

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

Tuesday, January 8, 2013

7:30 p.m. Public Session

Conference Room B

Present: Nancy Marshall, Chair, Radha Gargeya, Vice-Chair, Patty Mostue, Kevin Matthews, Gerald Quirk (absent) and Elena Kleifges.

Also Present: Scott Carpenter, Superintendent/Principal; Michael Connelly, Director of Finance & Operations; Lisa Weiss; Julia Thomas, Student Senate Representatives; Elizabeth Darley, LSPO; Nancy Errico, Information and Technology at LS; Sandy Crawford, Jason Medeiros, Leslie Patterson, Eleanor Burke, Housemasters; Lori Hodin, Mediation and LS History Teacher; and Sue Pardus, Friends of LS Softball.

Agenda Enclosures/Handouts

Unapproved Minutes for December 11, 2012

Call to Order

Nancy Marshall called the Public Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Welcome

Motion requested to approve minutes for December 11, 2012. Patty Mostue made motion that the minutes be accepted, Elena Kleifges and Kevin Matthews seconded the motion. All members approved the motion.

Presentation

House Masters Presentation by Sandy Crawford, Jason Medeiros, Eleanor Burke, Leslie Patterson and Leslie Belcher.

Sandy Crawford introduced the presentation entitled "LS Below the Surface." It described the vast collaborative network of teachers, administrators and staff working to maintain the educational demands

of state and federal mandates while creating a curriculum that challenges LS students and prepares them for the 21st century.

Leslie Belcher addressed the School Committee to relate the curriculum assessment and professional development activities that take place at LS. Among the drivers of these activities are external mandates such as curricular mapping and common core frameworks that have been adopted by the state of Massachusetts. Keeping pace with these initiatives requires many hours of work in departments and sub-departments. Teachers and staff work diligently to maintain our NEASC accreditation and state competency determinations (MCAS). Our current 8th graders will be assessed based on a new common core that will require a great deal of synthesizing by many of our staff.

Internal assessments of student needs include new courses such as the ACE wellness program, a new English class in Contemporary Literature co-taught with LBLD (Language Based Learning Disability) specialists, and a new history course in Ancient History. Proposals for next school year include an iOS programming class (apps for iPhone), English classes in Detective Fiction and the American Novel, and a course in Popular Culture in 20th Century USA. Other courses and curriculums are being constantly evaluated such as STEM/Engineering, Journalism, and E-Learning in which electronic tools are brought into the curriculum.

All courses need to be assessed to make sure they are delivering what our curriculum demands. We must keep an eye on MCAS while planning for PARRC (the State of Massachusetts assessment option that may replace the MCAS). Working groups are using local, state and national data to inform us of the best teaching practices.

Professional Development is a necessary part of our program to support curriculum and include LBLD learning, Voice Thread, web page design with Word Press, iPads in the classroom, mindfulness training, green team initiatives, collaborative learning techniques, and concussion workshops. The workshops are developed by faculty and administration and incorporated into Wednesday meeting groups. There is an ongoing First Year Initiative to support new faculty members and provide mentors for new teachers, as well as 5 or more

supervisory conferences for Non Professional Status teachers (4 or more for Professional Status teachers).

Eleanor Burke informed the School Committee members of the initiatives to promote and nourish a positive school culture that is the work of the Health, Safety and School Climate Committee. This includes a mediation program, mentors in violence prevention (upstanding rather than by-standing), a visions team (vocabulary for diversity), a school climate committee, and a mutual respect policy. Through conversations among teachers and contributed to by parents and students, we now have a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Our faculty is engaged in making meaningful things happen at LS.

The Metrowest Health Survey gives us a great deal of information regarding student health and welfare behaviors and indicates how LS compares with other Metrowest communities and as well as the rest of country. There are initiatives to promote student health in and out of school such as “Life of a Warrior – living without substance abuse” (Athletics). The Safety Council (which includes Buildings & Grounds, Nurses, Administration, and Campus Aides) plans our school response to outside events.

Jason Medeiros revealed the enormous amount of time contributed by teachers, guidance counselors, housemasters, and special educators to the sixty 7:20am parent/teacher meetings held each month to support LS students (60 administrator hours, 120 counselor or special educator hours, 420 evaluations by teachers). The meetings are generated by IEP requirements, by concerns of guidance counselors, housemasters or teachers and are intended to create a plan to ensure a particular student’s success at LS and often involve creation of a new behavioral program, planning for a transition program, and/or planning and grant writing for an invigorated academic support center.

For the ACE Program, we are developing processes and procedures by which students outside the program are referred. How we manage transitions in and out of ACE requires great involvement by housemasters, counselors, teachers, special educators.

We are endeavoring to invigorate the Academic Support Center – which is a vital resource in implementing new plans for student success.

Most committees integral to administrative functions include staff and students such as the MLK Action Project/Community Service, LS Web Team, Green Team/Environmental Club, Student Senate, and First Adventure to name just a few. The LS Web site is managed by students and staff collaboratively and is training teachers in current web-based technology. The Green Team/Environmental Club is working to reduce our carbon footprint, reducing paper consumption, and contributing to the effort to build a solar canopy in the parking lot. First Adventure, the 9th grade orientation program, is designed so that the first encounter at LS for new students is the friendly welcome of peers.

Leslie Patterson reported on the Hiring Process at LS. Every hiring committee involves administration, staff, and students and represents hundreds of staff hours. The collaborative professional culture of LS is a major draw to highly qualified candidates. The Hiring Guidelines Committee includes Jason Medeiros, Lori Hodin, Leslie Patterson and Theo von Lingen. The Committee examines and revises current hiring practices including recruitment and retention of a highly qualified and diverse staff. Fifteen hiring committees have gathered since April of 2012. The hours involved in this endeavor include many hours of summer work to which our faculty generously contributes.

Leslie Belcher concluded the presentation by reminding the School Committee of the many other committees that are integral to the administrative functions of LS such as the IPASS Advisory Board, the Calendar Committee, the Space Committee, the Academic Council Agenda Managers, the Wednesday Meeting Group that organizes all collective staff meeting times, the Faculty Advisory Committee that keeps a finger on the pulse of LS, and the Scholarship and Awards Committee. All things presented tonight require a collective and collaborative effort to ensure that everything runs smoothly at LS.

Patty Mostue acknowledged that LS far and away overshoots state mandates. Nancy Marshall applauded the efforts of our staff in creating innovative instruction. Scott Carpenter reminded the members of the School Committee that rapidly evolving technological changes require an innovative curriculum and that professional development is critical to maintaining an innovative curriculum.

Radha Gargeya recognized the critical work the public does not see that lays the bedrock on which the school stands. Leslie Belcher added that LS teachers are constantly looking for new methods to engage students and constantly seek the skills, knowledge and practices to effectively keep our students engaged. This is the art of teaching.

Nancy Marshall asked about the Academic Support Center. Scott Carpenter responded that there are currently 1.6 FTE's that are funded by a grant. Students must be referred to the Academic Support Center. It is also used for MCAS remedial support. If funding were available, LS would like to expand the Academic Support Center.

Friends of LS Softball

Sue Pardus announced that Friends of LS Softball would attend the Lincoln CPC meeting on Thursday to Lincoln CPC. They have requested 250K funding from Sudbury but the Sudbury CPC will not make a final decision until late January although they are confident that it will be favorable. Friends of LS Softball would like to be able to say that the LS School Committee will support this initiative. The long-term goal is for an inter-municipal agreement between the towns. The fundraising is going well and the organization has received tax-exempt status.

Nancy Marshall stated that CPC funds are directed and have some restrictions. A dialog should be opened regarding other municipal needs as it is a way to provide services without taking money away from instructional services. The School Committee offers Sue a consensus to proceed and supports the effort.

Public Comment – no public comments

Recognitions

Scott Carpenter reported on the Skydiving field trip of 42 students from the Practical and Conceptual Physics arranged by Carol Lewis. The students visited Sky Venture in NH, an indoor sky diving facility. Students were able to experience physics concepts explored in the classroom.

Many teachers were recipients of SERF Holiday ACE Awards and FELS Awards. Scott acknowledged the generous contributions of parents to recognize the excellence of our teachers.

Erica Wilson was congratulated for her nomination to the Fulbright Teacher Exchange. Scott Carpenter fully supports her nomination and is quite hopeful that it will come to fruition. Erica's nomination is a further testament of the high quality of instruction here at LS.

Rhonda Taft-Farrell presented her observations on learning disabilities within our communities and compared what she needs to state and national trends and pointed out ways to bring our out-of-district numbers down and improve our student IEPs. There has been a decline in students on IEPs and a decline in our out-of-district numbers.

Scott detailed LS responses to the Newtown, CT shooting tragedy. Emails were sent to parents that included resources that parents could use in discussions of the event with their children. The LS Clinical Team reached out to staff and students to help with emotions that resurfaced in response to the Sandy Hook incident, particularly given our school's sad history. Scott Carpenter personally appreciated Lynn Carlson coming to his office to make sure he was well. Within the school there was a great deal of individual outreach the days following. He was proud of LS students who found a way to help. The seniors organized a group photo of their numbers dressed in black that was sent as a sign of our students' respect and support for the Sandy Hook victims. The Class of 2013 sold white ribbons to support charities to help families impacted by the tragedy. Counselor John Flynn provided an email with many links and resources for LS staff. Students collected handwritten messages to be sent to Newtown. LS observed a moment of silence on December 21st in remembrance of the tragedy the week before. The Safety Council reassessed LS safety measures. The Housemasters met with the Sudbury and Lincoln police after the incident to evaluate our safety preparedness. Officer Al Hutchinson spent the next few days at school to provide reassurance.

Student Representative Report

The Santa Fundraiser went very well. The progress report initiative was passed by teachers and will go into effect during second semester of

this year. The Senate will have a meeting on January 9th to discover ways to make the state nutrition mandates more palatable.

TA Report

Lisa Weiss reported that exams would begin on January 17th. She pointed out that this is a wonderful and difficult time for students as college acceptances began to arrive for some students. The teachers endeavor to be continually observant of the well-being of their students.

METCO Report (there was no METCO report)

Chair Report

Nancy Marshall noted that Lori Hodin's email blast was comprehensive and informative regarding the LS response to the Newtown, CT tragedy.

She reported that the Board of Assessors would be meeting on Monday, January 14th at 7:45pm in the Flynn Building to further discuss the Solar Canopy installation. The tax question must be answered to understand how it will affect the solar project. LS must sign its contract soon and there is much work to be done to make this happen. There are laws that state this is a taxable improvement but how it impacts municipal entities is unanswered. Lincoln is looking into the same issue. Rami Alwan and Gerald Quirk plan to attend the Board of Assessors meeting. Elena may attend as a member of the Green Initiative. The LS School Committee has voted to support the contract with Sun Edison. We should be able to conclude our fact-finding at the next School Committee meeting. The Department of Revenue has stated that energy must be fully consumed on site. Nancy Marshall intends to write letters to legislators Representative Tom Stanley, Senator Mike Barrett, Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representative Tom Conroy. The Governor's budget will be finished this month. It would be ideal to invite the legislators come to a meeting in late February or early March and to provide them with an up to date budget would be helpful.

Nancy Marshall is working with department coordinators to schedule department lunches. She invited the School Committee members to join her in this opportunity to get acquainted and see what they are doing. Lastly, Nancy Marshall would like to examine the Field Trip Policy in terms of liability to the School Committee.

Liaison Reports

Radha Gargeya announced that there would be a meeting on January 30th of the Suburban Coalition whose main issue would be how to address the continual decline of Chapter 70 funds. Over the past 30 years, the general education aid fund has declined by \$1.7 billion as mandates have increased. John Roberson and Glenn Couterer have been invited to represent the Mass Taxpayer Association.

Radha Gargeya has also talked with a group of tech savvy townspeople who plan to meet to discuss the two technology infrastructure proposals. They will also invite the CPC committee from Lincoln and the CIPC committee of Sudbury to discuss ways of financing the technology improvements. There will be a discussion with the Sudbury Schools to ascertain whether there may be economies of scale from our vendors.

Scott Carpenter remarked that one of challenges of funding the technology initiative is timing. Our towns have moved fiscal decisions to mid-year so that the certainty of funding arrives too late in the year for the schools to spend, renovate, and road test during the brief summer months. Consequently the technology work may have to be done during the summer a year following the approval.

Superintendent Report

With the events in Newtown in mind, Scott illustrated the ways in which LS is an incredibly safe school. He has emphasized in his communications with students that keeping LS safe is the job of everyone here.

The Depression Workshops will begin soon. The students have formed a club called DEAR (Depression Exists, Ask for Relief). They wish to raise awareness about depression in our midst. It is beneficial to all if students can support peers and acknowledge when students are depressed. These are activities that reinforce the strength of this institution.

The LS Safety Committee advised we look into a number of subtle changes that would make LS a safer place. We review our staff lockdown procedures annually. The library and cafeteria are open

before school begins and have faculty supervision. Since 2007, there are only three entrance doorways. Each has swipe card readers because these doors can be locked instantly – one button can now lock the building immediately. Security cameras are at all entrances and at the doorways leading to the student locker rooms. Identity cards are issued annually to students. Information accessible through the IPASS system has become more and more robust. There is adequate parking in the front of the building for emergency vehicles. Visitor Sign-in procedures have been implemented. Through the “No Trespassing– Authorized School Use Only” signs the administration is in a position to issue No Trespassing letters so that an individual can be arrested for trespassing.

We have worked well with Sudbury Police Department and have a liaison – Officer Al Hutchinson. The police departments of Lincoln and Sudbury are involved in classes during the year.

The LS security staff has been increased to three campus aides. In response to a request from the police, we have had an unannounced canine search of lockers and backpacks. This resulted in a significant change in behavior and an immediate decline in illegal activities. School dances have become good clean fun and incidences of negative behavior have declined.

The last extremely important piece of our safety network is a referral system for social/emotional concerns. Tragedies like Sandy Hook involve weapons but also include mental health issues. At LS, concerned individuals may reach out to the House Teams to work with families and outside resources to do safety assessment evaluations. It is an effective way to address what underlies incidents of school violence.

This month’s musings in Carpenter’s Corner include data about Gap years. Current research shows that there may be an academic boost to students who take that option. In our country there seems to be a bit of stigma to taking a gap year but it can be very beneficial.

Action Items

Michael Connelly has prepared a budget for FinCom.

Bills

There are 4 warrants to be signed.

Michael Connelly has asked Aramark to present to school committee on January 22nd. He has asked them to prepare slides of current USDA guidelines and how it is impacting the bottom line. Projected profits will be lower than anticipated. This is a bid year for Aramark to renew their contract with LS.

Information and Discussion

Adjournment

Nancy Marshall called for a motion to adjourn to executive session. Elena Kleifges moved to adjourn the meeting, Kevin Matthews seconded the motion.

Adjourned at 9:38pm