

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

7:00 p.m.

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; Members Bonnie Brodner, Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart; and Sam Alpert, Student Representative

The Meeting Minutes were taken by Jean Curran, Recording Secretary

The Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome:

The Chair called the meeting to order and moved to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Exemption 3 – Collective Bargaining Pertaining to LEA, Unit A, Grievance Hearing

A roll call vote was taken:

Alessandro Alessandrini	“Aye”
Mary Ann Stewart	“Aye”
Bonnie Brodner	“Aye”
Jessie Steigerwald	“Aye”
<u>Margaret Coppe</u>	“Aye”

II. Executive Session:

Exemption 3 – To Discuss Collective Bargaining

The Chair moved to return to Public Session and a roll call vote was taken:

Alessandro Alessandrini	“Aye”
Mary Ann Stewart	“Aye”
Bonnie Brodner	“Aye”
Jessie Steigerwald	“Aye”
<u>Margaret Coppe</u>	“Aye”

III. Return to Public Session and Welcome:

The Chair called the Public Session to order at 7:39 p.m. and invited public comment.

There were no public comments.

IV. Superintendent's Update on Study of Elementary Foreign Language

Dr. Ash shared that he, Mary Ann Stewart, Alessandro Alessandrini and Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development met about two weeks ago to discuss the process they might follow to bring back a foreign language in the elementary schools. The reason for sharing this tonight was to share with the full Committee and the public that this topic will be on the School Committee Agenda for the next meeting. At that meeting they will report out what they discussed and the process they would like the Committee to endorse so that they can formulate a committee and begin the study process.

V. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Alessandro Alessandrini shared that he was at a School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) meeting yesterday where he gave the Committee an update on where the Ad hoc Committee on Youth at Risk stands. He got together with BJ Rudman and Bill Blout to amend the Charge and other parts of the Charge based upon the Committee's feedback. Mr. Rudman has sent the Chair the revised Charge. The other item that came up at the SHAC meeting was regarding homeless children, and is of interest to Mr. Alessandrini and he would like to see if we could find out more about these families in order to find ways to help them.

Margaret Coppe responded to Mr. Alessandrini that she attended a meeting at the Estabrook Elementary School a few weeks ago to discuss the topic of homeless families and children and her understanding was that Lexington has about thirty families living at the Quality Inn on Bedford Street. These children have the option of remaining in their home school or attending Lexington's schools. The transportation cost for those students choosing to attend their home school is split between that town and Lexington as required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. She and Ms. Stewart will be meeting next week with Senator Michael Barrett who is Chair of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities to discuss the topic of homeless education needs.

Mary Ann Stewart shared that she attended Lexington Town Meeting Members Association (TMMA) executive session and gave a School Committee update about what has been on the Committee's table since Town Meeting adjourned. Ms. Stewart mentioned to TMMA that the Committee had the Third Quarter Financial Report at the previous School Committee meeting and mentioned the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) and some TMMA Executive Committee members had some questions which she has sent along to Mary Ellen Dunn, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance. The law is very complicated and her understanding is that there is always a fluctuation in the number of homeless children who are moving from one town to another.

Alessandro Alessandrini shared that he is very supportive of McKinney-Vento and felt that he is focused on families in our district who may be financially strapped and homeless and if

there is some way to help we should do that. Mr. Alessandrini shared a story about homeless parents who can't work because they cannot afford after school care and summer care.

Margaret Coppe also stated homeless families living at the Quality Inn are considered to be Lexington residents.

Bonnie Brodner shared that this is a similar theme she spoke about a few weeks ago when she reported at the PTA Presidents' Council Meeting that these issues were discussed. Ms. Brodner shared that there is a need have a conversation about how to help people that are really financially strapped.

Jessie Steigerwald (i) congratulated the Ultimate Frisbee Team who won the Northeastern Championships held at Fort Devens over the weekend; (ii) shared that she attended the high school performance of "Miss Saigon" and congratulated everyone involved; (iii) shared that the High School Jazz Combo Group attended the Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition and Festival in New York City and were also mentioned in a Boston Globe article; (iv) shared that the Ad hoc Townwide Facilities Master Planning Committee (AhTFMPC) will be meeting tomorrow and they will be meeting weekly until AhTFMPC has a report. Currently, there is a draft report and there will be an inclusion of the Hastings Elementary School and the High School incorporated with the municipal list of projects. The Consultant came and walked around with Dr. Ash and herself and the consultant is including a more accurate number on the central office. Ms. Steigerwald recommended that the Committee update their master plan. Ms. Steigerwald stated that the Committee should include our priorities for these two schools; (v) a 300th anniversary update included three events that are related to the schools that will take place over the Memorial Day weekend and they include (a) Saturday, May 25 the time capsule is going to be dedicated and everyone who submitted ideas will be announced that day; (b) Sunday, May 26, the Old Time Baseball Game and police and firefighters will be playing in that game; and (c) on Monday, May 27 there will be a concert in the evening and it includes Jeff Leonard and the Bicentennial Band; (vi) commented on a matter that came up at the last Committee meeting regarding the cost of the 8th grade Mandarin trip proposed by Anna Monaco, Principal at Jonas Clarke Middle School. Ms. Steigerwald has drafted a memorandum which proposes a lottery system for the students in the 8th grade Mandarin program in order to address the inequity of the field trip cost to students. Ms. Steigerwald made a comparison to the Debate Program and how it has financing and fundraising available for all students.

Mary Ann Stewart had a few announcements tonight (i) shared that she would like to see more newsletters from the schools in their Committee packets; (ii) commented on Dr. Ash's May 9th Superintendent's Bulletin and the book "School Systems That Learn Improving Professional Practice, Overcoming Limitations, and Diffusing Innovation by Paul B. Ash and John D'Auria"; (iii) asked the Chair about the mailing from Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lehane, a law firm which frequently sends updates on labor, employment and school related issues, regarding the DESE Guidance on Gender Identity Law which requires a policy and inquired where the Committee was with our Policy Manual; and (iv) the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) rescheduled the Day on the Hill to Thursday, May 23.

Margaret Coppe shared that the Policy Manual has been on vacation this year because the Committee has had so many items to deal with over this past year. We do have some policies that are ready to come forward and we have some that we still have to deal with.

Bonnie Brodner inquired if the Committee was doing anything for the time capsule.

The Committee discussed various ideas for the time capsule and decided that they would have a discussion about this topic after the meeting and come to an agreement.

Alessandro Alessandro shared that he sent a copy of class size policy to the Committee a while ago and to please forward any amendments to Margaret Coppe.

Jessie Steigerwald asked the Chair to send out a copy of the last Executive Session vote.

VI. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Ash announced that Lexington High School student, Donny Fox was the winner of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) New England Emmy for 2013 student PSA video for his video on gun control. Mr. Fox is a student in Mary Pappas' Digital Production Class.

Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment played Mr. Fox' video for the Committee.

Donny Fox, in attendance with his family, shared that he picked the topic of gun control because it is the topic of our time. Mr. Fox wanted to pay tribute to the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings that took place in December, 2012. Mr. Fox stated that his video has a neutral message about gun control and the overall message is to seek professional help when you feel like using gun violence.

Mary Pappas, Lexington High School Teacher, shared that she is very proud of Mr. Fox as well as all her students. Ms. Pappas then announced that the third annual Lexington High School Film Festival will be held on Monday evening at the Lexington Venue.

Dr. Ash announced that Alec Sun was the winner of the 2013 Raytheon MATCHCOUNTS National Competition held in Washington D.C. The MATHCOUNTS Competition Program is a national middle school coaching and competitive mathematics program that promotes mathematics achievement through a series of contests.

Anna Monaco, Principal, Jonas Clarke Middle School congratulated Mr. Sun on winning the national competition and she explained the significance of the competition. Joshua Frost, Math Teacher, Jonas Clarke Middle School was the team's coach. This was the first time that an individual student won and she is very proud of both Alec Sun and Josh Frost and the whole team for all their hard work. Mrs. Monaco also shared that Alec was on the Good Morning America show yesterday.

Alec Sun, in attendance with his family, shared his experience at the competition. Mr. Sun shared that as part of his winning prize he will be going to space camp over the summer break and he also received \$8,000 for college.

Dr. Ash then announced that this past Saturday, 75 staff members took part in the *Ride for Neighbor Brigade* which is an opportunity for Lexington Public School and municipal employees' to engage in a year-end activity which promotes employee wellness and also raises funds to provide assistance and needed care for Lexington Residents. Dr. Ash gave special thanks to Kathy Pike, Chapter Leader, Neighbor Brigade and Robert Harris, Assistant Superintendent for leading this effort and to all who participated.

VI. Agenda

1. Vote to Authorize Installation of Recommended Fiske Shade Structure

Michelle Oldershaw, 10 Keeler Farm Way and Thomas P. Martellono, Principal, Fiske Elementary School presented a plan by the Fiske PTO to build a shade structure for students at Fiske Elementary School. The Committee had comments and questions regarding cost, vendor, manufacturer, materials, and plans for expansion.

Motion to Authorize Installation of Recommended Fiske Shade Structure
(Stewart, Steigerwald) **The Motion was Approved (5-0)**

2. Social Studies Curriculum Review – Year 2

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development introduced Robert Collins, Lexington High School Social Studies Department Head, Matthew Mehler, Middle Schools Social Studies Department Head, and Jane Hundley, K-5 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator who each presented the summary of the work of the Social Studies Review Committee (Year 2) to the Committee. Messrs. Collins and Mehler and Ms. Hundley's presentation included (i) Curriculum Review Committee; (ii) Mission Statement; (iii) Review of Year One; (iv) Sources of Support; (v) Year Two Goals; (vi) K-12 Content and Skills; (vii) District and Summary Level Reports for the elementary schools, middle schools and high school; and (viii) Year Three Goals.

The Committee had questions and comments regarding (i) the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments and its effects on teaching; (ii) Asian studies and world history; (iii) Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and what types of professional learning is needed; (iv) how to maintain fresh content through curriculum reviews and goals for Year 3 with State Standards; (iv) professional workshops; (v) equipment and/or instruction needs; (vi) how immigration fits into the curriculum; (vii) students and personal electronics; and (viii) communication and crossover between English and Social Studies Department .

Thomas Plati, Director of Education Technology and Assessment addressed the Committee with respect to iPads and the 10th grade iPad pilot project. Mr. Plati also commented on the text book *Social Studies Alive*.

3. Discussion of 2014-2015 Recommended School Calendar

The Chair stated that tonight there will be discussion only on the recommended School Calendar and the vote will be conducted at the May 28 School Committee Meeting. Dr. Ash presented to the Committee two calendars. The first proposed calendar has school beginning before Labor Day on August 26, 2013 and ending on June 15, 2014 (with no snow days) or June 19 or 22 (with snow days). The second proposed calendar would begin after Labor Day on September 3, 2013 and would end on June 19 with no snow days or June 26 (with snow days.) Dr. Ash stated his preference would be to start school before Labor Day because of a gain of 4 days in June for professional learning.

Carol Pilarski, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development suggested that the Committee allow teachers and the public to provide feedback before the Committee votes on May 28.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

4. Vote on School Choice

Motion that the Lexington School Committee not participate in School Choice in Academic School Year 2013-2014 (Brodner, Alessandrini) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

5. Vote to Appoint Voting Representative to the LABBB Collaborative Board of Directors

The Chair stated the State Law requires School Committees vote to appoint a voting representative for all Collaboratives. Dr. Ash has been the Committee's voting representative and also superintendent's in surrounding towns are usually chosen.

Motion to Appoint Dr. Ash as the Voting Representative to the LABBB Collaborative Board of Directors (Stewart, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

6. Vote to Appoint Voting Representative to the EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors

Motion to Appoint Dr. Ash as the Voting Representative to the EDCO Collaborative Board of Directors (Steigerwald, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

7. Vote to accept a \$610 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Maria Hastings School Gift Account

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$610 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser To Be Deposited in the Maria Hastings School Gift Account (Stewart, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

8. Vote to accept a \$163 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Lexington Children's Place Gift Account

Motion to Accept with Gratitude, a \$163 Donation from Wilson Farms' Shop at Wilson Farms School Fundraiser To Be Deposited in the Lexington Children's Place Gift Account (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

9. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 26, 2013, as Amended

Motion to Approve School Committee Minutes, as amended (Steigerwald, Stewart) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Chair announced the next School Committee meeting will be held on May 28, 2013

Motion to Adjourn (Steigerwald, Brodner) The Motion was Approved (5-0)

The Public Meeting Adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Documents: Meeting Agenda; Letter dated May 1, 2013 from Thomas P. Martellone, Fiske Principal to Dr. Paul Ash re PTO's desire to build a shade structure; Memorandum dated May 10, 2013 to Dr. Paul Ash from Robert Collins, LHS Social Studies Department Head, Matthew Mehler, MS Social Studies Department Head and Jane Hundley, K-5 Social Studies Curriculum Coordinator re Summary of the work of the Social Studies Review Committee (Year 2); LPS School Calendars 2014-2015; Letter dated April 29, 2013 to Lexington School Committee from Louise Lipsitz re \$610 Donation from Wilson Farms; Lexington Public School Committee Meeting Minutes of February 26, 2013, March 12, 2013, March 18, 2013, March 20, 2013, March 27, 2013, April 3, 2013 and April 8, 2013.

Voted by the School Committee August 27, 2013