

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Cary Hall Auditorium

1605 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Margaret Coppe, School Committee Members Rod Cole, Tom Diaz, Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart. The minutes were taken by Leora Tec.

The meeting was convened at 7:38 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome (Margaret Coppe)

II. Discussion Item

Update: Year 3 Physical Education and Wellness Curriculum Review.

Dr. Lynne Celli, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, introduced Eamon Sheehan, K-12 Coordinator of Physical Education and Wellness and Jennifer Wolfrum, K-12 Assistant Coordinator of Physical Education and Wellness, with a Concentration on Health, and thanked them for their leadership and work. Mr. Sheehan introduced the members of the Physical Education and Wellness staff who were present. Dr. Celli, Ms. Wolfrum and Mr. Sheehan then presented the update. Mr. Sheehan recognized Julie Fenn, substance abuse prevention specialist, Lynne Celli and the various staff, faculty and subcommittee members for all their work.

There were questions and comments from the Committee.

III. Action Item

Vote to Approve Superintendent's Recommendation to Redistrict Avalon at Lexington Hills Kindergarten Students to Bridge in 2009 and all K-5 Avalon at Lexington Hills Students to Bridge in 2010.

The format of the discussion was introduced by Margaret Coppe. Dr. Ash presented the issue, emphasizing the difficulty of redistricting and his desire to avoid it if at all possible. He discussed the various options available to the School Committee: maintaining the status quo, moving the children residing at Avalon at Lexington Hills from Fiske to Bridge in two stages starting next year or moving them in one stage after two years.

There were questions and comments from the Committee and the audience. A possibility of waiting a week to take a vote was discussed but members declined to do so.

Ms. Steigerwald invited fellow School Committee members to comment on the fact that this is not a short-term solution and that residents of Avalon would be welcomed as permanent members of the Bridge community. Several members emphasized that this was indeed the case.

Motion to adopt Dr. Ash's recommendation or option #3: the Avalon kindergarteners go to Bridge School next year and then all the students go in subsequent years (Diaz, Cole). The motion passed 5-0.

IV. Public Comment

Jessie Shu (Father of Jennifer Shu) and **Mother of Jennifer Shu**: We were astonished by notice from a lawyer that Dr. Ash is going to expel our daughter this Friday. We were told no one can help us. We would like legal procedures to take their course before she is expelled.

Debbie Side (Teacher at Bridge): A group of teachers are concerned that impending budget cuts could negatively effect the PALS program at Bridge. She read from a letter to Linda Chase supporting the PALS program which is a full inclusion program for academic learning and social skills.

Sara McSweeney (A psychologist who works with the PALS program): The PALS program works very well and saves the town a lot of money. The IAs are essential to this program.

Brother of Jennifer Shu: Understands Dr. Ash but thinks his sister should be able to stay in school until the decision has been made.

Jonathan Goldberg (parent of child in PALS program): The IAs *are* the program. I appreciate the support my son has gotten so far.

Joanne Cunningham (former Lexington teacher—18 years in Bridge): Spoke in favor of the PALS program.

Ginni Shevrin (neighbor of the Shu's): The Shus do not live at 7 Graham Road.

V. Discussion Item

School Committee Appointments to the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee. We are looking for volunteers.

VI. Action Item

Vote to Accept \$165 Donation from Wilson Farms' *Shop at Wilson Farms* School Fundraiser to Be Deposited in the Lexington Children's Place School Gift Account.

Motion to accept \$165 donation from Wilson Farms' *Shop at Wilson Farms* school fundraiser to be deposited in the Lexington Children's Place School Gift Account (Stewart, Diaz). The motion passed 5-0.

VII. Superintendent's Announcements

- A. Dr. Celli will be leaving to be Assistant Superintendent at Nashoba Valley Technical School on Aug 1st.
- B. Mrs. Margaret (Peggy) Mongiello has accepted the position of interim position at Diamond Middle School for one year.
- C. Fiske Principal Nancy Peterson will stay on at Fiske until April vacation next year from which point Assistant Principal Brian Baker will take over as acting principal until the end of the year.

VIII. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns

Jesse Steigerwald: We'll miss Lynne Celli. She has reached out particularly to parents.

Mary Ann Stewart: Liaison updates. I have checked in with every group but it is late so I will report at another time.

IX. Motion to Adjourn (Diaz, Steigerwald). The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 p.m.