

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 6, 2011
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James, Carol Perkins (Boston Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).
Absent: Tom Sander (Vice Chair).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld and Mr. Brandmeyer attended the EDCO Board Meeting this morning. The Department of Education is considering reforming collaboratives, and some of the proposed changes might affect the services that Lincoln receives as a member of EDCO. The Committee and the Town need to be involved with the legislative process, and he and Mr. Brandmeyer will talk with Representative Thomas Conroy. Ms. Glass said the Committee will write a letter.

Ms. James said the elementary curriculum night was a huge success with a wonderful turnout. She noted that parking was an issue as some parked on the grass.

Ms. Glass and Mr. Brandmeyer attended a training session on the new state regulations for teacher evaluation. There will be more to come.

Mr. Brandmeyer brought breakfast—protein, fruit, and milk—to illustrate the Food Services' breakfast program launch at Hanscom. They have increased student participation in the program and hope it will be successful. Ms. Glass congratulated Ms. Cathleen Higgins, Food Services Director, saying that the work is done in minimal conditions in Lincoln. Mr. Creel noted the *Lincoln Journal* will include a photo.

Ms. Pizarro, Hanscom Liaison Officer, reported that Hanscom held a special education fair. She thanked the Lincoln Schools, Ms. Powers, and Mrs. Kanter for their assistance at the successful event at which 101 family members attended.

III. Public Comments

None.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Agreement of Services for School Physician

Document: Agreement of Services, School Physician, for Dr. Stephen Jenkins, undated

B. Accept Gifts

Document: Copies of two checks from donors to Betty Bjork Fund

Mr. Brandmeyer said the Bjork Fund's principal has grown, and Mr. Bjork would like to do a grant for technology funds.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to approve the appointment of Dr. Stephen Jenkins to serve as School Physician for the 2011-2012 school year and to accept the donations of \$600 to the Betty Bjork Fund. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment and to accept the donations.

Mr. Brandmeyer will send thank-you letters.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Presentation of School Improvement Plans

Mr. Brandmeyer indicated that each School Council, composed of teachers, parents, and administrators, prepares the School Improvement Plans.

a. Preschool

Document: Lincoln School Improvement Plan 2011-2012, Lynn Fagan, Coordinator

Lynn Fagan, Coordinator, presented the Lincoln Preschool Improvement Plan. They have 127 students and have a balance of Lincoln and Hanscom teachers and students. While they are one preschool, they have two campuses. Students can arrive at any time of year and have an online application process.

They are waiting to hear whether they will achieve reaccreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] and should hear in 90 days, and reaccreditation is their first goal.

They promote reading and encourage parents to read to their children daily. The preschool staff has great passion for student reading. They also have a book lending program for families. These reading initiatives are the second goal.

Communication between the preschool and families and within the preschool with paraprofessionals is the focus of the third and fourth goals.

Staff members would like to improve their abilities to work with students who have developmental delays. They plan to collaborate with the students' doctors.

Ms. Glass noted there can be survey fatigue for parents and developing surveys in-house takes resources. Mr. Brandmeyer said they will use pre-designed surveys and share resources. Ms. Fagan said they will be creative in their ways to get feedback.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to approve the 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan for the Preschool. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the School Improvement Plan for 2011-2012.

b. Hanscom Primary School

Documents: 1) Hanscom Primary School, 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan; 2) Hanscom Primary School, 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan, Beth Ludwig, Principal

Beth Ludwig, Hanscom Primary School's new principal, said it is great to work with people who are wholeheartedly committed to educating students. She reviewed the 2010-2011 Improvement Plan and noted their success in writing and focus on SMART [Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely] targeted goals that were developed with data to see where students needed help. One 1st grader wrote, after a writing lesson on exciting beginnings, "Honk, honk, that's what a cab in New York City sounds like." Student answers to MCAS Open Response Questions in math became much better. New Hanscom students have math and literacy baseline assessments when they arrive and receive help early.

The 2011-2012 Plan was developed in collaboration with the previous principal, Randy Davis, who retired in June. This year's theme is "FACTastic!" There are three goals: 1) curriculum, instruction, and assessment—align standards-based learning expectations with assessments and clear learning targets; 2) authentic literacy—improve students' ability to support an argument with facts, reasons, evidence and details; and 3) community—strengthen the sense of community for staff, students and families through the continuous development of a connected learning environment. The first goal has teachers writing explicit learning targets for parents and students in English Language Arts and Math. Authentic literacy will entail incorporating the Common Core Standards, increasing nonfiction texts by 20% and including more of those texts in the book room. Community entails increasing parental involvement through coffees and activities.

c. Hanscom Middle School

Documents: 1) Hanscom Middle School, 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan, dated May 6, 2010; 2) Hanscom Middle School, School Improvement Plan 2011-2012, Erich Ledebuhr, Principal

Erich Ledebuhr, Hanscom Middle School Principal, reviewed the 2010-2011 Improvement Plan and noted that there was growth in MCAS scores. They created a transition specialist as a point of contact for students and parents, which helped and they would like to expand. The school is involved with the Base and instituted a weekly newsletter to increase communication. They wanted more time to work with the Instructional Support Team to assist students. They use three data points to figure out SMART goals in literacy for students. Mr. Ledebuhr noted that only 23% of last year's 6th graders are still attending the Hanscom Middle School.

For 2011-2012, the middle school has over 60 new students, and the enrollment is growing. There are three foundation blocks: Facility, Academics, and Community. They want to expand SMART

goals to math, do standards-based reporting for 6th to 8th graders, and adopt a writing initiative for math. Mr. Ledebuhr said that for military children, transitions to new schools are really tough on the academic and emotional levels. They recommend that new families bring copies of their academic records from previous schools. New students are assessed in math and English Language Arts within two days of arrival so any needs are addressed early.

Ms. Glass thanked Ms. Ludwig and Mr. Ledebuhr and their School Councils for their work.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to approve the Hanscom Primary and Middle School Improvement Plans for 2011-2012. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the plans.

d. Lincoln School

Documents: 1) Lincoln School, School Improvement Plan 2009-2011, Annual Report October 6, 2011, Stephen McKenna, K-4 Principal, Sharon Hobbs 5-8 Principal; 2) Lincoln School, School Improvement Plan 2011-2013, Annual Report October 6, 2011, Stephen McKenna, K-4 Principal, Sharon Hobbs 5-8 Principal

Mr. Stephen McKenna, Lincoln K-4 Principal, acknowledged School Council member Barbara Low and her work on the School Council. He reviewed their work in the last two years and noted that the school culture is much better; students are better equipped to work through conflicts, and there are not nearly as many discipline referrals.

Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Lincoln 5-8 Principal, noted that in the last two years, teachers are more skilled at doing targeted interventions for students who need them. The targeted interventions helped to release some students from their need for special services. They have narrowed achievement gaps and are pleased with the academic progress.

Mr. McKenna welcomed the new parents on the School Council and reviewed the 2011-2013 Plan. Lincoln has been identified as not making Adequate Yearly Progress [AYP] in some subgroups. They will continue their efforts to increase student scores to proficient. Lessons and learning targets are identified for students at the beginning of instruction, and students take some responsibility for learning that identified target. They have six- to eight-week intervention plans for students and reassess student progress. The SMART goals they work on are data driven.

Dr. Hobbs noted that teachers find it easier to share student work and to collaborate. Developmental Design [DDMS] has deepened the school culture of trust and community, and 21 middle school teachers are trained. The schools have a better feel after having learned Responsive Classroom [RC] and DDMS. Part of the training is to ask students about their engagement and to encourage them to ask for help. RC and DDMS teach them not to assume that students know what is expected and spell it out for them.

Mr. Christenfeld asked about efforts for differentiation for students who score above proficient in MCAS, and Mr. McKenna assured him that they focus on that too as the vast majority of students score in the proficient and above categories.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their effort, thought, and work on these Improvement Plans.

Ms. Glass moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to approve the 2011-2013 School Improvement Plans for the Lincoln School. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the School Improvement Plans for 2011-2013.

B. Report on Initiative to Narrow Achievement Gaps

Documents: 1) Report from Mary Sterling to School Committee, dated September 30, 2011 RE: Plan to Narrow Achievement Gaps; 2) Chart, Narrow Achievement Gaps: Raise Proficiency, dated September 2011; 3) Document entitled, "Strategies and Actions to Narrow Achievement Gaps," dated September 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that some MCAS subgroups have not made Adequate Yearly Progress [AYP] each year. They want all students to be proficient, and last year the district worked hard to narrow the gap, and it continues to be a district initiative. There will be information on their progress at future meetings.

Ms. Sterling reviewed the district plan to narrow achievement gaps. It has five-points—restructure existing programs, increase focused learning, monitor progress with data, strengthen community, and build professional expertise—to narrow the gaps with a focus on math and English language arts [ELA]. Increasing focused learning means they are bringing multiple strategies for each

student. They have after-school extended learning for those who need assistance. They are also building cultural competencies among the faculty and administrators and acknowledge that parents need to be involved too.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that 82% of Massachusetts schools have failed AYP, making the statistic a bad measure of schools. The schools are terrific by other accounts. As the District is small, six to eight students can move the field. They have addressed student needs on an individual basis.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

C. Discussion of METCO Reorganization Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer from Stephen McKenna and Sharon Hobbs, Principals, dated September 26, 2011, Subject: Report on Lincoln School's METCO Program Reorganization Plan; 2) Brochure entitled, "Lincoln School's METCO program"

Mr. Brandmeyer introduced Ms. Lateefah Franck, the new METCO Director and Academic Advisor. He reviewed last year's work and reorganization of the METCO program in light of the decreasing state funding for the METCO grant. He noted that Ms. Franck has made a terrific transition with them, and she and the Lincoln School Principals, Steve McKenna and Sharon Hobbs, and Ginny Flaherty, Coordinator of Student Services, built a plan to implement and to evaluate the new METCO staffing plan. They are using resources to provide the academic support that METCO students need to succeed.

Ms. Franck reviewed the plan and noted that they are also working with METCO Inc.'s tutoring resources, which provide services to all METCO students. METCO Inc. can accommodate 200 students. METCO K-4 students go home after the school day, and she would like the grades 2-4 students to take advantage of the tutoring.

Ms. Franck sees her role as being more thoughtful as she not only is the Director but also provides one-on-one teaching support to METCO students. Mr. McKenna said that parental involvement is good, and Ms. Franck has done a wonderful job with outreach to parents.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer received a letter, dated September 29, from the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] that is very positive and is their response to the September 1 meeting.

Mr. Brandmeyer commended Ms. Powers and her team for the Special Education Services handbook, which was included as an information enclosure. The handbook represents much good work, and he noted that it is so complete that other districts have asked for it.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they are making progress on many fronts.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling attended a 3rd grade class where Responsive Classroom routines of morning meeting and greetings set the day's tone to start the first lesson. It was interesting to see how the students are engaged in the community.

She also attended a 6th grade class, where students are happy to see one another, and greeting each other is a learned routine. School starts at 8:00 am, and by 8:09, the first lesson starts.

Ms. Sterling will attend the PTA meeting in the morning.

Ms. Glass thanked her and the teachers for their work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$630,887.20 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$440,064.06 for a total of \$1,070,951.26. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and

recommended that they be approved. Mr. Schmertzler moved to approve the warrants, with Ms. James seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

B. Establish Budget Guidelines and Timeline for FY13 Budget Process

Document: Memorandum to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer from Buck Creel, dated September 30, 2011, Subject: FY13 Budget Guidelines, with the attachment: Lincoln Public Schools, FY13 Budget Development Timeline as of September 30, 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that they will present the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2013 on November 10. Mr. Creel noted there is a month for discussion before the first discussion with the Finance Committee. They should receive the FY13 budget guidance from the Finance Committee on October 13. The goal is to have more formalized talks after the New Year, with the vote coming on January 19. He asked for guidance and their priorities on his memorandum, starting on page 3. They will have improvement initiatives. He highlighted several funding sources, including the RFP to fund the Hanscom Schools, where he used the same contract allocation; the METCO grant funding, which last year was at 83 students instead of the maximum of 91 students; and federal funding (not stimulus money) that will stay the same or increase. Mr. Creel asked the Committee what level of maintenance support the current building should receive?

Mr. Schmertzler thanked him for his presentation to the Capital Planning Committee, at which Mr. Creel did not make a request. Mr. Schmertzler noted that if the school building project does not go forward, they will make requests to fix items.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to establish the guidelines for the development of the FY13 budget. The Committee voted unanimously to establish the guidelines.

Ms. Glass thanked them for their work.

X. Old Business

A. Lincoln School Building Committee Update

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Building Committee from Buckner Creel, dated September 28, 2011, Subject: Repair Analysis—Lincoln School; 2) Lincoln Public Schools, Repair Analysis Summary, dated September 25, 2011, v. 4; 3) "Significant Differences between SBC Preferred Option and Repair Analysis," SBC Preferred Option 5E.1—Repair Analysis version 4, dated September 28, 2011

Ms. Glass said they've been planning for the October 16 forum and asked all to be involved before the October 29 State of the Town meeting. She noted Mr. Creel was working on the repair analysis. Mr. Creel raised that a repair project would not be taken on in conjunction with the MSBA and without their potential reimbursement. Mr. Creel noted that they had OMR's input on the repair analysis, and the bottom line is \$24.26 million for the repair project. The repair project would not include a new cafeteria or a connector between the Reed Field House and Brooks. It was unclear how they would execute a repair approach because it would disrupt students; the project would have to be phased. They have had to use a repair approach with the Hanscom Middle School, and it has not been an effective strategy. Mr. Schmertzler noted they used a repair approach with the 1994 project, and it has increased maintenance costs that will continue to increase.

Mr. Schmertzler commended the team of Selectman Noah Eckhouse, Marshall Clemens, OPM Dan Tavares, and Mr. Creel for their cooperative team work that thoroughly vetted the repair option.

Ms. Glass said the October 16 forum starts at 1:30 pm, with school tours beginning at noon. The School Building Committee will meet on October 18 at 7:30 pm.

B. Update on Long-Term Agenda

Document: Lincoln Public Schools, School Committee Long-Term Agenda 2011-2012, Draft as of September 28, 2011 at 3:30 pm

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the Long-Term Agenda is a working document that plans their time and will be posted on the web site.

Ms. Glass asked him to add the Finance Committee's report at some point before the Annual Town Meeting, an update on the Race to the Top grant, and whether the new state laws on teacher and administrator evaluations need to be discussed. Mr. Brandmeyer said there are policy reviews in January and February where these items will be addressed.

Ms. James asked them to include an update on METCO and the new reorganization.

XI. New Business

Document: None.

Ms. Glass asked the Committee what role they would like to consider for the PTA Community Breakfast, which is tentatively scheduled on November 8 at the Reed Field House. The PTA would like to work with the Lincoln School Foundation and other groups. Ms. James indicated she ran it for three years, and the PTA is having trouble finding people to run the event. Ms. Glass suggested that they could have a limited but defined role without being in charge of the event and will let the PTA know.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Document: Draft of School Committee Minutes for June 23, 2011

Mr. Schmertzler moved, and Ms. James seconded, the motion to approve the minutes for the meeting of June 23, 2011. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes. They will be posted on the web site.

XIII. Information Enclosures

Documents: 1) Letter to Mr. Chris Manos from Mickey Brandmeyer, dated September 27, 2011, about traffic safety; 2) Letter to Parents and Caregivers from Mickey Brandmeyer, dated September 28, 2011, about MCAS and AYP; 3) Memorandum to Capital Planning Committee from Buck Creel, dated September 26, 2011, Subject: Proposed capital project list—Lincoln Public Schools with 5-year plan; 4) Letter to Parents and Guardians from Stephanie Powers, dated September 26, 2011, with Lincoln Public Schools, Special Education Services Book, Student Services Directory, Names and Contact Information 2011-2012; Receipt of Notice of Procedural Safeguards; Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards; A Question and Answer Guide to Understanding the Individual Education Program (IEP) Process; A Question and Answer Guide to Understanding Assessments and Assessment Reports; 5) Letter to School Committee Member from Teresa Watts, Executive Director of the Concord Area Special Education Collaborative (CASE), dated September 21, 2011, to CASE parents with a summary statement entitled, "Summary of Concerns Related to the State Auditor's Reports on Selected Collaboratives"

These items are included for the Committee's information. There was no discussion on them.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Schmertzler, seconded by Ms. Glass, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary