

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 2, 2012
Lexington Town Office Building, Selectmen's Meeting Room
1625 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Dr. Paul Ash, Superintendent, Margaret Coppe, School Committee Chair; Alessandro Alessandrini, Vice Chair; Member: Bonnie Brodner; and Sam Alpert, Student Representative

**Absent: Jessie Steigerwald, Member
Mary Ann Stewart, Member (due to death in her family)**

The Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 7:32 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and invited public comment.

There were no public comments

II. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Ash reported that a ground breaking ceremony will be held on October 18th at the Estabrook Elementary School. State Treasurer, Steven Grossman and Jack McCarthy, Executive Director of the Massachusetts School Building Authority will attend and Margaret Coppe, School Committee Chair, Deborah N. Mauger, Chairman Board of Selectman and Sandra Trach, Principal, Joseph Estabrook Elementary School will all speak at the ceremony. There will be refreshments afterwards and he hopes many people will attend.

Dr. Ash then updated the Committee on the Bridge and Bowman renovations. He reported that due to the extraordinary efforts by administration, teachers, staff, parents, and the facilities department these schools were able to open on time. He also reported that Pat Goddard reported to him that the boiler at the Bridge School will be up and running by next Friday. The Estabrook School site work is completed and they are now into design development documents. On October 11th the School Committee will meet with the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) at which time various options will be presented to stay within the scope of budget. A supplemental appropriation may be needed to bring back to the Committee on October 16th.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Alessandro Alessandrini reported that the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) met last Thursday and one of their focuses is to issue a survey in order for SEPAC to obtain feedback from the community on what the needs are and what needs to be changed. Also, there will be continuing conversations with Dr. Ash and Linda Chase, Director of Student Services.

Bonnie Brodner had questions regarding the survey and to whom it would be distributed.

Margaret Coppe stated that she was not clear on the intent of the October 11th meeting with the PBC.

The Committee discussed the possibility of having a meeting on Saturday, October 13th to review the joint meeting held on October 11th. It was then decided there would be a Committee meeting on Saturday, October 13th at 10:00 a.m. at a location to be determined.

Margaret Coppe announced two items: (1) In August a request from the 2020 Vision Committee (2020) came to the Committee requesting a survey to report on what people value in the Town and education was one of seven categories. 2020 wants to place a note on the beginning of survey stating that "The results are to be used to inform committees going forward;" and (2) there has been a lot of talk regarding registered Level 3 Sex Offenders in town. Mark Corr, Chief of Police has spoken with the Board of Selectmen and they have asked the Town Manager to look into what kind of law could be written that would stand up to challenge and be enforceable. She wanted to let the public know that the Committee is working with Town Counsel, Police Chief and the Superintendent regarding school property and to know that they are concerned about the safety of the children.

The Committee discussed whether or not they would have a quorum at the Executive Session scheduled for October 3rd with the Board of Selectmen meeting regarding contract negotiations.

IV. Agenda

1. Vote to Approve Diamond Middle School Field Trip to Quebec City, Canada, May 29 through May 31, 2013

Ann Carothers, Principal, Diamond Middle School and Joan Yarmovsky, French Teacher, Diamond Middle School requested approval for the Diamond Middle School Trip to Quebec City, Canada on Wednesday, May 29, 2013 through Friday, May 31, 2013. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Motion to Approve the Diamond Middle School Field Trip to Quebec City, Canada, May 29 through May 31, 2013 (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (3-0) (2 Absent)

2. iPad Pilot Program at Lexington High School

Dr. Ash introduced Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment who presented the iPad Pilot Program that is currently going on with a core group of 53 Grade 10 students. Mr. Plati then introduced Adam Goldberg, Associate Principal LHS, Mary Pappas, Fine Arts Teacher, LHS, Marianne McKenna, Director of IT/MIS/Technology and Laura Lasa, Principal, LHS who worked closely with the team

on the grant proposal. Mr. Plati's presentation included technology highlights in the schools over the past three years and how the expanded use of iPads in the classrooms is changing how children learn and teachers teach. He thanked the Lexington Education Association for the \$58,400 Grant which allowed for the purchase of the iPads and the e-textbooks for these students and their teachers for use in home and school. He made a presentation using an iPad to illustrate why these e-textbooks are so important and the various features that they contain. The goals they will be looking for in this pilot program include increased student engagement, student organization skills, note taking, research, attendance, grade progress reports and research. He shared that teachers received their iPads in June and spent the summer developing curriculum materials, and researched purchasing the appropriate apps which are now currently being installed. There were parent meetings with 100% participation before they signed off on the agreement to the iPad Student Handbook. There were 4-5 sessions held in Boston for the METCO students and their families. There is also a website on the LPS homepage to update the community on this pilot project. Security and iPad Drop-off Zones (IDZ) were discussed as well as having more secure locations for student athletes who are participating in after-school activities. Student training, insurance for loss or damage, the filing of claims, as well as workshops for parents during the course of the year, Airwatch, Apple's Notability App, in class training for teachers were also discussed. There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding use, content filters, what metrics are being used for success, e-textbook updating and costs, license agreements, collaboration with other schools,

Laura Lasa addressed the Committee to say that she was really excited about the program but reminded everyone that we can't lose sight of teacher training and also wanted to publically thank Mr. Plati and his team and especially the Lexington Education Foundation.

3. Human Resources Department Update

Dr. Ash reported that the Human Resources report continues to expand each year and thanked Robert Harris, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and his staff for all their hard work.

Fran Salter, Training Coordinator, IT/Network/Technical Operations and Mr. Harris presented the LPS Human Resources Personnel and Program which was updated on October 2, 2012. Mr. Harris noted (i) the workforce remained highly stable over last several years and more closely in the last three years (ii) there is no data to suggest that there will be a mass exodus from teachers for retirement and other reasons. He believes that this is due to the support that they give to staff and teachers for professional development. The report reflects that they are making gains in increasing the diversity of their workforce. He then provided the overall profiles of new hires for FY 2013 and the average change of teachers and staff over a six year period, how LPS compares with other similar communities, retirement rates, gender and race which compared the FY 2012-FY 2013 data. Teacher absences, including those for professional development during the school day were discussed.

Nishan Dagley, First Grade Teacher, Harrington Elementary School spoke about the mentor coach program and how it helps teachers during their first years of teaching. They are now looking at a three year program consisting of mentor, content coach and trained mentor content coaches. He thanked the Committee for their commitment to this program.

There were questions and comments from the Committee regarding the report and program regarding how mentors are selected, compensation to mentors, minority hiring and the total percentage of minority hires.

Dawn McKenna, 9 Hancock Street, inquired about the cause of the 2008 teacher turnover rate. She then commented on the percentage of professional development absences during working hours and expressed her concern regarding disruptions in the classrooms.

Harvy Simkovits, 4 Angier Road, questioned gender and race in the schools and the percentages. He stated that it would be interesting to know how the diversity of the town compares with the total teacher population with respect to diversity.

Margaret Coppe stated that the 2020 Vision Committee put out a report about two years ago and Dan Krupka stays on top of those data numbers.

4. Update on New Employee Wellness Program

Robert Harris presented the update on the New Employee Wellness Program. He stated that last January the Committee adopted an Employee Wellness Program and a system-wide steering committee was established to develop the needs and interest of employees town-wide. Essential elements were based on collaboration between the Lexington Community Education Program, Physical Education and Wellness Department, School Health Services, Food Service Vendor, Public Facilities the Employee Assistance Program and Wellness Champions under the principals of each school.

Craig Hall, Director of the Lexington Community Education Program, talked about the Wellness Partnership Flyer. It is an invitation to all employees, both school and municipal, to participate in the programs free of charge.. The Fall program included Zumba, Yoga, QiGong, voice, mindfulness and pottery.

Eamonn Sheehan, Physical Education and Wellness Coordinator, LHS, presented on the School Fitness Centers as part of the employee wellness initiative. He stated that there are Centers at the Clark and Diamond Middle Schools and at the High School which include treadmills, elliptical machines, bikes, weights and fitness instructors. Currently the hours at LHS run from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Clark and Diamond Schools. There were questions and comments from the Committee.

Sandy Trach, Principal, Estabrook Elementary School presented on the Chef of the Month wellness opportunity which is run by Kevin Silvia of Whitsons Culinary Group. She shared what a positive experience the staff had during the presentation at Estabrook.

Kevin Silvia, Food Service Director, LPS, stated that he will be travelling to different schools to provide healthy meal planning and cooking demonstrations and sharing his ideas.

Jill Gasperini, Coordinator of School Health Services, spoke on the School Nurse Health Centers that are provided by registered nurses in each of the nine schools which help employees on an individual basis to provide health education and counseling and to promote relaxing techniques and exercise. She spoke on the work/life program through the Wellness Corporation which is for individual employees and family members who are experiencing problems and crisis; the program also provides legal, financial, budget, debt counseling, new parent transitioning, serious illness and end of life resources as well as smoking cessation programs, fitness programs, weight loss and walking programs and chronic disease and stress management.

Laurie Korpalski, P.E. and Wellness Champion at the Harrington Elementary School spoke on Wellness Champions who will serve as liaisons to the Wellness Steering Committee and attend staff meetings in their school in order to obtain staff feedback and provide ideas and share that data with the Steering Committee. All interested employees are encouraged to apply at each school and at the central office.

Fran Salter, Training Coordinator, IT/Network/Technical Operations and member of the Wellness Steering Committee presented the wellness website which is accessible and up-to-date. The link can be found on the LPS website homepage and is accessed through "Administration", "Employee Wellness Program" and once there people will have a menu containing links for each of the programs.

Lori Manning, Wellness Coordinator, Town of Lexington and member of the Wellness Steering Committee presented on the municipal employees participation and town wide flu clinic and a town-wide wellness event in May. She is proud to be working on Steering Committee which is working on offering a variety of programs for all town and school employees.

Mr. Harris thanked everyone on the committee and stated that hope is contagious. There were no questions from the Committee.

5. FY 14 Budget Guidelines and Timetable

Dr. Ash announced that they just beginning the budget process and will bring to the Committee a budget in January that reflects the highest possible education to students and professional development. Last year the Committee asked Dr. Ash to bring forward

recommendations to reduce fees and was impressed that they were able to reduce fees and work with the town and others in order to not sacrifice any programs. He spoke about the new #8 which includes high priority new initiatives. Dr. Ash would like to move back the number of classes taught by science teachers to the levels before the override. He also mentioned the additional costs associated with the new mandates for the supervision and evaluation of teachers. He then announced that at the next Committee meeting, Ms. Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development will bring forth the process to follow to look at what kind of foreign language program we would offer at the elementary level, what grade levels and the feasibility. Dr. Ash does not see that the foreign language program would impact the FY 14 budget due to timing issues and that it would take at least a year to launch a new program for the following year. Also discussed was the timing of the budget process. There were comments and questions from the Committee regarding expanding the iPad program, professional development, DESE teacher evaluations, additional staffing needs, and budget timelines.

Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance took questions and comments from the Committee regarding the budge and Capital Plan.

Phyllis Neufeld, Lexington Educational Association President, had questions on items numbered 1 and 8. She also inquired about cuts in the level service budget.

Motion to Approve the Guidelines as Amended (Alessandro, Brodner). **The motion was Approved** (3-0). **Steigerwald and Stewart Absent.**

6. Vote to Appoint Official and Alternate Voting Delegates to the MASC Annual Business Meeting

Mary Ann Stewart and Margaret Coppe will be attending the MASC Annual Business Meeting and Margaret recommended that Mary Ann be appointed as the voting delegate and Margaret as the alternate.

Motion to Appoint Mary Ann Stewart as the Official Voting Delegate and Margaret Coppe as the Official Alternate Voting Delegate to the MASC Annual Business Meeting. (Brodner, Alessandrini) **The Motion was Approved** (3-0). **Steigerwald and Stewart Absent.**

7. HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) Policy – Second Reading

Margaret Coppe presented the changes to from the First Reading to the Second Reading. Margaret stated she received an email from Jill Gasperini who was concerned about why this policy only included HIV and AIDS and not other communicable diseases. She explained that every town has an AIDS Policy and how the policy arose out of 1990s

Motion to Approve the HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) Policy and Move to the Third Reading (Alessandrini, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (3-0) Steigerwald and Stewart Absent.

8. Vote to Accept a Donation of FIRST Robotics Parts Valued at \$1,700 from Young-Chul Shin to the Lexington High School FIRST Robotics Team

Motion to Accept, with Gratitude, a Donation of FIRST Robotics Parts Valued at \$1,700 from Young-Chul Shin to the Lexington High School FIRST Robotics Team (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (3-0) Steigerwald and Stewart Absent.

9. Vote to Approve School Committee Executive Session Minutes of August 14, 2012

Motion to Approve School Committee Executive Session Minutes

The Committee decided to postpone the approval of the School Committee Executive Session Minutes because Jessie Steigerwald has comments to this draft.

Motion to Adjourn (Alessandrini, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (3-0); Steigerwald and Stewart Absent.

The Meeting Adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Diamond Middle School French Field Trip to Quebec City, Canada on May 29-May 31, 2013; Memorandum dated September 5, 2012 to Paul Ash from Tom Plati regarding School Committee Presentation of iPad Pilot Program at LHS along with attachments (i) a copy of the LEF grant proposal, and (ii) Letter sent by Principal Laura Lasa to parents of students who would be involved in the pilot; LPS Human Resources Personnel and Program Updated dated October 2, 2012; LPS Wellness Partnership Autumn 2012 Partnership Classes and a PowerPoint presentation regarding the LPS Employee Wellness Program 2012-2013; LPS Recommended FY14 Budget Guidelines and LPS FY14 Budget Calendar; Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. Notice of Business Meeting to be held on November 9, 2012; Second Reading of the Lexington School Committee Policy on HIV and AIDS; and Letter dated September 19, 2012 to Dr. Paul Ash from Jeffrey A. Harris, Mathematics/Computer Science Instructor FIRST Robotics Team Mentor regarding a \$1,700 donation from Yong-Chul Shin of FIRST Robotics parts to LHS's FIRST Robotics Team.

Voted by the School Committee November 13, 2012

