

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 8, 2009
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Julie Dobrow (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Rob Orgel, Jennifer Glass, Camille Harris (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance).
Absent: Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Dobrow called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Dobrow welcomed Camille Harris, the new Hanscom Representative. She said they are thrilled and pleased to have her aboard. She thanked her in advance for her service to the Lincoln Public Schools.

Mr. Sander attended the first of the October Wednesday student walking days and noted that there was a good turnout despite the weather. Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the *Lincoln Journal* may write a story and take photos. Mr. Sander attended the Middle School Math presentation, which he said was very well done but sparsely attended. Ms. Glass reported that there were many questions about the flu at the PTA meeting. She also reported that the group working on a common understanding of the costs involved in leasing the Hartwell Space met. The group is comprised of Town Administrator Tim Higgins, Ms. Glass, Mr. Creel, Selectman Sarah Cannon Holden, and Magic Garden President Tim Christenfeld. There is a perception that the group is negotiating the lease with Magic Garden, but she made it clear that this is not the group's mandate.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Recognition of Teachers Receiving Professional Status

Mr. Brandmeyer presented the list of teachers receiving professional status. He explained that professional status is awarded to teachers who have completed three consecutive years of service as a licensed teacher. The District makes a lifelong commitment to these teachers, and noted that the status is a significant accomplishment. He said that Lincoln Public Schools have a good track record of hiring good staff, and they track their first three years carefully. The school awarded professional status to:

Monica Albuixech	Technology Teacher at Hanscom Middle School
Dayna Brown	Preschool Teacher at Lincoln Preschool
Andrea Estes	Classroom Teacher at Hanscom Middle School
Dori Fishbone	Occupational Therapist at Lincoln and Hanscom Campuses
Kimberly Haflich	Special Education Teacher at Lincoln School
Jessica Haynes	Special Education Teacher at Hanscom Middle School
Keith Johnson	Classroom Teacher at Lincoln School
Edy McAndrews	Art Teacher at Hanscom Middle School
Diane Mitton	Classroom Teacher at Hanscom Primary School
Matthew Reed	Classroom Teacher at Lincoln School
Alice Sajdera	Library /Media Specialist at Lincoln School
Asya Shestopal	Special Education Teacher at Hanscom Middle School

Ms. Dobrow thanked him and accepted the report on the professional status of teachers.

B. Report on Use of the Virtual High School Program

Ms. Sterling presented the report on the participation in the Virtual High School [VHS] Program. She explained that VHS is a high barrier element in their program of advanced learning opportunities. She referenced an article in the September 24 edition of the *Boston Globe* West about VHS. Lincoln started the VHS program in September 2008; since then there have been 33 students who have taken part from both

the Lincoln and Hanscom campuses, with only three students dropping out. Mr. Brandmeyer said VHS is usually offered in high schools, not middle schools. VHS teaches time management, and the courses are challenging. Ms. Sterling talked to one student who reported that “you can’t procrastinate,” since students need to follow the on-line threads of conversation about the material and post weekly. VHS works especially well for students who are self-motivated and anxious to work at their own pace, but courses also have a group component. VHS requires a significant time commitment of students outside of school. She noted that VHS gives a wonderful array of courses that would not be possible to offer, and the participating students are exposed to a new set of peers. The downside of VHS is that it is difficult for the Hanscom and Lincoln site coordinators to stay connected to the students, and in one case, a student was unsatisfied by the course and the VHS teacher. She said that VHS is expensive; it costs \$425 per student per course, and Lincoln does not have any supervision over VHS teachers. Overall, Lincoln is very pleased and is building the VHS program into next year’s budget. Down the road, Lincoln can decide whether to have a teacher at Lincoln teach a VHS course (equivalent to a 0.2 teaching appointment) and in return get a number of free VHS placements. Ms. Sterling said teachers need a certain level of skill to challenge, engage, and involve students.

Ms. Dobrow and Mr. Sander asked about potential improvements to course selection and supervision: seeing whether there are online ratings of courses by students and, if not, whether VHS can be prompted to initiate such a system. Ms. Sterling and Mr. Brandmeyer noted that there is an on-line orientation to ensure the student knows what he/she is getting into, and they will work with the site coordinators to see how to improve course selection and supervision. Mr. Orgel asked what the demand for VHS classes was and whether we were at the limit of students who could take them. Ms. Sterling noted that everyone who wants to take VHS has been able to do so, and they do not want to cap student participation. Ms. Dobrow noted that it was good for some students but not others depending on the learning styles of students. She mentioned that Lincoln-Sudbury and Wayland are considering virtual classes. Mr. Brandmeyer added that Wayland Middle School is enrolled in VHS.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Ms. Sterling for her report.

C. Report on the Vote of the MSBA to Qualify Lincoln School for Feasibility Study

Mr. Brandmeyer reported that the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] has reviewed Lincoln’s Statement of Interest [SOI] from FY2009 and is inviting Lincoln into the Feasibility Study Phase. The MSBA will pay for 40% of the feasibility study expenses regardless and 40% of the construction costs of a new project, if ultimately approved. He is unclear on the timing and the next steps. The Town would have to fund the feasibility study in full via a warrant article at Town Meeting, and the state would later reimburse the Town the 40% of the costs. School Committee members asked about the expected timeline and costs of such a feasibility study. Mr. Brandmeyer said anecdotally, there is a two to three year window from the time the feasibility study starts to when ground can be broken on a new project. Mr. Creel explained that the MSBA and the District will go through a design or selection process, and the MSBA will issue an RFP for the feasibility study, but it is too soon to know what the costs will be. Mr. Schmertzler mentioned that at the Capital Planning Committee meeting, they discussed FY12 maintenance projects and recommended deferring any that would be made obsolete by a new school building.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the Facilities Subcommittee and the Building Subcommittee of the School Committee will be reconvened and will work with the MSBA. The MSBA Process Flow Chart was included in the packet, and Mr. Brandmeyer said that by the end of this school year, they expect to in the next to the last box of line 3 on the flow chart, about halfway through the various steps, but he noted that the process starts moving quickly now.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Mr. Brandmeyer for his report.

VI. Superintendent’s Report

None.

VII. Curriculum

Ms. Sterling reported on some classes she has attended. Lincoln and Hanscom schools hold morning meetings for the first 20 minutes of the day, and on the ones she attended, she heard Spanish greetings. She also attended a grade 3 Everyday Math class that was using differentiation strategies. The grade 7 *Impact* Math class she attended was factoring expressions and she saw differentiation in action. She attended a 7th and 8th grade student meeting where Janice Fairchild presented a PowerPoint presentation on community service projects for the November 4 conference. Ms. Glass asked whether

there will be a conference announcement, and Ms. Sterling said it would be forthcoming soon, after workshops are finalized.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$598,387.78 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$384,518.70 for a total of \$982,906.48. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants. Mr. Schmertzler moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Sander seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. Vote to Approve Request for FY2011 Capital Projects

Mr. Creel mentioned that the Food Service Point of Sale rollout has been going well, and they will update the Committee on it at the next School Committee meeting.

After the September 24, 2009 meeting, Mr. Creel noted that he had reworked the FY11 Proposed Capital project list to be submitted to the Capital Planning Committee. He said they have more clarity on the School's adjustments for the Special Town Meeting on October 17 and what the warrant articles would be. The MSBA's invitation to do a feasibility study on the Lincoln schools may impact the list of capital projects. The projects he highlighted in yellow are projects that may be cut depending on the outcome of the feasibility study. Mr. Creel gave the CPC various options, and he does not know which projects they will approve. Mr. Schmertzler said he hopes the Finance Committee will fund \$450,000 for a set of projects, and recommended combining several items into a project through a bond. The Finance Committee wants to complete the planning for the Town Hall renovation, and then the school project will be considered, he said.

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Orgel seconded, the motion to approve the FY11 Capital Projects Submittal. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the list.

C. Award Bid for Snow Removal at Hanscom Campus

Mr. Creel presented the recommendation for awarding the snow removal contract on the Hanscom campus. Although the district issued an RFP and had several bidders come to the RFP conference, they had only one bidder: the same company that has been removing snow for Lincoln for at least 10 years. Nevertheless, he said it was a good deal for the District, and he recommended that the Committee approve it. The budget for snow removal is \$35,000, which although generally adequate was exceeded last year.

Mr. Orgel asked what happened to the two other bidders at the conference. Mr. Creel said he guessed they found other work. The Base security requirements could also have scared them off, but he offered to provide them with a seasonal pass to the Base.

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to award the contract for snow removal at the Hanscom campus to D & P Contracting. The Committee voted unanimously to award the contract to D & P Contracting.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Dobrow moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the July 14, 2009 and September 10, 2009 meeting minutes. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Dobrow, seconded by Mr. Sander, the Committee voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations. Ms. Dobrow, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Mr. Orgel, yes; Ms. Glass, yes; Ms. Harris, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary