

**MINUTES OF THE
LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
February 1, 2007**

Present: Julie Dobrow (Chair), Laurie Manos, Al Schmertzler, Sharon Antia, Leta Allen (Boston Representative), Mary Goldstein (Hanscom Representative), Deneen Trask (Hanscom Representative). Also present: Mickey Brandmeyer (Superintendent), Paul Naso (Assistant Superintendent), Buck Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance), Teresa Watts (Administrator of Special Education and Student Services).

Absent: Sandy Hessler (Vice Chair).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

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

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Ms. Dobrow speaking on behalf of the Lincoln School Committee expressed the Committee's condolences to the families affected by the tragedy at Lincoln Sudbury (LSRHS) Regional High School. Ms. Dobrow said she is deeply appreciative of the administration and teachers at LSRHS and the support and compassion they have shown for the students. Ms. Dobrow said school safety is one of the School Committee's utmost concerns and that work has been done all year on school safety issues. She announced that there will be a meeting next week for parents to hear about some of the work the administration has done on safety.

Ms. Dobrow congratulated fifth and sixth grades at the Lincoln School and their teachers and choral instructors on the recent concert. Ms. Dobrow said she attended meetings of the Lincoln Selectmen, Finance Committee, and the LSRHS School Committee for discussions regarding the budget.

Ms. Antia reported that she attended the community meeting held after the event at LSRHS. She said the meeting was well handled and that Lincoln and Sudbury came together to grapple with the crisis. Ms. Antia said she also attended the concert and that the third and fourth grade students did a great job playing their recorders. Ms. Antia also said thanked and complimented the Lincoln Minutemen for the afternoon they put on for the Lincoln fourth graders.

Ms. Dobrow congratulated Cheryl Lecesse on her upcoming move from the Lincoln Journal to a position editing the Concord Journal.

III. Public Comments

Amjad Shaikh, a Lincoln resident and parent of three children attending the Lincoln School, spoke about a concern regarding school busing. Mr. Shaikh said he and his family live on Route 2. The nearest bus stop is at 26 Cambridge Turnpike. Mr. Shaikh is concerned about safety issues and about the equity of how children are bussed. He said he has already discussed this situation with the administration and has not received an answer that was satisfactory to him.

Ms. Dobrow thanked him for bringing this matter to the School Committee's attention and for going through the appropriate channels. Ms. Dobrow said parents are dealt with equally in the Lincoln School, and she asked Mr. Brandmeyer and Mr. Creel to prepare an analysis of this situation for the School Committee. Mr. Schmertzler said the School Committee will get an answer back to him.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept Gift from Millipore Foundation

Documentation of \$500 gift to support the Annual Science Fair at the Hanscom Middle School

Ms. Manos asked that this item be held out for discussion.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. Report from the Lincoln Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

Document: Requirements for parent advisory councils on special education under MGL 71B section 3

Lisa Deveau, Melissa Flood, and Jamie Allard, officers of the Lincoln Public Schools Special Education Advisory Council (LPAC), appeared before the School Committee to report on the newly reorganized LPAC. Ms. Watts explained that Massachusetts law requires that the District have a parent advisory council. In the past Lincoln had a vibrant PAC but last year no volunteers came forward to serve as officers. Ms. Watts said Ms. Deveau, Ms. Flood, and Ms. Allard have volunteered to serve as officers and were elected on December 14, 2006.

Ms. Deveau said she has three children who are Lincoln School District students. She has two children at the Hanscom Schools and one at the Lincoln Integrated Preschool. She said LPAC is trying to create a bridge between parents and the District Special

Education Committee. She wants LPAC to be a place where parents can come for information and to voice opinions.

Ms. Flood said she has two children in the Lincoln School District. One is a student at the Hanscom Primary School. Her other child is a student at the Lincoln Integrated Preschool. She said she has been very pleased with the education provided for her children and that she would like to help people access resources.

Ms. Allard said she would like LPAC to connect with the Hanscom and Lincoln parent groups. She thanked everyone for the support provided for her child. LPAC is having monthly meetings at Hanscom. There have been a few inquiries from Lincoln parents. If Lincoln participation is in greater numbers meetings can alternate between the base and the Lincoln campus. LPAC is considering an outside speaker.

Ms. Dobrow thanked Ms. Deveau, Ms. Flood, and Ms. Allard for volunteering. Ms. Watts said there is contact information for LPAC on the web site and the District will be happy to post information about other LPAC events. Ms. Deveau said the group is in the process of creating bylaws. Ms. Manos volunteered to help the new group get the word out on the Lincoln campus. Betty Green said in the past she was an officer of LPAC and would be happy to provide information about how the group was formerly operated.

B. District Work Plans: Mid-Year Review - Part 1

Documents: Lincoln Public Schools District Goals 2006 and Beyond, Work Plans with notations on progress to date for: Teacher Excellence and Professional Development; and Facilities, Operations, Health and Safety.

Mr. Brandmeyer said that tonight the status report would be on teacher excellence and professional development and on facilities, operations, health and safety. The remaining work plans will be covered at the February 15 meeting.

Mr. Naso presented the reports on teacher excellence and professional development. He began with the work plan on professional development updating the Committee on: professional development programs for paraprofessionals, the technology integration pilot programs, the mentoring program, reinforcing common understanding among the faculty of standards-based instruction and assessment, and investigations of further professional development collaborations.

Ms. Trask asked whether mentoring is offered for long-term substitutes. Mr. Naso said this is not done at this time. Teachers make a commitment to mentor early in the school year generally before the need for long-term substitutes is known. Mr. Naso said if there is a need for support for long-term substitutes that is not being met the District should look for ways to provide support.

Ms. Allen asked about the civil rights training. Mr. Naso said this training is for staff to inform them of obligations to be attentive to any type of discrimination.

Ms. Manos observed that the school principals are not listed as key personnel for reinforcing common understanding of standards-based instruction and said the work of the principals is important here because they interface on an everyday basis with the teachers. Mr. Naso said this was oversight and that they are involved in this effort.

Ms. Dobrow asked how the District is assessing the usefulness of the Primary Source membership. Mr. Naso said he has been getting formal feedback as well as informal feedback throughout the year. He said the Primary Source classes are well received and that the question is whether it would be just as cost efficient for the District to pay on a per class basis.

Mr. Naso reported on the work plan on evaluation of faculty and staff. He said it is the second year of implementation and that the fact that three of four principals are new has necessitated effort since the principals handle the majority of the teacher evaluations.

Mr. Naso reported on the work plan to recruit, develop, and retain strong administrative leadership. The development of multi-year succession planning has been set aside. Mr. Brandmeyer will be working on it. Work on the development of the personnel manual is going well. Pieces are complete. It needs to be assembled and formalized. More aggressive efforts are being taken to recruit diverse faculty and staff. Mr. Naso is going to a minority recruitment fair on February 10. The District will have access to more options and more diverse candidates. Mr. Naso said that an effort is underway to understand staffing needs for next year that will lead to long-term projections of staffing needs. At the moment it appears that next year will require very little hiring but that could change.

Mr. Creel reported on the work plan on budget and contracts discussing the development of the FY08 budget, funds for technology plan implementation, implementation of FY07 Hanscom operational plans and the response to the Hanscom contract solicitation. Ms. Manos suggested that work begin on the Town Meeting presentation immediately with work that does not require the specific numbers.

Ms. Antia asked whether there is a plan for presenting the technology plan to parents and the community. She said that the District is asking for \$129,500 for hardware and that parents and the community will be interested in knowing more about these expenditures. Mr. Brandmeyer said he would think about this. Mr. Naso said the Technology Steering Committee is still making decisions about the right hardware and structure to support learning. Mr. Brandmeyer said the presentation at Town Meeting will cover what is in the request and why it is there. If the funding is voted, there will subsequently be more presentations for parents. Mr. Schmertzler said it would be good to provide parents with some information about how these funds will be used. Mr. Brandmeyer said something can be included in the budget mailing about the proposed use of technology funds.

Mr. Creel presented the report on facilities and operations. Regarding master plan development, he said that SMMA, the consultants, have suggested exploring delivery methods which will help transform the existing facility into a twenty-first century learning environment prior to discussion of plan concepts. Statements of interest to the SBA have not been started. A presentation about the master plan will be made at Town Meeting. Mr. Creel also reported on food service options. He commented that participation is up at all three locations and that efforts are being made to find products which are generic and do not have advertising or cartoon characters. Mr. Creel reported on final adjustments to the revised phone system, implementation of technology and infrastructure, and the Student Information Management System (new software for keeping student information and creating report cards). Mr. Creel said contracts for commodity natural gas and electricity should result in some budget stability and a modest cost reduction. He said the District is not being billed regularly for utilities at Hanscom. He wants regular bills so that the District is not surprised by a large bill for a long period of time.

Mr. Manos asked about the exploration of delivery methods in conjunction with the master plan. Mr. Creel said choices in delivery of education can impact facilities needs. For example, how large classrooms need to be depends on how technology will be used. Mr. Brandmeyer said another example is that decisions on whether science will be taught in the classrooms or in dedicated science labs impacts space planning.

Mr. Creel presented the report on the work plan on health and safety. He noted that the crisis manual is complete, that safety planning sessions with other town agencies have taken place, and that there will be simulations. Pandemic flu planning will proceed in conjunction with town and state efforts. He noted that the CDC has issued an interim pre-pandemic flu planning guide. The wellness policy has been completed and the health services manual is in progress.

Ms. Antia commented that the new sign-in system is working well but that people may forget to sign out. Mr. Brandmeyer said there has been a glitch with the sign-out technology. Ms. Antia also asked how visitors can be encouraged to exit from the prescribed exits. Mr. Brandmeyer said visitor parking places have been designated to encourage this. Mr. Brandmeyer said the redesign will be done with an eye to safety.

Ms. Antia said during the LSRHS crisis she realized the importance of having a means of communicating such as an emergency telephone system. She said many parents had no idea what was happening until they saw it on the news. Mr. Brandmeyer said that the email communication system would be used in emergencies. This is why it is crucial that parents sign up for the District News. He suggested that parents sign-up with both their home and office e-mail so that they would receive emergency communications in a timely manner. He said District News contains only important communications and parents who sign up will not be burdened with excessive emails. Mr. Schmertzler suggested that the Hanscom PTO and the Lincoln PTA could make an announcement.

Ms. Antia said she has heard from many parents that they were disappointed to learn that their CORI clearances had expired. Mr. Brandmeyer said he would mention CORIs, District News sign-up including adding work e-mails, and sign-in and out procedures regarding safety on campus at the upcoming meeting on safety. Ms. Dobrow suggested that in addition, he send a letter home reminding parents about all of these issues. Mr. Brandmeyer said any parent can call Cynthia Barthold in the Superintendent's office or the school office secretaries to see whether their CORI has expired.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Brandmeyer reported that the deadline has closed in the Assistant Superintendent search process. A search committee has been formed and an interviewing schedule has been developed. There are 35 applications for the position and a strong applicant pool is expected. Interviews will take place in February and then reference checking and site visits will take place. Mr. Brandmeyer expects to bring finalist candidates to the School Committee meeting on March 15 and to make hiring recommendations on March 22.

On school safety, Mr. Brandmeyer mentioned the tragic event at LSRHS and noted that the Lincoln School District has been working on school safety plans all year. Next Thursday a parent forum on school safety will be held on the Lincoln campus from 7 to 8 P.M. There will be discussion of procedures and the District's "firm but friendly" philosophy. Police Chief Kevin Mooney and Dave Regan, the Youth Officer, will attend. A small session on helping parents think about how to talk with children about

tragic events will be presented. A similar presentation will take place on the Hanscom campus in March.

Mr. Brandmeyer said on the afternoon of February 8 there will be a safety drill and simulated lockdown for the Lincoln campus. School events such as play practice and sports practice will not stop but there will not be afternoon sessions for METCO students. A similar event will be held later on the Hanscom campus. Ms. Allen confirmed that on the afternoon of February 8 there will be no late Boston bus.

Mr. Schmertzler asked about progress on emergency egress. Mr. Brandmeyer said with the School Committee's authorization Ms. Dobrow sent a letter to the Conservation Commission. In response to this a small meeting has been scheduled with members of the Conservation Commission and public safety officers to consider options and strategies.

Ms. Manos said she believes that it is important to protect the informant who speaks up about situations that can be potentially dangerous and that she is interested in ensuring that procedures are in place and are uniformly applied. She said it is important to speak about this with parents so parents can feel confident that if their children have information they can encourage their children to come forward. Mr. Brandmeyer said that this week there was a complaint about an allegedly potentially violent student, that the principal handled it very well, and that it turned out not to be true. Ms. Dobrow underscored the importance of having procedures in place so that students who have information about dangerous situations will come forward. She referred to an op-ed piece in Boston Globe which spoke about the need to create a culture where kids feel safe and compelled to tell an adult about threats to security. She said this is important and worthy of further conversation and additional outreach to parents and students. Mr. Schmertzler said it also important to protect the so-called accused because sometimes information is fabricated.

VII. Curriculum

Mr. Naso said the Lincoln Minutemen will be doing work with the schools in addition to the previously mentioned afternoon program with the fourth grade. There will be an event for the fifth grades at Lincoln and Hanscom. There will also be something with the eight grade next fall. He thanked the Lincoln Minuteman for their work in this cooperative endeavor.

Mr. Naso reported that the Health Advisory Council is being formed with parents and community members, faculty and staff from both campuses, recreation department representation, and some ex officio police representation. Mr. Schmertzler asked for an update about efforts to teach students how local government works. Mr. Naso said this will be taking place in third grade history which has a unit on Massachusetts history and on how local government works.

VIII. Policy

A. Establish Subcommittee to Review Class Size Policy

Mr. Brandmeyer said at the January 18 meeting the School Committee voted to establish a subcommittee to review class size policy. Mr. Brandmeyer said he put forth a call for volunteers. The Committee will consist of Mr. Brandmeyer, Steve McKenna, teachers (still looking for volunteers), parents, community representatives, and School Committee members.

Ms. Manos said there are four parent volunteers with strong interest and credentials. She recommended that the School Committee accept all four volunteers. There was one volunteer to act as a community representative. She recommended that the Committee accept this volunteer. Ms. Dobrow said three School Committee members have volunteered (Ms. Manos, Ms. Antia, and Mr. Schmertzler) but that only two should serve because three members would be a majority of the elected members of the School Committee. Ms. Antia asked not to be considered since Mr. Schmertzler would represent a different perspective in the Subcommittee's deliberations.

Ms. Dobrow moved that the School Committee accept the parents and community volunteers as members of the Subcommittee to Review Class Size Policy and that the School Committee appoint Ms. Manos and Mr. Schmertzler to represent the School Committee on the Subcommittee. Ms. Antia seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring. Ms. Manos said she would contact the volunteers and get information to them. Mr. Brandmeyer said a member of the Finance Committee will be participating ex officio.

B. Vote on Policy Subcommittee Policy Manual Format Proposal

Richard Jewett joined the Committee for this discussion. Mr. Dobrow moved that the School Committee vote to authorize the reorganization of the policy manual as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee. Mr. Schmertzler seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring.

Ms. Manos requested that for the next School Committee meeting all School Committee members bring their manuals. The manuals will be reassembled over after the February vacation week and reissued thereafter. Mr. Jewett acknowledged Cynthia Barthold's contributions to the revision of the policy manual format.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Ms. Manos said she has reviewed warrants totaling \$772,305.56 and that they appear to be in order. Ms. Manos moved that the School Committee vote to accept warrants in the amount of \$772,305.56. Mr. Schmertzler seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring.

B. FY'07 Budget Quarterly Report

Documents: Memorandum from Bucker Creel to Lincoln School Committee and Michael F. Brandmeyer, FY'07 Second Quarter Report; Lincoln Campus FY 2007 Operating Budget -- Status Report 2nd Quarter as of January 22, 2007; Hanscom Campus FY2007 Operating Budget -- Status Report 2nd Quarter as of January 22, 2007.

Mr. Creel said he met with Ms. Manos and Mr. Schmertzler earlier in the week to discuss the second quarter reports. Mr. Creel said note number 3 on the Lincoln Campus report should be changed to read: "A variance from the allocated budget of 20,064 was due to a reserve fund transfer." This was for unanticipated SPED expenditures for tutors. Mr. Creel said for the Lincoln campus more of the reserve has been used than he would like but that there is enough money in the controlled account. He said the necessity for a van to serve a family on Route 2 has resulted in an expenditure of \$23,000. This will be the subject of a report to the School Committee and he will be looking for ways to avoid this expenditure next year.

Mr. Creel said on the Lincoln campus he is looking at how grant funds are applied. A change in non-professional staff could result in more funds being available. Regarding Hanscom, Mr. Creel said there is a sufficient reserve for unanticipated events. He said he has received almost no billing for heat and utilities and he is looking to get information on this.

X. Old Business

A. Proposed Updates to Long Term Agenda

This discussion was deferred to the February 15 meeting. Mr. Brandmeyer reminded the Committee that on March 15 they will be interviewing Assistant Superintendent finalist candidates. The March 29 meeting has been moved to March 22. Ms. Manos asked when the Committee could discuss time on task in math. Mr. Naso said he will discuss it next week in conjunction with a work plan.

XI. New Business

Regarding the item from the consent agenda held out for discussion, Ms. Manos asked whether there is any commercial component to the \$500 gift from the Millipore Foundation. Mr. Brandmeyer said there is not. Ms. Dobrow moved that the School Committee move to accept a gift of \$500 from the Millipore Foundation for the Hanscom 2007 Annual Science Fair. Mr. Schmertzler seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring.

XII. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Dobrow moved that the School Committee accept the minutes of the January 4, 2007 meeting as amended. Mr. Schmertzler seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring.

XIII. Information Enclosures

XIV. Adjournment

Ms. Dobrow moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Schmertzler seconded the motion. All elected members voted in favor with Ms. Allen, Ms. Goldstein, and Ms. Trask concurring. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Rolley, School Committee Recording Secretary