

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, November 18, 2010
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James, Debbie John (Boston Representative), Deb Leister (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator of Student Services).
Absent: Joe Connell (Hanscom Representative).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm noting that the meeting was being taped for cablecast.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Leister attended the Hanscom Middle School's production of Alice in Wonderland. The costumes were phenomenal; their second performance was this evening. She thanked all involved for such a wonderful production.

Mr. Schmertzler arrived at 7:10 pm.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Presentation of FY2012 Preliminary Budget

Document: Budget Book, FY2012 Preliminary Budget: Lincoln Public Schools, dated November 18, 2010

Mr. Brandmeyer gave an overview of the FY2012 budget process, which began in August with the central office administrative team, using the guidelines discussed in September. He thanked Mr. Creel, Ms. Sterling, Ms. Powers, and their team leaders for their hard work. The Committee is slated to vote on the budget on January 20, 2011. More meetings other than those currently scheduled may be needed.

The budget presented tonight will allow them to advance the current program but is fiscally prudent. The Lincoln Finance Committee's guideline of 2% over FY2011 translates to \$9,475,105, and the Preliminary Budget is \$9,731,138, making a gap of \$256,033. Since the Finance Committee will not ask the Town for an override; therefore, there will only be a base budget. The Hanscom School Preliminary Budget, funded by the contract with the federal government, is \$10,198,772. There is no budget gap for Hanscom.

Among the guidelines used to prepare the budget: 1) deploy resources in alignment with projected FTE needs; 2) project a 5% reduction in funding from state grants, including METCO. The state could cut the grants further. They will discuss at the December 2 meeting the Middle School model of staffing teachers because enrollment has been decreasing. Mr. Brandmeyer will present a middle school staffing recommendation to the Committee by the end of December or beginning of January. They will meet with METCO stakeholders to discuss the budget and how to use the resources to close the achievement gap, which needs to be the focus.

Mr. Brandmeyer, Mr. Creel, Ms. Sterling, and Ms. Powers presented their improvement initiatives, which are listed in their sections of the budget book.

Ms. Glass thanked them for the enormous amount of work, especially when much of it was done when school was opening.

B. Standards-Based Report Card Pilot – Part I

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Mary Sterling to School Committee, dated November 15, 2010 RE: Report on Plans for a Standards-Based Reporting System; 2) Implementation Timeline and Process for Development of a Standards-Based Reporting System; 3) Draft Report Card

Ms. Sterling presented the draft of a standards-based report card which is being tested on grades 4 and 5 and asked for the Committee's input. Standards-based curriculum focuses on learning targets for students instead of on topics for teachers to cover. This method of grading students pushes excellent assessment practices and enables teachers to differentiate their teaching. She noted that unlike with letter grades, achievement scores will not be confused with student effort and are not put on a bell curve. Teachers and parents will have personal conversations about how students compare to each other. The goal is for all students to meet or to exceed all standards. They are based on competencies at the end of a trimester, not an average of work over a trimester.

In September 2011 they will have a new report card for grades K-6. They will then decide whether to change grades 7 and 8 to standards-based report cards. They are working on a brochure and a cover letter for parents when they send the report cards in September 2011. Ms. James suggested that they explain the difference between scores of 3 and 4.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

C. Report from G4 Group

Document: Report, G4 [Lincoln Public Schools, Sudbury Public Schools, Wayland Public Schools, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School], dated November 2010, "A Review of Potential Collaborations Among Public School Districts"

Mr. Brandmeyer explained the genesis of the G4 Group: Lincoln, Sudbury, Wayland, and Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School formed a partnership to seek opportunities for collaboration and possible consolidation. The G4 Leadership Team's report describes last year's activities and the possible next steps, and it will be posted on the school's web site. They looked at improving programs rather than regionalizing all activities. The effort was to share resources and to find efficiencies. Consolidation efforts were considered for professional development activities, METCO, and transportation services. They brought those who perform the same functions together. They will meet with the town administrators to discuss their findings.

Ms. Glass thanked all involved for their time and noted it is valuable to share information, materials, and expertise with other districts. The report lists the initiatives on page 12, and some of them would require Town approval. Significant changes in staffing models look like they could cut costs at first, but they often do not in the long run. They want feedback on the suggestions. Mr. Brandmeyer will place a discussion on the initiatives on the School Committee's agenda in December or January.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer attended last night's play at the Hanscom Middle School and enjoyed it. Lincoln's play, *The Walking Stones*, directed by Kristen Hall, will be held tonight and tomorrow night. It will be exciting for many reasons, including the smoke machine that will be involved.

The Band of Liberty at Hanscom will perform on December 8 at Mechanics Hall in Worcester and has invited the Hanscom Middle School choir to join them.

He reported on his visit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] to solidify the project enrollment number, which is a 50-year projection for the right size project. The Design Review Panel will meet December 16 to form the short list of design firms, and there will be a Selection Panel on December 21.

EwingCole architecture firm from Philadelphia is the designer for the Hanscom Middle School building project. They will hold the design charrette on January 10 and will start the specific conversations on what will be built. The price tag will be \$32 million, paid for by the federal government.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling visited a 7th grade social studies class that was studying Egypt and the pharaohs. The class was focused on selecting the items on which to take notes. She also visited a 1st grade science enrichment class with Terry Green where she saw the students demonstrate mastery of extended bar graphs.

VIII. Policy

A. Bullying Policy: First Reading

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Stephanie Powers to School Committee, dated November 12, 2010 RE: Draft of School Committee Policy on Bullying and Draft of Lincoln Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan; 2) File JICFB, Lincoln Public Schools: Bullying Prevention, Draft for First Reading by School Committee; 3) Draft Document of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Presented to the Lincoln Anti-Bullying Community Forum, dated November 10, 2010

Ms. Powers explained that the drafts on the policy and the plan overlap and are based on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's [DESE] model. Students in grades 3-8 have been surveyed, and they are waiting for more data before compiling another report that will become available. They were pleased that many with different perspectives attended their bullying forum; during the session, they looked at data and at their experiences interacting with students. Their suggestions were incorporated in the plan, but they do not want to customize the plan too much as the DESE has to approve it. The public comment period runs until December 1, 2010, and she will bring those comments and the documents to the next meeting.

Mr. Sander suggested that they define which principal would be the person to follow through on a complaint. Mr. Brandmeyer said they need to cite a specific curriculum program on page 8 of the plan. Legal counsel has looked at the plan and the policy and recommended that they not spell out more items in the policy in a legal sense. Ms. Powers noted that they work closely with the Police Department and share information with them, but they do not want to box themselves into a situation where they need to inform the police each time about every incident.

Mr. Brandmeyer said Ms. Powers has done a terrific job collecting and incorporating feedback. Ms. Sterling said her work has been extraordinary and is time consuming but very important. Ms. Powers will incorporate the changes and bring the documents back to the next meeting for votes.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$606,619.12 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$124,722.43 for a total of \$731,341.55. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they approve them. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. Glass seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. Hanscom FY11 Fiscal Report: First Quarter

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Buckner Creel to School Committee and Mr. Brandmeyer, dated November 6, 2010 Subject: FY11 First Quarter Report – Hanscom updated; 2) Hanscom Campus FY2011 Operating Budget – Status Report, First Quarter as of November 6, 2010; 3) FY2011 Operating Budget – Key Budget Line Tracking, First Quarter as of November 5, 2010

Mr. Creel told the Committee the Hanscom budget has increased by \$28,331 because of additional Special Education costs, additional teacher and paraprofessional costs for the increased preschool enrollment, and costs for new teachers. The enrollment report moved their contract price to the 461-480 price band, giving them an operating budget of \$9,805,950 with contingency funds of \$435,820. They welcomed four new students at the Hanscom Primary School today.

Mr. Creel and Mr. Brandmeyer review all accounts and figures closely.

Ms. Glass thanked Mr. Creel for his work.

C. Electricity Contract

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Buckner Creel to School Committee and Mr. Brandmeyer, dated November 8, 2010 Subject: Recommendation for Award – Commodity Electricity Supply; 2) Memorandum from Cynthia Arcate, President and CEO of PowerOptions to Members of PowerOptions Purchasing Consortium, dated April 30, 2010 RE: Electricity Supplier Selection Process for the Period June 2011 to May 2015

Mr. Creel stated that the current contract expires in June 2011, and it is now time to look for a supplier for commodity electricity. Other Town departments will join the district for commodity electricity. Direct Energy won the bid with the PowerOptions collaborative because of their options. He would like to pursue two year purchase power. He will strike for price either tomorrow or on Monday if the Committee approves this tonight.

Mr. Schmertzler moved, and Mr. Christenfeld seconded, the motion to approve the purchase of commodity electricity from Direct Energy through the PowerOptions collaborative, and authorize the administration to lock in prices for up to a two-year period. The Committee unanimously approved the purchase.

Ms. Glass thanked Mr. Creel for his clearly laid out presentation.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, the Committee voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations. Ms. Glass, yes; Mr. Sander, yes; Mr. Schmertzler, yes; Mr. Christenfeld, yes; Ms. James, yes; Ms. John, yes; Ms. Leister, yes. The Committee would not be returning to open session. The open session adjourned at 10:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah G. Marcotte, Recording Secretary