

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, August 24, 2017
Superintendent's Office, Hartwell Building, Ballfield Road, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Tim Christenfeld (Chairperson), Peter Borden (Vice Chairperson), Al Schmertzler, Jena Salon, Tara Mitchell, Laurel Wironen (Hanscom Educational Liaison). Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance).

Absent: Jessica Rose (Assistant Superintendent), Mary Emmons (Administrator for Student Services), Robert Ford (Director of Technology).

1. Greetings and Call to Order

Mr. Christenfeld, Chairperson, called the open session to order at 9:37 am. The meeting was not taped.

2. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld met with the Fellowship Manager of the Center for Green Schools, Phoebe Beierle, to discuss the school building. Ms. Beierle emphasized that the design process and the construction project should be used as teaching tools for students. The Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council works with "school decision makers, community volunteers and thought leaders in the public and private sectors to drive progress at the intersection of sustainability, education, public health and the built environment." He noted that the discussion included the successes and pitfalls of nearby building projects, such as the use of plug load management to increase efficiency and a reliance on shared rather than individual teacher work spaces.

Mr. Christenfeld said there will be a tri-district forum on Monday, October 23 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm in Lincoln, and the topic will be diversity and inclusion in our schools and communities. Mr. Christenfeld noted a recent *Boston Globe* article on the METCO program at Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. Former Sudbury principal William Smith, currently the head of the National Center for Race Amity, will speak and facilitate the conversation. Mr. Christenfeld will discuss additional details with Sudbury K-8 School Committee Chairperson Christine Hogan and Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School Committee Chairperson Kevin Matthews and asked the members to send him ideas for how the discussion could be framed.

Mr. Creel will reserve the Brooks Auditorium or the Reed Gym for the forum.

Dr. McFall asked Mr. Christenfeld to submit a blurb about the forum so that the administration can publicize it.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Consent Agenda

1. Vote to Approve David A. Geller, M.D. as School Physician, 2017-2018

Document: Agreement of Services School Physician, signed by Mary Emmons, Administrator for Student Services, and David Geller, M.D., dated August 1, 2017

Massachusetts General Law Ch. 71 § 53 requires school committees to appoint a school physician. Dr. McFall explained that this was Dr. Geller's first year, and with the district's increased needs, Dr. Geller will consult on an "as needed" basis, and there will be some model of compensation. She noted that the school nurses think highly of him.

Ms. Salon arrived at 9:57 am.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to appoint David A. Geller, M.D. as School Physician for 2017-2018. The Committee voted unanimously to appoint David A. Geller, M.D. as School Physician for 2017-2018.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Dr. Geller for his willingness to serve the Lincoln Public Schools.

5. Time Scheduled Appointments

1. Approval of Designer Architect for Lincoln School Building Project

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Becky McFall, Superintendent, from Buckner Creel, Subject: Award of Designer Contract—Lincoln School Project, dated August 17, 2017

Mr. Creel reviewed his memorandum on the School Building Committee's [SBC] recommendation of a designer architect for the Lincoln School project. Massachusetts law requires municipalities to follow the designer selection law and that the company that provides architect services to be selected by a qualifications-based process in Massachusetts General Law Ch. 7C Sections 44-57.

The SBC appointed the Designer Selection Panel [DSP]—architects Douglas Adams, Ken Bassett, and Peter Sugar, Selectman Jennifer Glass, OPM Craig Nicholson, Facilities Manager Michael Haines, Dr. McFall, and Mr. Creel—to review the responses to the Request for Services document. After going through the selection process discussed in the memorandum, the SBC voted for the following ranking of firms: Symmes Maini & McKee Associates [SMMA], Dore & Whittier Architects, Flansburgh Architects, HMFH Architects, JLA Jonathan Levi Architects.

Mr. Creel noted that the Owner's Project Manager [OPM], Daedalus Projects, also reviewed the responses, and the DSP and OPM independently chose the same two finalists: Symmes Maini & McKee Associates [SMMA] and Dore & Whittier Architects. Mr. Creel felt that either firm would do a great job, but the SBC decided that the sophistication of the proposal and presentation put forward by SMMA was impressive, and the SBC decided that the design took priority over the outreach to the community. Mr. Creel mentioned that Mr. Keith Fallon, the Project Manager for the design of the Hanscom Middle School with the architectural firm Ewing Cole, attended the finalist interviews. SMMA will partner with Ewing Cole as a primary subcontractor on the Lincoln School project, but that decision on the division of work will be made by SMMA. Mr. Creel said that SMMA would receive all of the information and designs that have been created by other feasibility studies.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Mr. Borden seconded, the motion to authorize the Administrator for Business and Finance to enter into negotiations with Symmes Maini &

McKee Associates, and to authorize the Committee Chairperson to award the contract to provide designer services for the Revitalization of the Lincoln School, subject to agreement upon the fee and the language of the contract document. The Committee voted unanimously to authorize the Administrator for Business and Finance to enter into negotiations with Symmes Maini & McKee Associates, and to authorize the Committee Chairperson to award the contract to provide designer services for the Revitalization of the Lincoln School, subject to agreement upon the fee and the language of the contract document.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Mr. Creel, the Panel, and the SBC for their work.

