

## MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Thursday, November 13, 2008  
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA  
OPEN SESSION

Present: Julie Dobrow (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Jennifer Glass, Rob Orgel, Louann Robinson (Hanscom Representative), Cynthia Nunes-Taijeron (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Director of Student Services).

Absent: Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent)

### I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Dobrow called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

### II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Sander attended the Math night last night. He said that it was well attended with at least 100 people there. He termed it a great success and said that there will be one in the spring.

### III. Public Comments

Ms. Dobrow prefaced Public Comments by saying that as we get into budget season, the Committee wants to hear parents' concerns, but we do not want to be at the meeting too late. She reminded everyone that the meeting was a business meeting; there is not much time for back and forth discussion. Ms. Glass and Ms. Dobrow will have other meetings with parents to get their input that is not during a school committee meeting. The meetings will be held after Thanksgiving.

Mr. Brandmeyer sent the apologies of Ms. Sterling, Assistant Superintendent, for her absence because of a family situation. She will present her MCAS report another night.

Mr. Andrew Ory said he appreciated the opportunity to come voice his opinions. He said that the curriculum is great.

### IV. Consent Agenda

None.

### V. Time Scheduled Appointments

#### A. Food Service Program: Award Recognition

Mr. Creel presented the food service award. In March, the John C. Stalker Institute of Food and Nutrition held their second statewide recipe contest, "For the Health of It: Kid Approved." Christine Saulnier, Brooks Kitchen Manager, and Sandra Hillson, Smith Kitchen Manager, entered their recipe for Italian Chicken Quesadillas and won the award for the Main Dishes/Soups/Sandwiches category. Their achievement was recognized publicly at the fall conference of the School Nutrition Association of Massachusetts.

Ms. Cathleen Higgins, Food Service Director, said that they wanted to do a chicken cacciatore concept with a quesadilla. They used skim-milk mozzarella, and the recipe was well received by students and staff alike. They provided samples to those assembled at the meeting. Each manager received a plaque.

Mr. Creel said that in his opinion, the food service is a winner. Mr. Orgel said that there has been a remarkable change in the kitchens, and it is terrific that they are providing healthier foods for the students. Mr. Creel said that the Food Service Evaluation Committee is meeting on December 4. Ms. Dobrow thanked the Food Service Managers and the Director for their hard work. Congratulations on the award.

#### B. Progress Report: FLES Spanish Program in Grades 4 and 5

Ms. Karena Hansen, Foreign Language Content Specialist, presented the progress report on the implementation of the Foreign Language in Elementary School [FLES] program. Ms. Hansen said that she is having an incredible experience building this foreign language program from start to finish. She's done curriculum for 12 to 13 years, but has not built a program from beginning to end, and said that she and the Hanscom foreign language teacher, Nancy Encalada, have had a great experience. They met several times with Deb Paquette, a consultant who taught FLES in Springfield. The consultant is paid by a Lincoln School Foundation [LSF] grant. The roll-out date for the FLES program is December 1, 2008.

During the summer, they have analyzed program needs, developed lesson plans, found resources, and they have designed themes for the different units that target appropriate vocabulary. They have created 16 standards-based units. There are 8 units per year for grades 4 and 5, and some of the units have been designed around the holidays. Their units are taught in 20-minute segments. When they evaluate the program at the end of the year, it

may change. The information on the FLES program is in a binder in her classroom. She invited interested people to come to see it.

During the fall, they completed scheduling, met with Ms. Encalada, visited Weston's program, created text series evaluation and ordered samples, developed surveys for evaluation and have ongoing communication with parents. They have developed a song list. Ms. Hansen showed a letter they send to parents. The letter showed parents how the students greet the family. They have developed options for lesson changes and collaborated with the Technology and Library departments to put together integrated projects. The social studies classes are learning about Mexico, and they are working with them too. They developed a sample progress report, researched and purchased a pilot text, durables, and consumables. They've organized class lists, planned class observations, and they have ongoing meetings to discuss class set-up. During the program, there are self-assessments for students. Deb Paquette will be back in the spring to observe the classes and will assess the evaluations, and come up with recommendations. They will keep the Committee posted.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Ms. Hansen and said she is very impressed with her work. Mr. Sander said the work was terrific and asked whether there was enough material for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades when the program becomes a full year in 4<sup>th</sup> grade in 2009. She said that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade gets 8 units, and so does the 5<sup>th</sup>. Paul Montie asked when the instruction occurs. She said it's three times a week for 20 minutes each time. They are taught Spanish. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Lincoln students have a choice of Spanish or French. Hanscom students can take Spanish only. Mr. Brandmeyer thanked Ms. Hansen and said that they look forward to seeing this program unfold.

Ms. Dobrow made a motion to accept the report, and it was seconded by Mr. Schmertzler. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the report.

#### C. FY 2010 Budget Discussion: Presentation by Principals and Program Directors

Mr. Brandmeyer said that they shared the overall revenue picture at the last meeting. They have potential gaps in money. He turned the meeting over to the Director of Student Services, Stephanie Powers, to discuss the special education needs. Special education is mandated by federal and state laws, such as the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement [IDEA] law and MGL Ch. 71B. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education enforces program quality assurance. She talked about how to move the program forward in the next budget and district priorities. She said that they still have budgetary unknowns, such as how much Chapter 70 funding will be received. The district has to provide the least restrictive environment for these students, and it requires lots of paperwork. There is a model of including these special education students in the general education framework as much as possible. The students are placed in the most appropriate setting for their specialized needs.

How do students become eligible to be considered students with special needs? A teacher or a parent makes a referral to the school that the student seems to need extra help, and then they assess whether the student's needs make them eligible. Once it is decided that the student has special needs, an individual education program [IEP] is prepared for them. The IEP is a legal document that is used to determine placement and to implement the student's plan. The student is monitored, and his/her plan is re-evaluated after three years. At that time, the district looks at whether the student is still qualified to receive special education services.

The district has 153 special-needs students. There is equitable access for students throughout the district. In all categories of disabilities, there is a lower percentage of students in Lincoln compared to the state average. Lincoln gives good general education support to students who have mild problems, which, according to Ms. Powers, is high praise for Lincoln's excellent teaching. Special education students make up 12 percent of the student population. We have good diagnostic thinking and general education. The program emphasizes access to general education with high expectations and collaborative teaming. The state is impressed with the inclusion of students in the general education classrooms. If Lincoln does not have a program for a specific disabled student (such as a vision-impaired student), they consult with area experts. Lincoln's membership in the CASE and EDCO collaboratives helps to place certain special needs students in appropriate programs in other schools.

In the budget, they emphasize personnel. Some kids need year-round schooling. There are budget expenses for out-of-district tuition, collaborative assessments, and transportation.

Their improvement initiatives for both campuses are to 1) expand the capacity for diagnostic-prescriptive teaching and educational evaluation; 2) professional development for training to meet needs of kids with social skill deficits (how to take turns, how to voice dissatisfaction, etc.); and 3) facilities improvements at Hanscom to install air conditioning. Mr. Brandmeyer said in the past 5-6 years, they have used special education circuit breaker funds. Now this funding does not exist. The number of out-of-district special education students has dropped. We won't get reimbursement, but we don't have to provide service to as many students. Mr. Schmertzler asked, don't we have to provide services? Mr. Brandmeyer explained that the circuit breaker money reimburses the district for 72 percent for the costs of providing that education.

Ms. Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator, presented their needs. They provide services to students starting at age 3, which is driven by special education requirements. They emphasize school readiness skills in math and

science. They look at big ideas, key outcomes, and essential skills and preparing students for kindergarten. They use the DECA program that assesses the social and emotional skills of their students in initiative, self control, and attachment. The preschool teaches literacy development, listening and active communication skills, play skills and interpersonal development. The improvement initiatives are a preschool math program and materials for science curriculum. Ms. Dobrow wondered if these items present an opportunity to write an LSF grant. Ms. Fagan will look into it.

Ms. Glass asked Ms. Powers if there's a priority for training teachers for different assessments. Ms. Powers said yes, but it is different by school site. They focus on what individual teachers need for their professional development. Some teachers will get training for Test of Early Mathematics Ability [TEMA], and others will get training for the Weschler Individual Achievement Test [WIAT]. Ms. Dobrow asked whether the tests are administered by teachers, and if so, whether this would free up any of the school psychologist's time, and Ms. Powers responded yes. The teachers also interpret the results instead of having the school psychologist do it, which frees up the psychologist's time. Ms. Dobrow said it was a powerful model to use teachers in this way.

Gustav Beerel said that we have a fabulous program for special education and are lucky to have it. As the numbers for special education are from 12 to 18 percent, are we not catching students with disabilities early enough to make a difference? He wondered about funding for the program and wondered whether costs could be isolated. If the district isn't reimbursed enough, have you looked at outside funding? He said that the Lovelane horseback riding program has much goodwill and funding to support the activity. He asked whether the preschool program was a pilot program. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the extended day program is the pilot program. They will present a report on the extended day program another evening. He explained that he could not talk about all the revenue streams, but the district seeks all reimbursement they can for special education. The costs are not fully covered, but the district is still required to provide it. Lovelane is a different structure and is wonderful, but the school has to deliver services every day. He cautions everyone about taking outside funding for it.

Steve McKenna and Sharon Hobbs, Lincoln Principals, presented their schools' improvement initiatives. Mr. McKenna said that at this time of year, they talk about what is possible. Their initiatives, in order of priority, focus on the whole student.

-4 Literacy Support Teacher for grades 6-8

-Responsive Classroom Training

They may try to get an LSF grant for 10 teachers for summer training in this program.

-2 Math Specialist

To focus on math and to direct student instruction to extend the curriculum for advanced learners.

-Drama Teacher

The drama teacher has been funded with a Codman grant that is ending this year. The students have been able to participate in choreography, performing arts, and in theater technology. These items provide students with advanced learning opportunities.

-Instructional Assistant Technology

The Town has provided extraordinary resources for our students.

-Music Ensemble Director

The music teachers have been itinerant people, not just those who teach music. These teachers receive freelance stipends. The program has grown and the school now has a jazz band and chamber music. Some LSF funding has paid for the program. The music program may grow to an after-school program; there is discussion about having a percussion ensemble and a rock and roll ensemble.

-Instructional Assistants

These assistants provide one-on-one opportunities with students. The funding for assistants was restored to almost the same level as it was. They want to maintain the services that are currently in place.

-After School Library Learning Center

The library has been open two days a week after school so that kids can do their homework. This has been funded by an LSF grant that will run out.

-Virtual High School Registration

They want to continue this initiative that allows students to take high school courses online. Students do this in addition to their work at Lincoln. There are five students taking the courses this semester. They would like to expand it in January.

-Technical Equipment

They would like digital cameras and digital video cameras for peer coaching. They would like one per grade. These expand learning opportunities.

-New After School Sports

They have started a girls' soccer team and would like to have a boys' lacrosse team. Now these are funded with fees and other money.

-Furniture

They have a 10-year plan to replace desks and chairs. They would like to replace things for 3 to 4 classrooms per year.

Ms. Glass asked whether they developed their initiatives with the team leaders and how that process works. Ms. Hobbs said they ask for input from teachers and also search out people who commented through the year that a certain item would be helpful. Mr. McKenna said that they had sit downs with team leaders and asked for School Council input. He said that they use this to strike a vision for the Committee. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the site-based funds are based on enrollment figures. There is \$137,000 in the budget for materials and textbooks in addition to the improvement initiatives. Ms. Hobbs said that in the middle school, budget items are more department-specific than they are at the elementary school.

Mr. Sander asked about the literacy support teacher and whether there was any focus on the achievement gap with this teacher. Ms. Hobbs said no, the person's work would not necessarily be focused on the achievement gap. Mr. McKenna said that the responsive classroom training focuses on the achievement gap in that it focuses on the social and emotional aspects of the students. Ms. Hobbs said that the math specialist would provide a smaller teacher-student ratio and helps with close the achievement gap. Mr. Sander asked whether they had any data on the Responsive Classroom that proved it was better. Mr. McKenna said no, but anecdotally, things are going better and the morning meetings are good. Mr. Sander also asked why the instructional assistants were ranked lower in the list. Mr. McKenna explained it was an exhaustive process to focus on the whole student. Their improvement initiatives are closely aligned with the school improvement plans. They target items to give students a variety of experiences. Mr. Sander asked whether the music and sports programs could be handled through fee for service and provide scholarships for students whose parents could not afford the fees. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the schools support the common good. We already have high fees for some things. There are already additional charges and hidden fees for parents of Lincoln students, such as with field trips. He said the community is responsible for providing these services for students. The school has inherited some programs, such as the drama program, which had grant funding. The after-school library program was originally a Recreation Department program. He added that more fees also add to overhead administration costs. Ms. Hobbs responded that with music and drama, they give students a chance to explore different things, but she heard the point about fees. Ms. Dobrow asked whether a letter to parents went out asking for their help with the music ensemble direction. Ms. Hobbs said that parents are reluctant to direct the ensembles.

Ms. Dobrow asked about the virtual high school pilot and said that she would like to see an evaluation of how this is going. Ms. Hobbs said the students are doing well, and it has added a level of interest. She asked that Ms. Hobbs report more formally on the experience with the virtual high school program. She asked what students thought they were learning; the program is expensive. Mr. Brandmeyer indicated that the initiative would fund 20 seats, 10 per semester, and there is a catalogue of courses that are available. Ms. Dobrow said not to go overboard on it. Mr. Orgel asked what the underlying demand for the virtual high school program was. Ms. Hobbs acknowledged that their number of expanding it to 20 seats was high for the high school portion. Mr. Brandmeyer said that it depends whether the focus is on high school courses or middle school courses. The program is a recurring cost that does not have one-time start-up costs that dwindle.

Mr. Sander asked whether the technology piece could be funded through the Donelan's receipts or a LSF grant. Mr. McKenna indicated that they could look into it. Andrew Ory said that the initiatives were great and thanked the principals for their focus on the whole child. He asked why the instructional assistants were not a top priority. Mr. McKenna said that he feels they are needed or they would not be on the list. Ms. Hobbs said that the school could operate at a lower level without the assistants. Sharon Antia asked whether the .2 math specialist would help to close the achievement gap. She noted that next year there won't be as much time used for math because they will be in year two of the new Everyday Math program. She said that they need to get some traction on closing the achievement gap. She said that they have two initiatives to help advanced learners but nothing that directly helps struggling students. Ms. Hobbs responded that they have front-loaded the general education tutors to boost the achievement gap in the lower grades. She noted that advanced learners have been neglected for a long time. Teachers are giving small group instruction for struggling students. The literacy teacher, priority one, is needed to deal with struggling students. Linda Hammett-Ory, a parent of three students, said that the teachers like to have assistants in class, and she is surprised that they are not a higher priority. She said that there were at least 175 people in strong support of instructional assistants. She would like them as a higher priority; please rethink this. Mr. McKenna responded that they are charged with looking at the whole program and they need to prioritize. This is the beginning of the discussion. He said that they have to understand the balance between vision and community needs.

John Konvalinka asked about early intervention and the help of teaching assistants. He asked how they measure progress. Ms. Hobbs said that the MCAS shows the year to year progress. They also have classroom assessments and other assessments that measure student progress. Mr. Konvalinka asked whether the data could be made available to the parents. Mr. Brandmeyer responded that there are a number of students with special services, and he can get some information. They have systematic formalized assessments of students. He will be

sharing data this spring on this; the standards are on the school website. They do not do the RTI, an expensive and time consuming test, but they use pieces of it. Ms. Dobrow thanked the principals for their presentation.

Randy Davis and Mark Kaufman, the Hanscom principals, presented their budget and improvement initiatives. They have built their budget collaboratively and their goals with the base budget are to create a guaranteed and viable curriculum, and to support continued implementation in language arts, Everyday Math, science, differentiation of instruction, and student engagement with the responsive classroom and community meetings. Ms. Davis listed the Hanscom Primary School's [grades K-3] improvement initiatives:

-Instructional Assistants for 6 hours a week for intervention and advanced learning. They would like to increase the time and will deploy them in ways as needed.

-Responsive Classroom Training They need summer training for teachers. They use parts of this philosophy now.

-Restore .25 secretary Last year one secretarial position was cut, and it has affected the work load in the office.

-Orff Bass Xylophone The instrument is currently in disrepair.

-Document Cameras for Everyday Math

-Furniture for Reading Instruction; tables for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Mr. Kaufman listed the Hanscom Middle School's goals. They will continue the K-5 Math and science implementations, grades 6-8 math materials selection, grades 6-8 science curriculum alignment, and grades 6-8 English language arts review. He presented their improvement initiatives:

-Library Assistant He noted that ELL services have increased.

-Restore .25 Secretary He noted that it would be half time position that would make things run smoothly

-Classroom Furniture for one classroom

-Laptop computers They have two computer labs that are used often. They would like enough laptops for four classroom computers in each class.

-Video Equipment The library uses VHS video. They have one digital camera and would like another. He said that they appreciate the support of the School Committee.

Ms. Robinson asked about the after school math club that has just started and whether they need more support for it. Ms. Davis said that they have 2.0 math specialists, and that should be enough support. She said that she focused on instructional assistants. Ms. Robinson asked whether the assistants were getting away from doing secretarial tasks. She said that some of them do both. Ms. Davis responded that one benefit of having a transient population is that they can use people creatively. Some are assigned to a classroom, and others are freed up for clerical work.

Ms. Nunes-Taijeron loves the virtual high school [VHS] program and asked if the Hanscom campus has it. Mr. Kaufman said that they may do it in the spring and will piggyback on the Lincoln's pilot program. He is going to query students to see if there is any interest. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the Hanscom Middle School has resources in the operating budget for the VHS. The benefit is that a small number of students can take advantage of it; they pay on a per pupil basis.

Ms. Glass asked about Hanscom's \$130,000 gap between the base budget and their improvement initiatives. Are there things in the Hanscom base budget that could be shifted to do their improvement initiatives? Mr. Brandmeyer explained that overrides do not affect their budget as the school funding comes from the federal government. Ms. Davis said that if they can't afford to do something one year, they keep thinking about it and how it can be done in some ways. Mr. Brandmeyer said that grants are a good way to fund improvement initiatives. Ms. Glass asked whether they could get grants from the LSF or the PTO to fund the equipment on their list. Mr. Creel said that we are not limiting ourselves financially, and it was not the time to make cuts yet.

Ms. Dobrow thanked the principals for their hard work.

Ms. Dobrow moved to accept the report on the preliminary budget, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded it. The Committee voted unanimously to accept the report.

#### D. Status Report from the Lincoln Green Technology Committee

John Snell from the Planning Board and a member of the Green Technology Committee, and Peter von Mertens from the Conservation Committee and a member of the Green Technology Committee, presented a summary of recommendations for greening the school. Mr. Snell said that the building envelope of the school is weak. They were pleasantly surprised that the mechanical equipment was in good shape. The lighting needs more attention. The school's utility budget is roughly \$350,000. He emphasized that there are opportunities to do better, and Commonwealth Energy can help coordinate funds. Mr. Snell recognized the work that Mr. Schmertzler has done on the Green Technology Committee. He has also worked with Mr. Creel.

Mr. Creel said that we have a good opportunity to use green technology at the school. The Town has replaced the old unit ventilators, and the program ends this year. The new unit ventilators give various options for

control. He would like to tune up the existing facilities and replace the boiler, despite Mr. Snell's complementary assessment of it. He said that he will approach conservation not by buying more equipment, but by using what we have better.

Mr. Schmertzler said that we should incorporate energy-saving items into the long-range plan and assess what equipment and parts of the buildings should be retained and what should be adjusted. He asked what needed to be done before the potential rebuilding of the school. His thought is that we have five years minimum before they do anything like rebuilding the school. He asked once they replace the Field House roof, can they put solar panels on it. Mr. Schmertzler thinks the school should keep the facilities separate from education. The state may have money to make the facilities more energy efficient. Mr. Creel said that they may be able to get money from ESCO. Mr. Snell said that there are a few financing options.

Mr. Von Mertens said the school is the natural place to cut consumption, and it could be a model for projects around the Town. He thinks that solar panels could be installed on the Field House roof. The state is financing some solar photovoltaic projects with tax credits. As the school is exempt from taxes, there are organizations that take those tax credits and turn them over to non-profit entities, such as schools. The Conservation Commission wants to cooperate with the School Committee. Mr. Schmertzler welcomed Mr. Von Mertens, who thanked him.

Mr. Schmertzler suggested the facilities subcommittee be reinvigorated to look at the question what facilities should be kept and which should be bulldozed. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the Statement of Interest [SOI] will be filed this week with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. He said that we can look at the next steps and see what the targets are for the school, so it will enable them to move more quickly. Mr. Snell said there might be some budgetary issues with the consultants who will evaluate the heating systems. There are outside resources that could help to defray those costs, and sometimes they can get money back.

Ms. Glass asked whether there are solar arrays that can be purchased and installed and then moved to another site if needed. Mr. Snell said that it's best for the equipment to put it where it would stay for 20-25 years. Mr. Von Mertens said there are several installations of solar equipment in Town: at Ari Kurtz's on Old Concord Road and at Drumlin Farm. The solar panels on the new restaurant roof bring in 8 kilowatts and are for hot water only.

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, that they accept the report from the Green Technology Committee. The Committee unanimously approved the report.

## VI. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Brandmeyer updated the Committee on many items. He mentioned special education and that he read the components of the IEP meeting. The Middle School printed its first issue of the Knightly News. Eighteen students are involved. They will sell subscriptions and will print it once a month. The third item was that he and Tim Higgins, Town Administrator, met with Commander David Orr, and there will be an impact on school enrollment at Hanscom. They are going to replicate the meeting with the four towns that surround the Base [Bedford, Lincoln, Lexington, Concord], and they need the School Committee to attend.

The next item was that the new emergency access road to Sandy Pond Road is ready. They held a practice drill with faculty. The fastest person took two minutes to get out, and the slowest person took ten minutes. They will have a drill with students in the spring. He also reported the two new granite posts and new school sign were a donation from parents two years ago. It is a prototype for projects on campus.

Mr. Brandmeyer's last update was about the Tripod report. He noted there was interest in the data charts. They released the report, and now the data charts can be made available to the public. They had a Freedom of Information request, and they will provide the charts. Mr. Schmertzler noted that week's Boston Globe story about Hanscom funding, and Mr. Brandmeyer said it was interesting.

## VII. Curriculum

### A. Report on MCAS 2008

Ms. Sterling will present the report at another meeting as she had a family issue to attend to tonight.

## VIII. Policy

### A. Acceptance and Use of Gifts Policy: First Reading

Mr. Orgel presented the policy draft on the acceptance and use of gifts. He said that it preserves the decision that all gifts are received by the Committee and that much of the draft is not controversial. He wanted the Committee's input. He said that the government should support public education.

Mr. Schmertzler asked whether B 2 and B 4 were the same. Mr. Orgel said he did not think a super majority was needed to approve a gift; a simple majority worked for him and asked how large the benefit of having a super majority was. Mr. Schmertzler said on C 1, could a staff person accept a donation? He asked if a grant written by a staff member was different from a grant written by an outsider? Ms. Glass said that a community member can't write a grant. Mr. Orgel clarified it to be a grant written on behalf of a staff member and approved by the Superintendent. Ms. Dobrow asked why grants would be included in a gifts policy because they should not be, there is already a strict

procedure in place to vet grants. Mr. Brandmeyer said the answer was yes and no on the grants. For larger scale grants, they have a vetting and review process. Small grants, such as those from the Lincoln School Foundation [LSF], are not in the approval process. Ms. Dobrow said that those are apples and oranges. There is a separate school based procedure so that the School Committee would not have to get involved. Mr. Sander said the committee should know about grants the school receives because there can be long-term implications for the school's program. He cited the grant that funded the drama class that expires this year.

Ms. Nunes-Taijeron said that notification of the school committee is good. Ms. Glass said that the two schools are funded differently and asked whether Hanscom could accept money for teachers' salaries. Mr. Brandmeyer said that they were not restricted to accept money, but the Town would have to pay for their benefits. She continued that if they accepted money for core personnel, and Hanscom money pays for the benefits of core personnel, what would happen. Mr. Creel said that in the event that someone was terminated, there are termination costs. He generally discourages receiving money for the school's core operating expenses. If someone works less than 20 hours a week, they are not eligible for benefits. Ms. Dobrow wondered if accepting money for core personnel could end up having hidden costs to the Town because of the ways in which benefits are currently handled through the Town budget. Mr. Schmertzler thought the policy is too open ended. Mr. Sander said that Mr. Orgel did a great job drafting the policy, but the policy has no teeth. It needs to be more serious if we are going to have one. He thought it said that we have a policy except when we don't. Mr. Brandmeyer said Town Counsel said that they are not prohibited from requiring a unanimous or super majority vote to change the policy. He reminded the Committee that the Hanscom representatives are non-voting members.

Mr. Sander suggested that the approval of gifts require four votes or to change the policy requires a vote of four of five members. Mr. Orgel said he has faith in committees and he does not view this as different from other items that they vote on. Mr. Creel said that we already have a well-developed way of dealing with gifts by putting them on the consent agenda. He suggested that E. Fundraising should be worded differently, and he said he would give Mr. Orgel his suggested changes.

Mr. Schmertzler said his gut feeling is that they have not accomplished anything. He does not think this draft represents a policy, and he does not feel comfortable with it. There's no super majority. Do we accept gifts for core expenses or not? He thinks they should never do it. He said under B 2, it looks like we have a policy, but if you go to the exception, it undoes the policy. If the school had to shut down because there was no money, that's one extreme situation, but we are talking about relatively small amounts to support core functions. He warned, don't do it; the Town pays for that. Instruments and furniture are not core items, and they can raise money for them. Mr. Orgel said we can accept the xylophone but not the teacher. Mr. Brandmeyer asked if there was a middle ground with personnel? They accept seed money for a new program, but not for a classroom teacher, with his approval. Later they put the new program as a possible piece in the core program. Mr. Schmertzler asked whether they were obligated to accept new programs. Mr. Brandmeyer explained the lacrosse program was funded for a few years by parents, and the school could turn down the program. Programs can be started with the intention of adopting them into the core program, and if the time comes, the Committee can always turn them down. Mr. Orgel said that there's some manner of threshold of money for these things. Mr. Schmertzler has less of a problem accepting money when the purpose is for a drama teacher or a sports coach as long as they maintain the discretion to not have it come into the core curriculum.

Ms. Dobrow said the problem she sees is that the Finance Committee does not want the Committee to take gifts for the operating budget while they cannot tell the School Committee what to do. She wondered will we ever need to take money for those operations. It is not a math versus drama question, it's a more basic question. Mr. Orgel said that drama is the perfect example. Mr. Creel said that the drama instructor is an improvement initiative for FY 2010. We have a good process to bring these things to the School Committee. Mr. Brandmeyer said that they have presented music and drama to be in the core curriculum after funding them with grants. Mr. Sander said that a policy that enabled funding of personnel would need to incorporate money for benefits. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the school collaborates with the Town for many things, and they get reported in the school's budget. He said that the school hires people all the time without the Town's specific approval, including instructional assistants. Mr. Sander said that he did not want the policy to be changed without a vote of four members. Ms. Robinson said a donation of money would impact small groups. Mr. Sander said that issue is raised in B 3 with inequity.

Mr. Brandmeyer raised a hypothetical issue. What happens when they create a structure and they need another classroom section because the enrollment grew. What if the Finance Committee said raise the money for the section. He said that we need to live in the same sandbox. Ms. Dobrow said she wants to be transparent. Mr. Schmertzler warned that if the Committee accepts gifts, the Finance Committee may change their flexibility. Don't ruin the relationship with them; it's good to trust them. The relationship between the two committees was adversarial a long time ago. Mr. Brandmeyer reminded the assembled that the Finance Committee has never said no in the seven years he has been here. Mr. Schmertzler said that the Finance Committee is changing, but we should not change the relationship.

Ms. Dobrow said that she was afraid they had not given Mr. Orgel much guidance. Gustav Beerel said that there were multiple audiences in the room, which include people who donate money. He thought the policy statement was a negative document that says we don't want gifts. He suggested that they turn it upside down and say that they appreciate gifts, and there are six areas that we prefer to receive gifts in. The policy should direct fundraisers where the School Committee wants money to be used. Ms. Hammett-Ory said why not accept gifts if they are opportunities to pilot new programs? She said that the drama program is great; why fight against the mechanism where it came to be? Why do you need a policy when you have come up with a handful of times where it's an issue? She said gifts could help in these tough economic times. Mr. Orgel said that they've survived without a policy. Mr. Brandmeyer said that there is no new law that requires them to have a policy, but it was a situation of the instructional assistants this summer that did. He agreed that drama was a great thing to offer. Mr. Paul Montie wondered if the School Committee could be requesting a larger budget from the Finance Committee. Mr. Brandmeyer responded that the Finance Committee has worked very collaboratively with the School Committee and that the budget process is a series of back and forth conversations, but that the school budget has to be seen as one part of the Town's budget.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Mr. Orgel for his work.

**IX. Facilities and Financial**

**A. Warrant Approval**

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$593,195.55 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$209,033.60 for a total of \$802,229.15. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants. Ms. Dobrow moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Schmertzler seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

**X. Old Business**

None.

**XI. New Business**

None.

**XII. Approval of Minutes**

None.

**XIII. Information Enclosures**

None.

**XIV. Adjournment**

On motion by Ms. Dobrow, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The open session adjourned at 11:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary