

MINUTES OF THE LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Thursday, November 15, 2012  
Hartwell Building, Lincoln, MA  
OPEN SESSION

Present: Jennifer Glass (Chair), Tom Sander (Vice Chair), Al Schmertzler, Tim Christenfeld, Jen James.  
Also present: Becky McFall (Superintendent), Mary Sterling (Assistant Superintendent), Stephanie Powers (Administrator for Student Services), Buckner Creel (Administrator for Business and Finance).  
Absent: Lisa Pizarro (Hanscom Civilian School Liaison Officer).

I. Greetings and Call to Order

Ms. Glass, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

II. Chairperson's and Members' Reports

Mr. Christenfeld thanked Principal Steve McKenna for inviting parents to school. He attended a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class where students were reviewing their learning targets for math, and he watched them review, read, and predict where they would be. He noted that tonight is the first night of the middle school play.

Ms. James has joined the Lincoln-Sudbury Scholarship Fund, which raises money for Lincoln-Sudbury students to attend college; she said Lincoln needs to be more involved. She attended a print making workshop for 5<sup>th</sup> graders taught by Colleen Pearce. Students learn to use the printing press to make greeting cards, a fabulous opportunity. Ms. James wrote an article for the Lincoln School Foundation about the workshop.

Mr. Schmertzler attended two meetings; the CapCom meeting, and he urged that the Committee get a plan to the CapCom as soon as possible with an improvement plan if the Town does not go forward with the building project. The second meeting was the EDCO meeting, and he noted that the use of a moderator when there is a gathering of schools is helpful. He thanked them for the information on the students' election assembly and was very impressed with the assembly.

Ms. Glass attended the election assembly. Students were very involved, and it was enjoyable.

III. Public Comments

Document: None.

Four parents of 4<sup>th</sup> graders were concerned that their children were bored in math and asked that there be a more challenging and advanced curriculum for them. They are concerned that the math standards have changed and are lower. Ms. Glass responded the standards have changed to the National Common Core Standards, and Lincoln uses them as a guideline. She thanked them for their concern.

IV. Consent Agenda

Document: Agreement of Services for School Physician, undated, signed on October 23, 2012

Ms. Powers noted that Dr. Stephen Jenkins is happy to serve in this capacity and is able to come in an emergency.

No vote was taken.

\*The School Committee voted its approval on the consent agenda at its February 7, 2013 meeting.

V. Time Scheduled Appointments

A. FY 2014 Budget Discussion

Documents: 1) Printout of PowerPoint Presentation: FY 2014 Preliminary Budget, November 15;  
2) Budget Book, FY2014

Dr. McFall reviewed the FY2014 budget proposal for the Lincoln schools which is \$10,008,928 with \$144,820 in improvement initiatives. The proposal for the Hanscom schools is \$11,426,485 with improvement initiatives of \$180,778, and the Band 3 price is \$11,259,242, making a gap of \$167,243. Tonight the principals—Steve McKenna, Sharon Hobbs, Beth Ludwig, and Erich Ledebuhr—will speak on their improvement initiatives.

Dr. McFall, Dr. Sterling, Ms. Powers, and Mr. Creel mentioned their improvement initiatives at the last meeting, which include a technology director and instructional technology support, weekend

custodial support, a half-time custodian for the Lincoln campus, science leadership and outdoor education assistance, tools to help with standards-based reporting, and a .8 FTE school psychologist at Hanscom. Additional details are in the budget book, where the improvement initiatives are listed at the end of each section.

Steve McKenna, Lincoln K-4 Principal, has one initiative: Math Camp and Achievement Camp staffing. The free summer camps are held in August, and students have enjoyed them and want more. Students receive invitations to Achievement Camp based on their literacy and math assessments, and the summative assessments after the camps show that students' skills have improved. Ms. James suggested that they consider a nominal cost for these camps.

Sharon Hobbs, Lincoln 5-8 Principal, has two initiatives: a technology integration specialist at .4 FTE and an academic mentor coordinator. Dr. McFall spoke to the technology integration specialist. They are proposing a new mentoring program that would include an academic component for students in grades K-8; the mentor coordinator would oversee efforts at matching students with adults other than their teachers. Dr. Hobbs reported that mentorship for students who were not achieving at a proficient level went well. Dr. McFall served as a mentor to a high school student on a weekly basis in Wellesley. It gave the opportunity for a different chance to interact between adults and students and provides an additional social-emotional connection. Mr. Christenfeld noted the research shows mentoring helps to close the achievement gap, but he was concerned that there was enough time for the adults. Dr. Hobbs responded that they had a similar program seven or eight years ago that worked well, and while not all teachers could participate, many are willing, and it would not only include teachers. Mr. McKenna said they vetted the proposal with team leaders, who were enthusiastic.

Lynn Fagan, Preschool Coordinator, asked for two initiatives, both for the Hanscom campus: 1) a special education supported class, and 2) a longer day. She noted that they have new students arrive each week at Hanscom, and now there are over 150 of them. There are 31 students on Individual Education Plans [IEPs], and there has been an increase in referrals for special education. The longer day would be for those students in the pre-Kindergarten year, and it would increase the day for one section from four hours with an extra one and a half hours. There is no dollar amount for these requests.

Beth Ludwig, Hanscom Primary School Principal, thanked the Committee for its support and said the school has 283 students and continues to grow; they have registered 93 students since July. Her two new initiatives are: 1) technology integration specialist at .4 FTE, which Dr. McFall has already discussed; and 2) a part-time general assistant at .5 FTE. The assistant would help students with transitions and support and is a request for 25 hours per week on a temporary basis. She said their 3<sup>rd</sup> grade has enough room now, but may become an issue.

Erich Ledebuhr, Hanscom Middle School [grades 4-8] Principal, said they too have more students; the Hanscom housing is at capacity; many Base residents have retired and stayed on Base, which makes a good community. While there are bubbles in some grades, they have more consistency in grade levels. His four initiatives are: 1) 1:1 technology program expansion replacement; 2) technology support; 3) summer testing of new students; and 4) science enrichment specialist. They have projected that there will be double the number of 6<sup>th</sup> graders for the tech program next year and need to expand it and replace some iPads. The second request is self-explanatory, and the third will cover both Hanscom schools and is an existing program that helps them to place students in the classes and with the supports they need to succeed. While the administration works hard to obtain student school records from the other institutions that arriving students have attended, it often takes too long for the information to help when the student comes to Hanscom, losing valuable learning time for the student. The transition specialist is also the Title I coordinator. The science enrichment specialist would give the campus parity with the Lincoln campus.

Dr. McFall noted the timeline for voting on the FY2014 school budget. The administration and School Committee will meet with the Finance Committee for the first budget meeting on December 11 and again on January 8. The School Committee will vote on the budget in January.

Dr. McFall thanked the administrative team for their work and the good and tough conversations they had about trimming the budget. She acknowledged that it was a rigorous process. Ms. Glass thanked them for the level of detail and their work.

B. Discuss Building Project Vote  
Document: None.

Ms. Glass reviewed the November 3 Special Town Meeting, which was one of the largest meetings in memory, 691 residents voted with 370 voting yes and 321 voting no, not giving the needed two-thirds vote to pass the project. On November 6 at the ballot, there was high voter turnout, and the project received 53% yes to 47% no votes. The Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA] has a failed vote policy that gives the Town ten business days to respond to the MSBA to explain why the vote failed and what the Town plans to do.

Last Thursday, the School Building Committee and the School Committee met and gave the public the opportunity to comment. Comments ranged from economic concerns and questioned the need for a large project to the design and the site design with the growing sense that the project did not keep a similar footprint, some did not like tearing down the Smith School, and others did not want to lose the campus feel. Still others did not like the process. The SBC and School Committee decided to step back and take time to bring the community together rather than to embark on an ambitious schedule.

Ms. Glass wrote the letter to the MSBA, and it will go out tomorrow. Ms. Glass noted that since the vote, many supporters and non-supporters of the project have come forward to become part of a solution, and the Committees decided that they want to stay within the MSBA's process.

Ms. Glass, Dr. McFall, and Mr. Creel met with the Finance Committee, and they are willing to play a supportive role and are willing to collaborate on a talk on the financial options. The three also discussed the design work that would need to be accomplished, and the Finance Committee would look favorably on support with a reserve fund transfer to fund the Owner's Project Manager (Dan Tavares of Skanska) and the architecture firm, OMR, to do additional work. Ms. Glass said they would use the money judiciously.

Mr. Christenfeld said the strong consensus is to have OMR and the OPM at the meeting at which design issues are discussed. His feeling is that the MSBA will support the Town to come to an answer. Mr. Christenfeld said it was important for the School Committee to figure out its role in the school building project process; while they delegated much of it to the SBC, the School Committee should manage the Town politics. He thought the project should be pushed back to a June Special Town Meeting or later.

Mr. Schmertzler suggested that the School Committee make sure that the academic requirements are kept and that something critical to those not be bargained away. Ms. Glass noted that education is at the center of this project.

Mr. Creel cancelled the procurement for the Construction Manager at Risk [CMr] for the school building project.

The SBC and School Committee will meet on Tuesday, November 20 in the Hartwell Multipurpose Room. The SBC's Steering Committee will meet before to put together the agenda for the November 20 meeting. The Planning Board will host a meeting and collaborate with the School Committee.

## VI. Superintendent's Report

Document: None.

Dr. McFall attended the student assemblies. She also attended the professional development on math at grade levels, noting that the math specialists designed the sessions. For the grade 4-8 session, they presented a math problem and adapted it to discuss the standards of mathematical practice. All were engaged in the topic.

Dr. McFall attended the METCO Superintendents meeting, and there was discussion that there may be 9C cuts to the METCO program, but there are no specifics yet. They are organizing METCO directors and superintendents to discuss funding and would like to meet Governor Patrick for assistance by January and encourage him to put support for METCO in place before he leaves office.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

## VII. Curriculum

Document: None.

Dr. Sterling attended a kindergarten class that was listening to the sounds of letters, pulling the letters and putting them into words. It was fascinating to watch, and the students did well and were engaged.

Dr. Sterling also attended an 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies class that was discussing constitutional amendments and reading news articles on breaking criminal law. Which amendment was applied to

protect civil rights? The students worked together to defend their points of view, and she was impressed with their work.

Ms. Glass thanked her for her work.

VIII. Policy

None.

IX. Facilities and Financial

A. Warrant Approval

Document: None.

Mr. Creel presented the payroll warrants totaling \$660,344.60 and the accounts payable warrants totaling \$150,694.53 for a total of \$811,039.13. Mr. Schmertzler reviewed the warrants and recommended that they be approved. Mr. Sander moved to approve the warrants, with Mr. Christenfeld seconding the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the warrants.

X. Old Business

None.

XI. New Business

None.

XII. Approval of Minutes

None.

XIII. Information Enclosures

None.

XIV. Adjournment

On motion by Ms. Glass, seconded by Mr. Schmertzler, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:45 pm. The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 6 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah G. Marcotte  
Recording Secretary