

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, March 19, 2015
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chairperson), Tim Christenfeld (Vice Chairperson), Al Schmertzler, Jena Salon, Peter Borden, Laurel Wironen (Hanscom Educational Liaison). Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Patricia Kinsella (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services).

Absent: Preditta Cedeno (METCO Representative), Robert Ford (Director of Technology).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:58 pm. She thanked David Trant for taping the meeting.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld said the Lincoln Middle School is performing the musical "Grease" tonight and tomorrow at 7:00 pm. He thanked Kristin Hall, Blake Siskavich, Julie Reynolds, Terri Nathanson, and parents for helping.

Mr. Christenfeld announced that the Class Size Research Committee has met twice.

Mr. Christenfeld and Dr. McFall attended the EDCO Board meeting last week. Wellesley has been allowed to withdraw from the collaborative, and the remaining school districts will have to pay additional fees to make up for the loss. He reported that Lincoln's fees will increase by roughly \$1,300.

Ms. Glass reported that they had the multi-Board meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Finance and Capital Planning Committees. There were also some Planning Board members in attendance. They reviewed the warrant articles and ballot questions for the Town Meeting, and it was an opportunity for residents to ask questions. She thanked Jim Cunningham for taping the meeting and the Board and Committee members for attending.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. deCordova Appointee Report

Document: None.

Ms. Glass welcomed Mr. Daniel Elias, the Committee's appointee to the deCordova Museum Board of Trustees, Ms. Julie Bernson, the deCordova's Deputy

Director of Learning and Engagement, and Mr. John Ravenal, the new Executive Director of the deCordova.

Mr. Elias said the deCordova is very happy to welcome Mr. Ravenal, who came to them from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Mr. Elias noted that the deCordova's focus is now on education and learning engagement for all ages. The Museum now hosts the Lincoln Nursery School, and they have programming for the Lincoln, METCO, and Hanscom groups. They have hosted the district's art teachers and will have classes visit in the spring. Mr. Elias, Ms. Glass, and Dr. McFall have met to discuss further collaborations. He will meet with the schools during the summer with a focus on how to expand the offerings for students.

Mr. Ravenal said that education for all ages is at the heart of the Museum. He reviewed the upcoming exhibitions.

Mr. Elias suggested that the district's teachers visit his art school in Newton. Mr. Elias explained how the art teachers are engaging the students and noted the connections with math, science, and writing where students are asked to write about their visual experiences.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

B. Review Town Meeting Presentation
Document: None.

Ms. Glass said that they are still working on the presentation for the warrant articles and did not have a draft to show at this time. The goal is for the presentation to tell a story. She and Dr. McFall are planning to do a dry run on Tuesday, March 24 at 7:00 pm in the Multipurpose Room. Ms. Glass asked for suggestions.

Ms. Glass and Dr. McFall are going to the Council on Aging on Friday, March 20 at 1:00 pm to have a conversation with interested residents.

Mr. Borden noted that residents are confused about the feasibility study and do not understand why another one is needed. He suggested that they say they are looking for a chance to craft the best options for the Town. Ms. Glass said they will define feasibility study in their presentation.

Mr. Schmertzler said they need to emphasize that they need a strong approval to show the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA], and residents' votes make a big difference.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Dr. McFall and Ms. Glass for their time spent and enormous amount of work on the presentation.

C. Student Feedback Survey Results (B2)

Documents: 1) Memorandum to Lincoln School Committee from Rebecca McFall, Superintendent, Re: Student Feedback Survey Results, dated March 11, 2015; 2) ESE Model Student Feedback Survey Results, 2014-2015, Grades 3-5; 3) ESE Model Student Feedback Survey Results, 2014-2015, Grades 6-8

Dr. McFall said all students in grades 3-8 have taken the Student Feedback survey about their classroom teachers. Students in grades 3-5 took the survey about their classroom teacher. Students in grades 6-8 took two surveys about two teachers. The

teachers were randomly selected. Dr. McFall said that Mr. Ford proctored the survey and noted that students took these surveys very seriously and thought about their responses. Dr. McFall said that they will not discuss individual teacher results but will only talk about the results district-wide.

Dr. McFall said they gave the surveys to students in February, and on March 4, she met with the faculty to discuss how to use the information. She said that it is very personal work, and the teachers take it seriously. She said the work can be rewarding and anxiety provoking at the same time because it ties in with the teacher evaluation system.

Dr. McFall showed slides. The survey organizes the results according to the Standards and Indicators on the Standards of Performance rubric used for educator evaluation, so they are reported on Standards I and II. Lincoln was one of nine districts to pilot the student survey last year. Dr. McFall said that they did not survey students in grades K-2, but teachers are thinking about how they can get useful feedback from those students.

Teachers will use the results to reflect on their practices. They are asked to consider: what positive validations there were, what surprises there were, what do they want more information on, and what actions might they consider to improve their practice. Teachers will then implement new strategies and communicate with students on those strategies and tell them that they appreciate their feedback. Teachers will use the information to assess themselves and to set goals. The survey shows students that they have voices. Dr. McFall stressed that they will not use the results of these surveys directly in any teacher evaluation.

While the principals will not seek out teachers' results to discuss them, principals can ask how the results were used to set goals for the evaluation system. The principals may also look at patterns over time to address student needs. Districts will use the results as baseline data and will look at trends to see where there might be areas of improvement and to set goals for the district.

Dr. McFall said there was no statewide data available to districts. She reviewed the results, and they have results by school. She thanked the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE] for helping with their requests.

The reports that the Committee was provided contained the raw data. Dr. McFall said that they have to be careful how the data is used and interpreted; the purpose of the survey is to help teachers with their growth and goal setting.

Dr. McFall said the data in the packet was manually sorted, and they categorized the survey questions according to district focuses. She said that the district did well in the growth mindset, which has been a focus, and with cognitive demand. The data also shows that teachers are clear and check with students for understanding before moving on to another topic.

Dr. McFall said the data brings to mind some questions and considerations. There are questions on cognitive demand. There are questions on the instructional repertoire, student choice, and the variety of instruction. Another item to consider is how to increase the students' voices in the learning process and how to engage students. In some areas of the survey, there are only a few questions. There were only two classrooms at the Hanscom Primary School that completed the survey, so they have to be careful about the sample sizes.

Their next steps are to have teachers share their results with students and gather more feedback where appropriate, and then teachers will try new approaches and strategies. Dr. McFall said Panorama Education, the developer of the survey, has Playbook software that helps teachers share their strategies. She said the software can be useful if the teachers would like to use it, and they can provide it for them.

Ms. Glass thanked them for piloting the survey and their work on the requirement.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall had no report.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Kinsella was impressed by the Middle School musical.

Ms. Kinsella said artwork for Kindergarten students and 5th grade students is showing at the library. She thanked art teachers Colleen Peirce and Pam DiBiase.

Ms. Kinsella said the 3rd graders are working on a maple sugaring unit.

Ms. Kinsella noted that they had a workshop for teachers to make changes to work in their classrooms, and teachers are sharing pictures of the changes. She is pleased that they are doing that.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrant totaling \$747,151.10 and the accounts payable warrant totaling \$70,006.43 for a total of \$817,157.53. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Schmertzler moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. Glass seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. Review and Discussion of Preschool Fees

Document: Memorandum to Dr. Rebecca McFall, Superintendent, and Buckner Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance, from Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator, Re: Proposed Tuition Increase for the Lincoln Preschool, dated March 11, 2015

Mr. Creel reviewed the memorandum on preschool fees and said they should consider increasing the fees. The district has integrated preschools with students with special needs and students without those needs and sees the benefit of preschool for all students. Ms. Powers and Ms. Fagan surveyed other preschools to see what their fees

were and found that programs had a range of fees. Most programs use a per hour rate. They found that the district offers the lowest rates around. Ms. Powers and Ms. Fagan recommended that they increase the fees by \$1,000 for the first year and \$600 for the second year. Mr. Creel said that as families are planning for next year now, they should consider the increase for the 2016-2017 school year and will review the fees on a more regular basis. Mr. Creel stated that they cannot increase the numbers of students because there is a space issue for the next three years.

Dr. McFall said that even with the increase, the rates would still be the lowest around, and they have a sliding scale for low-income families.

Ms. Glass said the Committee should review the preschool fees every two years. Mr. Creel suggested that they make the discussion a part of the discussion on the revolving funds, and they will. Ms. Glass asked that they please move forward with the new funding schedule.

C. Pod C License Review and VOTE

Document: License: Lincoln Campus—Pod C, dated March 19, 2015

The Lincoln Extended-Day Activities Program [LEAP] uses Pod C through a license agreement with the Committee, and the license expires on June 30, 2015. According to the LEAP report, they provide safe and affordable after-school care for children of working families. Last year was the first time that the Committee approved a license agreement, instead of a lease agreement, for Pod C with the license to be renewed annually. LEAP submitted all requested materials, and the Committee was pleased with their direction.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to grant a license to Lincoln Extended-Day Activities Program [LEAP] for the operation of an affordable after-school and school year recess period care program for school-aged children in Pod C from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016. The Committee voted unanimously to grant a license to Lincoln Extended-Day Activities Program [LEAP] for the operation of an affordable after-school and school year recess period care program for school-aged children in Pod C from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

Ms. Glass thanked Mr. Creel for his work.

D. Hanscom Middle School Building Update

Document: None.

Mr. Creel visited the building site yesterday and showed photographs of the progress. All of the steel has been erected, but the contractors are a little behind schedule. He noted that the administration is starting to make plans for the move into the new building, but they will not know exactly when the completion date will be until September 2015. At this point, they are estimating that the move will occur in April 2016. All administration and staff have been asked not to plan vacations during the April 2016 vacation week. Mr. Creel said there is much work to be done, such as choose the furniture, fixtures, and equipment [FF&E] and then set everything up in the new building.

Mr. Creel said the Hanscom Primary School has been approved. The temporary buildings will have to be ready for the Hanscom Primary School students to move into,

and that move is tentatively planned for July 2016. He said they will need six more trailers.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

XIII. Information Enclosures

Documents: 1) Letter to Dormie Baskerville, President, Hanscom PTO, from Rebecca McFall, Superintendent, dated March 6, 2015; 2) Letter to Lincoln Police Association from Rebecca McFall, Superintendent, dated March 6, 2015

The letters were for the Committee's information and were not discussed.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, the Committee voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purposes of negotiating salary increases for the superintendent. The vote was: Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Ms. Salon, yes; Mr. Borden, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 8:58 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 7:00 pm.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary