

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 20, 2014
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James, Preditta Cedeno (METCO Representative). Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Robert Ford (Director of Technology).

Absent: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Mr. Christenfeld acted as Chair and called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld attended the Brooks School production of Annie last week, in which more than 70 students participated. He noted that more teachers are helping with the drama productions, and thanked Blake Siskavich, Terri Nathanson, Julie Reynolds, and others for their work. He said it was a great team effort.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Mr. Creel, Mr. Haines, and the custodial staff for their efforts at the last minute when the Town Candidates Forum had to be moved to the school gym.

Mr. Christenfeld cited Jen James' many contributions to the school, and noted that this would be her final meeting as a member of the School Committee. The Committee will miss Ms. James. He thanked her for her service.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Donation

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Becky McFall from Sharon Hobbs, 5-8 Lincoln School Principal, dated March 20, 2014

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to accept the donation of \$357.48 from the Grade 8 Graduation Fund, Class of 2013, for the Legacy Fund. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the donation.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked the Class of 2013 for their donation. He explained that the Legacy Fund helps to fund field trips and activities for students who need financial assistance. They will send a thank-you note.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. deCordova Appointee Report

Documents: 1) Report by Katherine Hall Page, Appointee to the deCordova Museum, dated March 20, 2014; 2) Packet of information about the deCordova Museum

Katherine Hall Page, the Committee's Appointee to the deCordova Museum Board of Trustees, reported on her activities for the past ten years. She is stepping down after serving the Committee for ten years. Dan Elias, the recently appointed Trustee, was her high school student, and she is very pleased that he will serve. She believes that Mr. Elias will bring great energy and skills to the position, and she and Mr. Elias will meet with Dr. McFall soon.

Ms. Page is pleased that the ties between the schools and the museum have been strengthened during her tenure. The museum staff and Ms. Page now have an annual meeting with the four art teachers, and the museum helps with professional development for the teachers. Teachers are also invited to join the docents during their training sessions on the exhibits. The Andy Goldsworthy Snow House exhibit aims to involve school communities. The student art show has grown so large that it will be not be held at the deCordova this year, but at Hartwell instead. There will be a family day this spring for Hanscom.

Ms. Page noted that Dennis Kois, the current deCordova director, is leaving for family reasons, and said that she has enjoyed working with him. The Trustees have a search firm looking for a new director. Ms. Page thanked the four art teachers—Donna Lubin and Chris Gentel at the Hanscom schools, and Pam DiBiase and Colleen Pearce at the Lincoln schools—for their work. She has also enjoyed working with Dr. McFall and noted that she is still available to work with the schools.

Dr. McFall said it has been a pleasure to work with Ms. Page because of her problem-solving skills and creativity. She thanked Ms. Page for her work.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Ms. Page for her work.

B. Student Feedback Survey Results

Document: PowerPoint Presentation of Student Feedback Survey Results

Dr. McFall updated the Committee on the Student Feedback Survey which is being piloted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE] by nine school districts statewide. Once finalized, the Survey may be used as a piece in the educator evaluation process, based on each district's preference. Students of all ages will fill out surveys on one of their teachers.

All Lincoln students have completed one survey for one teacher each. In grades K-5, students filled out the survey on their classroom teacher, and for grades 6-8, students filled out the survey on a teacher of one of the core subjects. The district will administer the survey again; it will take place in the end of March to April 11 timeframe to determine which survey questions are the best. For example, one of the questions was, "I receive useful feedback on my progress from my teacher." Students were asked to select one of four answers: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree.

The district will not receive individual teacher results, but the teachers will, and teachers can use the information for their self-assessments as a part of the evaluation process. How they use the information is left to the discretion of the teachers. The district received results on a district-wide basis. The survey also gives the results for

each school and compares them with results district-wide. One of the concerns is that the survey is geared toward general education teachers; students do not fill out surveys on specialist teachers.

Dr. McFall said DESE will visit the district on April 4 and will receive feedback on the questions. In June or July DESE will present a model survey to all districts for potential use based on this work.

Dr. McFall thanked Mr. Ford for his work on the administration of the survey.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked her for her work, especially as DESE is benefiting from her time and effort.

C. Establish School Committee Meeting Dates for 2014-2015

Document: Draft, Lincoln Public Schools, School Calendar 2014-2015, with School Committee meeting dates, dated March 20, 2014

Dr. McFall presented the proposed set of School Committee meeting dates for the 2014-2015 school year. While most meetings are distributed evenly across the months, the February meetings are one week apart. The calendar was developed to make sure that packets did not need to be created during vacation weeks. The August 28 meeting will not be held if it is not needed.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to establish the 2014-2015 School Committee meeting calendar as presented on the draft calendar. The Committee voted unanimously to establish the meeting calendar.

D. School Security Update

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Rebecca McFall, Superintendent from Stephanie Powers, Administrator for Student Services and Ian Spencer, Lincoln Police Juvenile Officer, Re: Report on the School Safety and Security Advisory Committee, dated March 12, 2014

Ms. Powers and Mr. Spencer reviewed their report on school security. The School Safety and Security Advisory Committee has met six times to discuss increased security measures at the schools and includes representatives of both campuses. The district has installed security cameras and locks on the insides of classroom doors, upgraded the campus intercom systems, and adopted new procedures for visitors. The Advisory Committee has focused on planning for evacuation drills on each campus using the ALICE protocol. ALICE stands for A-ALERT, L-LOCKDOWN, I: INFORM, C-COUNTER, E: EVACUATE and it offers options to students and staff to deal with an armed-intruder situation. Hanscom Principal Erich Ledebuhr and Lincoln Police Officer David Regan have been trained as trainers in the ALICE program, and administrators, faculty, staff, and Security Committee members have been trained.

Mr. Spencer noted that while there used to be a coded method to discuss an emergency, the ALICE protocol entails the use of plain, concise English so that all know what is happening and can respond appropriately to emergencies. Sometimes it may be more appropriate and safe to lockdown and shelter in a classroom, and other times it might be better to evacuate the building.

Ms. Powers said the drills are to empower people to take action and to trust their judgment. The evacuation drills will be clearly scheduled and the purpose will be to collaborate with safety officers to see how the plan works and whether changes are necessary. Dr. McFall will communicate with parents, and the District will be hosting parent forums on March 24 at 7 pm on the Lincoln campus and March 27 at 7 pm on the Hanscom campus so that parents can prepare their children.

The drills will be on Thursday, May 1 on both campuses and on Wednesday, April 30 for Hartwell. The evacuation drills are different from fire drills, and the Advisory Committee has developed routes and destinations for students and adults who are evacuating all the campus buildings. Ms. Powers said they have planned for the needs of many different students, such as those who use wheelchairs and those who might have trouble dealing with the situation. They hope the drill will take 20 minutes. Students will be told not to run but to walk purposefully to get to their prescribed locations. After the drill, the Committee will survey participants for feedback.

The preschool, LEAP, Magic Garden, Recreation Department, and the Hanscom Youth Center and Clubhouse will also do the evacuation drill, and the training module will be given to them. The crisis guide will also be shared with Town Hall and Bemis Hall. The guide will address many kinds of emergencies, such as bomb threats, strange packages, and natural disasters.

Ms. James was concerned that there was no representative on the Security Committee from Boston, especially as Boston students may react differently to authority figures than Lincoln or Hanscom students do. Dr. McFall noted they will work with METCO Director Ms. Lateefah Franck. Ms. James said going outside in May will mean that they need to check for ticks, and Ms. Powers said they have that in the plan too; they check for them when students go outside for recess.

Mr. Christenfeld heard a story this week about television stations sending reporters to schools to check school security. He was concerned that doing the drill makes people more nervous, but it communicates that they have a plan in place, which is good. Dr. McFall said the feedback she has received indicates that the faculty would like more training in how to handle these incidents. The purpose is to practice so that all feel comfortable with it, and evacuation drills will be held at least once a year.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked them for their work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall reported that this year's Town Annual Report includes last year's school report by mistake. The Annual Report has been mailed to each residence. The Town website will have this year's school report, and they will also make copies of this year's report that will be available at the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, March 29.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

None.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrant totaling \$712,981.64. There is no accounts payable warrant this time. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrant and recommended that it be approved. Ms. James moved to approve the warrant, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrant.

B. Review Town Meeting Presentation

Document: PowerPoint Draft of Presentation to Town Meeting, March 29, 2014

Dr. McFall said that Mr. Creel and Ms. Glass attended the Capital Planning and Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Creel said the Committees wanted to know how much money was needed in the warrant for Town Meeting for the study on what to do with the Lincoln school buildings. Mr. Creel said they asked for an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for a consultant to study the previous studies on the school buildings, and an additional \$50,000 just in case, so the warrant would ask for up to \$250,000. He also noted that they looked at the tentative schedule presented at the February 12 Multi-Board meeting, and the Special Town Meeting might need to be held later than October or November 2014. Mr. Creel, Ms. Glass, and the two Committees discussed the request in detail, and the Committees wanted to make sure there was public input. Mr. Creel said that by the meeting's end, the CapCom and FinCom understood that they were using the Town's money wisely and approved the warrant article.

Dr. McFall reviewed the draft of the budget presentation she will make at the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, March 29 and showed it with a PowerPoint presentation. Unlike previous years, Dr. McFall will present instead of the Chair of the School Committee. At last night's Town Moderator's Town Meeting preparation meeting, Dr. McFall and all Town boards were told to keep their presentations brief and to stick to the basics.

The Committee discussed which slides to include from the budget book, and made suggestions on additional information to relay. Some important information, such as the fact that all of our 8th grade students scored proficient or advanced in the English Language Arts portion of the MCAS exam, is worthy of inclusion in the talking points but may not need a separate slide. Mr. Christenfeld said Dr. McFall should mention that the per pupil expenditure has dropped, and the schools have returned money to the Town in the last few fiscal years. Ms. James suggested that the font color not be red, especially for dollar amounts, and to make it easier to read. She noted that a breakdown of the operating budget should be included for the non-financial types, and she likes graphs.

Dr. McFall and all Town boards have to submit their presentations to Town IT Director Chuck Miller by next Thursday, March 27.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked her for her work.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes, October 10, 2013; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes, October 24, 2013; 3) Draft of School Committee Minutes, November 7, 2013

Ms. James moved, and Mr. Christenfeld seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the October 10, October 24, and November 7, 2013 meetings. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes. They will be posted on the website.

XIII. Information Enclosures

Document: Amendment of Solicitation/Modification of Contract from William Lockard, Contracting Officer, Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools [DDESS], effective date March 3, 2014

These items were not discussed. The documents are for the Committee's information.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Christenfeld, seconded by Ms. James, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary