

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
October 18, 2007
Hanscom Air Force Base, MA

Present: Julie Dobrow (Chair), Laurie Manos (Vice Chair), Sharon Antia, Al Schmertzler, Louann Robinson (Hanscom Representative), Sharon Gillespy (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance).
Absent: Tom Sander

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Dobrow called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm. She welcomed Louann Robinson and Sharon Gillespy, the two new Hanscom Representatives, to the Committee. She also welcomed Lt. Colonel Jerry Parrish to the meeting.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

None.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Gifts

The PTA has donated \$3,800.00 to the school; \$2,000 for school field trip scholarships, \$1,500 for the Principal's gift account, and \$300 for expenses for new teachers to set up classrooms.

B. Authorize Superintendent to Vote on CASE and EDCO Boards

Superintendent Mickey Brandmeyer will be the School Committee's voting representative to the Concord Area Education Collaborative [CASE] and the Educational Collaborative of Greater Boston [EDCO].

The committee moved to approve the consent agenda and unanimously voted to approve it.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Preschool Improvement Plan

Ms. Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator, presented the Preschool Improvement Plan. The Plan has three goals: 1) to plan programs and activities to promote community outreach and parent involvement in the preschool classrooms; 2) to plan programs and activities to establish a specialist program (such as music or movement), to review and implement an updated science curriculum and continue projects that support social and emotional learning; and 3) to plan programs and activities to address and improve transitions for all students and families. The transitions include from Early Intervention to preschool, from preschool to kindergarten, and military transitions that impact Hanscom students.

Ms. Fagan reported that last year's feedback indicated that parents did not feel that they had enough chances to work with the preschool. Parents wanted more information, and to that end, Ms. Fagan and staff are working on an informational brochure, are editing the preschool handbook, and making informational flyers for parents. Parents are volunteering in the classrooms, and the preschool is soliciting their feedback about other ways in which they would like to be involved.

The preschool is working on the campus signs, which are confusing. Ms. Manos asked what name would be on the sign. Ms. Fagan responded that it will be Lincoln Preschool instead of Lincoln Public Integrated Preschool. Mr. Creel said that they are updating signs throughout the Lincoln School campus.

On the second goal, planning activities and programs to establish a specialist program, enhancing knowledge and understanding of science learning expectations and curriculum standards, and continuing projects that support social and emotional learning, they are working on assessing the learning expectations on the science curriculum. On the social and emotional program front, the assessment of students' social and emotional well-being is helped by using the Devereaux Early Childhood Assessment [DECA]. Ms. Fagan said that DECA benefits the children. They are also looking at a program for Hanscom family transition and are working with the Drumlin Preschool on how to work with the children.

Mr. Schmertzler asked whether any information about bullying was presented to kids. Ms. Fagan responded yes, but it is not called bullying. Ms. Gillespy mentioned that the preschool should work with the Air Force Base's support center with workshops and transitions. Ms. Robinson mentioned that if the preschool was going to get a social worker to help with the transitions, have the social worker talk to kids about their feelings during lunch. She said it's good for them to talk to others, not just their families, about their feelings.

Ms. Dobrow said that she thought the specialist programs were wonderful and asked whether they could continue using the resources they currently have, or, as it is budget time, does the preschool want more money. Ms. Fagan responded that they are open to creative ways to do what they want to do. Mr. Brandmeyer added that the preschool assistant's specialty

is music, and she has been helping with the special music program. They plan to rotate the specials each year for the same kids. The preschool will have budget requests for next year.

Ms. Dobrow asked about the science curriculum. Ms. Fagan mentioned that they want to create their own science curriculum. They want to have the students participate in the science theories. They also want professional staff development.

On goal three, the transitions that children have to make, the staff is looking at the timeline. They are listing the items to be done for children and seeing where the holes exist. Ms. Fagan wants to have a binder and CDs with the information and ideas for helping children and families through transitions. The binder would be available for all to use.

Ms. Dobrow said she was delighted to see the directions that the Preschool was taking. Mr. Brandmeyer said that Ms. Fagan works part time, and because of that, they also have a designated teacher-leader this year. The goal is that either the teacher/leader or Ms. Fagan is available for parents to call at any time. Mr. Brandmeyer said he was cognizant of Ms. Fagan's time.

Ms. Manos mentioned that she received an email about traffic concerns on the Lincoln campus. Ms. Fagan deferred to Mr. Brandmeyer. They have asked staff members to park farther away. In the new letter to parents, they have asked parents to be careful in the parking lot. The two CASE vans drop off 20 students at once, making things confusing. There is an increase of 8 students this year over last. Mr. Brandmeyer said that there is not good access, which is one reason why they are looking at an extra road on the campus. The traffic is driven by the use of the facilities. The Lincoln Police Department monitors the parking lots, and some drivers have bad habits. The police can enforce the speed limits and no parking in the fire lane. There is plenty of parking on the campus. The success of the Recreation Department's morning exercise program has increased traffic, but they can work through that as many of the attendees are the same ones who are dropping off kids at school. Ms. Manos asked whether they were going to have signs that pointed to Brooks for additional parking. Ms. Fagan asked that the "no parking, tow zone" sign come down. Mr. Creel responded that it was coming down the next day. School personnel are required by law to report any person who leaves children in the car to the police.

The committee moved to approve the Preschool Improvement Plan and unanimously voted to approve it.

B. Proposal to Develop AED Program for Schools

Lincoln School Nurse Maureen Richichi and Hanscom School Nurse Eileen Dirrane presented an Automated External Defibrillators [AED] plan to equip the schools and train the staff to use the defibrillators. School systems nation and statewide have programs with the equipment. They would like six Philips "HeartSmart OnSite Defibrillator" machines. Lincoln's EMS system uses the same machines. There is no way to harm someone with these machines. They are in locked storage boxes with alarms on them. If a person is having a heart problem, the machine will work on them. When someone goes into cardiac arrest, the best chance they have for a full recovery is if equipment is used within one to three minutes after they collapse. Each machine costs \$1,513.40. Ms. Richichi explained that they have received fair bids for them. They would like one machine each in the Brooks Gym, Brooks School, Smith School, and the Hartwell Building, and two machines at Hanscom. The machines have self tests to make sure that they are working.

There are five pieces to the AED program. All staff would be trained in CPR with AEDs. First, Ms. Richichi would get training, and she would train the others. She has talked to Lincoln EMS to coordinate the training.

Mr. Schmertzler asked why the AEDs would be in locked boxes, wouldn't that make it tough to grab quickly in an emergency? The AEDs are alarmed, but are not stored in locked boxes, said Ms. Richichi. Ms. Manos asked whether the AEDs need to be tested every day. Ms. Richichi responded yes. Ms. Manos said she worried about overloading Ms. Richichi with work and asked whether there was an AED system that was not as labor intensive. Ms. Richichi explained that her health aides would be trained to test the AEDs. Ms. Manos asked where other schools in Lexington, Concord, Bedford, and Newton placed their machines. Ms. Richichi said that there is a bill going through the State House that would require school districts to have AED programs if it passed.

Ms. Dobrow said that the AED program is important, but asked what the hidden costs were in having one. The equipment, training, and replacement costs are something to be considered. She pointed out that the proposal only mentions the cost of buying the AEDs and she wanted to know the costs of their upkeep and training of personnel. Ms. Richichi explained that the batteries have a four to five year life. The cartridge pads only need to be replaced when the AED is used. The cost of the pads for adults is \$59, and for children it's \$95. Ms. Richichi said the training would be done by staff people, cutting costs there, but she agreed that it took staff time.

Mr. Brandmeyer said that the AED proposal was an unbudgeted request now. This reading is the first step in the process of having an AED program, and tonight the Committee is voting for them to proceed with the program. He explained that they could obtain machines in a piecemeal fashion. He stated that the proposal was for six machines, and that the costs would be split between the Lincoln and Hanscom budgets. They will look for other funding sources to pay for the program because it is unbudgeted now. Mr. Schmertzler wondered whether money might be found in another source since the school is the Town's shelter. Mr. Creel suggested that since the Town uses the Field House, money might be found in the Board of Health's budget. He suggested that Dr. Arnold Weinberg, a Board of Health member, might be willing to help with

this. Ms. Robinson asked whether the PTA and PTO could raise funds for this program. Mr. Brandmeyer said he hesitated to ask the PTA and PTO to raise money for it because they raise money for other items.

The committee moved to approve the establishment of an AED Program and unanimously voted to approve it.

C. Review District Health Services Manual

Ms. Richichi presented the new District Health Services Manual, which was last reviewed in 1996. The key was to make it user friendly for the staff. Cynthia Barthold, the Superintendent's Secretary, assisted with the project. The two policies that are to be decided are the HIV/Aids and Life Threatening Allergy policies.

Mr. Schmertzler asked whether it would help to put tabs on the manual to make it easier to flip to the correct section. Ms. Richichi thanked him for the suggestion. Ms. Dobrow thanked the nurses for their fantastic work. Under the rubric, The Role of the School Physician on page 3, she mentioned the sentence, "The School Physician will be hired by and receive administrative direction from the School Committee." Dr. Jenkins has neither met the Committee nor received administrative direction from them. Ms. Dobrow said that they would delegate the hiring and direction to Mr. Brandmeyer, who then delegated that responsibility to Ms. Richichi. The School Committee wants to focus on the policies.

Ms. Dobrow asked about the head lice section on pages 28 and 29. She requested that as much information as possible be included in the manual about head lice. When the School has sent notices home about head lice, their information contradicted much of the information found on the internet and made it confusing for parents and kids. Ms. Richichi responded that they give information to the parents of children who get lice. She said that they want this manual to be approved. The school does not recommend that children miss school for the presence of nits or lice. Their intent is to maximize the child's chance to stay in school. The onus is on the parents to track the lice. As girls tend to have sleepovers with their friends more often than boys, they get lice more often.

Ms. Manos mentioned the MRSA [Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus] bacteria and asked whether hand washing was encouraged in school. She also asked if there was a dangerous bacteria outbreak in the school, what policies and procedures would be followed. Does the school use the Department of Public Health guidelines? Mr. Brandmeyer responded that there is a fine line between communicating with parents and sending letters home about every issue. Too much communication tends to make parents panic. Ms. Manos asked again whether the school encourages hand washing. Ms. Richichi responded that it is tough for the nursing staff to make sure that children are washing their hands, but each classroom has a sink, so it is possible. The school also trains children on sneezing etiquette, but the etiquette must be reinforced by parents at home. Ms. Robinson asked whether the school uses hand sanitizer, such as Purell. Ms. Richichi responded that its use is not a good idea because kids put their hands near their mouths. Ms. Robinson asked whether people could be reminded to wash their hands as they do in a hospital. She recommended that it helps to prevent the spread of bacteria.

Ms. Manos asked about page 42, allergic reaction. Ms. Richichi responded that the protocol would be more in depth than the flow chart is. Someone in the audience responded that this manual should be on the website. Ms. Richichi said they are working on getting it on the web. Ms. Manos indicated that lice are difficult to see. The nurse's office personnel are able to detect live lice. The manual says that the school excludes children with live lice and active infestations of them.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

D. School Health Services Policy: First Reading

Mr. Brandmeyer said that the Policy is specific to the health services. The health services manual will be kept current. This policy will be voted on at the next meeting. Ms. Manos asked whether allergies should be included in the one-page policy. Ms. Gillespy asked whether mental health issues training should be included. Ms. Richichi said that those are included in the rubric of health counseling and promotion. Ms. Manos asked whether updating the School Health Services manual every two years is too often because she is concerned the amount of time it would take. Ms. Richichi responded that they could do it.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

E. Life-Threatening Allergies Policy: First Reading

According to Ms. Richichi, 29 people at the Lincoln campus and 22 at the Hanscom campus have life threatening allergies. All of them have Epi-Pens that carry a dose of epinephrine to be administered in an emergency. Mr. Brandmeyer asked how the nurse's office handles the process. Ms. Richichi responded that the nurse is the only one who can administer medicines in the school, but the exceptions are the pre-dosed syringe Epi-Pens. The school has to apply for a license each year to allow nurses to delegate to other people how to use the Epi-Pen on field trips. The nursing staff trains the chaperones. The control is that the nursing staff signs off on a form that the chaperone can administer the Epi-Pen. Ms. Antia asked what happens on the buses to and from school. Ms. Richichi responded that it is unclear. People need to be trained to use these Epi-Pens. The nursing staff keeps the Epi-Pens in a marked, unlocked cabinet, and they are available for extracurricular activities also. The School purchases extras EpiPens for coaches to keep with them. Right now they are working without procedures and policies on this item.

Ms. Gillespy asked whether EpiPens are in first aid kits. She also said that one teacher has an EpiPen in class. Ms. Manos asked about the individual care plans. Ms. Richichi responded that she does one for each child who has medical issues. Ms. Dobrow suggested that they include the word “staff” with the life-threatening allergies. Ms. Richichi responded that it is tough to do for the staff because staff members may not want to tell the school that they have life threatening allergies. She said that it does not rule out that the nursing staff would respond to the staff in an emergency, but the staff are adults and are responsible for themselves. Ms. Richichi said that the staff members are not their responsibility. Ms. Dobrow asked how much the school district is responsible for staff people. Ms. Richichi said that in 20 other towns, the allergy policies are directed toward the children. She knows that a few staff members have allergies to bees and latex. Mr. Brandmeyer stated that disclosure and requiring to know presents legal issues for the district. How can these issues best be addressed to help the staff members who need it? Identifying the members with life-threatening allergies versus responding to a member who is having a life-threatening allergy attack are two different things. Responding to a staff member who is in distress is fine. Ms. Richichi responded that the policy will give them teeth to do further action, for example with bus drivers. The School Health Council will develop protocol and procedures. Ms. Manos asked whether this policy was enough. Richichi said that the policy is recommended by the Department of Education. Ms. Dobrow thanked Ms. Richichi for her work. The issue will be revisited at the next meeting.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

F. Final Report and Recommendation from Class Size Policy Subcommittee

The Class Size Policy Subcommittee members are: Laurie Manos (Chair and School Committee member), Al Schmetzler (School Committee member), Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Stephen McKenna (K-4 Principal), Sarah Wood (teacher), Parents Jennifer Glass, Timothy Christenfeld, Shing Hsieh, Staci Montori, and John Robinson (Finance Committee liaison). Ms. Dobrow thanked the subcommittee for their hard work on this issue. The work will enable the School Committee to make an informed decision on class size. The subcommittee has done an immense service to gather the relevant information and data, which is a big help. Ms. Dobrow said that tonight the School Committee will not decide on the class size, they will hear the subcommittee’s report and ask questions. The committee is looking at the educational benefits weighed against the cost and other initiatives against their Finance Committee allocation. Where can we get the most educational bang for the buck? Ms. Dobrow said that some parents received an email that said the School Committee wants to increase class size. She said that she wanted to be very clear and state that this was not true—in fact, the only policy change the School Committee is considering is one to lower class size.

Ms. Manos said that the subcommittee started to meet in January 2007. They recommend that the maximum class size for first grade be lowered from 22 to 20; that the maximum class size for grades 2 and 3 be reduced from 24 to 22; and that the policy for all grades specify maximums only and eliminate any reference to targets. They investigated the literature about class sizes. In her view, the findings were clear and unequivocal. In a survey of 284 parents and guardians and 53 teachers—special education teachers, teachers, and specialists—in 17 communities, the research pointed to reduced class sizes for students in grades 1 through 3. There are academic benefits to smaller class sizes in those grades. As students graduate to higher grades, the benefits multiply and last through their school years. The parents of students in grades 2 through 4 want to reduce the class size. She asked what size was unacceptable? In grades 1 through 5, the maximum size goes above our current policy. Teachers reported that having 22 kids in class was too high. 44 percent of teachers prefer smaller classes. In peer community comparisons, in grades 2 and 3 only, our class sizes exceed those of the other 17 towns.

Ms. Manos listed potential objections to lowering the class size. Some will say don’t change the policy because for the most part, the class sizes are good. She stated that the argument against that is that in grades 2 and 3, they are not good. Now we work to the maximum of the class-size policy. With the current financial and political pressures, the class size will not go below the policy’s minimum size. Now, there are 21.3 students per class in first grade and 24 students per class in third grade. She said that if they change the policy, next year they would have 16 students per class in first grade and 18 students per class in third grade. The new policy would be significantly different. She warned that because of the budget, we should not assume that we can add sections. Ms. Manos continued that those who may not be for lowering class sizes will argue that if we change the policy, initiatives such as adding foreign languages for students in lower grades and doing extras for high achieving students will not be funded. She argued that we can’t talk of trade offs with these initiatives because they have not happened yet. In the 17 peer communities, 4 of 17 offer languages in the early grades; none of them have a program for high achieving students; 4 of 17 offer extended learning; 13 of 17 have lower class size policies in second grade; and 11 of 17 have lower class size policies in third grades.

Ms. Low mentioned that she is fiscally conservative and asked if the community values small class sizes, let’s see whether they will put the money toward it. Ms. Montori said that the research validates that small class sizes are good because the teachers can spend more quality time with each student. She does not see that there is an issue with class sizes versus other initiatives. Ms. Glass, a former kindergarten teacher, agreed that smaller class sizes make the difference for kids in lower grades because teachers are encouraged to stretch each child individually, which they can do if they don’t have as many students. Mr. Robinson said that it is clear from the literature that small class sizes are beneficial. Lincoln supports its schools. He stated that the increase in costs only comes in the first year of the new policy. He mentioned that the Town is

facing several capital projects, so now is the time to enact the new policy. The Town may not back the policy once the capital projects are completed. Mr. Christenfeld said that there was a mix of believers and agnostics on the subcommittee on the subject. He said that there is a problem in the second and third grades; parents feel that the classes are too large.

Mr. Brandmeyer said that he supports small class sizes. He said that the schools have a rich educational program. There have been spirited conversations, and the work that was done was very beneficial. His struggle is with the cost. How can we expand education for all? He sees that there are trade-offs with offering foreign languages in lower grades, offering a new mathematics curriculum, offering new items for high achieving students. The district is also negotiating the teachers' contract. He asked whether this would be an override question. The district is well endowed, but it uses money well. He mentioned that the average of the 17 peer communities' class size policies versus their actual data is different. He does not want to manage the budget through school policy. If you look at the class-size data, our actual size matches the average of the peer communities in second and third grade, they are lower. He asked why make a policy change? He believes we have small class sizes and we will continue to have them. At this point, he was reserving his recommendation until they finish the budget proposals for the base and preferred budgets. An analysis of enrollment trends shows that they will have the same number; the actual average class size is 18 for third grade. He said the subcommittee was using scare tactics. The subcommittee has done lots of work to inform the decision, but it has to be made in the context of the other initiatives and concerns that they want to budget for. He said that all have their perspectives.

Ms. Hsieh supported everything that the others raised. The policy impacts the Superintendent's job. Historically Lincoln has a practice of implementing class size policy, and it has gone well. If the policy says that the maximum number of students is 24, and the classes are getting close to that maximum, the school goes to the Finance Committee to add another class so that the maximum is not reached. If the target is the goal, then it should also be the maximum. Small class size is the most important basic building block that should be compared against the other initiatives. Smaller classes also help teachers. Mr. McKenna, a former teacher, responded that it makes a difference when a class has one fewer child. He asked what is that low class size number? He argued that the number the subcommittee is coming up with is not fully supported in the literature. He said that the school has low class sizes now. When the class size gets to the maximum, they go to the Finance Committee and get a teacher to teach another class. His concern was that the budget projections were already showing a \$200,000 deficit without adding additional sections for second grade. What cost will it have in terms of new initiatives that will not be started? Ms. Wood stated that she supported their proposal because the quality of learning is stronger with a smaller number in class. It is fundamental to their development.

Ms. Manos thanked her members. She wanted to clarify some of the points made. The class size for next year is projected at 24 students for grade two. She said that the scare tactics Mr. Brandmeyer mentioned are coming from the data the school administration gave the subcommittee. The sizes with the current policy will be 21 students in first grade and 24 students in second grade. There is a change in the financial incrementals. Mr. Creel said that you are dealing with different data sets. Mr. Brandmeyer said that they can rework the models and urged the committee not to confuse the data sets. If you assume that there are 24 students per class in the third means you need \$200,000.

Ms. Dobrow thanked the subcommittee again and opened the floor to the public. Judy Pistorio, the mother of a kindergartener, asked whether advanced activities were going to be offered. She said that she has noticed when there are more kids in class, her daughter drifts off. With smaller sizes, kids are more focused and teachers are not burned out. She stated that there was a ruckus with second grade with parents pulling their children out of the Lincoln schools and enrolling them in private schools. She does not think that the school's MCAS standings are as good as they should be. She would like her daughter to have language instruction in Spanish. Terry Graph, another mother of a kindergartener, said that she was disappointed that her daughter's class had 20 students. She does not want a bigger class for first grade. Martha DeCesare, with kids in second, fifth, and eighth grades, said that they are new to the school, and they moved here for the school. Her understanding was that the hallmark of Lincoln schools was small class size. She is upset with the current policy and said there is a difference in a class that has 15 kids versus one with 20 kids. She wants teeth in the class size policy. Sarah Liepert, mother of kids in second and fifth grades, said that she supports smaller class sizes. The difference in a class that has 18 kids versus 24 kids is huge. Ms. Dobrow said that the teachers said it would help if there was a drop of three to four kids in the class, not one or two kids, which is what was being proposed.

Ms. Antia thanked the subcommittee for their work. She was not sure where the harm was to change the policy to the numbers they use. She wants to ensure that they continue with these numbers. While the data doesn't say that educationally advantaged children don't benefit as much, consider the achievement gap with Metco students. If it helps kids, let's change the policy. She has received many emails from parents who state that the earlier grades have larger classes while the later grades have smaller ones. She asked whether we could reconfigure so that later grades have more kids in them. Ms. Low responded that it cannot be done; the middle school cannot be redesigned. The next change may be to look at the middle school.

Mr. Sander sent comments to Ms. Dobrow. He said that the academic literature shows that when the class size was cut in half, it showed a benefit in Tennessee, but it was tested in a city school that was not performing well to begin with.

Ms. Dobrow stated that it was a challenge to look at lowering the class sizes in the context of the other items that the committee has to fund. Next fiscal year's budget may not increase at all, or it could be increased as much as three percent

over this year's. We want to retain excellent faculty. Mr. Creel asked how the school facilities could handle two more classrooms. He does not know where the rooms could be found, and suggested that something would have to change in order to accomplish this. He is working on a facilities report. There is a shortage, there simply aren't enough rooms available. Ms. Dobrow responded that there will be the same number of sections as there were last year. Mr. Brandmeyer responded that there are facility issues here; the policy won't be for just one year. He mentioned that it is hard to get the kindergarten enrollment from the census at Town Hall.

Mr. Christenfeld asked when would they know what the budget numbers would be for the next fiscal year? When will this policy be voted on? Mr. Robinson responded that this week they would get the percentage for the budget. Mr. Brandmeyer added that the actual increases are higher than the 0 % to 3% projected; he said they are more like 6% to 8% moving forward. He said that we have good resources but we do have a lot on the plate. The class size policy decision will have an impact for the next 10 years. He will have a base budget ready for December.

Ms. Robinson asked whether the literature showed a direct correlation of increasing scores when class sizes were decreased by one or two children. Mr. Schmertzler responded no. She asked whether there were any tangible benefit to the kids how they improve? What difference would a gifted and talented student program have compared to lowering class size? The Department of Defense states that the class size for grades pre-K to grade 3 can't have more than an average of 18 children, and for grades 4-8 the class size cannot average over 23 students. Mr. Schmertzler said that the data shows that if one class size is 15 and another is 26, if you reduce the size of the larger class, you get better results, based on the peer communities. Mr. Robinson agreed that it was intuitive.

Ms. Manos said that if we decrease the policy maximums by one or two, each can be dropping by 5 to 6 students, taking the class size from 24 kids to 18 kids. It is that different. Ms. Low said that the literature showed that a highly qualified teacher with a small class is the best scenario for learning. Classroom assistants did not help, she said. Ms. Gillespy said that you can't make all the people happy. Ms. Robinson asked how family influence correlated to student improvement. She asked whether the goal was to get smaller class sizes to show later student improvement or to focus on MCAS scores. Ms. Manos suggested that she read the literature for next time. The objective was to enhance the achievement of all students period. The budget should not drive policy; she is reluctant to go down that path. The policy decisions should be built into the budget.

Mr. Robinson said that all Town agencies will get the same percentage budget increase. Mr. Creel said that he agreed with Ms. Manos that the budget should not drive the policy. The relationship between the school, the Town, and the Finance Committee is fragile, he warned. The school needs to be conscious of conserving and should not embed many extras into the budget. There needs to be a cogent reason to change the policy. Ms. Dobrow thanked the subcommittee again.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. October 1 Enrollment Report

Mr. Brandmeyer explained that enrollment is cyclical. It has trended down in the past decade and will cycle up shortly. Overall, the Lincoln School, including the Preschool, has 14 more kids than it did in 2006. Mr. Schmertzler said to be prepared for it to increase; they went through an increase 30 years ago. Hanscom enrollments decreased by 20 students from 2006. All the schools together have an overall decrease of 6 students from 2006.

Ms. Manos asked whether these figures included the private school trend reports. Mr. Brandmeyer responded that he will compile one of those reports shortly.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

VII. Curriculum

Ms. Sterling had two comments before presenting the charge. She had the pleasure to be a guest reader in 32 Hanscom and Smith classrooms. She enjoyed reading to the kids and loved their comments. She said it is a great experience being in the classrooms. She attended two middle school faculty meetings to get a feel for the teachers and the students.

The second item was she will be talking to parents about mathematics. There will be meetings on Monday, October 29 from 7 to 8 pm at the Hanscom Primary School and on Monday, November 5 from 7 to 8 pm at the Lincoln School. The parent meetings will include math content specialists. The meetings' intent is to share draft comments on the criteria to select the new mathematics curriculum. The School Committee approved this process. The Math Committee reiterated that they want to listen to parents.

She also mentioned that they are sending out district news via email and will also be sending it out via bulk mail. She asked how to get information to Hanscom parents. Ms. Robinson and Ms. Gillespy suggested the Principals Newsletter, the Hansconian newspaper, and the flashing billboards on the Air Base wing.

A. Review Charge to Task Force on High Achieving Students

Ms. Sterling presented the draft of a charge to form the High Achieving Students Task Force. All schools have high performing students. There is no agreement, however, on how to best serve these students' needs. They may be an

underserved population. The Task Force will get research and good practices on how to help them. They want principals, teachers, parents [1 Boston, 2 Lincoln, and 2 Hanscom], and community representatives on the Task Force. She thanked the committee for recommending that the Task Force use consultants, they will do so. She called the committee's attention to the middle piece of the draft, the questions that the Task Force will address. Ms. Manos asked about question one, "In what ways do the educational literature and research studies on high achieving students inform the district's current practice and future planning?" She asked how to interpret that question. Ms. Manos suggested that we make the first question into two questions. In what ways does Lincoln meet the needs of high achieving students? How effective are those ways? Question two should be: In what ways should they be defined and identified? How has that happened in the literature? On question three, the Task Force needs groundwork. How well are we doing? Should we do more? If so, what are the pros and cons of doing more? Bring question five earlier in the list. Ms. Manos suggested that the list be reorganized chronologically. Mr. Schmertzler said that question three stands alone and asks what's out there. Ms. Manos said that there are two tiers. She will help reorganize the questions. Under the Activities and Schedule of Events rubric, they discussed that if the Task Force finds that the school needs to address anything, where will we get the funding, and what timing would something be done? Ms. Sterling put a place holder in the budget because she is presuming that there is a need to spend funds on this issue.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they know they can do more for high achieving students, they do not know specifically what it is, but it will be something new. Ms. Robinson asked what the target group was. Ms. Sterling responded that it was pre-K through 8th grade. There are some young students who could clearly do more. She will put that the charge is for pre-K to 8th grade in the draft. Ms. Manos asked where the money for the consultant will come from. There is a Title II grant that is covering that expense.

Ms. Dobrow moved to approve the charge to the Task Force on High Achieving Students. Ms. Manos asked whether they were approving the money for it. Ms. Dobrow responded no. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the charge to the Task Force on High Achieving Students.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Mr. Creel presented three warrants, totaling \$806,977.14, to be approved. The payroll warrant totaled \$579,629.52, and the two accounts payable warrants totaled \$227,347.62. Mr. Schmertzler reported that he had reviewed all three warrants, and he suggested that the committee approve them. The committee moved to approve the warrants and voted unanimously to approve them.

B. FY '08 Quarterly Budget Report

Mr. Creel said that all financial obligations are expected to be met within the funds appropriated and allocated for Fiscal Year 2008. He told the committee that there were a larger number of maternity leaves than normal. There are also two paternity leaves and one person on medical leave.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

C. Review Status of Hanscom Facilities

Mr. Creel updated the committee on the Hanscom facilities projects. He also told the committee that they anticipate being able to cover the school's expenses for the year. The computer lab has been completed and the other items on the Contract Plan Projects list and the Facilities Projects list are finished. The Hanscom schools are further along in the renovation process than the Lincoln schools. The Town should be encouraged to give money to the Lincoln campus. Mr. Schmertzler informed the committee that the Capital Planning Committee and the Finance Committee are considering whether to make classroom rehabilitation a separate warrant article for Town Meeting. They want to pull this item out of the capital plan. Nothing has been approved, however, and Mr. Schmertzler will let the committee know the outcome. He said that when the schools asked last year for \$75,000 for classroom rehabilitation, the Finance Committee raised eyebrows and got them to decrease the amount to \$50,000. He thinks the \$75,000 amount has a better chance of passing this year. The argument is that if they don't spend the money now and maintain what we have, it will cost more money later.

Mr. Creel informed the committee that they are waiting for the principal to approve the use of the Smith School kitchen. The Concord Board of Health has approved the kitchen.

The Committee moved and voted unanimously to accept the report.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

Ms. Dobrow mentioned that there will be a School Committee workshop in the next month because they have three new members. At the workshop, they will talk about operational issues such as the open meeting law. There will be information about the use of emails and the ground rules for subcommittees under the law. The facilitator will discuss these issues. She suggested to the new members that they get the handbook and attend the training program for new school committee members given by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees. It is a requirement to attend the training. Ms. Cynthia Barthold, the Superintendent's Secretary, will contact the new members about the training dates.

Ms. Manos asked about an update on the State of the Town meeting on Saturday, November 3. Ms. Dobrow said that they will be allotted about ten minutes to talk. As the meeting's theme is facilities, the School Committee will talk about those.

XII. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 5 meeting were amended, and Mr. Brandmeyer made the corrections on his copy. The committee moved to approve the minutes with the corrections and voted unanimously to approve them.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

There being no further business, the Committee moved to adjourn the open session at 10:45 pm and to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations. The Committee would not return to open session. The Committee unanimously voted to go into Executive Session, with Assistant Superintendent Mary Sterling taking the Executive Session minutes.

XV. Executive Session

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte, Temporary Recording Secretary