2. 2017-2018 District Strategic Plan, Second Reading and VOTE

Document: Draft, Lincoln Public Schools Strategic Plan, dated August 24, 2017

The District's Strategic Plan sets the priorities for and guides the work of the administration and is reviewed before each school year. The Plan focuses on the instructional core of the district's work and not the budget or other ongoing priorities. The words appearing in red were added from the last discussion about the Plan.

Dr. McFall said that the changes suggested at the July 13 meeting have been included in the draft. She discussed the Plan with the Administrative Council on Tuesday, and they agreed to take one piece out of the Plan—refining curriculum to align with changing state standards in science, ELA, math, digital literacy and computer science—and added it to their task list. She noted that in B2 under the Strategic Priorities, the district will emphasize social and emotional learning, and there will be more discussion about the issue.

Mr. Christenfeld wanted to ensure that the Plan did not create extra work but that it acknowledged the work that the district is already doing. Mr. Christenfeld suggested that they delete the words “align with state and district standards” in box B2 and develop a comprehensive approach. He also suggested that they use the word “refine” the curriculum before the curriculum is adjusted to state standards and that they delete “Priority Map for 2017-2018: Conduct a review and needs assessment of the district's Social and Emotional Learning Curricula and programs” from box B2. Dr. McFall noted that the work the district will do on the bullying prevention plan and education is not a curriculum review.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Ms. Mitchell seconded, the motion to approve the 2017-2018 District Strategic Plan as revised. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the 2017-2018 District Strategic Plan as revised.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Dr. McFall and the Administrative Team for their work.

3. School Committee Goals and Organization

Documents: 1) Composite document of each Committee member's evaluation form for the 2016-2017 School Committee Goals; 2) Lincoln Public Schools: School Committee Goals 2016-2017, Approved at School Committee Meeting of October 6, 2016; 3) School Committee Self-Evaluation, Charting the Course, Massachusetts Association of School Committees (2010); 4) Lincoln Public Schools, Draft, FY18 School Committee, Long Term Agenda; 5) Grid of Meeting Conditions, undated but handed out at July 13, 2017 meeting

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Ms. Mitchell for using the evaluation format that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees [MASC] recommends. He said the Committee has a policy that requires them to set goals, and the Committee will have a similar process to Dr. McFall's evaluation with a check-in at mid-year to see how they are meeting their goals. The Committee will create a work plan similar to the ones created by the administration to ensure that their work gets accomplished.

The Committee reviewed their progress on their 2016-2017 goals. For Strategic Priorities B2, "Revise policies that relate to school safety and security," and B3, "Prioritize other policies that pre-date the Ed. Reform Act of 1994, and reaffirm or revise at least 10% of said policies," the Committee has accomplished those goals.

For Strategic Priority C1, "Establish an intake and communication process to capture, track, and address community questions, issues, and ideas; effectively inform the community of important events, considerations, achievements and activities," Mr. Borden indicated that they had not translated that into a task list. Ms. Mitchell said they need to get information out on what is happening at school. Mr. Christenfeld said it was a central part of the conversation, and they will discuss what information they send to people and how to build information into the meeting agendas. Mr. Borden agreed that they need to tie in items to be celebrated and to bring awareness. He wanted to keep the language of a public relations plan.

For Strategic Priority C3, "Engage the community in preparations for next steps in a Lincoln School building project, based on response from the Massachusetts School Building Authority," Mr. Christenfeld said for 2017-2018, it was crucial. As the district and Committee have decided that collaborative practices in school are important, they need the school building spaces to make that possible. The Committee has to explain to the Town why collaborative practices are important, how to push them in the district, how does the building encompass the practices, and the members have to create momentum and excitement for the project on those.

For Strategic Priority B1, "Improve the processes linking the strategic plan and community engagement with the establishment of annual budgeting and policy making," the budget should reflect the Committee's and district's priorities. Dr. McFall asked that members let her know if there are improvement initiatives they would like to see. Mr. Borden was concerned that the budget was not set up for deep change. He said that if their priority was innovation, there should be a conversation about what time and money resources could be used to address bigger ideas.

For Strategic Priority C2, "Improve the way the community participates in School Committee discussions and processes," Mr. Borden was concerned that the public is uncomfortable to bring issues to meetings because the meetings are on camera. He thought it raised frustration because the public cannot get into their issue deeply and made people disengage. Ms. Salon suggested that the Committee create a culture where people attend meetings, and the PTO and Principals' coffees are places to have more open discussions. She did not want additional Committee meetings. Mr. Schmertzler suggested that the Committee send letters to parents saying that they have heard something is an issue, invite parents to a meeting, set aside time on the agenda to discuss the issue. Dr. McFall suggested that they hold open office hours before a Committee meeting for these kinds of issues. She said there is a difference between discussion and

public comment. She noted that during public comment, they cannot respond in the moment with difficult situations without gathering information. She suggested they might have a discussion-oriented piece that was off-camera and without minutes, but there could not be a quorum of members in attendance for that because the meeting would be subject to Open Meeting Law. Mr. Christenfeld said members and the administration are easy to reach through emails or phone calls. Dr. McFall asked that if the members hear about issues to please inform her of them. Mr. Christenfeld said that while the members can listen to concerns from parents, the appropriate process to resolve problems is for parents to talk with teachers, then the principals, and then the superintendent. Mr. Borden wanted to track issues so that they had data that issues were not being ignored, and he wanted the Committee to be transparent.

Mr. Christenfeld said that the members have not attended any educational workshops or conferences, but MASC would like them to attend. Dr. McFall noted that the timing has been an issue, but she will continue to look at conference agendas and that a conference with a focus such as innovation might be more helpful. Mr. Borden said that members try to be well informed about issues that come before them.

A Committee goal for 2017-2018 is to continue to update or reaffirm policies. Mr. Christenfeld has an Excel spreadsheet that lists all of the policies with the dates they were adopted, and he suggested that they start with the oldest policies. The Committee will also continue with goal C1, "Establish an intake and communication process to capture, track, and address community questions, issues, and ideas; effectively inform the community of important events, considerations, achievements and activities," and goal C2, "Improve the way the community participates in School Committee discussions and processes."

The Committee discussed what work would need to be done to see what a budget would look like if greater innovation was a higher priority. Dr. McFall said the Administrative Team has started the conversation by asking how innovation and risk-taking are defined. She noted it was a good place to start for the school building conversation. In a building project, how would a creative design fit with the cost, and what is the functionality of a creative design? Dr. McFall said yesterday's tour of the newly built Field School in Weston showed what is really needed is functional creativity. She said the key is to design a building that is flexible over time and that has different spaces as the Hanscom Middle School has.

Ms. Mitchell and Mr. Borden will draft the School Committee Goals 2017-2018 document and bring it to the next meeting.

For the organization piece of the agenda, the Committee asked that the blue sheets summarizing agenda topics include a box that said not applicable instead of no for the supporting documents. Mr. Christenfeld said they will discuss the work plan at a later meeting.

Ms. Mitchell wanted to discuss whether to have work sessions or public forums on deeper discussions on data and survey results. The Committee decided to discuss that later.

Mr. Christenfeld asked the members what needed to be included or deleted on the Long-Term Agenda.

4. Superintendent's Annual Goals

Document: Superintendent's Annual Plan, 2017-2018, undated

The Committee is required by law to evaluate the superintendent's performance, and this morning the Committee will begin the first step in the evaluation cycle: determining the superintendent's goals for the year. The Committee follows the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation System. There are three types of goals that have to be included: one in student learning, one in professional practice, and two in district improvement.

Dr. McFall presented her draft, stressing that it was challenging to choose goals that would reflect what she herself has been able to do as much of her work is to delegate and to shepherd the work of others. The other challenge is to determine what evidence to use that demonstrates her work on a goal. She mentioned that two big items that will require focus are the Lincoln School building project and the Hanscom contract. Mr. Borden noted that three of the goals do not mandate particular outcomes, but the educator evaluation process does have an outcome.

Mr. Borden wanted Dr. McFall to have more goals to make sure that she received the proper credit for her work. Mr. Christenfeld suggested that she incorporate the educational vision into the school building project as a goal. Dr. McFall suggested that she delete the student learning goal, "support the development of administrator and faculty use of Collaborative Practices that focus on student learning," because that goal is on the Strategic Plan, and they will continue their work on it anyway. She asked how to report outcomes on that goal. The Committee decided to keep the Collaborative Practices as the student learning goal because it helps the Committee to see the work in this area. Dr. McFall will ask Ms. Rose and Mr. Ford to include it in their goals. Ms. Mitchell said while it was not a quantitative goal, it would capture how they have grown using the practices.

For the two district improvement goals, "work with the Administrative Team and key faculty to review our course offerings, staffing, and scheduling across the district," and "provide support and guidance to the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Technology as they carry out an assessment review process," Dr. McFall said there will be steering committees with representatives from the LTA. She noted that they have not yet started work on the specialist scheduling, and she will attend the department meetings on it.

Dr. McFall will include the Lincoln School building project as a goal and bring her draft back to the September 7 meeting for a second reading.

Mr. Christenfeld said the Committee will review Dr. McFall's goals in September.

Ms. Wironen left at 11:04 am.

5. Approval of Employee Child

Document: None.

This item was no longer relevant because the employee resigned.

6. Hanscom Enrollment

Document: Email message from Dr. McFall to Committee members, dated August 24, 2017

Dr. McFall said the Hanscom Primary School's kindergarten has 79 students enrolled and three students pending, which would make a total of 82 students for four sections. She noted that the number was high and suggested that the district add a fifth section of kindergarten, which would mean that they would need another kindergarten teacher and assistant. There is a classroom available in the temporary school. She said there were funds available to open the additional section, and the Committee would not need to approve a transfer from the Reserve Fund. Dr. McFall will meet with a teacher candidate on Friday. Dr. McFall asked that the Committee vote to approve the additional section of kindergarten at the Hanscom Primary School.

Dr. McFall said the enrollment numbers are higher at Hanscom, and the district may be close to the Band 4 enrollment, but they will not know the exact numbers until September 30, which is the date for the district to submit the enrollment figures to the federal government. Dr. McFall said the total enrollment, if all of the pending students arrive, for the Hanscom Primary School will be 275 students, the total enrollment for the Hanscom Middle School will be 267 students, and the preschool will have 70-80 students. When the students who are not eligible for reimbursement through the federal government are taken out of those enrollment numbers, there will be 585-595 eligible students enrolled at the Hanscom Schools.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve an additional section of kindergarten at the Hanscom Primary School and that Dr. McFall hire another kindergarten teacher and instructional assistant for the new section of kindergarten for the 2017-2018 school year. The Committee voted unanimously to approve an additional section of kindergarten at the Hanscom Primary School and that Dr. McFall hire another kindergarten teacher and instructional assistant for the new section of kindergarten for the 2017-2018 school year.

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Dr. McFall for her work.

Mr. Creel left the meeting at 10:22 am.

6. Superintendent's Report

None.

7. Curriculum

None.

8. Policy

None.

9. Facilities and Financial

1. Warrant Approval

None.

10. Old Business

Document: None.

Dr. McFall spoke with the attorney about exit interviews for students who were leaving the Lincoln Public Schools before graduating. The attorney informed her that if a Committee member takes notes of the conversation with a parent who is taking their child out of the school and writes a summary of the results or shares the information, it creates a record that could be a public record for which people could request.

Mr. Borden suggested that the Committee member talk with the parent, not take notes, and give them an exit survey that the parent could complete online anonymously.

Dr. McFall suggested that they consider the issue before doing anything on it.

11. New Business

Document: “Template for Lincoln School Committee responses to topics of interest on social media and similar channels: First Draft,” by Peter Borden, undated

Mr. Borden handed out the first draft of a generic message to the community that addressed how issues and concerns should be handled. The Committee would discuss it at the next meeting.

12. Approval of Minutes

Documents: 1) Draft of Meeting Minutes, April 6, 2017; 2) Draft of Meeting Minutes, April 27, 2017

The Committee decided to approve the sets of minutes at the next meeting.

13. Information Enclosures

Documents: 1) Letter to Mr. Steve Wyngarden, Civil War Preservation Trust, from Rebecca E. McFall, Superintendent, dated August 10, 2017; 2) Letter to Ms. Tara Harbour, Hanscom Spouses Club, from Rebecca E. McFall, Superintendent, dated August 10, 2017; 3) Letter to Ms. Gwyneth Loud, Lincoln Land Conservation Trust, from Rebecca E. McFall, Superintendent, dated June 29, 2017; 4) Letter to Ms. Christine Sveistys, from Rebecca E. McFall, Superintendent, dated August 10, 2017

The Committee did not discuss these items. They were for the Committee’s information only.

14. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Christenfeld, seconded by Mr. Borden, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:28 pm.

The next School Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Hartwell Multipurpose Room, Ballfield Road, Lincoln.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary