

1 MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

2 Thursday, April 27, 2017

3 Hartwell Multipurpose Room, Hartwell Building, Ballfield Road, Lincoln, MA

4 OPEN SESSION

5
6 Present: Tim Christenfeld (Chairperson), Peter Borden (Vice Chairperson), Al
7 Schmertzler, Jena Salon, Tara Mitchell. Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent),
8 Patricia Kinsella (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business
9 and Finance), Mary Emmons (Administrator for Student Services), Robert Ford (Director
10 of Technology).

11
12 Absent: Laurel Wironen (Hanscom Educational Liaison), Samaria Stallings (METCO
13 Representative).

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15 1. Greetings and Call to Order

16 Mr. Christenfeld, Chairperson, called the open session to order at 6:34 pm.

17
18 2. Vote members of the School Building Committee [SBC]

19 Document: Slate of Members of School Building Committee, April 27, 2017

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21 Article 33, which asked the Town to repurpose \$750,000 to fund a feasibility
22 study for a Town-only funded school building project, passed at Town Meeting on
23 Saturday, March 25. The next step is to appoint members to a new School Building
24 Committee [SBC] that will oversee the study.

25 Mr. Christenfeld said that the SBC Selection Committee received five letters of
26 interest to serve on the SBC. The SBC Selection Committee decided to accept all five
27 people as community members to the SBC.

28 The SBC members are Dr. Becky McFall, Superintendent; Mr. Buckner Creel,
29 Administrator for Business and Finance; Mr. Michael Haines, Town Facilities Manager;
30 Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Brooks School Principal; Mr. Timothy Christenfeld, School
31 Committee Chairperson; Ms. Jennifer Glass, Board of Selectmen; Ms. Gina Halsted,
32 Finance Committee; Ms. Kimberly Bodnar, Community Member; Mr. Chris Fasciano,
33 Community Member; Mr. Craig Nicholson, Community Member; Mr. Steven Perlmutter,
34 Community Member; and Mr. Peter Sugar, Community Member.

35 In addition to the SBC members, there will be liaisons from other Town Boards,
36 Committees, and Commissions to provide input at all stages of the school building
37 process. Mr. Christenfeld said that he has contacted all other Town Boards, Committees,
38 and Commissions to ask for assistance from them.

39 Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Mr. Borden seconded, the motion to approve the
40 slate of School Building Committee members—Dr. Becky McFall, Superintendent; Mr.
41 Buckner Creel, Administrator for Business and Finance; Mr. Michael Haines, Town
42 Facilities Manager; Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Brooks School Principal; Mr. Timothy
43 Christenfeld, School Committee Chairperson; Ms. Jennifer Glass, Board of Selectmen;
44 Ms. Gina Halsted, Finance Committee; Ms. Kimberly Bodnar, Community Member; Mr.
45 Chris Fasciano, Community Member; Mr. Craig Nicholson, Community Member; Mr.
46 Steven Perlmutter, Community Member; and Mr. Peter Sugar, Community Member—as

1 presented. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the slate of School Building
2 Committee members—Dr. Becky McFall, Superintendent; Mr. Buckner Creel,
3 Administrator for Business and Finance; Mr. Michael Haines, Town Facilities Manager;
4 Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Brooks School Principal; Mr. Timothy Christenfeld, School
5 Committee Chairperson; Ms. Jennifer Glass, Board of Selectmen; Ms. Gina Halsted,
6 Finance Committee; Ms. Kimberly Bodnar, Community Member; Mr. Chris Fasciano,
7 Community Member; Mr. Craig Nicholson, Community Member; Mr. Steven Perlmutter,
8 Community Member; and Mr. Peter Sugar, Community Member—as presented.

9 Mr. Borden thanked the five community members for volunteering to serve and
10 said he was impressed with the roster.

11 3. Discussion about Forum

12 Document: None.

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15 Mr. Borden led discussion on how to organize and to focus the Strategic Priorities
16 Forum to get the feedback to use for the 2017-2018 District’s Strategic Plan. Mr. Borden
17 raised several topics including peer observation, instructional skills, alignment with state
18 standards, academic content, and project-based learning. Each attendee would write one
19 thought per post-it note that would be placed on each topic sheet. The administrative
20 team and Committee members would facilitate discussion at each of the tables.

21 4. 3rd Annual Strategic Priorities Community Forum

22 Documents: 1) District Strategic Plan and Budget Cycles, undated; 2) Lincoln
23 Public Schools Strategic Plan; 3) Lincoln Public Schools, Core Values

24 A. Overview of District Vision and Strategic Plan

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28 Mr. Christenfeld welcomed all to the Forum and thanked the teachers for coming
29 to share their work with students in the schools.

30 Mr. Christenfeld said that the District Strategic Plan is written each year to
31 address what the district can do to improve student outcomes and how to invest extra
32 resources, such as time, to improve student learning. The district uses Wednesday
33 afternoons to provide professional development for teachers, and ten of those
34 Wednesdays are used by the Administrative Council. Committee and Administration
35 asked those attending how the district should prioritize in the next year. The District
36 Strategic Plan will be written in the next month, and this Forum is the chance for parents
37 and residents to give input into that Plan.

38 Dr. McFall thanked the teachers for attending to share their work. Teachers have
39 been working on collaborative practices to positively effect student learning.

40 B. Faculty Presentations of Current Classroom Practices that Represent District 41 Priorities

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44 Ms. Sarah Collmer, Lincoln K-4 Principal, introduced the 2nd grade team—Ms.
45 Caroline Curry, Ms. Alissa Nageotte, Ms. Melissa Webster, and Ms. Cheryl Wing-
46 Jones—to share their work on collaborative practice and the intervention block. Ms.

1 Curry said they wanted to give students choice, activity, and cooperative learning, and
2 teachers wanted to try something new with targeted practice. Students were split into
3 different groups depending on their learning needs, and students worked with all teachers.
4 Ms. Nageotte said intervention block was offered twice a week for 45 minutes for all 2nd
5 graders, and the time was not used for new instruction but was to review and to reinforce
6 previous key concepts. Teachers spent 8 weeks for math concepts and 8 weeks for
7 literacy concepts. For math, teachers focused on place value, and for literacy, teachers
8 focused on phonics. Students took pre-assessment tests before the intervention blocks,
9 and for math, 33% of students had not met the benchmark. After the intervention block,
10 only 22% of students had not met the benchmark expected for June. Students who met
11 benchmark used the time for more advanced concepts. Teachers are continuing their
12 work and students and teachers are pleased with the results.

13 Ms. Kristen St. George, Interim Hanscom Primary School Principal, introduced
14 1st grade teacher Ms. Jennifer Williams and Ms. Jessica Killian, Board Certified Behavior
15 Analyst. The other 1st grade team members are Ms. Kaitlyn Love, Ms. Rachael Peterson,
16 and Ms. Tiffany Shaw. Teachers and social workers collaborated to work with students
17 on problem-solving skills. The instruction came during morning meeting. Teachers
18 taught four steps: 1) identify the problem; 2) make a plan to solve the problem; 3)
19 accomplish the plan to solve the problem; and 4) reflect on the plan. Teachers taught
20 students about external and internal problems, activities, support systems, and strategies
21 for handling problems. Ms. Williams said that most students have made significant
22 growth, and the work has empowered students to take ownership for solving their
23 problems instead of having teachers do so. Students have written about problem solving,
24 and teachers used literacy connections to discuss internal feelings. The school has
25 celebrated moments of problem solving. Ms. Williams said they will continue the work.

26 Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Lincoln 5-8 Principal, introduced music teacher Ms. Karen
27 Sheppard, who along with art teacher Ms. Pam DiBiase, have collaborated to integrate
28 music and art instruction with 8th graders. Ms. Sheppard and Ms. DiBiase worked to
29 engage students at a higher level. She wanted to build their confidence and vocabulary.
30 Students were introduced to great works of music and art from the Romantic period to
31 see how the two subjects connected. Assignments included either creating a visual work
32 based on the music provided or creating their own music and showing paintings.
33 Students discussed the work with each other, and they learned about artist expression and
34 that the audience can view things differently. The assignments and discussions provided
35 choice for expression.

36 Mr. Erich Ledebuhr, Hanscom Middle School Principal, introduced the 6th grade
37 team—Ms. Janice Fairchild, Ms. Claire Evans, Ms. Becca Fasciano, Ms. Kathryn
38 Manley, and Information Technology Specialist Ms. Monica Albuixech. The team
39 worked with students on student-led conferences with their parents. Mr. Ledebuhr said
40 he was proud of the work, which was presented at the New England League of Middle
41 Schools [NELMS] conference. The goal was to help student achievement and self-
42 awareness, and as there are no spring conferences with teachers and parents, it gave
43 students an opportunity to showcase their work for a 25-30 minute presentation. Ms.
44 Fairchild said students started in the fall to decide which pieces of work to show their
45 parents during the conference. Students created online portfolios of their work which
46 improved their digital skills and enables them to carry their work with them to other

1 school districts when they move. Students also learned presentation skills and showed
2 their parents how professional they could be. Parents loved the presentations, and
3 students took responsibility for and ownership of their learning. The teachers enjoyed
4 watching the students build self-confidence and having teacher collaborative time for the
5 initiative.

6 Dr. McFall thanked the teachers for their presentations.

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8 C. Community Conversation about Hopes, Expectations, and Priorities for the
9 District to Consider for the Coming Year

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11 Mr. Borden led the discussion and reflection on the presentations. He asked for
12 input about where the district should invest time, focus, and energy. He asked each
13 person to prepare responses to “I like,” “I wish,” “I wonder,” and the responses would
14 give guidance to the administration and Committee.

15 Under the “I like” prompt, responses were: how excited faculty was; seeing
16 outcomes for students; effective use of collaborative time; engaged teachers; seeing
17 teams and students expanded; differentiation at early ages and fluid groups; teachers
18 developed projects and were empowered to do so; students take ownership of learning;
19 student-led conferences; increased social-emotional learning; explicit instruction on
20 problem solving; broken down academic silos; combination of disciplines; project-based
21 learning; collaborative practice is the fabric of class; flexibility with time and schedules;
22 technology in service of projects.

23 Under the “I wish” prompt, responses were: had more time to do this work; fewer
24 initiatives to do more; focus on one or two things; space; hear more about what is
25 happening in the schools; more people were here; more community; social-emotional
26 focus from preschool to grade 8; expand problem-solving; more community-building
27 opportunities K-8; facilitate cross-campus collaboration; sharing; copying good things;
28 and create schedule to be flexible.

29 Under the “I wonder” prompt, responses were: collaborative work enhances
30 ownership; do all teachers embrace this?; asked people to work differently, are
31 challenges; how support teacher leaders to do this work; parents to support their work;
32 what happens when teachers get better at it?

33 Dr. McFall said it was the first year of giving teachers true dedicated collaborative
34 time and asked whether the work should continue on Wednesday afternoons. She also
35 noted that social and emotional learning was a growth area.

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37 5. Adjournment

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39 On motion by Mr. Christenfeld, seconded by Mr. Borden, the Committee voted
40 unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 pm.

41 The next School Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May
42 11, 2017 at 7:00 pm.

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44 Respectfully submitted,
45 Sarah G. Marcotte
46 Recording Secretary