

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, March 31, 2010

Cary Hall, Estabrook Room

1605 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Margaret Coppe, School Committee Members Sandro Alessandrini, Rod Cole, Jessie Steigerwald, Mary Ann Stewart and student representative Liam Gandelsman. The minutes were taken by Leora Tec.

The meeting was convened at 6:35 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Superintendent's Announcements

1. The tragic suicide in South Hadley has led to thinking about bullying and the roles schools play or could play in such situations. We are not waiting until the legislature passes anti-bullying legislation. We are doing several things to make the schools caring and respectful places: We have *Open Circle*, an SEL (social and emotional learning) program for K-5, in all 6 elementary schools. Children learn conflict resolution. This program requires annual training. We are developing a social skills curriculum; we run lunch bunch groups, which teach kids self-regulation. Some of our schools have begun a school-wide positive intervention support program; our staff has been trained through CPI (the Crisis Prevention Institute). Our guidance curriculum this year has focused on resiliency as part of the goal of aligning our guidance curriculum with national guidelines, competencies and indicators. Many of our schools now have a behavioral assistance team. There is a system-wide Behavioral Committee that has been meeting for two years. The Committee consists of counselors, principals and psychologists. Some schools are investigating Rachel's Challenge, a program named after the first student killed at Columbine High School. Speakers come in and present to parents, students and community leaders.

In summary, Dr. Ash believes LPS has an array of support programs in place to create a safe and caring environment for children and looks forward to doing more.

III. Members' Reports / Members' Concerns:

Jessie Steigerwald: On May 13th there will be a presentation on cyber bullying by Elizabeth Englander. It is sponsored by the Town of Lexington Human Services Department and the Center for Parents and Youth.

Some parent questions have been: Some towns have a hotline for bullying. Is that something staff would like to see? How do we track incidents of bullying? Is there a standard for parental notification?

We have a homeless hotline—people who find themselves homeless can call it. There are several homeless families in Lexington.

IV. Discussion

1. Town Meeting Articles 4, 12 (g), 15, and 16 (c) (35 minutes)

Discussion of four Warrant Articles: Article 4, line 1100 (the School budget); Article 12g (municipal capital request—specifically for sidewalks); Article 15 (School capital request) and Article 16 —public facilities capital request—specifically a request for \$750K for design, engineering and generation of construction documents for the renovation of the Bridge and Bowman Elementary Schools.

The Committee discussed these warrant articles.

Motion to support Article 4 (Cole, Steigerwald). **The motion passed 5-0.**

Motion to support Article 12g (Alessandrini, Cole). **The motion passed 5-0.**

Motion to support Article 15 (Steigerwald, Stewart). **The motion passed 5-0.**

Motion to support Article 16c (Cole, Stewart). **The motion passed 5-0.**

Committee members volunteered to speak about particular Articles when they come up at Town Meeting.

V. Action Items:

1. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of January 5, 2010
2. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 2, 2010
3. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 9, 2010
4. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of February 22, 2010
5. Vote to Approve School Committee Minutes of March 23, 2010

Motion to approve School Committee Minutes of January 5, 2010; February 2, 2010; February 9, 2010 and February 22, 2010 (Steigerwald, Stewart). **The motion passed 4-0 (Alessandrini).**

Motion to approve the minutes of March 23, 2010 (Alessandrini, Stewart). **The motion passed 5-0.**

There was a brief discussion about future agenda items and about the School Committee retreat.

Dr. Ash announced that LPS has received \$390,500 from Avalon Bay pursuant to a contractual clause allowing for payment of \$7,100 per child beyond 111 living in the complex. As of February 1, 2010, there were 166 Lexington Public School students living in the Avalon at Lexington Hills complex.

VI. Motion to recess to reconvene on Town Meeting floor and adjourn at end of tonight's Town Meeting (Stewart, Cole). The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was recessed at 7:15 p.m.