentioned their improvement initiatives, which include a technology director and instructional technology support, weekend custodial support, a half-time custodian for the Lincoln campus, science leadership and outdoor education assistance, tools to help with standards-based reporting, and a .8 FTE school psychologist at Hanscom. Ms.

Powers noted they are not expecting a big jump for special education services next year, but in the past five years, the enrollment trends have increased. Labeling a student as needing special education services is a significant decision for a school district to make, and the district's number of students with Individual Education Plans [IEPs] is low compared with the state average. They have effective general education interventions that keep students from having IEPs; there are currently 179 students with IEPs in the district.

Hanscom Base housing is now effectively full, and the student body is increasing. There is a space issue with the Hanscom Primary School, and they will meet about that soon. In grades 4-8, they have enough room in the classrooms to meet the maximum class size. Mr. Christenfeld mentioned that many have asked about the reserve fund transfers in discussions about the school building project, and he noted it gives flexibility when students arrive, which can be at any time during the school year. Mr. Creel explained that the contract with the federal government to operate the Hanscom schools requires them to have 18 students as a maximum class size in grades K-3 and 23 students as a maximum class size in grades 4-8. When they have an enrollment increase, they have to open new sections, and the reserve fund allows them to do that.

Dr. McFall noted the timeline for voting on the FY2014 school budget. On November 15, the principals will speak on their improvement initiatives, which were pared down from 40 to 16. The administration and school committee will meet with the Finance Committee for the first budget meeting on December 11 and again on January 8. The School Committee will vote on the budget in January.

Ms. Glass thanked them for the level of detail and their work.

B. Educator Evaluation Update

Documents: 1) Educator Evaluation Professional Learning Community Progress Update November 1, 2012; 2) Memorandum from Rebecca McFall to School Committee, RE: Superintendent Goals 2012-2013, dated November 1, 2012

Dr. McFall and Dr. Sterling are working with the Professional Learning Community [PLC] using workshops to understand the Massachusetts' regulations for educator evaluation and supervision and the Model for Educator Evaluation and reviewed the memorandum. They are scripting observations and asking what the feedback should look like for educators. They have provided consistency and focus on written feedback and are now asking how to provide evidence on the impact on student learning and guidance on how the teacher can grow. She noted they are working on having teacher leaders to mentor colleagues.

Dr. Sterling is pleased that the district withdrew from the Race To The Top [RTTT] federal grant program as it gives them the chance to pilot a program that they have developed instead of having to comply with the new educator evaluation this year. The district will be allowed by the state to phase in the new evaluation system, and Dr. Sterling said it is a multiyear project.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

C. EDCO First Quarterly Report

Document: 1) Quarterly Report FY13 Q1, dated October 22, 2012, submitted by Colleen Dolan, EDCO Executive Director

Dr. McFall said that the quarterly report from EDCO is part of the new requirements for education collaboratives. Mr. Christenfeld said it is EDCO's goal to assess the needs of each member district. He will write a summary of how much Lincoln pays to be a part of EDCO and how much the district uses the membership.

Dr. Sterling noted that as a small district, Lincoln uses EDCO to pull small districts as a consortium to get Title III grants, and she noted that with new English Language Learner [ELL] standards, EDCO will be helpful with training ELL teachers. They also count on EDCO for the Greater Boston Students of Color Achievement Network [GBSOCAN].

Ms. Glass thanked them for the update.

D. Lincoln Agency Annual Report: Progress Update

Document: Draft, Lincoln Public Schools Annual Report, October, 2012, dated November 1, 2012

Mr. Christenfeld, Mr. Sander, and Dr. McFall attended last week's Finance Committee meeting with the Lincoln-Sudbury representatives, Town Administrator Timothy Higgins, and a representative

of the Library to discuss the Lincoln Agency Annual Report. They presented a draft outline, and the reaction to it was favorable. Some numbers are subject to change, and the graphs will include explanations. He noted that while they were going in the right direction, there may be too much information, and they can exclude some information that is hard to gather. Mr. Christenfeld said the social-emotional learning information and the instructional assistants are tough to compare to other districts as Lincoln's are used in different ways.

Dr. Sterling said that for foreign language instruction, the district compares itself to Sudbury and Bedford. Lincoln is one of the few districts that offers foreign language in elementary school, and Lincoln offers it more often. Karena Hansen will gather the data on this issue.

They want to establish benchmarks for future reports. Mr. Christenfeld noted the draft for internal review will be ready in December with an external review in early January. Mr. Sander noted they will have the data together by January or February with a two-page executive summary, and the full report will be on the school website. The year's goals, accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities will be included.

Dr. McFall and Ms. Glass thanked Mr. Christenfeld and Mr. Sander for their work.

E. Review of New Model for Superintendent Evaluation

Document: Draft, Annual Superintendent Evaluation Timeline, dated October 25, 2012

Ms. James said there has been much discussion about the new model. There are ten rubrics to cover in the superintendent's evaluation, which is new this year. They have to measure the goals and decide what makes sense to include this year. The annual superintendent evaluation timeline was included, and they have made adjustments to fit the district's needs. Goal five includes three student learning goals.

Ms. Glass thanked Dr. McFall for being first on having specific benchmarks for her evaluation and Ms. James and Dr. McFall for their work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall thanked Police Chief Kevin Mooney and Fire Chief Steve Carter for their communication and support to get through Hurricane Sandy, and she was updated on an hourly basis. They opened school yesterday, and she noted that using three snow days in October would have been too much. She also thanked Cyndy and Dennis Murphy for their willingness to consider alternative bus routes to get around fallen trees. Weston and Sudbury had to use three days.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling showed slides of students planting garlic and smelling mint, noting that students were learning many things outdoors. She attended a 1st grade art class that was studying patterns that were typical of aboriginal cultures to learn how things become patterns. The students made snakes to demonstrate their understanding of patterns.

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 \$652,782.52 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$223,193.10 for a total of \$875,975.62. 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.

Ms. Glass thanked the Board of Selectmen for their 2 to 1 vote in favor of the school building project and thanked Peter Braun and Noah Eckhouse for voicing their support. She noted the Planning Board will meet on Saturday at 9:20 am before the Special Town Meeting, which will be held at 9:30 am in the Brooks Auditorium.

While some of the outreach events have been cancelled, the Council on Aging held one on Friday. The Maguire Group made their final report, and there was a good turnout and discussions at the sessions. Ms. Glass noted four concerns: 1) the site plan and the prominence of parking; 2) school and community space; 3) the uncertainty of Hanscom in the Base realignment process; 4) a low cost and responsible alternative. She addressed the concerns: 1) the site plan is at the 15% design process and there is still flexibility in the plan, and they asked OMR, the architect, to be creative and look at the space again. New plans for the site will be available. On the second concern, she noted that they cannot build dedicated community-use space with MSBA dollars, as the MSBA's focus is on school buildings. At the same time, they are cognizant of Town needs and support the collaboration of the schools and the Town. She noted that the Community Center group found that the Hartwell complex could be a place where Town services could be offered and reminded that the Hartwell complex is not part of the school building project. The third concern about Hanscom and the Base Realignment And Closing [BRAC] process and whether Hanscom will be cut is unknown. Selectman Peter Braun is the liaison and is getting information and meeting with people there. The Base was spared from the last downsizing process in 2005. The Town is in a good position with the Base housing full and the new schools that will be built on Base by the federal government. The fourth concern about another alternative; the Maguire Group was asked to assess the school buildings without tripping the safety codes, which would cost an estimated \$6.4 to \$6.6 million.

Ms. Glass expressed her confidence in the Town's ability to weigh the information and thanked the School Building Committee members for their hard work over the last two and a half years: Co-Chairs Gary Taylor and Al Schmertzler, David Bau, Owen Beenhouwer, Peter Braun, Andrew Glass, Eric Harris, Laura Regrut, John Snell, Sheila Webber, Buckner Creel, Michael Haines, Becky McFall, Stephen McKenna, Sharon Hobbs, and Mickey Brandmeyer. She also thanked the Central Office Staff for their hard work.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of September 6, 2012; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes for Meeting of September 27, 2012

Ms. James moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the meetings of September 6 and 27, 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 9:48 pm. The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 15 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary