

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Thursday, November 10, 2011
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Tim Christenfeld. Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services).
Absent: Al Schmertzler, Jen James, 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 7:08 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Glass noted that next week's meeting, which may start at 6:30, will include interviews with superintendent search firms and discussions with principals on their budgets. She announced the budget workshop dates with the Finance Committee: November 30 with dinner at 6 pm and the meeting at 7 pm, and January 10, 2012.

Ms. Glass attended last night's PTA meeting. Ms. Lateefah Franck presented on the METCO program, and Boston and Lincoln parents attended the good discussion. Ms. Glass thanked Ms. Franck.

III. Public Comments

Cathy McSwain, Hanscom Parent Representative, was there to learn.

IV. Consent Agenda

None.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Presentation of FY 2013 Preliminary Budget

Documents: 1) Memorandum to All Budgeting Agencies, Town of Lincoln from Lincoln Finance Committee, dated October 12, 2011, RE: FY '13 Budget Guideline; 2) "FY2013 Preliminary Budget," Lincoln Public Schools, to Lincoln School Committee, dated November 10, 2011

Mr. Brandmeyer was pleased to present the budget for FY13 and noted that they are starting with a balanced budget with a few challenges. The proposed total operating budget for the Lincoln Public Schools is \$22,271,406, which is made up by Lincoln Town Appropriations of \$9,703,367, Hanscom Contract of \$11 to \$11.5 million, and grants, tuition and fees, and reimbursement programs of \$1,463,169. There is no exact amount for the Hanscom schools yet, but it will be determined by the current enrollment band. Each enrollment band is 20 students.

Mr. Brandmeyer said the Lincoln Finance Committee gave them a 2% increase over the FY12 budget. They have included modest program improvements that are in line with their strategic goals, and the principals and program directors will present their improvement initiatives at next week's meeting. Mr. Brandmeyer mentioned that the new National Common Core Standards will require change.

Mr. Creel noted that the increase in budget from FY12 to FY13 is \$732,000. Grants other than the METCO grant have been projected at level funding. They are concerned about the METCO grant and projecting enrollments, especially at Hanscom. The major budget drivers are personnel and class size. Personnel accounts for 74% of the budget; benefits, utilities, instructional materials, food services, transportation and the like make up 24% of the budget; 2% is for improvement initiatives. They are projecting a staffing decrease of 1.4 FTE. They have increased the site-based funds by 4%, which have not kept up with inflation in recent years.

Mr. Creel said the housing situation at Hanscom will sort itself out in the next 18 months, but it has not reached a steady state. The Hanscom contract requires the class sizes for grades K-3 to average 18 students and the class sizes for grades 4-8 to average 23 students. They are watching Hanscom's 6th grade, and there is a bulge in grades 2 and 7, so they will add one section in each grade. Lincoln's 7th grade is projected to be at class-size, and all other sections are well within the preferred class size.

Mr. Creel noted that they would like to add a half-time custodian for Lincoln as a result of the cleaning consultant's recommendation. There are requests for information technology, including software licenses on both campuses.

Ms. Sterling said they have three areas for improvement initiatives: 1) national Common Core Standards; 2) math materials; 3) professional development.

Ms. Powers reviewed the student services budget. In 2011, there are 143 students on individual education plans, but the District has a lower percentage of them than the state average. She mentioned that once a student enters into special education, it is rare for them to exit. There are 10 students placed in out-of-district placements, and she indicated they prefer to educate students in the district where possible. They use many general education interventions and specialists help to keep students out of special education. The improvement initiatives are mats for physical and occupational therapy.

Mr. Creel said the timeline was the presentations on improvement initiatives on November 17, November 30 is the joint meeting with the Finance Committee, the Committee will discuss and vote on the budget at the January 5 meeting, and around January 10 will be the second joint meeting with the Finance Committee.

Ms. Glass thanked them for all their thought and work.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that Raytheon Corporation developed video game using math and science called "The Sum of All Thrills" and visited the 6th graders at Hanscom Middle School for a focus group. Students were enthusiastic and made a video that will be shared. Dave Joseph is starting an energy module for students, and they will build roller coasters in class.

Mr. Brandmeyer said they have received the 35% design for the Hanscom Middle School from architect Ewing Cole. They will meet with the designer the last week of November; the design will be locked in but can still be tweaked.

Ms. Glass thanked him for his work.

VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Ms. Sterling attended an English Language Arts [ELA] Common Core Standards conference with 400 people statewide, many of them English Language Learners [ELL] teachers. The ELL standards will change quickly and are aligned with the National Common Core Standards.

Ms. Sterling attended a kindergarten class that was linking geometric shapes to art and fire trucks, and a 1st grade class that walked at Drumlin Farm to observe habitats for science class. She thanked the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust [LLCT] and Kris Scopinich for their support.

The 3rd grade at Smith was writing stories of their grandparents' heritage in social studies. The 4th grade math class was studying geometry.

They have been collecting data on student perseverance and initiative, qualities important for good learners, for the new standards-based report cards.

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: Second Reading and Vote

Documents: 1) File GBEB, Presents to School Personnel, Revised at School Committee Meeting of March 18, 1985; 2) 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. They have also edited the policies after the last meeting's discussion.

Mr. Christenfeld moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to approve the policies on Presents to School Personnel (GBEB) and Gifts, Donations, Grants to Schools (KCD) as presented. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the policies.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

The Committee moved discussion of warrants to the November 17 meeting.

X. Old Business

A. Update on Superintendent Search

Document: Draft of Search Committee composition

Ms. Glass will address the faculties of both campuses Wednesday, November 16 from 1:30 to 2:30 to gather input and to talk about the superintendent search process.

The district has issued the RFP and invited four firms to respond by the November 14 deadline. Mr. Creel and Ms. Glass will review the proposals, interview the firms, and distribute their summary to the Committee before the November 17 meeting. They will score the proposals after the interviews at that meeting. Ms. Glass said they need two subcommittees to write two sets of questions, one for reference checks and one for interviews. Mr. Sander will work with Ms. Glass on the reference questions, and Mr. Christenfeld will work with Ms. Glass on the interview questions. The firms will have 5-10 minutes to present, and the Committee will ask questions.

Ms. Glass moved, and Mr. Sander seconded, the motion to form two subcommittees to form questions for interviews and reference checks. The Committee voted unanimously to form the subcommittees.

Ms. Glass will form an agenda. She also had a draft of the search committee's composition and will share it with the faculty; she wants to ensure enough participation from both campuses. She suggested a total of 12-15 people, comprised of two building principals, two to four school employees with at least two teachers, two School Committee representatives, one central office administrator, parents from Lincoln, Hanscom, and Boston, and at large community members. Mr. Christenfeld noted that a smaller committee is better and suggested five community members and members of other Town Boards. Mr. Sander did not want to lock in on the number of committee members and wanted different kinds of input.

Mr. Brandmeyer suggested that they get the advice of the search firm on the search committee's composition. He noted that the search committee will not be the only way for interested parties to have input on the process and that the Base leadership was not involved when he was hired.

B. Lincoln School Building Committee [SBC] Update

Document: None.

Mr. Brandmeyer noted that the SBC will meet on Tuesday, November 29 to discuss the life-cycle cost of the proposed project. The School Committee will have to vote on December 1 on whether to submit the Preferred Schematic Report [PSR] to the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA]. If the Committee grants approval, OMR Architects will submit the PSR to the MSBA on December 8.

In late December to early January, OMR will meet with the MSBA and the school staff. The MSBA Board meeting is on January 25. In early February, OMR will host a users group meeting and will meet with engineers to get more input for schematic design. In the February-June timeline, they will meet with OMR every 3-4 weeks. In June, the School Committee will vote to submit the schematic design. At the July 25 MSBA Board meeting, the MSBA will set the percentage of reimbursement to the Town.

Mr. Brandmeyer will continue to update the Committee on the progress.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

XIII. Information Enclosures

Document: Letter from Jennifer Glass to the Special Joint Committee on Re-Districting, dated October 27, 2011

There was no discussion of this item.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Mr. Schmertzler, seconded by Ms. Glass, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah G. Marcotte
Recording Secretary