

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, April 10, 2006
School Administration Building, Conference Room
1557 Massachusetts Avenue

Present: Superintendent Paul Ash, School Committee Chair Helen Cohen, School Committee Members: Tom Diaz, Tom Griffiths, Olga Guttag, Ravi Sakhuja and student representative Toni Maeck. Minutes taken by Leora Tec.

The meeting was convened by Helen Cohen at 6:32 p.m.

I. Call to Order and Welcome

II. Superintendent's Report

- A. Update on recent events in LHS by Bill Hartigan. A week ago there was a recurrence of CO2 exposure in the high school. We brought in consultants who found several items that needed addressing. We are trying to defer costs but safety is paramount. The final costs are not yet known.

There was a discussion about the fact that the equipment in question was only five years old. There is currently an agreement with the Fire Department that no combustion equipment will be run without a qualified operator on site to measure the CO2. Since there is a spending freeze, money will have to be requested to pay for these repairs. Bill Hartigan stated that in his judgment, at no time were students or faculty in danger.

III. Action Items:

Motion to accept Paul Ash's recommendation to place Preventive Maintenance funds and the new Facilities Director position from so-called Question Three in two line items in the FY07 budget, the expenditures to be reported to the School Committee on a monthly basis (Diaz, Griffiths). The motion passed 5-0.

IV. Discussion Items:

Discussion of Possible Town Meeting Amendment proposed by Fred Rosenberg

Fred Rosenberg stated that he supports the budget that was unanimously approved by the School Committee, but he is afraid that the override won't pass and that necessary items will be lost. He proposed an amendment that would keep: foreign language in elementary school, six classes per week of science in all levels in the high school, the travel budget for debate and elementary instrumental music. He proposes to do this by increasing fees for: parking for students at LHS; lunch; sending transcripts to colleges; and athletics.

The ensuing discussion included concerns about: time pressure to vote on this before Town Meeting; the fact that the Committee still needs to find \$177K to cut somewhere; the fact that there is some question about Mr. Rosenberg's figures being correct; the fact that the proposed budget already contemplates raising fees; the fact that a substantial portion of the fee increases would go to the Town and not the schools, so increased fees would reduce the override but not the overall budget; and the fact that if fees are raised scholarships must be offered liberally.

Motion to reaffirm our intention to support the Superintendent's bottom line budget voted on March 31st (Díaz, Griffiths)

Before the vote, Paul Ash noted that the appropriate vote would be on whether or not the Committee wanted to change the fee structure. **The motion passed 4-1.**

V. At 7:35 the Committee went into recess.

The next meeting of the School Committee is scheduled for Monday, April 24, 2006, at 6:30 p.m. at the School Administration Building Conference Room, 1557 Massachusetts Avenue.