

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 24, 2013
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

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

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. Glass acknowledged two incidents of school violence in Sparks, Nevada and in Danvers, Massachusetts, saying the incidents were happening too frequently. She asked for moments of silence for the families.

Ms. Glass welcomed Ms. Preditta Cedeno, who has volunteered to represent the Boston families on the Committee. Ms. Cedeno, a social worker and a preschool and kindergartener parent, is excited to be in Lincoln and looks forward to learning and adding something useful to the Committee.

Ms. Glass congratulated the 39 Lincoln-Sudbury students who have been named Commended Students by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, noting that many graduated from the Lincoln School. The students were listed in the *Lincoln Journal* and are: Lucia Alexander, Michael Bader, Ian Baize, Christopher Bauer, Evan Berkowitz, Jane Blicher, Austin Brown, Thomas Callegas, Daniel Canella, Erin Cromwell, Elizabeth Dewey, Rebecca Epstein, Amanda Fasciano, Isaac Feldberg, Anthony Foscolos, Caroline Glass, Eric Goodman, Benjamin Gorman, Brett Halperin, Tessa James, Zachary Joachim, Yuliya Kulyomina, Michael Lascaleia, April Lee, Connor Levesque, Chase Levitt, Ashley Liu, Bryn Miller, Helen Montie, Joseph Mooney, Sarah Ostrow, Rosemary Rust, Molly Schineller, Amy Stoddard, Sarah Stone, Daniel Weinstein, Thomas Winschel, Ivy Zhang, and Valerie Zhao.

III. Public Comments

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$692,618.30 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$275,595.70 for a total of \$968,214.00. 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.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Lincoln School PTO Donations

Document: None.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to accept donations of \$1,000.00 from the Lincoln PTO for grade 6 and \$200.00 from the Lincoln PTO for grades 2 and 7 English classes. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the donations.

Ms. Glass thanked the PTO for their donations. They will send a thank-you note.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. School Building Advisory Committee [SBAC] Update

Document: None.

Ms. Glass said the SBAC is working on its report. Mr. Christenfeld, a member of the SBAC, said Co-Chair Steven Perlmutter has written a draft of the SBAC report that the SBAC reviewed, and they are now revising it. The SBAC will review it at their meeting next week.

B. Academic Calendar Update

Document: Memorandum, "Feedback on School Calendar," dated October 21, 2013

Ms. Glass created the document on the feedback that she received about the 2014-2015 school calendar. She noted that consistency was a common thread and that more are willing to start school before Labor Day. She said that some would like to finish earlier in June to get an earlier start to the summer. Ms. Glass said that Lincoln parents would like an after-Labor Day start. She noted that a March vacation instead of February and April vacations would be drastic, but they have put it out for consideration.

Mr. Christenfeld said there has been more pressure for a post-Labor Day start. Many also noted the low attendance days on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday. If school runs late into June, there is an issue for the start of summer camps, but if school ends too early, there is also an issue. Mr. Sander asked whether they've heard from both campuses and if the comments are consistent.

Dr. McFall said that many Hanscom students move, usually after Memorial Day, and they like to end the school year earlier. She mentioned that there are options with adjusting days for parent-teacher conferences. She noted that they need to consider the total number of days that faculty need to be at school, and she will gather information from the faculty on what is useful with parent conferences and the alternatives for scheduling. They will develop draft calendars for community input.

C. School Improvement Plans for Hanscom Primary and Hanscom Middle School

Documents: 1) Hanscom Primary School, School Improvement Plan 2013-2014, undated; 2) Hanscom Middle School, School Improvement Plan 2012-2013 [sic], undated

Hanscom School Principals Beth Ludwig and Erich Ledebuhr reviewed the Hanscom Schools Improvement Plans with a PowerPoint presentation. The plans were written using the district's strategic objectives (educator growth, curriculum and instruction, assessment and data, and responding to student needs) and goals. Mr. Ledebuhr said they had a strong opening of school; there are 140 new students at the schools this year. The base housing is completed, and the campuses are stabilized. They will have an improvement initiative for FY15 for professional development on learning targets.

Ms. Ludwig noted the first goal for both schools is "educators will grow their capacity to engage students in activities that simultaneously show students what the learning target is, develops their understanding of the concepts and skills that make up the target, and produces evidence of their progress toward the target." They are looking for the alignment of three items: 1) learning targets, 2) "look fors" (I can add numbers, for example), and 3) performance of student understanding. The faculty shares examples and different strategies at their on-line "share shop." Mr. Ledebuhr heard students cheering in class when they met the learning target.

The second goal for the Hanscom Primary School is "implement a three-tiered positive behavioral intervention system to support the behavioral, social, and emotional growth of students." Ms. Ludwig noted they work with students and parents earlier when they see issues. They had two days of professional development during the summer on behavioral issues. They have created a team called the Behavioral/Emotional/Social Student Support Team [BESST] that is composed of herself, five teachers, one social worker, and one school psychologist to support students and their families. Ms. Ludwig said they are seeing better results with their discipline data. They also use Goal Focused Intervention Plans [GFIPs] for social issues.

Mr. Ledebuhr said the second goal for the Middle School is "educators in grades 6-8 will expand their use of Developmental Designs for Middle School [DDMS] to respond to students' academic and social needs." They will review the social contract as most students have moved since it was created two years ago and they have more students this year. They have also started an Advisor/Advisee program that will begin November 1 to help students. He noted that the program is a big time commitment, and they will track the program's effectiveness.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their exciting work.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the Hanscom Primary and Hanscom Middle School Improvement Plans for 2013-14. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the school improvement plans.

D. 2013 MCAS Results

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee from Mary Sterling, Re: Report on the 2013 MCAS Results, dated October 18, 2013; 2) MCAS Results: Comparison to Other Communities, October 2013; 3) Appendix A, Spring 2013 MCAS Results by Achievement Level, School, District and State Comparison for Lincoln Schools Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and for Hanscom Primary and Middle Schools Grades 3,4,

5, 6, 7, 8 and Cohort Comparison for Lincoln School, 2010-2013; 4) Appendix B, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Lincoln, 2013 Accountability Data – Lincoln (profiles.doe.mass.edu/accountability/report/district.aspx?orgtypecode=5&linkid=30&fycode=2013&orgcode=01570000); 5) Appendix C, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Spring 2013 MCAS Student Growth Scatter Plots, Lincoln and Hanscom Middle Schools, Grade 8, dated October 16, 2013 and Spring 2013 MCAS School Growth Distribution, English Language Arts and Mathematics, dated October 16, 2013

Dr. Sterling highlighted the MCAS results with a PowerPoint presentation. She noted that there will be a second report in November that deals with subgroup information and the achievement gap. This evening's report is the first one that reflects the results of the new 2011 standards in English Language Arts and mathematics. Next spring there will be all new frameworks with MCAS, and eventually the PARCC assessment [Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers] will replace the MCAS. Dr. Sterling noted that the science standards will be changing.

Dr. Sterling reviewed the English Language Arts scores for the Lincoln Schools; the 8th graders scored at a high level with no students at the needs improvement or warning levels. She mentioned that the inclusion of extra writing time helps in Lincoln, but they do not have that at Hanscom, where 77% of the students scored advanced or proficient. Students have more background with narrative writing and now have to manage opinion and expository writing.

Dr. Sterling said mathematics scores were strong, with only 16% of the students scoring needs improvement or warning on the Lincoln campus. While the scores on the Hanscom campus are lower than Lincoln's in grades 3-6, they are higher than the state average. She noted that grades 7 and 8 at Hanscom have lower scores than the state average, which is very discouraging. They are closely analyzing the results and question types, and many times, arriving students need to be taught remedial skills. Dr. Sterling said that the flipped classroom did not work. They are getting students prepared to answer open response questions and to explain their answers and problem solving. Dr. McFall said they will use Title I grant money to expand on the position to intervene and to support students. She said that Mr. Ledebuhr has developed goals with math and will have an improvement initiative for FY15 for online math tools.

Dr. Sterling said the science test is a three-year cumulative test, which means students have to maintain their knowledge in some areas for that time. One science teacher commented that the scores do not jibe with the strengths seen in class. No process or inquiry skills are tested in the MCAS test. The Lincoln 5th graders have gained overall since 2009, and the Lincoln 8th graders have improved since 2009 even while having more scores at the needs improvement level. The Hanscom students have scored better than the state average, which shows growth and is exciting given that most of the students were not students in the district for the previous three years.

Dr. Sterling explained the new Progress and Performance Index [PPI], which is the metric for determining district and school accountability for student progress. PPI is assigned to each district and school in each district, and there are 5 levels, with Level 1 being the best and Level 5 being the worst. The district was designated as a Level 1 district in 2013 and was a Level 2 last year.

Dr. Sterling also reviewed the Student Growth Percentile [SGP] scatter plot graphs that show growth and performance from one year to the next; students who show low performance and low growth are ones they are most concerned about. High performing students do not show as much growth as they perform at a high level already. Dr. Sterling showed a comparison of the Lincoln Schools with surrounding communities; the district has high performance and strong growth.

Ms. Glass congratulated her for the good news and her work.

E. Recognition of Teachers Receiving Professional Teacher Status

Document: Memorandum to School Committee from Rebecca McFall, Re: Professional Status Awards, dated October 24, 2013

Dr. McFall congratulated the educators who have attained Professional Teacher Status. The teachers are: Melissa D'Agostino, Joshua Gold, Elaine Herzog, Karen Sasky Hughes, Heather Morin, Amanda Sykes, and Jennifer Wakeling. Later this year, one more teacher will attain the Status when they return from leave. Each teacher has been recommended for the Status by their principals and has completed three consecutive years as a licensed teacher.

Ms. Glass and the Committee congratulated the teachers on their work.

F. Superintendent's Evaluation—Selection of Priority Elements

Document: Chart of Priority Elements 2012-2013 with Standards and Indicators, undated

The Committee discussed the indicators that would be used to evaluate Dr. McFall's performance this year. The ten indicators are: 1-A-2, 1-B-2, 1-D-1, 1-E-2, II-E-1, III-B-2, IV-A-1, IV-D-1, IV-E-1, and IV-F-3; the indicators are defined in the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation Guide.

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. James seconded, that the ten indicators mentioned above will be used to evaluate Dr. McFall's performance for the 2013-14 school year. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the ten indicators.

G. Strategic Priority Maps—Second Reading and Vote

Documents: 1) Lincoln Public Schools Strategic Plan 2013-2015, Approved by School Committee June 20, 2013; 2) Lincoln Public Schools On-going Priorities: 2013-2014, dated June, 2013; 3) Lincoln Public Schools Strategic Priority Maps for 2013-15, dated October 2, 2013

Dr. McFall said the new Strategic Priority Maps replace the work plans. These maps were compiled by the Administrative Team using the District Strategic Plan that the Committee approved in the spring, and these maps outline the steps to be taken to achieve the Strategic Priorities and Objectives. The maps are multi-year plans, and Dr. McFall said the team has had a highly collaborative process to form these plans. The maps were reviewed at the last meeting.

Mr. Sander moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to approve the Strategic Priority Maps for 2013-2015 as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Strategic Priority Maps for 2013-2015.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall commended Mr. Creel for becoming a Certified Administrator by the International Association of School Business Officials. Mr. Creel is only one of ten people who are certified in the Commonwealth. She thanked him for his work.

Dr. McFall went to Nature's Classroom yesterday with the 7th graders. She attended an aquatic life class that was collecting samples from the pond and a pioneer village class that made johnnycakes. She felt energized and noted that the curriculum at Nature's Classroom is terrific; students were highly engaged.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling attended a 6th grade class at Hanscom Middle School that created geo-autobiography posters that related to their lives as they have lived in many places. The posters show how humans and their environments interact in different places.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

A. Updated Anti-Bullying Policy Reflecting 2013 Provisions – First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Policy on Bullying Prevention, File JICK, Adopted by the School Committee December 2, 2010

Ms. Powers noted that the bullying prevention policy needs to be updated to reflect the state's mandate, and the changes are reflected in the proposed wording which includes not only students, but "a member of a school staff, including but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional...". Parents are not included.

Ms. Powers will bring the policy back for a second reading and vote.

B. Administrator Salary Negotiation Policy – First Reading

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, Policy on Establishment of Compensation Levels for Principals and Other Non-Bargaining Unit Administrators, File GCBB, undated

Dr. McFall said the policy establishes the discussion between the Committee and the superintendent about salary ranges and increases.

Mr. Sander asked that a sentence be included that reads, “The School Committee will set an overall percentage range for raises.” Mr. Christenfeld noted that the salaries are broken out to different departments, and it is addressed during the budget discussions.

Mr. Sander asked that they include a sentence be included that reads, “The School Committee and superintendent shall also agree on a total pool available in a given year for salary increases.”

Dr. McFall will add the sentence to the policy and bring it back to the Committee for a second reading and vote.

C. Remote Participation Policy – First Reading

Documents: 1) Memorandum to Board and Committee Chairs & Respective Staff from Tim Higgins, Town Administrator, on behalf of the Selectmen, Re: Remote Participation in Board and Committee Meetings, dated October 15, 2013; 2) Remote Participation Policy, Town of Lincoln, MA, adopted by the Board of Selectmen, October 7, 2013

Ms. Glass noted that the Board of Selectmen approved the use of the remote participation provision of the Open Meeting Law, effective November 1, 2013. The Town is doing a one-year trial, and the Selectmen would like feedback. Each Town board and committee is included until they opt out via a majority vote of the board or committee. Requirements of the remote participation provision include that it be used in extenuating circumstances, all participants must be audible to all in the meeting room, a quorum of Committee members must be in the meeting room (three for the School Committee), and the member participating remotely must have access to the materials to be covered during the meeting. In addition, the member participating remotely can participate in executive sessions but must not allow others to hear the executive session. The Committee will not reimburse members for expenses incurred to participate remotely.

Mr. Ford said they would need to install a new phone line in the Hartwell Multipurpose Room, and it is easy to do it now, but there is a cost. Mr. Sander suggested that they install the line now, but Mr. Christenfeld suggested they wait until a committee member wants to participate remotely. Mr. Christenfeld noted that the School Building Advisory Committee did a dry run of remote participation using a cell phone, and it seemed to work.

Dr. McFall will bring the policy back for a second reading and vote.

IX. Facilities and Financial

B. FY14 Fiscal Report: First Quarter

Documents: 1) Memorandum to Lincoln School Committee and Rebecca McFall, Superintendent of Schools, from Buckner Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance, Subject: FY14 First Quarter Report, dated October 12, 2013; 2) Lincoln Campus, FY 2014 Operating Budget – Status Report, 1st Quarter, as of October 5, 2013; 3) Hanscom Campus, FY 2014 Operating Budget – Status Report, 1st Quarter, as of October 5, 2013; 4) FY 2014 Operating Budget—Key Budget Line Tracking, 1st Quarter, as of October 5, 2013

Mr. Creel reviewed his memo and reports. They have encumbered the faculty salaries and are on track with their “burn rate.” He noted that they submitted the enrollment numbers and list of 603 students to the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools [DDESS], which means that the Hanscom enrollment has increased to a Band 4 reimbursement rate, an extra \$478,901. The district has to wait for verification on the extra money, which will be put into the Hanscom Reserve Fund.

There have not been any extraordinary expenses to bring to the Committee’s attention, but they have had more maternity leaves that require more long-term substitutes. Mr. Creel noted that only a portion of the maternity leave is paid. Dr. McFall noted that there have been a few medical leaves.

X. Old Business

A. School Committee Subcommittee Assignments

Document: Memorandum to Members of the Committee from Jennifer Glass, Re: Subcommittees and Liaison Responsibilities: Draft, dated September 26, 2013

Ms. Glass asked if there were changes on the subcommittee and liaison assignments. Ms. James volunteered to work on the Pod C RFP, and she was added to the list for it.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the list of subcommittee and liaison assignments for 2013-2014. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the assignments.

Ms. Glass thanked the members for their work.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

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 purposes of litigation and the Request for Proposal [RFP] with LEAP. Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Ms. James, yes; Ms. Cedeno, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 9:05 pm.

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

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary