

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Thursday, October 20, 2011  
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA  
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James.  
Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services).

Absent: Carol Perkins (Boston Representative), Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

#### I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. She thanked Mr. David Trant for broadcasting the meetings.

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

Mr. Brandmeyer announced that he will retire effective June 30, 2012. He enjoys working in Lincoln and will leave with some regret, but it will give him a chance to do different things after his 35 years in public education. He will support the transition to the next superintendent.

Ms. Glass accepted Mr. Brandmeyer's retirement announcement with mixed feelings, because he will leave very large shoes to fill. She wished him well with his next step and thanked him for the timing and notice. They will discuss the steps of a superintendent search during the new business portion later in the meeting. She thanked him for all of his work.

#### III. Public Comments

Robert Jevon of Trapelo Road wished Mr. Brandmeyer well on his retirement.

#### IV. Consent Agenda

##### A. Overnight Field Trip: Lincoln School Grade 8 to Washington, D.C.

Documents: 1) File IICA-E2, Late Night and Overnight Field Trip Proposal, filled out by Supervising Teacher Steve Cullen; 2) Letter to Parents from Capital Tours, Inc., undated; 3) Lincoln Middle School Proposed Washington DC Itinerary, dated July 28, 2011; 4) Check List for the DC Trip; 5) Washington Trip Experience Parental Agreement Form; 6) Washington DC Trip Behavior Contract and Emergency Contact Information Form; 7) Field Trip Permission Form; 8) Letter to Parents from Steve Cullen, dated May 16, 2012 [yes, 2012]; 9) Washington, D.C. Trip Justification; 10) Washington, D.C. Behavior Contract, dated September 2, 2011; 11) Parent Notice, Important Informational Meeting, Washington, DC Trip; 12) Letter to Parent/Guardian from Maureen Richichi, R.N. School Nurse, with Emergency and Health Care Consent Form and Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medication Consent Form; 13) File IJOA, Field Trips Policy, Voted at June 3, 2004 School Committee Meeting

##### B. Accept Gift

Document: Memorandum from Sharon Hobbs and Stephen McKenna to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer, dated October 6, 2011, RE: Donation with copy of check for \$400

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the Grade 8 overnight trip to Washington, D.C. and to accept the donation of \$400 from the Lincoln PTA for the four new Lincoln School teachers to help with the personal cost of setting up new classrooms. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the trip and to accept the donation.

Mr. Brandmeyer will send thank-you letters.

#### V. Time Scheduled Appointments

##### A. 2011 MCAS: Results and Interpretation

Documents: 1) Report to School Committee from Mary Sterling, dated October 14, 2011, RE: Report on the 2011 MCAS Results; 2) Appendix A: 2011 Performance Levels: State, District, Schools by Grade in ELA, Math, Science and 2008-2011 Cohort Performance Levels at Lincoln School by Grade in ELA, Math, Science/Engineering; 3) Appendix B: 2011 Subgroup Performance Levels by Grade in ELA and Math for each school; 4) Appendix C: 2011 AYP Reports: District, Lincoln School, Hanscom Middle, Hanscom Primary; 5) Appendix D: Adequate Yearly Progress: Background and Explanation; 6)

Appendix E: Superintendent's AYP Letter to Families, September 28, 2011; 7) Appendix F: 2011 Student Growth and Achievement: Scatter Plot Graphs of ELA and Mathematics for Lincoln School and Hanscom Middle School, Grades 4-8

Ms. Sterling reviewed the 2011 MCAS results, which she stressed are one data point, and their value is to flag those students who need help. The state reports the MCAS scores in demographic groups, such as race and ethnicity, disabilities, English language learner [ELL], and low income. In these subgroups, the scores of one or two students make a huge difference in the district's overall performance as the district is small. Many of the students in those subgroups have not met proficiency standards and can be in more than one subgroup. The achievement gaps are larger in Mathematics than they are in ELA and that is true statewide. They want academic success for all students. The specifics they are taking to close the achievement gap will be discussed in a report in the next three to four weeks.

Students made gains in English Language Arts [ELA], and the teachers were not surprised at the results. Students did not do as well in Mathematics. They take a one-on-one tailored approach to students and have written individualized improvement plans.

Students improved their scores on open response questions in ELA, Mathematics, and science in grades 6-8. These questions require students to formulate written responses to the text and cite evidence. The district focused on improving student skills to answering open response questions and will continue this work. The district scores at proficient and advanced levels on open response questions at higher levels than the state average. Ms. Sterling noted open response questions are more challenging for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as they are not as developed to be able reference information.

Not as many Hanscom students have scored at proficient levels, but they are improving. Overall, student growth has increased. The Hanscom students often move away, making a comparison of cohorts unhelpful. Hanscom students have had more trouble with the *Impact Math* curriculum, and students are challenged with developing problem-solving skills.

The state will be changing standards to the National Common Core Standards in September 2012, which focus on making sense of problems and formulating strong responses and solutions to problems. The federal No Child Left Behind requirement's Adequate Yearly Progress [AYP] determination will no longer be used, and Massachusetts will use another system to assess and monitor student progress in ELA and Mathematics, called Student Growth Percentile [SGP]. Overall, student proficiency has increased steadily, and Lincoln is one of 69 schools commended for substantially narrowing proficiency standards for many subgroups.

Ms. Glass and the Committee thanked her for her work and the detailed snapshots behind the scores.

#### B. Action Plan for Improved Custodial Services

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Buckner Creel to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer, dated September 29, 2011 Subject: Custodial services consultant; 2) Letter from Sanitation Systems Incorporated [SSI] dated September 7, 2011, SSI Service Guarantee; 3) Project Timeline, Sanitation Systems Incorporated, dated September, 2011

Mr. Creel presented his memorandum, which summarized the reference checks and answered their questions as to SSI's results and guarantees. Mr. Creel was concerned whether SSI, the contractor, would focus on improving the school as we have custodians who work hard and simply need training. He reported that the majority of SSI's clients hired them for situations that were much worse than our schools and noted that recommendations suggest they will work well with the current staff, who want to improve performance. He recommended that the Committee proceed with the study on the timeline included, and they would implement the changes during the Christmas vacation if the Committee votes for his recommendation.

Mr. Creel discussed the issue with the custodians' shop steward, confirming with him that the Administration did not want to contract out for custodial services. Mr. Creel explained they wanted the custodial staff to have the tools and training to do the work more efficiently and effectively. Mr. Creel noted that they have funds.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to permit the administration to enter into an agreement with Sanitation Systems, Inc. to improve custodial services and to provide the funding as outlined in Mr. Creel's memorandum. The Committee voted unanimously to permit the agreement and to provide the funding.

Mr. Creel will present a progress report in March or April 2012. Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

## VI. Superintendent's Report

### October 1<sup>st</sup> Enrollment Report

Documents: 1) October 1, 2011 Enrollment by Residence, October 1, 2011 and 2010 Enrollment by Grade Level with Comparison; 2) Lincoln Monthly Enrollment 2011-2012 by Campus/Program; 3) Hanscom Monthly Enrollment 2011-2012 by Campus/Program

Mr. Brandmeyer reviewed the enrollment figures for Lincoln and Hanscom. He noted that the current enrollment at the Lincoln School is 615 students, which is higher than the MSBA's estimate for the school building project. The preschool enrollment and the Hanscom enrollment have increased, and students continue to enroll in the schools. They have the capacity to meet the needs of new students and are below the preferred class size in each grade with two exceptions: 1) 25 students in honors algebra at Lincoln, and 2) 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the Hanscom Middle School. They are looking at applications for a half-time English Language Arts teacher. They have the resources to open another 6<sup>th</sup> grade classroom at Hanscom.

They have submitted the September 30 enrollment report to DoDEA/DDESS and the October 1 enrollment report to the state.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

## VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling attended a preschool art class that was using new tabletop easels and learning about color mixing and a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade art class that was tracing leaves, painting over their drawings, and learning about overlapping.

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

## VIII. Policy

A. Policy Review: Presents to School Personnel and Gifts, Donations, Grants to Schools: First Reading

Documents: 1) Document entitled "Classroom and Teacher Gifts," undated; 2) File GBEB, Presents to School Personnel, Revised at School Committee Meeting of March 18, 1985; 3) File KCD, Gifts/Donations/Grants to Schools, Adopted at School Committee Meeting of December 18, 2008

Mr. Christenfeld explained that the State Ethics Commission changed the guidelines on gifts to public employees, which includes those from students and parents to teachers. The Commission does not involve itself with gifts to schools. Mr. Christenfeld and Ms. Carol Kasper discussed the situation and guidelines with the PTA, the field representative for the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and with the attorney for the State Ethics Commission.

Mr. Christenfeld recommended that the Committee reaffirm the current policies [File GBEB and File KCD] at the next meeting as the policies do not require gifting to be policed. A policy that stated that no gifts should be exchanged between families and teachers would require oversight from the Committee and the District. Mr. Christenfeld explained that any parent exceeding the limit could be the subject of a complaint filed with the State Ethics Commission. Teachers are required to report such gifts to the superintendent.

Mr. Christenfeld said the PTA would like the approval to raise money for Christmas gifts. Mr. Brandmeyer suggested that he tell the PTA they could proceed with their plans.

Ms. Glass suggested that they add the reference to Massachusetts General Law and the State Ethics Commission and also emphasize that teachers' failures to report could be subject to investigation. She suggested that the policy be placed in the parent handbook.

Ms. Glass thanked Mr. Christenfeld for his work.

## IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$629,282.90 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$131,734.05 for a total of \$761,016.95. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and

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

#### B. FY 2012 Fiscal Report: First Quarter

Documents: 1) Memorandum to School Committee and Michael F. Brandmeyer from Buckner Creel, dated October 12, 2011, Subject: FY12 First Quarter Report; 2) Hanscom Campus, FY 2012 Operating Budget—Status Report, First Quarter, as of October 7, 2011; 3) Lincoln Campus, FY 2012 Operating Budget—Status Report, First Quarter, as of October 7, 2011; 4) FY 2012 Operating Budget—Key Budget Line Tracking, First Quarter, as of October 7, 2011

Mr. Creel reviewed his memorandum, directing attention to the “expended and encumbered” column on the right which is the best measure of how the money has been spent. One change from the memorandum was that the additional monies spent on the school building project feasibility study came from the personnel budget.

Mr. Creel met with Finance Director Colleen Wilkins about the Defense Finance and Accounting Services’ [DFAS] new procedures for billing and paying for utilities because prepayments may be at odds with Massachusetts General Law. Mr. Creel will report the expenditures and will change the key budget line tracking to reflect it. They will not know the exact amounts paid for utilities at Hanscom until August 2012.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

#### X. Old Business

##### A. Lincoln School Building Committee Update

Documents: 1) Document entitled, “School Building Committee Update: School Committee Meeting of October 20<sup>th</sup>,” prepared by OMR Architects, dated October 18, 2011, Meeting #17; 2) Flyer to Lincoln Community, prepared by the School Building Committee, Update #1, dated October 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer reviewed the October 16 forum. 140 people attended, and 50-60 toured the school buildings, with most staying until close to the end. 10 people offered to help get the message out or to host coffees about the project at their homes. 45 attendees returned the exit survey, the results of which were tabulated by OMR. The district met the goal of explaining the school building project and communicating the facts, but he is not sure whether they changed minds to support the project.

The School Building Committee [SBC] met after Sunday’s forum. The SBC believes option 5E.1 to be educationally sound and fiscally responsible and will last for 50 years. OMR Architects will send its version to their cost estimators for more work. OMR will submit the Preferred Schematic Report [PSR] to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] by December 9. There will be continuing discussions and communication regarding the school’s needs and the project’s cost.

Ms. Glass, Mr. Brandmeyer, and Mr. Gary Taylor, SBC Co-Chair, will cover four items at the October 29 State of the Town meeting: 1) a brief update on educating children; 2) the superintendent search; 3) Hanscom Middle School’s new building; and 4) SBC and Lincoln building project. In preparation, they will inventory community outreach efforts on the building project to date. At the end of the current MSBA process, there will be one choice to vote up or down. Working with the MSBA means the Town would receive partial reimbursement for a project, giving them more for the money whereas a repair project would most likely not garner reimbursement.

##### B. METCO Transportation

Documents: 1) Memorandum from Buckner Creel to School Committee and Mickey Brandmeyer, dated October 12, 2011, Subject: Interim Agreement for Transportation—METCO; 2) Agreement, Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO), Inc.

Mr. Creel explained that METCO, Inc. took time to respond to the Committee’s request to revise the transportation agreement. He recommended that they sign an interim agreement tonight to release the District from the obligation to give all of the METCO transportation grant money to METCO, Inc. and instead pay the invoices as they come in. The contract has a firm fixed price with a fuel adjustment cost. The District does not contract individually with bus companies for the service because it is more expensive than partnering with METCO, Inc. There will be another agreement in February or March 2012.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Schmertzler seconded, the motion to enter into an interim agreement with METCO, Inc. for the provision of bus services for transporting our students from Boston, and to

concur in their award of a contract to Eastern Bus Company for services for the period 2011-2014. The Committee voted unanimously to enter into the agreement for bus services.

#### XI. New Business

Documents: 1) Letter to Jennifer Glass from Mickey Brandmeyer, dated October 19, 2011; 2) Faculty Update #2 from Mickey Brandmeyer, October 20, 2011

Ms. Glass noted that the redistricting process has proposed that Lincoln be included in a new state representative district with Waltham instead of the current district with Sudbury and Wayland. The Committee agreed that she should speak with Town officials and the Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee to register concern about the proposed district, as Lincoln shares a school with Sudbury.

Ms. Glass noted that there will be a School Committee meeting on Thursday, November 3 to discuss the specifics of the superintendent search. There will be regular School Committee meetings on November 10 and 17. The November 3 agenda will include discussion of whether to retain consultants and whether they would need to issue a Request for Proposals [RFP] for them. They will have representatives from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents to inform them about searches and the services that their organizations could provide to the Committee. Mr. Creel said they would solicit three quotes under \$25,000 for consultants' services. The tentative timetable is to start the interviewing process after the first of the year and to select a new superintendent in March.

Ms. Powers reported on her meeting with the Hanscom Primary School and Middle School nurses and Hanscom Fire Department, at which they shared the health care needs of students. Of 490 students, 40 suffer from asthma, 6 have seizure disorders, 23 have life-threatening allergies. There are students who suffer from cardiac issues, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder and other illnesses. They also review the adults' health needs.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they will meet with the Lincoln Police and Fire Department soon for the same reason.

#### XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

#### XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

#### XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Schmertzler, seconded by Ms. Glass, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah G. Marcotte  
Recording Secretary