

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, April 30, 2009
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Julie Dobrow (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Rob Orgel, Cynthia Nunes-Taijeron (Hanscom Representative), Thadine Brown (Boston Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services).

Absent: Jennifer Glass (until 7:30), Louann Robinson (Hanscom Representative).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Dobrow called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Erich Ledebuhr, new Hanscom Middle School Principal, spent the day on campus, and Mr. Brandmeyer and Ms. Dobrow welcomed him to the Lincoln and Hanscom Public Schools. Mr. Ledebuhr thanked Mr. Brandmeyer and the Search Committee and said he was eager to start his tenure. He looks forward to collaborating with all involved.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Dobrow attended the Lincoln-Sudbury "Working Group" meeting that is considering consolidating the Lincoln and Sudbury schools. Reports gathered from other school committees, such as Concord-Carlisle, Acton-Boxborough, Dover-Sherborn, indicate that it is complicated to combine the schools, and they recommended not doing it unless one had to. The Working Group will continue to meet.

III. Public Comments

Ms. Dobrow asked those wanting to comment on the RFP for the Hartwell School space to wait until that item comes up on the agenda. Linda Hammett-Ory felt that the Committee has kept parents at arms' length and should welcome parents' participation because we all want the best schools possible. Jillian Darling voiced frustration at being unable to access documents for this meeting at 3:15 pm this afternoon and requested having information available in advance of the meeting for the public, since policies and documents are sometimes complex. As to the Policy that will be considered later on children of employees, she advocated flexible, rather than strict policies. She also urged the Committee to take input from parents. Julie Lynch commented regarding the FOIA request for documents about the funding of the public preschool, stating she is not against the public preschool or Hanscom Preschool but wants to know how it is funded. She has been told by a district attorney that she has the right to examine documents.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Gift

The School Committee was asked to accept the donation of \$2,500.00 from the Philip Schultz Memorial Fund for scholarships for the 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C. Mr. Orgel moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to accept the gift. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the gift.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Discussion and Vote on Lincoln School Foundation [LSF] Grants

Ms. Dobrow noted her appreciation for the work and hours that the Lincoln School Foundation puts into fundraising to support professional development for teachers and curriculum initiatives, and was impressed by the level of fundraising this year. She thanked the Foundation members for coming. Susan Beard, Co-Chairman of the LSF, said they completed the grant cycle for 2009-10 school year. They met with faculty and thank the principals for letting them attend the staff meetings. They also met with Mr. Brandmeyer to review each proposal. The LSF approved \$38,148.00 for 12 grants. Ms. Beard said they are rolling out the new LSF website; people can now donate online. The website will give information about what they do to the community. Ms. Beard thanked the Committee.

Mr. Orgel and Mr. Sander thanked the LSF for their work. Ms. Beard said they want to encourage cross-campus collaboration with their grants. Ms. Dobrow thanked them for distributing their grants among every grade and each campus.

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to accept the Lincoln School Foundation grants for \$38,148.00 as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the grants.

B. Food Service Program Action Plan

Mr. Creel asked that, and Ms. Dobrow accepted, the Committee postpone the discussion of the Food Service Program Action Plan until May 14 since Ms. Cathleen Higgins, Food Service Director, was dealing with a death in the family.

Ms. Glass arrived at 7:30.

C. Update on Lincoln Preschool Operations

Ms. Dobrow said the School Committee supports the important services that the Lincoln Integrated Preschool provides for Lincoln and Hanscom families. The contract with the federal government to provide school services to Hanscom families requires that the Town provide preschool services.

Mr. Brandmeyer said two years ago they lengthened the school day from 2 1/2 to 4 hours and included a full-day option for children of school employees on a tuition basis. They expanded to four classrooms and aligned certain services to make it cost-effective. They have implemented an instructional program that provides access to a general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment for the students, including for disabled students. All teachers hold licenses in special and early childhood education. The tuition pays for the program, and they provide scholarships to families in need.

Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator, presented a report on the history of the Preschool since its founding in 1994. She thinks it is one strong selling point for teachers. The program has evolved and combined with the Hanscom preschool in 2000, and it has focused on providing children with a quality early childhood experience. In June 2006, she asked School Committee to enroll non-resident children. They looked at the preschool's potential as a revenue source. In September 2006, they became known as the Lincoln Integrated Preschool, and they expanded to 3 classrooms. They started to offer 2-day, 3-day, or 5-day programs.

Ms. Fagan said they have a legal obligation to provide a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment for special education students. Students are having success in the integrated model. The Preschool is celebrating their second anniversary of accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the program. They offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum with four integrated and multi-age classrooms on the school year schedule. Four hours each morning are offered with a dual-certified teacher and at least two paraprofessionals. Teachers are assigned based on ratios set by the Department and NAEYC. They often exceed that level when dictated by student need. For students who require additional programming, they offer two extended day programs. One is for students who require specialized instruction and runs from 12:15-1:45; the second one is a private program that runs from 12:15-4:15, for students of teachers and staff, for up to 10 students. If that program is not full, they open it up on a lottery basis to students who are in the morning programs. It is based on a self-sustaining model and is offered 5 days a week.

The curriculum is based on the state framework. They offer English language arts, math, science, social sciences, music and movement, and gym. They offer DECA for the social and emotional curriculum. The youngest student age is 2 years, 9 months. They have a transitory population and they need to be flexible to accept students at any time of the school year. They expect full enrollment for next year.

Mr. Creel said the Preschool brings in revenue in many ways from grants to tuition. The District gets reimbursement from the state in the form of special education and Chapter 70 grants, and from the federal government in special education and early childhood grants. In addition, Hanscom preschool students count in the Hanscom enrollment numbers, which determine the amount of money the District receives from the federal government to educate the students. The staff is supported by professional development grants. Staffing level depends on the nature of the children's needs from year to year.

Mr. Creel interjected to discuss the cost of the preschool relative to the prior operation where the special education students were educated at Magic Garden. While the costs of the fourth classroom were \$104,000 per year, about \$21,000 of these costs were provided by tuition for the extended day program, thus lowering the net cost to Lincoln by about \$20,000 from what it had been to provide these services through Magic Garden. The number of special education students in Lincoln varies from year to year so savings in other years could be higher or lower than this \$20,000 figure.

Ms. Powers noted that she is very impressed with the work the Lincoln Integrated Preschool does. Dual certification of teachers gives students with developmental disabilities the best chance possible. Curriculum development has been impressive and is on target. The transitions into and out of the preschool are going smoothly. They are reporting outcomes to the state's Department of Early Education, and the students are making wonderful progress. The integrated model is getting students to learn from each other and is very valuable. The program is meeting the school's legal obligations and meets professional standards.

Ms. Dobrow asked if she would elaborate on the dual-certification role of the teachers. Ms. Powers said it means there's a particular set of training experiences teachers have when they come into the preschool classroom. They learn the scope of how to work with typical preschool children, and they learn how to handle children who have disabilities to maximize the preschool experience.

Mr. Sander thanked the team for the helpful report. Regarding the finances, he asked about the marginal cost of providing the afternoon program versus the tuition that came in to confirm that tuitions met any marginal cost of doing this. Mr. Creel said it is a complex web; there are students who require special services and those who do not.

They charge a fee based on parental income on a sliding scale used by the state. They don't carve out a comparison of marginal costs. Mr. Sander said that some students (with IEPs) the law requires the District to provide preschool; for other students in the Lincoln Preschool, his understanding is that they are not required to be in the program. He noted that he's convinced that there is educational benefit to having them there, but are these students without special needs providing enough tuition to cover the marginal costs? Mr. Brandmeyer said he's not sure they can pull out those marginal costs for the students to whom the district is not legally obligated to provide preschool education. We do not fully recover the costs through tuitions, but they need a balance of students with and without special needs for the "least restricted environment." The program is not fully offset, but there's a cost in having the right student body in delivering the integrated program model. The Hanscom contract pays for about two-thirds of the program, and the Lincoln portion is about 22 percent with the rest of the cost being paid by tuition. The marginal costs are due to the extended day program, and tuition pays for the cost of personnel. Tuition will increase and pay more of the costs than it covered in 07-08. They will try to work up the numbers for the next meeting.

Cynthia Nunes-Tajeron thanked them for the report. She appreciates the effort that goes into educating students with special needs, but asked what they are doing for students without them. How are they being challenged to go above the bar? Ms. Fagan said they differentiate for all students. There is a range of activity centers. Ms. Nunes-Tajeron asked about IEPs. Ms. Fagan explained that goals and plans for each student are discussed with parents. Parents receive their child's portfolio at the end of the year.

Ms. Dobrow asked about the Hanscom-Lincoln balance of students for next year. Ms. Fagan said that Lincoln students are going to kindergarten next year, and they have six applications from Lincoln students, which will be a slight increase. Hanscom students may be about the same or a smaller group. There will be a slight decrease in the number of faculty and staff children. Mr. Brandmeyer said they hope that they don't start the year 100 percent full because of the Hanscom students; they keep a few spots available for Hanscom students who may move into the district and require IEPs. Their student body is always dynamic in that between the 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day programs, there is change. Tuesdays and Thursdays there aren't as many students as there are for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. They are truly flexible to receive new students into the classrooms at any time.

David Loewenstein asked how many non-Hanscom, non-special needs, non-staff students attend the preschool? Ms. Fagan said there are seven students of 66. They are chosen based on which program (2, 3, or 5 day) they choose and whether there is a space available for them. They have a waiting list. Mr. Brandmeyer clarified that as a public school program, they cannot reject students, if a student has special needs, they have to accept him. Ms. Loewenstein was concerned that there wasn't enough room for Lincoln students without special needs and asked whether they want to grow. Ms. Fagan said they are relatively new to accepting students who did not come from Hanscom. There are preschools in the area that serve different families and children. Ms. Fagan said they do not have a preferred ratio as to where students come from, other than for special needs students. Mr. Brandmeyer said that they do not feel that they need to compete with other preschools in Town, and they do not have the capacity to grow now. The ratio of special needs students to other students is mandated at 7 to 8 in a class of 15.

Julie Lynch and Neil Maxymilian asked about the maintenance and operational costs for the preschool. How many military families who don't live on Hanscom attend the program? Mr. Brandmeyer said two. The school is a Pre-K to Grade 8 school. On the costs, Mr. Creel said that they do not budget those costs per grade. They do not allocate costs to individual classrooms and are not required by the state to do so.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Ms. Powers and Ms. Fagan for the report.

D. Review RFP for Hartwell Space

Ms. Dobrow acknowledged the letter that appeared in the April 30 *Lincoln Journal* signed by many Lincoln residents asking the Committee to look carefully at this issue. The Committee believes that the Magic Garden is an excellent program; she sent all four of her children to Magic Garden over 15 years. The Committee understands the value that Magic Garden brings to the community and to working parents. She reminded all that the RFP process is required by law in order to rent the space at the school, just as they had to go through the RFP process to fix the Field House Roof. We have discussed the RFP, but no RFP has been written yet. The Committee asked the Administration to bring the numbers down by taking out some maintenance costs and services to make it easier for groups to bid on.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they started this public conversation about 8 weeks ago, and they have tried to listen to concerns surrounding the structure of the RFP. He, too, thinks that Magic Garden is an excellent program, as are the other preschool programs in the Town. They have no desire to take Magic Garden off the campus. They want to recover the costs of operating the space at the Hartwell Complex. The costs they found, after the first round, are at \$100,000. He understands why Magic Garden would be surprised at the price. However, they looked at the structure of the previous contract, and there are certain conditions in place, and recognition of a \$300,000 capital investment, a memorandum of understanding that talked about a reduced rate in exchange for the heat and for enrolling special needs students at Magic Garden. Those conditions have changed; they no longer need Magic Garden to enroll special needs students; costs of power, utilities, and custodial services have increased since the old contract was written 9 years ago. Custodial services alone have increased 40 percent. In the RFP presented in the last

discussion, we are not charging for the space, and it is a defensible and accurate budget of the costs to operate. The school pays for snow removal and mowing too.

There are several major drivers of the finances: custodial services, supplies, and utilities. The year one cost recovery model would be \$54,000; they arrived at that number by excluding custodial services and supplies, but including the utilities because it is difficult to segregate those. They have tried to structure the RFP to make it possible for bidders such as Magic Garden to bid on it. They are open to proposals from potential bidders if they would like to submeter utilities, but the bidder would need to incur the costs of modifying the building to submeter the utilities. The School Committee would have to approve those modifications before they could be implemented, and they would also need to work with the Building Inspector. They provided an opportunity for the bidder to purchase through the Lincoln Public Schools the custodial services; they are obligated to make sure the building is maintained at an acceptable level. The two preschools require an intensive cleaning after each school day. Bidders would be required to present a cleaning plan to the schools if they did not hire the School's custodial services.

Mr. Brandmeyer said the more important part of the RFP, under the evaluation of proposals rubric, they increased the value for "f." "How program benefits the Town" to 20 percent, tied for the highest of any factor, which he thinks offers local organizations more of an opportunity. He proposes that they discuss the latest version of the RFP, if in a position to move forward with issuing it, they can follow the schedule presented in Mr. Creel's April 7 memo. Ms. Dobrow thanked Mr. Brandmeyer and Mr. Creel for their work on the RFP. She would like to move on it in a timely manner; it's in everybody's interest to do so. Mr. Creel said the same RFP process, open and advertised, was followed the last time the contract was negotiated. Mr. Orgel thanked Mr. Brandmeyer and Mr. Creel for taking the feedback. Everybody in the Town supports Magic Garden, and there's universal goodwill for them. Mr. Orgel was studying the numbers and asked how they were allocated. Mr. Creel said the entire Hartwell complex has one gas meter and one electric meter. Magic Garden occupies 40 percent of the Hartwell space. The most intensive use of electricity is by Magic Garden; they are in the space more than the other occupants and are there all year.

Mr. Sander said the input has made the RFP much better, and lots of time and expertise went into it. His daughter attended Magic Garden, and he thinks it is a very important community asset to working families in Town and offers outstanding childcare. The main goal with the RFP is to make sure the costs are being reimbursed so that the school budget is not subsidizing private daycare in Town.

Mr. Schmertzler pointed out that the costs have increased significantly. He hopes that those in attendance understand that Magic Garden has benefited by a rough calculation, roughly \$250,000, over the last ten years. The School system has contributed to Magic Garden. Ms. Glass, who has no affiliation with Magic Garden, commented that she likes the addition of a utilities option.

Ms. Dobrow opened to questions from the audience. Barbara Low, who founded Magic Garden 27 years ago to have full-time day care, spoke to how it is an integral part of the schools and the community and asked the Committee to take that into account. Tim Christenfeld, President of the Magic Garden Board, asked whether it was worth it to have certain tenants in the school space. Tenants can be a nuisance or can contribute in small or large ways, such as building a parking lot. The relevant question is not how much money can we get out of them, but is there a value to having Magic Garden as a tenant, and how can they make the symbiosis continue? He does not think of this as a zero-sum game; the interests of the Lincoln Public Schools and of Magic Garden can be aligned. He urged the Committee to make the space affordable to Magic Garden, and asserted that we are not there yet. What is the difference to the school budget if they did not have a tenant versus if they did?

Gustav Beerel said Magic Garden has been renting space since 1982 with increasing services for students with special needs. Magic Garden has had a great deal for its 27 year existence. The increase is higher than anything they have seen. He still has four big concerns: 1) they have started to have a productive conversation with the Committee; 2) the contract locks in electricity at today's prices which he thinks will decline; 3) they disagree with the cost calculations for future costs; 4) the minimum bid requirement in the RFP does not represent the true incremental costs. We've done months of work on the numbers, and they don't represent goodwill toward Magic Garden. Magic Garden uses 2.6 percent of the space of the Lincoln campus; the total campus has just over \$1 million in operating costs, but the calculations of \$100,000 represent 11 percent of the whole campus costs.

They would like to see the RFP adjusted in three ways: 1) additional flexibility in stripping out additional services, such as electricity and natural gas; 2) fairness in terms, meaning that the playground provisions transferring control of the playground to the Lincoln Preschool need to be adjusted; 3) removal of non-incremental costs. He said that Magic Garden paid for and installed the playground, therefore they own it but they do not own the land. The playground is currently open to the Lincoln Preschool when Magic Garden is not using it, or when shared use does not exceed its safety capacity. Extend the termination clause from a one to two year notice for each party for fairness. They are confused about the capital improvement charges and would like them removed. They invested \$300,000 in the building to make it suitable for preschoolers, as required by the state, and it was not rent. The last 10 years, the \$5,000 yearly charge for capital improvements was waived in recognition of the \$300,000 investment, Beerel contended. Magic Garden spent \$137,000 to repave the Hartwell parking lot, and everybody has benefited from it. They paid for the air conditioning, ducting, kitchen cabinets, appliances, playgrounds, office furniture, and other things. If Magic Garden moves, these items will go with them, which will cost the school or the next tenant. He asked

that they not ignore the goodwill that they have built with the Town, and parents and Board members are upset. In contrast, he said, Lincoln Public Schools have shown goodwill to LEAP and set their costs at \$25,000 for the same square footage.

Ms. Dobrow asked whether Mr. Brandmeyer wanted to respond, and he deferred, saying he would rather reflect on it later, and he thanked them for sharing information. They will be fair, and he hopes that will be interpreted as goodwill toward them.

Pat Phillips, a former School Committee member, who served when the additions were added to the school campus, when Hartwell and the Pods were reallocated from teaching to community use, said they decided that the best use of the space was for preschool and daycare. He negotiated with School Committee chairman Patti Salem and Magic Garden, and their concerns were to recover the costs, just as they are today, so that it was a net neutral to the school. He said they have not followed the Lincoln Way, and urged continued negotiation with the interested parties and trying to resolve the issues.

Jason Felsch thanked the Committee, noting that Magic Garden is a Town asset, whose service should be deemed essential to the Town. He recommended that the RFP require the bidder to provide full-day preschool care for 18 month olds to kindergarten.

Ms. Dobrow said that they are not ready to vote on the RFP, and she asked Mr. Brandmeyer for his recommendation going forward. Mr. Brandmeyer said he appreciates the conversation. They are required to follow Massachusetts General Law to use an RFP process for leased space over \$25,000. We have brought goodwill to the revisions that have been presented. We have been more flexible in taking input and feedback than the federal government has been with Hanscom. They do not want to hide anything and have tried to be transparent.

Jason Felsch, a Lincoln taxpayer and Magic Garden parent, indicated he was fine with Lincoln taxpayers paying for services of those who didn't reside in Lincoln. He recommended that the RFP selection committee include Lincoln residents and not exclusively include K-8 interests. Terry Morgan, not associated with Magic Garden, felt childcare is important for the Town and the country, and the school should not be trying to get their share of money out of it; it does a disservice to the Town.

Mr. Brandmeyer responded to a question comparing the RFP that LEAP applied under and the RFP for the Hartwell space. He said that while the spaces are used in different ways, for different intensities and over differing number of days per year, the process they need to follow has to be open and competitive.

Ms. Dobrow said they are trying to run a good process that fits in with their educational mission and their fiscal responsibility. They already took an unusual step of releasing the draft RFP before it has been voted on.

Various Committee members asked if they could have a bidders' conference for those who want to meet where they could answer questions with more specificity than they want to go into before they have voted on the RFP. Mr. Brandmeyer will ask legal counsel as to the legality and appropriateness of having that meeting with bidders before they vote on the RFP. If it is legal and appropriate, the Committee and the Magic Garden Board will have another conversation to review information and to craft an RFP that takes into account the District's needs and recognize the needs of Magic Garden.

Ms. Dobrow asked the audience members who did not have a chance to speak send their comments to the Committee and they will be distributed to all members and taken into consideration.

E. Special Education Program Report With Recommendations for Development

Ms. Powers presented the Special Education Program Report. In her first ten months, she has been getting to know the existing program, reading previous program evaluations, and applying her knowledge and sees various areas for improvement. *Communication with parents*: since the district lacked a special education services booklet which includes all the services the district provides, she wrote a draft booklet, gathered the staff's feedback, and will include the Committee's input before the booklet gets circulated publicly. She has been working very closely with the parents of students with disabilities and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council [PAC]. She has also focused on *professional development for paraprofessionals*. She surveyed teachers regarding their skills, and compiled the information into an asset map to help teachers learn what colleagues they can call upon to help specific students. The asset map also identifies where they have people and where they need professional development to help develop a needed skill in the faculty. She worked with teachers around specially designed instruction, and using teacher skills to train other teachers or use best practice in developing IEPs.

On educational assessments, the teachers are part of the diagnostic testing team. The special education teachers were trained to administer formal academic assessment tests to special-education eligible children or at the three-year mark to reconsider them for special education. They are looking at the services provided to students with IEPs and looking at the specialized programs they have and seeing how they can refine the programs to maximize the benefits for children.

Under *general education support*, they are working with the social workers and the school psychologist to look at general education strategies for struggling learners to avoid their need for more intensive special education interventions. They are building instructional support teams that are skilled at intervening and applying strategies to

address struggling children's needs at an early stage. She completed the actions required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education through the Coordinated Program Review.

Ms. Glass asked about whether they use the co-taught model at both campuses. Ms. Powers looks at the cohort of children and whether their needs would best be met by using a co-taught model. Sometimes they aren't, for example if a student needs a special education teacher one-on-one to help with reading, the student is taken out of the co-taught model for that time. They have two co-taught cohorts in mind for the Lincoln campus next year. They have reviewed each IEP and decided the best match for each student. The IEP means that the decision has been made. If they had great need, and it was warranted to expand a program, they could. Other models also could be expanded. Ms. Dobrow and Mr. Brandmeyer thanked her for her work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Brandmeyer recognized Howard Worona at the Hanscom Middle School, for the lecture on the Base entitled "Of The Shtetl We Sing," about the life of European Jews, to which brought some students with him to sing some of the music from the period. The PR team on the Base filmed it, and they hope it will be broadcast on the Base.

Mr. Brandmeyer received a memo and an email today from the Department of Education about possible school closings because of the swine flu outbreak. Schools across the nation are being warned. The district has sent information home with students to tell parents what to look for. Students or family members who test positive for the flu may trigger school closures of up to a week or more. He's preparing in the event that they need to close. It would not just be school programs, but other community programs too. The Department's email asked for superintendents' home phone numbers in case after hours action needs to be taken. They are talking about a waiver for the requirement that school be in session for 180 days. MCAS is starting in a week, and they hope that doesn't get postponed. Some Lincoln students and teachers have traveled outside the country on their vacations, so that is something to monitor.

Ms. Dobrow thanked him for the report.

VII. Curriculum

Ms. Sterling had four statements about curriculum. First, the Art Department put up a stunning display in the Lincoln Library in April. There's a guest book full of comments, and she has put some of the display upstairs. She expressed her appreciation to the Art Department for showing the full range of K-8 Lincoln and Hanscom artwork. Second, she attended a 5th grade math class where the math specialist functions in a small group working on opportunities for advanced learners, and it was a privilege to be part of that group and listen to the mathematical discussion. Third, next week is foreign language international week. Karina Hansen expanded it to an entire week; the Food Service is going to include food from different countries, there will be music, a Spanish musical group is coming to perform for Hanscom 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Fourth, the Science Fair for Lincoln is Tuesday and for Hanscom is in early June. She expressed her appreciation for both coordinators, particularly for Jeff LaBroad, who has significantly increased participation to 60 students.

VIII. Policy

A. Revised Admission of Non-Resident Students Policy: Second Reading and Vote

Mr. Sander presented the revised policy, meant to be a tweaking of the current policy, not a lessening of commitment on the Committee's part. Several factors necessitate a change in policy. The first factor is they have an extremely large number of requests for non-resident children to be accepted into the schools for next year, especially in kindergarten; the second factor is that we are in uncertain financial times, making budgets hard to project; and the third is that the Committee approved a new class-size policy which makes it tough to determine whether they have enough space in a given year since one gets only two exceptions per cohort to go above the recommended class size.

Mr. Sander noted that he had incorporated Ms. Glass' suggestion that they grandfather students who are already attending the Lincoln Public Schools if they don't have enough space to admit all the students requesting to attend. Mr. Sander noted that the Committee's intention is to take all students admitted for the duration of their K-8 education, as long as their parents remain teachers or employees of the Town or the schools, and to take that intention very serious. That said, he noted that given that they would not know what the budget circumstances would be in the future and whether there would be opportunities to save \$100,000 by consolidating a section with fewer such students, they shouldn't leave that option off the table and the policy gives the School Committee the right to do so if financially necessary. It also indicates a priority (if there is insufficient space for all such children of Town and school employees), the same way as there was in the original policy.

Mr. Brandmeyer explained that when a student is accepted into the Lincoln schools, he writes a letter notifying the parent that explains the conditions of the student's acceptance. He would add that the student's acceptance is on a year to year basis and will be reviewed each spring by the Committee.

Jillian Darling asked the Committee to reconsider the policy because it sends an uncertain message to teachers if they enroll their child that their child may not finish his schooling in Lincoln and asserted that the preference categories were highly discriminatory and that they make value judgments on students based on a parent's job. Mr. Sander explained that the preference categories were in the original policy and if they had to add a section for a few students, it could cost another \$100,000, and given the community's concern last fall about finding money to save teachers' aides, to say nothing of preserving teachers' positions, this could make a huge amount of flexibility. They might have to choose between cutting the section and saving teachers' jobs. The Committee needs the flexibility in these tough budgetary times. Someone else said that the policy will affect retention, job satisfaction, morale, recruiting, and organizational commitment, which is a disservice to the teachers.

Ms. Glass asked if there was a way to show the Committee's commitment to the teachers but also acknowledge that there can be extenuating circumstances. Mr. Brandmeyer suggested that they include a philosophical statement that said it was the Committee's preference or desire to continue the enrollment of the students once started, however, there are times when they may not be able to. They need latitude in the policy. They have 13 requests this year, which is an extraordinarily high number.

Ms. Dobrow asked about other districts' policies. Mr. Brandmeyer will collect other districts' policies and bring them back to the next meeting.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$587,973.17 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$350,240.01 for a total of \$938,213.18. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants. Ms. Dobrow moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Orgel seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. FY 09 Financial Report: 3rd Quarter

The report was postponed until the next meeting.

X. Old Business

A. Proposal to Accept Enrollment Requests of Employee's Students

Mr. Brandmeyer has updated the enrollment and recommends that the Committee accept 13 students of employees, even with the earlier policy discussion. The requests are for seven kindergarteners, two first graders, one second grader, one third grader, one fifth grader, and one sixth grader. The only problem he sees with going over the maximum class size and the requests is in the 2nd grade, where there would be 21 students per class. There will be four sections of kindergarten, making the class size an average of 15 students per class.

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the enrollment of 13 employee children at the Lincoln School beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, subject to the continued employment of their parents as required by School Committee policy and with a note to such parents that the Committee policy may change but not in any way that is more restrictive than that considered today. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the enrollment of the employee children.

XI. New Business

A. Review Ad for Library Board Appointee

The review was postponed until the next meeting.

XII. Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes of the March 26, 2009 and April 7, 2009 meetings was postponed until the next meeting.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Dobrow, seconded by Mr. Sander, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The open session adjourned at 10:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary