

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 6, 2015

7:30 p.m. Public Session

L-S Conference Room B

Present:

Radha Gargeya, Chair; Elena Kleifges, Vice-Chair; Nancy Marshall; Patty Mostue; Gerald Quirk.

Also Present:

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal; Patrick Collins, Director of Finance and Operations; Susan Shields, TA Co-President; Aida Ramos, Director of Student Services; Tara Mehta, Student Senate Representative; Mr. Troughten, L-S parent; Mrs. Caltabiano, L-S Parent; Mrs. Heimberg, L-S parent.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:33pm.

Approval of Minutes

Radha Gargeya requested a motion to approve the Minutes for December 2, 2014. Nancy Marshall moved that the minutes be approved and Elena Kleifges seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Presentation

Aida Ramos, Director of Student Services, presented statistical information of student services for the current school year and recommendations resulting from the Walker Report.

Statistically, the number of L-S students on IEP's remains at 16%, which is the same as last year. This does not include the Out of District students. There is a significant number of students with learning disabilities but the percentage is similar to peer schools in the area and matches a state-wide trend. The number of students in 504 Plans has increased from 5% to 6%. However, the Department of Student Services has created a protocol for 504 plans that began with this school year and may explain the increase of 1%.

There are 59 out of district students this year and is the same number as that of the last school year. L-S anticipates an increase for next school year based on the incoming 9th graders who are currently out of district.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education figures show that L-S is statistically in the middle of other area high schools with 16% of students requiring special education services.

Walker Report: Ms. Ramos reported on the results of the Walker Report which was commissioned to evaluate the L-S Special Education services. The review began in December 2013. Interviews with parents, teachers and administrators were conducted as well as review of documents, student records, and current protocols. As the review was in progress, Ms. Ramos and the Special Education Department were working independently and concurrently to improve department protocols.

The Walker Report was issued in June of 2014. All relevant groups at L-S were informed of the results in September. Department Coordinators met with Ms. Ramos and reviewed recommendations. The results of the report were shared school-wide at the end of November. Ms. Ramos will hold a meeting for parents on January 16th to discuss the recommendations from the Walker Report. The Report will be on the L-S website beginning January 8, 2015.

Recommendations resulting from the review included improved professional development, and a protocol for issuance of 504 Plans that has already been implemented by the Department. The Walker Report recommended that the EXCEL Program have a full-time guidance counselor as that program currently has a population of 40 students. A guidance counselor, Kayla DeWees, has been hired as the Excel guidance counselor as of September 2014.

The Beacon Transition Program was initiated by the Department of Special Services with a grant from the MetroWest Health which has provided funding for three years. A full time clinical counselor has been hired to assist students returning to school from hospitalizations or recovering from concussions. Currently 15 students have accessed the program. A protocol detailing entrance and exit criteria is in place.

The recommendation to implement a Guidance Curriculum has been addressed by the department. 9th Grade Seminars led by house guidance counselors was begun last year. During the seminars, expectations and benchmarks for success are detailed to the 9th graders. Seminars for 12th graders have begun this year, and as of September 15, 2015 there will be a curriculum in place for 10th and 11th graders.

Deployment of teaching assistants has been re-evaluated. Classes with a large population of students on IEP's have been assigned a teaching assistant. There are now 20 general education classes that teaching assistants attend to assist students in need.

Still to be accomplished by the department are revised entrance and exit protocols and mission statements for each specialized program. This is a task that needs to be repeated periodically as the needs of students in various programs evolve. Beyond the special

programs, the department must also develop a response for interventions for students who are not in special programs. After-school tutoring, academic center, and behavioral interventions are all areas that the department will be focusing on in the next year. Consultants from the May Institute have been hired to assist the district in identifying, implementing and monitoring effective interventions in academic and behavioral areas.

Dr. Schultz, Clinical Neuropsychologist, has been hired to work with teachers in the language-based program to strengthen student services in this area. A consultant will be visiting LS to provide professional development in the area of developing effective strategies to improve executive functioning.

Lastly, professional development will continue for all staff in special education to provide district-wide training regarding specialized instruction, accommodations, modifications, strategies, the IEP evaluation process, and eligibility for programs.

Bella Wong complimented the Special Education staff for their willingness to embrace improvements and revised protocols. The department has accomplished a great deal of work refining and improving existing programs in a short period of time. Of greatest concern is the number of Out-of-District students which requires development of methods and programs to keep students in-district. Ms. Wong added that providing access to equity and excellence for all students is an overarching goal of L-S in the coming year.

Patrick Collins addressed the School Committee on the subject of the Circuit Breaker funds. The Circuit Breaker was initiated in 2004 (MGL c71B 5A) for financial relief for districts with high cost special education students. The state reimburses up to 75% of costs. Reimbursement is subject to annual appropriation in the state budget process. There is a one-year lag in reimbursement from the state. Tuition rates of private schools used for out-of-district placement are set by the state. The FY16 Budget assumes a 3% increase in those tuitions. For FY16, the total expenditure for out-of-district tuitions is expected to be \$4,790,721. L-S expects a \$1,100,000 reimbursement from the state.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Recognitions

Austin Lessin was selected as 1st Alternate to the 53rd Annual United States Senate Youth Scholarship Program. This year, over 180 students in the Commonwealth registered to take this exam.

The Spanish Club hosted Daniel Fernandez Davila on Thursday, December 18th. Mr. Davila spoke about the Loose Change Campaign program he started to raise funds to help build schools and bring school supplies to remote schools in the Peruvian jungle. He takes a group of middle/high school students on this adventure each June to hand deliver the supplies. Mr. Davila has offered to give a couple of LS students the opportunity to join his trip in June 2015.

The Wellness Department invited Karen Smyers to speak to Faculty and Staff on December 4th. Karen Smyers is a world-class triathlete, coach, speaker, Mom and cancer survivor. She won World Championship titles in Women's Triathlon in 1990, 1995, and 1996 in addition to numerous other achievements. She is a nationally known motivational speaker.

L-S musicians have provided music for the Hosmer House Holiday Open House. The Flute Choir played on Sunday, December 7th. The Violin Ensemble, Chamber Singers and Musicals performed on Sunday, December 14th.

Bella Wong attended the Forum on Domestic Violence was held on December 9 at the Wayland High School. The event was well attended and included members of the Board of Selectmen, the Police Department, and L-S staff members Lori Hodin, JK Park, and Jen Reen.

The 30th Annual METCO Director's Conference for Educators was held on December 5th in Boston. LS attendees were Bella Wong, Steve Desrosiers, Leslie Patterson, Tara Zantow, Andrew Nyamekye, Paul Sarapas, Kelly Bultema, Michael Hickey, Rami Alwan, Silvana Stephen, Chris Herbert, Amanda Klein, and Katelyn Dix. The key-note speaker was Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, Social Critic and Intellectual, whose focus is the intersection of culture, politics and education. Throughout the day, workshops were offered on a number of subjects that included teaching educators methods for engaging students of color in the classroom.

The LS Speech and Debate Team sponsored the LS Speech and Debate Showdown on December 6th with 500 participants from 35 schools. A full day of debate was capped off with a lively awards ceremony in the auditorium. Katie and Joseph Pinto, LS brother and sister, won the Public Forum category. Katie also placed 10th overall in public speaking. Other Public Forum teams who did very well include Sandeep Shankar and Jacob Weinstein; Justin Liu and Rick Gangopadhyay; Kerry Johnson and Keneth Ho; and Lucy Huo and Tiffany Qin. Other participants in the Speech, Congress and Debate events were Tara Mehta, Alessandro Nicastro, Iriana Lessin, Lauren Kim, Katy Flanagan, Avery Katz, Julia Solowey, Maddie Zuckerman, Masha Filatov, Ro Daley and Austin Lessin.

Sarah Fetteroff received a grant to attend a STEM seminar/workshop for High School German teachers in San Francisco at the Goethe Institute December 5-7, 2014. She plans to prepare a "green unit" influenced by what she learned at the Goethe Institute.

Thanks to Faculty for reading student reflections regarding the Ferguson Sit-In on Friday, December 5. On Friday, December 12th, students met in the cafeteria at the Peace Table during lunch block to decorate tracings of their hands to add to a Ken Kimura designed logo of *Lincoln Sudbury Boston One School One Community*.

Thank you to Nicole Digenis - who took five young women from the Young Women's Leadership Club (YWLC) to the Massachusetts Conference for Women in (YWLC), as part of the Young Women's Program of that conference. This trip would not have been possible without the passion, planning and support of **Susan Shields**, the YWLC faculty advisor. The young women who attended are: Julia Laferra, Sarah Banta, Constance Roberts, Samantha Katcher, Madison Marilla and Kahmya Moss.

Highlights of the conference included several outstanding keynote speakers including Former Secretary of State **Hillary Rodham Clinton** who addressed the need for further progress in the economic and social status of women, including equal pay for women, paid sick leave, and affordable quality child care. Academy Award-winning actress **Lupita Nyong'o** shared her advice for conquering one's fears in order to follow your dreams. Her speech generated a great deal of heartfelt response from the audience of 10,000 women.

Warriors 4 Warriors Hockey Games to benefit Lt. Scott Milley Ranger Foundation took place on Saturday, December 13 at the New England Sports Center with a Girls' Hockey game at 3pm and a Boys' Game at 5pm. The teams played Concord-Carlisle High School and the LS girls won 5-1 and the boys won 5-0. More than 1700 people attended the games. The girls' and boys' youth hockey teams played in the intervals. LS Accent A cappella sang the anthem and performed for the crowd. It was a marvelous event for a very worthy cause, raising at least \$10,000 for the foundation.

The LS METCO Program just received a very generous donation of \$1,000 from the Class of 1964, the proceeds from a raffle held during their recent reunion.

SERF ACE Awards have been given to TRACY BURKE, JOAN CAMPBELL, TOM DANKO, SARAH FETTERHOF, NICOLE FRATTAROLI, DAVID GRACE, THOMAS GRANDPREY, LORI HODIN, DAVID HOSFORD, PHILLIP JAMES, ANN KRAMER, DAN LEWIS, MARK MASON, ELISA MILLS, TIMOTHY NIKULA, MEGHAN NOTARI, ANNALISA NOTARO, SAMANTHA PARKER, WILLIAM PEGRAM, HENRY PHELAN, SARA PILCH, CAROLINE SINGLER, SILVANA STEPHEN, KATHLEEN THOMPSON, LISA WEISS, and MATTHEW WENTWORTH.

Student Representative Report

Tara Mehta reported that \$200 was raised at the December Student Senate fundraiser and that a generous Sudbury family had offered to match that amount. The Senate will donate the funds to the DCF Kids' Fund in Boston to support opportunities for children who have been abused.

Teachers' Association Report

Susan Shield reported that the Teachers' Association is planning a coffee with the LSPO on January 15th from 9:30am to 11:00am. It is an occasion for teachers and parents to get together informally. Ms. Shields thanked Ms. Mostue and Mr. Gargeya for judging during the Poetry Out Loud competition. Teacher recommendations have by and large been completed and teachers are preparing for exam week at the end of January.

Chairman's Report

Radha Gargeya reminded the Committee members that the FY16 Budget was the main focus of their work this month. He complimented Bella Wong and Patrick Collins for their great work preparing the budget. It remains for the School Committee to approve the budget and then advocate for the financial needs of L-S to the member communities.

Liaison Reports

Elena Kleifges and Patty Mostue met in early December with the Teacher Evaluation Committee. The next meeting will involve language changes to the final draft.

Superintendent/Principal's Report

Bella Wong related events devolving from the December 5th student demonstration concerning events in Ferguson, Missouri and Staten Island, New York. The demonstration was impromptu and for the most part peaceful. It ended with some incidents of spitting and name-calling. Ms. Wong and several school administrators were attending the METCO Director's Conference that day but returned to school to learn of the day's events. On Saturday she met with Boston parents in Boston to relate to them the events of the previous day. She learned that many students found the demonstration a significant disruption to the day and that many younger students were intimidated and apprehensive about returning to school on Monday.

Ms. Wong sent an email to all students and families that for the remaining 12 days in December, there would be no impromptu demonstrations and that students would refrain from dressing as victims or perpetrators of the incidents. Administrators, Department Coordinators and staff worked over the weekend to prepare for the opening of school on Monday, December 8th. On Monday morning all students were directed to complete a written reflection of their experiences related to the demonstration on Friday. The prompts for the exercise were how the events reflect the L-S core values, how did adults in the building support the event and how should the school community support one another when expressing contradictory opinions. There were meetings of various groups of students during Monday and Tuesday. Discussions took place during class meetings and on Friday, the Intersections Club sponsored a Peace Table in the cafeteria.

During the second week of December, faculty and administrators read the student responses, and it was clear that students held different perspectives of the event but were uniformly in agreement that acts of aggression or disrespect to the opinions of others was wrong. The L-S community should strive to provide an environment in which students could feel safe in expressing their opinions. Ms. Wong took this as a very positive sign.

On January 5th, the first day back from the winter break, students shared their recommendations with the Academic Council. On January 7th, the faculty met to reflect on supporting open discussion. Calvin Terrell was scheduled to address the faculty, seniors, and METCO students – separately – and plans are underway to hold an all-day teach-in in February. Ms. Wong was encouraged that the L-S faculty was focusing on the experience as a “teachable moment.” She commended the faculty for being willing to focus on this event and reunite the community. She also thanked the School Committee and communities of Lincoln and Sudbury for their support.

Director of Finance and Operations' Report

Patrick Collins requested that his report of the FY16 Health Insurance Budget be postponed until the January 20, 2015 School Committee meeting to prevent the current meeting from being too long.

The state requires transportation for all regional school district students and subsidizes the cost of transportation. The expense of bussing students is the fourth largest operating cost in the FY16 budget at 3.9% of the total. The District is in the final year of a 5-year contract with First Student. Costs will increase by 3%. L-S coordinates with Sudbury Public Schools for bus transportation. State reimbursement covers only home-to-school costs. It does not cover Special Education, late buses, athletic transportation, exam buses or METCO (paid by METCO). Estimated home-to-school transportation costs are \$484,000. Out-of-district transportation costs are estimated at \$530,000.

Information & Discussion

Discussion of upcoming meetings regarding OPEB and FY16 Budget matters.

Action Items

The first reading of the EDCO's Articles of Agreement was completed. L-S is one of the member districts of the EDCO Collaborative and every member district must approve the amendment. Approval will be discussed at the January 20, 2015 School Committee Meeting.

The L-S School Calendar for 2015-2016, 1st Reading, was discussed and will be approved at the January 20, 2015 meeting.

Other Business

Warrants were signed.

Bill Schedule

There were no bills.

Calendar of School Events

Civic Orchestra Concert	January 11, 2015
Sudbury Bd of Selectmen OPEB Meeting	January 13, 2015
Martin Luther King Day	January 19, 2015
LS School Committee Meeting	January 20, 2015
Second Quarter Ends	January 20, 2015
Mid-Year Exams	January 21-27, 2015

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjourn

Radha Gargeya requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Marshall moved that the meeting be adjourned. Gerald Quirk seconded the motion and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:44pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Francy Zingale