

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Tuesday, September 23, 2014
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jena Salon, Preditta Cedeno (METCO Representative). Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Patricia Kinsella (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), 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 7:07 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

This evening was Vice Chair Tom Sander's last School Committee meeting. He will resign from the Committee, effective after tonight's meeting. Ms. Glass showed a slide show presentation as a testament to Mr. Sander's last seven and a half years as a member. Ms. Glass read aloud a letter from former School Committee Chair Julie Dobrow, who was unable to attend, about Mr. Sander's service. Ms. Glass and the Committee thanked Mr. Sander for his service. He was grateful.

Mr. Sander's three-year term ends in March 2015, and the Committee will interview candidates for the interim position on October 9. Candidates will then run for the seat.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Donations

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee from Erich Ledebuhr, Re: DonorsChoice.org, dated September 15, 2014; 2) Memorandum to School Committee and Rebecca McFall from Sharon Hobbs, dated September 16, 2014; 3) Memorandum to School Committee and Rebecca McFall from Sharon Hobbs, dated September 23, 2014

B. Agreement of Services for School Physician

Document: Agreement of Services: School Physician, signed September 15, 2014

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Christenfeld seconded, the motion to accept a materials donation from DonorsChoose.org in the amount of \$759.78 to Joshua Gold, Grade 6 and 7 science teacher at Hanscom Middle School, a donation from the Parent Teacher Organization [PTO] in the amount of \$100 to Hilary Skelton, grade 6 ELA teacher at Lincoln School 5-8, a donation from Target in the amount of \$89.56 to Lincoln School 5-8, and to appoint Dr. Stephen Jenkins, M.D. to serve as School Physician for the

2014-2015 school year. The Committee voted unanimously to accept a materials donation from DonorsChoose.org in the amount of \$759.78 to Joshua Gold, Grade 6 and 7 science teacher at Hanscom Middle School, a donation from the Parent Teacher Organization [PTO] in the amount of \$100 to Hilary Skelton, grade 6 ELA teacher at Lincoln School 5-8, a donation from Target in the amount of \$89.56 to Lincoln School 5-8, and to appoint Dr. Stephen Jenkins, M.D. to serve as School Physician for the 2014-2015 school year.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Retiree Recognition

Document: None.

Dr. McFall said Ms. Donna Furman will retire on October 3; she has served the Lincoln Public Schools since 2003. Ms. Ginny Flaherty, her supervisor, thanked Ms. Furman, who started at the Hanscom Primary School and moved to the Lincoln Schools as the METCO secretary in 2008. In 2010, Ms. Furman became Ms. Flaherty's secretary in the student services department.

Ms. Glass congratulated Ms. Furman and thanked her for her work for the Lincoln Public Schools.

B. EDCO Articles of Agreement

Documents: 1) Letter to EDCO Member District School Committees from Colleen Dolan, Re: EDCO Articles of Agreement and Capital Reserve Fund, dated July 17, 2014; 2) EDCO Collaborative Articles of Agreement, replacing the agreement dated June 28, 1988; 3) Letter to EDCO Collaborative Member School Committees from Colleen, Re: EDCO Collaborative Final Articles of Agreement, dated July 17, 2014

Dr. McFall said that all education collaboratives in Massachusetts are required to update their articles of agreement to comply with new legislation. The EDCO Collaborative is made up of the Acton-Boxborough, Arlington, Bedford, Belmont, Brookline, Carlisle, Concord, Concord-Carlisle, Lexington, Lincoln, Lincoln-Sudbury, Newton, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, Weston, and Winchester school districts and offers programs for at-risk students and adults, educator training, and cost-effective services.

Dr. McFall said that other districts have approved the Articles of Agreement in full but Waltham shared Lincoln's concerns with the capital assessment piece in the Articles of Agreement. Mr. Christenfeld talked with Ms. Colleen Dolan, the Executive Director, about the issue. Dr. McFall said that if Lincoln or other districts wanted to change the language around capital assessments, the process would be to propose alternative language and to send it to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE] and all the other member districts for their approval. The School Committees of the member districts need to vote on the revised Articles of Agreement.

Ms. Glass asked about the procedure for determining the capital assessment for member districts and whether it was subject to a vote of the Board of Directors and required a two-thirds vote in order to pass. She asked whether the Capital Assessment was discussed during their budget process or at other times; she wanted to make sure that

districts could discuss and have input into potential assessments. Ms. Glass wanted member districts to be notified about a vote before it happened. She noted that EDCO leases the property and does not own it, so there is not as much likelihood of the member districts receiving a big capital assessment, but she does not want any surprises for the district.

Mr. Christenfeld shared Ms. Glass' concerns but did not want to derail the process of voting for the Articles of Agreement. He noted it was a question of the likelihood of a large capital assessment happening versus safeguarding the district from one and said he thought they would know how much money the assessment would be.

Dr. McFall said she was not sure what would happen if one district voted no for the Articles of Agreement. There is no deadline to approve the Articles of Agreement, and the current Agreement remains in place until the new one is approved.

Mr. Christenfeld said that Ms. Dolan was willing to attend a meeting, and he suggested that they invite her to attend the October 9 meeting to give more information.

The Committee did not vote on the revised EDCO Articles of Agreement.

C. School Committee Subcommittee Assignments

Document: Memorandum to Members of the Committee from Jennifer Glass, Re: Subcommittees and Liaison Responsibilities: Draft, dated September 17, 2014

Ms. Glass reviewed the current assignments with an eye to filling the positions that Mr. Sander's resignation would leave open. Mr. Christenfeld will compile the Finance Committee Annual Report. All members will work on the Superintendent's Evaluation, and Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Glass will work on the Evaluation System Committee. They need members for the Secretary and Custodian Negotiations; the work will start in the winter after the FY16 budget is approved. She asked whether the Technology Review Committee was established, and Mr. Christenfeld had been the liaison to it.

Ms. Glass asked the members to contact her if they have questions or would like to change their assignments. Once they approve a new member, that new member will take on some assignments.

D. Superintendent's Annual Plan

Documents: 1) Annual Superintendent Evaluation Timeline, undated; 2) Memorandum to School Committee from Rebecca McFall, Re: Superintendent's Annual Plan 2014-2015, dated September 18, 2014

Dr. McFall presented her annual evaluation plan with PowerPoint. The new educator evaluation system requires that all teachers and administrators establish goals. Dr. McFall's goals are aligned with the recommendations in the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, Part VI: Implementation Guide for Superintendent Evaluation, and these goals are aligned with the District's Strategic Plan. Dr. McFall has four goals—a professional practice goal, a student learning goal, and two district improvement goals.

Dr. McFall's professional practice goal is about improving her practice in regard to how she works with the Principals, the Preschool Coordinator, and the Assistant

Superintendent. At regular meetings, they will discuss leadership practices, share best practices, and develop consistent models in a variety of areas such as: discipline, developing faculty collaboration, data analysis, community building, calibration of evaluation practices and other areas. They had their first meeting last week. Ms. Glass wanted the measures to be clear at the start and to find the easiest and best way for Dr. McFall to convey the information. Dr. McFall said when she reports on the impact of this goal, it is about her work with the administrators, not about their work. She noted that she will have measures when they create the long term agenda.

Dr. McFall's student learning goal is to establish a set of universal indicators to monitor the growth and achievement of students in the areas of Math and English Language Arts [ELA]. This goal is a joint one with Assistant Superintendent Kinsella, Mr. Ford, and the other administrators. They are continuing to look at which assessment they will use for ELA in grades 6-8 and will have training for the STAR Math Assessment tomorrow. They will continue their reviews of assessments and stop using any that are not useful. The assessments provide both district-level data and information about individual students' progress. They can be used to assess the need for interventions when appropriate. This will allow Dr. McFall to directly impact student learning. Teachers will discuss the data and what to do with it. The district can then assess how this impacts student learning. Dr. McFall will present outcomes and the work done to get there to the Committee. Dr. McFall noted some of the data is not available until the end of the school year, and the MCAS data from the spring does not become available until the following fall.

The first district improvement goal is to develop an understanding of teaching, learning, and school culture based upon the feedback provided by students in grades 3 through 8. The district will administer surveys, possibly using the model student survey from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [DESE]. Dr. McFall is going to apply to participate in the DESE Model Feedback Survey Project. There are many choices on when and how many times to give the survey to students. The survey will not be given on specialty subjects. Teachers use the survey data from students in their self-assessment process. Dr. McFall will appear in a DESE video on student feedback. There are survey models on the DESE website, and the questions correspond with teacher evaluation rubrics, and she is pleased with the survey.

The second district improvement goal is to improve instructional practices by providing opportunities for faculty collaboration and instructional growth through the participation in Peer Observation practices. Dr. McFall said there was an improvement initiative approved by the Committee to help with this goal, and it has the potential to make huge improvements in their instructional practice. It will be a major focus for Ms. Kinsella and the Administrative Team. Dr. McFall said they want examples to show teachers what exemplary practice is, and it will move them to a higher level.

Ms. Glass said the members agree that Dr. McFall's goals and indicators are worthwhile.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. Salon seconded, the motion to approve the Superintendent's Annual Plan 2014-2015. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Superintendent's Annual Plan 2014-2015.

Additional Reports:

Document: Implementation of Educator Evaluation System Survey #3, Spring 2014

Ms. Glass asked why there was a low number of respondents, 39, to the survey. Dr. McFall noted it was given very late in June, which is a busy time to complete it. She said that only 50 percent of the administrators and staff participated in the new evaluation system last year, but this year 100 percent of the administrators and staff are required to use the new evaluation system. The answers are anonymous, and the group will be surveyed again.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall extended their sympathies to the family of Megan Pojar, who passed away last night. They are putting things in place to help students and to provide supports.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Kinsella has been in 14 classrooms since the last meeting. She has observed new teachers and watched as one teacher read aloud to 16 students in a cozy setting in the library. She also observed hands-on science using microscopes and students observing outside creatures. She has been paying attention to the way that space is used in the classrooms.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

A. Third Reading of Criminal Offender Record Information [CORI] Policy (File: ADDA)

Documents: 1) File: ADDA, CORI Requirements, reaffirmed at School Committee Meeting of May 3, 2007; 2) Draft Third Reading of Background Checks, File ADDA, dated September 23, 2014

Dr. McFall said the district has to update their policy, File: ADDA, CORI Requirements, to include State Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services [SAFIS]. Massachusetts has mandated that all public schools require prospective and current employees, and others as determined by the School Committee and the Superintendent, "having the potential for unsupervised contact with children" to submit to background checks, including a Criminal Offender Record Information [CORI] and a SAFIS as a condition of employment. They would like to rename the policy from "CORI Requirements" to "Background Checks" to acknowledge the different types of criminal record checks; a CORI check shows only information on events that took place in Massachusetts, and a SAFIS check shows information on events that took place in other states.

Dr. McFall revised the language in the policy based on the edits discussed at the July 23 and September 11 meetings. At the July 23 and September 11 meetings, there was much discussion about whether they should require volunteers with unsupervised contact with children, including parents, to submit to CORI and SAFIS.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to accept the policy entitled “CORI Requirements,” File: ADDA, as amended, and to rename the policy “Background Checks,” File: ADDA. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the policy entitled “CORI Requirements,” File: ADDA, as amended, and to rename the policy “Background Checks,” File: ADDA.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrant totaling \$684,254.71 and the accounts payable warrant totaling \$161,959.23 for a total of \$846,213.94. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Ms. Glass moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. Lincoln School Utilities

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Rebecca McFall from Buckner Creel, Subject: Recommendation for Award—Commodity Electricity and Natural Gas Supply, dated September 14, 2014

Mr. Creel reviewed his comprehensive memorandum, stating that the contract for commodity electricity ends in June 2015, and the contract for commodity natural gas ends in October 2015. He said it was a good time to consider these items before the heating season starts, and while prices for natural gas are low, electricity is becoming increasingly powered by natural gas. As the district is small and uses roughly one million kilowatt hours per year [kWhr], it makes sense to continue to partner with the PowerOptions collaborative, which aligns the district with other nonprofits and municipalities that are buying electricity. The Town departments are included with the school accounts, and the PowerOptions collaborative has purchased commodity electricity from supplier Direct Energy, ensuring that pricing does not fluctuate. NSTAR’s commodity electricity prices do fluctuate. He recommended that the Committee choose to lock in electricity prices now for the next two years. He and Assistant Town Administrator Mary Day are reviewing the prices.

Mr. Creel stated that the same reasons apply for locking in a natural gas price now. As the district is small and uses roughly 11,000 to 12,500 decatherms of gas, it makes sense to continue to partner with the PowerOptions collaborative, which aligns the district with other nonprofits and municipalities that are buying natural gas. Some Town departments are included with the school accounts, and the PowerOptions collaborative has purchased commodity natural gas from supplier Direct Energy, ensuring that pricing does not fluctuate. National Grid’s commodity natural gas prices do fluctuate. He

recommended that the Committee choose to lock in natural gas prices now for the next four years.

Mr. Creel noted that the Town does not ask to use renewable resources for its energy because renewable energies entail a significant premium at this time.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the purchase of commodity electricity and commodity natural gas from Direct Energy through the PowerOptions collaborative, and to authorize the administration to lock in prices for commodity electricity up to a two-year period, and commodity natural gas up to a four-year period. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the purchase of commodity electricity and commodity natural gas from Direct Energy through the PowerOptions collaborative, and to authorize the administration to lock in prices for commodity electricity up to a two-year period, and commodity natural gas up to a four-year period.

C. First Reading, FY16 Capital Projects

Documents: 1) Draft Memorandum to Becky McFall, Superintendent, and School Committee from Buck Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance, and Michael Haines, Facilities Manager, Subject: Proposed Capital project list—FY16 CapCom project process, dated September 16, 2014; 2) Draft Lincoln Public Schools: Department Capital Project 5 Year Plan, dated September 14, 2014; 3) Memorandum to Department Heads from Mary Day, Assistant Town Administrator, dated September 9, 2014; 4) Town of Lincoln, FY16 Capital Funding Request Form

Mr. Creel, Mr. Haines, and Dr. McFall would like the Committee's guidance on how to prioritize the nine projects, estimated to cost a total of \$818,800, on their FY16 Capital Projects list. He asked the Committee for its advice on the amount of money to ask for from the Capital Planning Committee [CapCom], given that the SBAC process is ongoing; they have tried to avoid listing capital improvements that would be subsumed in some type of building project. Priorities 3, 4, and 7 are contingent upon the outcome of the Lincoln SBAC process; priorities 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 are not. The CapCom's FY16 budget, spread over all the Town departments, is a total of \$450,000. Mr. Creel said they have estimates for the nine items on the FY16 list, but do not have construction costs.

Priority 1 is the annual Classroom Rehabilitation and Preventive Maintenance Program for \$75,000. Mr. Creel said that for Priority 2, the Curtain Walls at the Hartwell Building, they have cancelled the bids and will put the funding for two phases together to save money. Priority 3 is to replace the Brooks smokestack, which has been patched. Mr. Creel noted that the 1948 Smith Smokestack collapsed in 2002, which required a reserve fund transfer to fix.

Mr. Creel and Mr. Haines would prefer not to use the approach of fixing facilities once they fail. If items have to be repaired or replaced because of a catastrophic failure, an emergency funds transfer has to occur, and the projects cannot be budgeted and handled on a more cost-friendly basis.

Mr. Creel is meeting with Assistant Town Administrator Mary Day on October 9 to discuss the items. The Committee wants the Town to know that the buildings have to be maintained, and it costs money.

Ms. Glass asked that he put the parking lot resurfacing and regrading as priority 9 and also combine the roofs together. Mr. Christenfeld will talk to Mr. John Snell of the Green Energy Technology Committee [GETC] about the possibility of funding from the state to make the Reed Gym more energy efficient.

Mr. Creel will bring another draft of the list to the next meeting.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the Proposed Capital project list for FY16 as amended to go to the Capital Planning Committee. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Proposed Capital project list for FY16 as amended to go to the Capital Planning Committee.

D. School Building Advisory Committee [SBAC] Update

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Becky McFall from Buckner Creel, Subject: FY14 Budget status, dated August 26, 2014

In March 2014, Town Meeting approved funding for consultants to develop possible options for a Lincoln School building project. After a careful selection process, the SBAC recommended Dore & Whittier Architects, and the School Committee awarded the contract to Dore & Whittier Architects at its July 23 meeting. The fee proposal they received from Dore & Whittier Architects was \$180,000 with an additional \$10,000 allowance for reimbursables. The contract with Dore & Whittier Architects goes until December 31 so that they can incorporate the input into a final proposal, and the contract gives the option to add tasks if needed. It is proposed that their work will finish in mid-January. Over the summer, the SBAC met weekly, and Dore & Whittier attended a September 2 meeting with the Town Boards, and a September 4 meeting with the School Committee and the administration to discuss the educational program needs. They have posted the meeting schedule in many places in Town.

Dr. McFall announced the first public forum with Dore & Whittier Architects was held on Tuesday, September 16 in the Reed Gym, and there were 80-90 in attendance. The architects led the Town through a process to prioritize the needed items in a project, and the Town learned their approaches to cost estimates and different ideas. She noted there was questioning and pushing, and all were heard and contributed to the discussion.

Mr. Christenfeld said there was some disagreement, but the extreme positions were moderated. His key takeaway was that the willingness to spend money on the buildings depends on what the Town will get for the money. Ms. Salon mentioned that the Community Center Study was mentioned often during the forum.

The next SBAC meeting will be held on September 30 at 7:00 pm, and Town Boards and Committees will attend to reflect on cost estimates and the input. Dr. McFall will present a revised educational vision for the district. The SBAC will also meet on October 7 at 7:00 pm and discuss cost estimates and preliminary concepts. The second public forum will be held on Thursday, October 16 at 7:00 pm in the Reed Gym, and they will provide more information. The PTO will hold a meeting on Friday, November 7 with the SBAC for collaborative conversations.

Ms. Glass thanked the SBAC for their work.

X. Old Business

Documents: 1) Memorandum to Lincoln School Committee and Becky McFall, Superintendent, from Buck Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance, Subject: FY16 Budget Guidelines, dated August 28, 2014 and revised September 11, 2014; 2) Lincoln Public Schools, FY16 Budget Development Timeline, undated

Mr. Creel said he made the changes that were discussed at the September 11 meeting.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Christenfeld seconded, the motion to establish the guidelines for the development of the FY16 budget as presented in the September 11, 2014 memorandum. The Committee voted unanimously to establish the guidelines for the development of the FY16 budget as presented in the September 11, 2014 memorandum.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of School Committee Minutes, February 6, 2014; 2) Draft of School Committee Minutes, March 6, 2014; 3) Draft of School Committee Minutes, July 23, 2014

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2014 and March 6, 2014 meetings. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2014 and March 6, 2014 meetings. Ms. Salon was not a member of the Committee at that time and was not eligible to vote on them.

Ms. Salon moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2014 meeting. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 23, 2014 meeting.

The sets of minutes will be posted on the website.

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 purposes of discussing school security and contract negotiations and salary increases for the administration. Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Ms. Salon, yes; Ms. Cedeno, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 9:26 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 9 at 7:00 pm.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary