

## LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Lexington High School, Library Media Center

251 Waltham Street

Present: Paul Ash, Scott Burson, Helen Cohen, Tom Diaz, Tom Griffiths and Olga Guttag and student representative Toni Maeck.

7:33 p.m. Call to Order and Welcome (HC)

Public Comment – none

### Superintendent's Report:

1. Snow storm on Friday, December 9.

In hindsight, Dr. Ash said he should have cancelled school. According to David Eagle of C&W Transportation, this was the worst storm in 36 years because so much snow fell in so little time and created white-out conditions. Dr. Ash acknowledged that many people were put under stress and commended the DPW, bus drivers, police, fire department and LPS staff for their dedication to making sure the kids were all safe. This was an opportunity to learn what to do better next time.

2. Thanks to LEF for sponsoring the Trivia Bee. LEF is important to the school system and people had a great time.

3. Dr. Ash received a letter yesterday from Commissioner David Driscoll granting a one day waiver for the day Diamond missed due to the natural gas explosion because we meet the minimum hours of instruction time required by law.

### Discussion Items:

1. Facilities Report by Bill Hartigan, Director of Facilities  
(copies of the report were available for the public)

a. The various areas where work has been done and where work has yet to be done were presented. (Discussion regarding funding of the repairs).

b. The Tools for Schools program will be initiated, and free training for teachers and staff will take place in Jan and Feb 2006.

c. On December 2, 2005 the Massachusetts Department of Public Health conducted an indoor air quality study on Estabrook School. A full report is expected in January.

d. The Massachusetts School Building Authority may be offering new funding opportunities for schools in the near future, and to that end they are conducting inspections of all schools facilities. (Discussion regarding the future rebuilding or renovation of the remaining four elementary schools in Lexington, including funding and how to make sure we get reimbursed).

e. Discussion of preliminary steps for the "White House" renovation.

Patrick Mehr, Precinct 3: Brought up concerns about inefficient heating and cooling systems in many buildings.

## 2. Report on Summer Workshops by Carol Pilarski, Assistant to the Superintendent (copies of the report were available for the public)

Ms. Pilarski described the vast array of summer workshops in which teachers participated this summer, indicating that summer workshops are a very efficient way of providing professional development because teachers can learn without interruptions. She stressed that curriculum must go hand and hand w/ instruction, and that both kinds of workshops were offered.

Questions were asked about the cost-effectiveness of sharing this kind of PD with other communities. In addition, some members expressed their hope that under the new administration basic curricula would be reviewed and modified using a more systematic approach, while allowing for particular needs that arise.

## 3. School Committee Budget Process

This year's budget book will look different than it has looked before. The budget will be approximately 250 pages long.

There are two options for the School Committee's review of the budget:

- a. As in previous years, the whole committee reviews the entire budget, or
- b. Each member of the School Committee sits on two work groups and delves into those two areas. The areas would be: [K-5]; [6-8]; [9-12]; [K-12: phys. ed., art, wellness, buildings and grounds, Central Office, transportation]; and [SPED].

Discussion regarding the pros and cons of each method. It was pointed out that with the work groups, SC members will have an opportunity to ask questions of principals and department heads, which they haven't had in the past.

Eventually the Committee agreed that they will use the process of five, two-member work groups, with Olga Gutttag reserving the right to ask additional budget questions of the professionals. The School Committee will decide the composition of the work groups off-line.

### SC Budget Meeting Schedule

Dec 20<sup>th</sup>: Presentation of Budget by Dr. Ash

Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>: Presentations of K-5 and 6-8

Jan 17<sup>th</sup>: Presentations of 9-12 and K-12 phys. ed., art, music, wellness, buildings and grounds, Central Office and transportation.

Jan 24<sup>th</sup>: Student Services presentation

Jan 26<sup>th</sup>: Public hearing (the only agenda item)

Jan 31<sup>st</sup>: Final discussion and vote

## 4. Future School Committee Meeting Dates — January through June

See website for meeting dates.

They may only need one meeting in June but are scheduling the 6th and the 20th just in case.

They will check to make sure the PBC meeting is March 7th so they don't conflict.

### Action Items:

1. Vote to Support House Bill 1457 — An Act to Promote Proper School Nutrition

The Committee voted to endorse the Bill with some reservations to be compiled by Tom Diaz. (Diaz, Gutttag)

2. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Minutes of November 29, 2005

3. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of July 12, 2004

4. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of August 10, 2004

5. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of August 24, 2004

6. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of October 12, 2004

7. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of November 16, 2004

8. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of November 30, 2004

9. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of December 14, 2004

10. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of January 4, 2005

11. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of February 1, 2005

12. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of February 25, 2005

13. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 11, 2005

14. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 12, 2005

15. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of April 26, 2005

16. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 2, 2005

17. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 10, 2005

18. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 17, 2005

19. Vote to Approve and make public School Committee Executive Session Minutes of May 31, 2005

The Committee voted unanimously to approve and release the minutes of the meetings listed in items 2-19 above. (Burson, Gutttag)

Members' Reports / Members' Concerns: deferred until next time due to the late hour.

Meeting adjourned: 11:05pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Leora Tec