

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

Thursday, August 16, 2018

9:50 am

**Donaldson Room
Lincoln Town Hall
16 Lincoln Road, Lincoln**

Present

Radha Gargeya, Chair; Patty Mostue, Vice-Chair; Ellen Joachim; Carole Kasper; Kevin Matthews. Craig Gruber was absent.

Also present

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal; Sherry Kersey, Director of Finance and Operations; Chief Scott Nix, Sudbury Police Department; Chief Kevin Kennedy and Ian Spencer, Lincoln Police Department; Virginia Blake, Curriculum Director; Jason Medeiros, Sandy Crawford, Leslie Patterson, Associate Principals; Aida Ramos, Director of Student Services; Art Reilly, Athletic Director; Shelly Hinds, METCO Director; Martha Wall, Director of ACE Program; and Jo Ann Forester, LSPO Co-President.

Call to Order

The Open Session meeting was called to order at 9:50am.

LS School Committee Chairman Radha Gargeya opened the meeting by thanking Bella Wong for her hard work during the summer months. He added that the topics for discussion at today's meeting would be:

School Safety

Recommendations of the LS Safety Review Subcommittee

NEASC Accreditation

Communications/Outreach

School Start Time

Capital Projects

FY20 School Budget

Improving the performance of the LS School Committee

School Safety

Mr. Gargeya introduced Chiefs Kennedy and Nix. Both Chief Kennedy and Chief Nix reported that the open lines of communication with Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School through the efforts of Bella Wong and the school administrators contributed greatly in the collective ability to maintain the best interests of students and families at LS. In addition,

the addition of Kim Walch, Sudbury Police Force, as School Resource Officer to LS would enhance safety coverage at LS. Both Chiefs asserted that the ability to share information openly and freely leads to greater success in assuring the welfare of LS Students.

Chief Nix reported on changes in police protocols and services available. Of note, a mental health clinician is now embedded in the force and rides with officers which brings the experience and knowledge of a mental health professional to address events at schools, residents' homes, etc. Lincoln Police Force employs a similar model. The Sudbury Police force also has a jail diversion program so that offenses committed by young residents will not necessarily result in jail time. If a juvenile commits a crime, the path provided by criminal justice is not appropriate. The Diversion Program permits students to be held accountable with a contract to improve behavior. Use of the diversion program will result in offenses being evaluated based on the LS Code of Conduct.

Chief Nix informed the school committee members that the legalization of marijuana has led to increased drug use. There is no standardized test for mental impairment due to use of marijuana as there is for use of alcohol although training by drug recognition experts will help the police evaluate this. Both Chiefs cautioned the members regarding the dangers of vaping and jouling - neither is against the law. However, possessing the apparatus is against LS School policy. Chief Nix stressed the importance of discussing strategies before events occur. Ms Wong agreed and stated that the landscape for school safety has evolved a great deal in recent years. She stated that LS has been able to keep up with these rapid changes because of the collaborative partnership with local police forces and is grateful that working relationships between school and local police are good.

Ms. Wong informed the school committee members that new Memoranda of Understanding templates are newly available from the state of Massachusetts. The memoranda involve policies for sharing data collected by security cameras with local police forces, for example. Beginning with the current school year, live access will be shared with the Sudbury Police Department. Security cameras for the exterior of the building will be installed this year.

Securing the exterior of building will begin this school year. Students, staff, and faculty will have free access to building through the use of access cards. All others will be directed to enter through the Main Entrance. This new security protocol will be shared with community via a letter which will be sent out by the Associate Principals. The addition of School Resource Officer Kim Walch and her collaborative work with Officer Al Hutchinson, SRO for Sudbury Public Schools will provide information regarding students coming to LS.

Camera security for under the solar canopy will be installed shortly after start of school. Peter Elenbaas is our administrative liaison point person who works with police and fire departments regarding safety drills and training.

Recommendations of LS Safety Review Subcommittee

Mr. Gargeya reviewed the 22 recommendations of the LS Safety Review Subcommittee and invited members to query or comment.

1. The LS Safety Council report on safety issues deemed appropriate to School Committee. The report shall include clear delineation of safety policies, including the need for confidentiality, and that the L-S Safety Council will include a communication plan in their council design that addresses the dissemination of information to students, staff and parents.
2. The LS Safety Council meet at least once per year in a meeting open to the public and that the meeting include a discussion for parents and students about safety and warning signs.
3. The school's communication network with local police and fire departments be expanded. It was acknowledged that the hiring of the School Resource Officer would, in large part, accomplish this recommendation.
Enacted
4. District will support budgetary support to supt/principal to seek coaching around best practices for communication within and outside of the school.
In process
5. School district will continue to evaluate emotional and social programs offered within LS (for students) and consider the possibility of increasing the number of programs due to increased demands of mental health supports. In addition, the district will build in systemic supports and continue to evaluate emotional and social training and professional development for L-S faculty and staff. This recommendation can be linked or include recommendation #12 regarding the clinical counselors. It was acknowledged that the language of #5 and #12 needed to be made clearer.
6. The District should identify and put in place the tiered approach to crisis recovery team as outlined in STARS assessment. Continue to assess emergency plans as delineated in STARS assessment and/or other protocol. Completion of this

recommendation is underway as Peter Elenbaas works with representatives from the police departments of Lincoln and Sudbury.

7. The district ensures no double-standard or preferred status exists in practice in regards to discipline at LSRHS. Bella Wong stated that the Coordinated Review has offered template for survey for students, staff and families but will also to look at our discipline data. The review of discipline data is an annual requirement so that it would be part of our corrective action plan.

Kevin Matthews indicated that there seemed to be different perceptions of the fairness and consistency of consequences among students. Aida Ramos stated that there is no data to support this perception. Incidents resulting in disciplinary action are reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

8. NOT RECOMMENDED BY COMMITTEE

9. The district improve security at night athletic events through better lighting and an increased police presence. Sudbury Police is already planning on an increased police presence at athletic events scheduled in the evening.

Mr. Matthews inquired if there was a plan to improve security and lighting for the first football game of the season. Chief Nix indicated that the area of concern was between the parking lot and the stadium field. Ms. Wong stated that Kevin Rossley will ensure adequate lighting is in place.

10. The district will collaborate with community leaders to facilitate training for community leaders, police, fire, school staff in the area of mental health, as needed.

11. The district offers elective programs for staff and administration in the national campaign to Stop the Bleeding, which is first aid procedures taught to staff who would elect to have the training. Chief Carter will facilitate this training. Chief Nix stated he has two instructors for this protocol that can train faculty and staff.

12. The district provide time and resources for clinical counselors to visit and/or research other school districts' programs in mental health supports.

13. District continue its program in Restorative Justice practices. Chiefs Nix and Kennedy have established this program.

14. The district continue to provide ALICE training when school year begins. A.L.I.C.E. Training has been a part of the LS Safety drill program for several years.

Jo Ann Forester, LSPO Co-President, wondered if there was a role for parent volunteers to support this training. Ms. Wong indicated that A.L.I.C.E. training will commence at the beginning of the school year. Chief Nix offered to teach the protocols to any interested group. Ms. Kasper suggested that the LS School Committee should be informed as well.

15. The district continues and expands its self-defense class offered by the Wellness Department.
16. The district offer training in recognizing and responding to sexual harassment for all students to include consent, Title IX issues and other legal areas, especially as they refer to assault and harassment. Ms. Wong stated that there would be no budgetary impact because this is already a part of the curriculum.
17. The district allocate resources to expand the MVP program to include more Students.
18. The district hold the mock car crash event at least every 2 years. It is currently scheduled every 3 years.
19. Access to building should be limited to the front entrance after school begins at 8am.
20. Ensure that cameras are connected to Sudbury Police Department before school begins in fall 2018. This project is in process.
21. Change access to front door and check-in by visitors so that all visitors must be checked in and given a pass to enter the building.
22. The LS Safety Council develop and administer a safety survey for parents, students and staff members annually or semi-annually.
23. The composition of the LS Safety Council include the following liaisons, keeping in mind the need to exclude the student and/or parent for reasons of confidentiality: Student, parent, School Resource Officer, and a Member of the School Committee.

VOTE: Ellen Joachim offered a motion to approve the recommendations of the LS Safety Review Subcommittee. Carole Kasper seconded the motion. All were in favor, there was no further discussion.

School Start Time

A survey conducted showed that there was interest in the community for a change in School Start Time for students. However, last year we realized that there is an issue with Sudbury traffic patterns and congestion on the roadways that necessitated a traffic study.

Sherry Kersey provided an update of traffic survey. In Sudbury, there are four troublesome intersections. The traffic survey response is due August 17th, 2018, and the study will not be entirely complete until after school starts when traffic patterns during school times have been re-established. The final study will be available by the end of October. At present, it seems that the later students are picked up, the worse traffic becomes. Consequently, starting school somewhat later may not be feasible. Ellen Joachim pointed out that Sudbury Public Schools and Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School must engage in a joint effort to work out the logistics. Mr. Gargeya asked if there would be a budgetary impact on changes made. Ms. Kasper stated that residents' expectations needed to be addressed on this matter and queried when parents would hear about the matter from the school and what should the message be from the LS School Committee.

Staff Evaluation and Review

Ms. Wong shared with the LS School Committee work undertaken by the Administrative Team to reflect on issues of the school year just completed and preparing for the year to come. Issues of the past school year included policies regarding the lawsuit filed against the school, the N-word, and a review of the staff handbook. Discussion of these issues included the questions:

What did you want to happen?

What did happen?

Why?

Regarding the lawsuit, there was a disconnect between reality and perception.

Many allegations in this second lawsuit had already been adjudicated. We realized the power of the media to define a matter and that as administrators of a school we cannot get our messaging out the way the media can. What did we learn from this? Reality and perception have equal weight because perception is very real. What should we be more proactive about? Communication regarding the lawsuit should have been shared with faculty and staff so that they were cognizant of the facts of the matter.

Proactive plans include house bulletins highlighting events at school. Ms. Wong will host public coffees to discuss matters of concern. Ms. Wong also plans to extend open lunch blocks for staff drop-in conversations. Ms. Wong is also exploring the value of engaging a public relations firm to act on behalf of the school and School Committee in matters where

the media weighs in. Additionally, efforts will be made to reinforce relationships with the community. Carole Kasper opined that this dovetailed perfectly with the LS School Committee's listening sessions. She expressed value in discussion of the 8th to 9th grade transition and outreach to 6th and 7th grade families

Ellen Joachim suggested that the LS School Committee Chairman respond immediately to media inquiries, particularly if the committee members have already discussed the matter. Ms. Wong stated that LS should engage in a media outreach regarding the many positive events occurring at LS. She also stated that the administrative team had spent a great deal of time discussing how to address matters of concern to students.

State of Faculty/Staff Evaluations

Sandy Crawford began the discussion regarding the enormous changes in evaluation schedules and rubrics over the past 6 years. There are currently 18 indicators, 50 elements, unannounced short evaluations, long evaluations, examination of lesson plans, student feedback, and a rating schedule. LS has currently facilitated two full evaluation cycles. Administrators manage a caseload of 30 teachers which requires gathering evidence, ongoing conversations on proficient ratings, and writing reports that provide excellent feedback to teachers.

Jason Medeiros continued by pointing out changes built into the Teachers Contract such as setting up timelines, giving teachers feedback on benchmark dates, and evaluation of the processes employed by teachers regarding planning and instruction. Consideration is given to how teachers use common assessments to build a collaborative dynamic within departments and how can specificity in the system push teachers into areas of growth.

Ms Wong interjected that the most important aspect of an excellent school system is the quality of instruction and that teachers appreciate the elevation of standards. She added that the Associate Principals do an excellent job of evaluating teachers and sharing concerns that all learners are being reached through a teachers' instruction. Ms. Mostue inquired if data was collected from students after classes are complete.

Proposal for use of 420 Lincoln Road for Social/Emotional Program

Ms. Wong introduced a new plan for use of 420 Lincoln Road. Over the last three years, a substantial portion of the budget has been directed to Out of District tuitions, approximately \$5 million in total. Administrators have been working on a proposal to bring students enrolled in day programs back to LS and house a program in 420 Lincoln Road for students with social/emotional disabilities.

Housing such a program at LS will enable students to access co-curricular aspects of an LS education. Innovations such as the Beacon Program and a refined ACE Program have provided students continued access to an LS education while also providing them with a bit of separation to allow them continued support from special programs. The program in 420 Lincoln Road would be for students that are cognitively intact and would be successful on a break even basis with a minimum of 5 students.

Over the past few years, the infrastructure of 420 Lincoln Road has been repaired - new roof, reinforced walls, internet access, code requirements met, etc. Mrs. Mostue expressed concern that there was no curriculum, nor a sense of whether or not new teachers would need to be hired. Aida Ramos indicated that another clinical counselor and a special educator would be necessary. She further stated that law required no more than eight students per special education teacher with no teaching assistant, up to twelve students if a teaching assistant was provided. Cost savings would include providing our own assessments and savings in special education transportation.

Ms. Wong requested use of E&D funds to launch the new program in the fall of 2019-2020 school year. The expected savings in tuition and transportation costs would then be deposited into the FY20 surplus money fund. Ms. Joachim questioned whether or not Ms. Ramos and Ms. Wong were confident they could adequately serve the needs of the students in the program. Ms. Ramos replied that Tracy Lopez, who currently guides the EXCEL program would run the program with assistance from ACE teachers. School Committee members asked additional questions regarding the start-up funding for the program. Ms. Wong expressed the belief that the savings engendered from a successful program would result in a reduction of the school's operating budget bottom line. The Beacon Program was initiated with grant funding and its initial success justified adding it to the budget. Ms. Wong requested permission to begin reaching out to the community with discussions about the planned program. Mrs. Kasper was supportive of the proposal for 420 Lincoln Road though wondered what would LS not be able to do if funds are directed toward this program. Mr. Gargeya felt that a one time use of the E&D funds for such a purpose would be fine in his opinion. The school committee members concurred verbally that Ms. Wong may begin a dialog with both communities that will enable possible action at the Sudbury Special Town Meeting in October.

The School Committee members interrupted the meeting to enjoy lunch - the meeting resumed at 1:05pm.

Financial Report

Sherry Kersey reviewed the Report from the auditors regarding FY17 and the Corrective Action Plan responding to it.
Warrants were signed.

Adjourn

Radha Gargeya requested a motion to adjourn the meeting and return to Open Session at 1:45pm. Patty Mostue offered a motion to adjourn, Ellen Joachim seconded the motion. The open meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Dorothy Presser, MASC Field Officer

The School Committee resumed its open session at 1:45pm. Ms. Presser was present to facilitate a team development session with LS School Committee members. She conducted a workshop on School Committee roles and responsibilities, School District/Superintendent/School Committee goals and Superintendent Evaluation. The slides from the workshop will be posted on the LS School Committee website.

The workshop ended at 4:10pm.

Ellen Joachim moved to appoint Toni Benhaim as the School Committee Secretary. Patty Mostue seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ellen Joachim moved to adjourn the meeting. Carole Kasper seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale