

**LINCOLN-SUDBURY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
OCTOBER 29, 2019**

Present

Ellen Joachim, Chair; Carole Kasper, Vice-Chair; Cara Endyke-Doran; Kevin Matthews; Candace Miller; Patty Mostue

Also Present

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal; Peter Rowe, Director of Finance and Operations; Joshua Gilman, ExecTA; Aida Ramos, Director of Student Services

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

Presentation

Dr. Aida Ramos, Director of Student Services, provided an overview of current programs offered to LS students. The number of students on IEP's, based on October 1st data, has increased slightly over the past three years. Nevertheless, LS remains within the norm for schools in Massachusetts (see attached power point presentation). Students attending LS Academy are now part of the tally of students that are included. The number of out of district student placements has remained level for the past several years. The number of students on 504 programs has also remained level. Training for staff and counselors regarding 504 eligibility standards has been useful. LS Academy has welcomed 9-10 students into the program. The students benefit from access to LS teachers and a more rigorous curriculum than typically available at out of district placements. Dr. Ramos attends LS Academy each Monday to provide oversight. Associate Principal Peter Elenbaas provides additional oversight of students in the program.

Bella Wong provided background information on the declining trend of Out of District student placements. LS has endeavored to proactively design in-house programs to address the needs of students that will be attending LS in the next few years. The administration is actively developing a program to provide support for students with moderate autism. Dr. Ramos and clinical counselors frequently observe LS students at out-of-district institutions as well as students in Lincoln Public and Sudbury Public Schools that may require special programs. Mr. Matthews commended Ms. Wong and Dr. Ramos for the number of programs that have been developed at LS in the time that he has been participating on the School Committee. Dr. Ramos expressed her gratitude to Tracie Lopez, Colin Cox, and John O'Connell who have done yeoman's work in starting LS Academy.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Recognitions

The Metrowest Youth Health Survey World Café was presented on October 23, 2019 in the LS Cafeteria. Susan Shields, Sarah Greeley, and David Bloom organized training for students who presented the results to fellow students, staff, and parents.

On Friday, November 8 at 7:30pm, the LSB players will present a staged reading of Naomi Iizuka's play "Good Kids," a new play which explores an incident of rape that occurs at a high school party. Earlier that day, LS Mentors in Violence Prevention and Students Together Empowering Women and the LSB Players will host a forum. The students will discuss how social elements depicted in the play, such as toxic gender roles, social media, and alcohol combine to create a dangerously disrespectful environment. The panelists will explore ways in which upstanders could support others and intervene to prevent abusive incidents.

Senior Dress Up Day will occur on Thursday, October 31st culminating in Senior Skits during ACA block. Associate Principals have met with Seniors to discuss expectations for the event which is enjoyed by all.

The LS Model UN Club hosted the Annual Fall In-School Conference which provides an opportunity for new and returning members to become acquainted with Model UN formalities and to prepare for the National High School MUN Conferences in NYC and at Boston College (both in March). Thirty students from grades 9-12 represented countries ranging from Australia to the US to discuss the topic of denuclearization. JK Park is the faculty advisor for the Model UN.

Student Representative Report

There was no student representative report.

Athletics Report

Ms. Wong reported that the Boys' Golf Team won the Massachusetts Golf Championship. All other athletic teams have achieved post-season play.

Teachers' Association Report

Joshua Gilman highlighted colleagues who are introducing students to important world issues and empowering students to discuss these issues among themselves. Large numbers of LS faculty have taken advantage of professional development workshops and courses to learn skills and teaching strategies that they then share with fellow faculty members.

Chairman's Report

Ms. Joachim reported that the METCO Parent organization has requested an LS School Committee meeting in Boston and suggested the date of January 28, 2019. Ms. Wong reported that the three dates proposed for presenting the budget to Lincoln and to Sudbury may conflict with this date. Further discussion with the METCO parent board will be necessary.

Proposed dates for a second workshop with Dorothy Presser are November 22, December 6 or December 13th, 2019. Ms. Joachim will follow up with emails to members to choose the most convenient date.

Ms. Joachim attended the recent Sudbury Board of Selectmen's Meeting at which hearings for the LS Budget, as detailed in the Regional Agreement, were discussed. The Regional Agreement stipulates that public hearings should be held in both towns to discuss the budget, followed by a meeting at which the budget is approved. Ms. Joachim acknowledged that time was an issue in holding additional meetings. She also stated that the LS School Committee always sought guidance on setting the budget from the Sudbury Finance Committee and the Lincoln Finance Committees before voting on its approval.

The LS School Committee website continues to be a work in progress.

Ms. Joachim reported that at the recent EDCO Board Meeting, there was discussion about EDCO's significant budget deficit and how to address it. Ms. Wong noted that EDCO programs in danger of cancellation were not programs used by LS. Programs of interest were more typically those for professional development for faculty and staff. The yearly cost of EDCO membership is \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Liaison Report

Cara Endyke-Doran reported to the LS School Committee that no one attended the listening session offered at Goodnow Library on Wednesday, October 23rd. Ms. Kasper noted that no listening sessions have been scheduled for November. Mr. Matthews suggested a listening session for Boston parents. Ms. Kasper attended the Lincoln Finance Committee meeting and reported that the Lincoln Fincom plans to attend the Sudbury Finance Committee meeting on November 4, 2019. Lastly, Candace Miller suggested work on updating the LS School Committee Policy Manual.

Superintendent/Principal Report

The School Improvement Plan is typically presented at the end of the previous year. This year the school goals have evolved from the Self-Reflection Report submitted to NEASC. The goals are consistent with initiatives being undertaken by LS. Changes to the school schedule are under review, headed by Leslie Patterson and Tim Jason. Finding methods for mitigating stress among students is a subject of continuing interest. The Racial Climate Task Force will focus on cultivating community.

The NEASC Site visit occurred on October 21-22nd. Site members reported that LS met the standards for foundational elements and the Committee was impressed with the support programs LS has in place. The site committee approved LS programs for inclusion and belonging as well as LS priorities for narrowing achievement gap. The Site Committee was very complimentary of the Self-Reflection Report. Ms. Wong expressed her gratitude to the

members of the Self-Reflection Team: Dan Conti, Laura Cole, Jen DuBois, Karen D'Amore, Maureen Bolton, and Shawn Lingley.

PSAT/NMSQT Test Administration was held on October 19, 2019 at LS. The PSAT exam qualifies students for scholarships offered by National Merit Scholarship Program. Four hundred exams were ordered for this year's exam but 450 students appeared to take the test. Last year 325 students registered for the test. The system in which parents register students to take the test is Unipay. It did not have a deadline date for registrations and permitted students to register up to the night before the test. Between 40-50 students were turned away from the exam despite having registered with Unipay. LS sought schools that were administering the test at a later date as the College Board Corporation would not permit an additional test date at LS. A school in Worcester will be administering the test on October 30th and LS students who were unable to take the test at LS will be able to take the test in Worcester.

Thorough examination of the process at LS will prevent a similar outcome in subsequent years. Ms. Wong offered an apology to all students and families that were adversely affected by the test administration this year.

LS is initiating vaping education for students that begins with the October 23rd sharing of data from the MetroWest Youth Health Survey and followed by "LS unites against vaping" program on November 21-22 (previously an anti-smoking event). Emerson Hospital is collaborating with LS for interactive health education regarding the dangers of vaping. On December 4th, the League of Women Voters, in collaboration with Connections, will be holding a panel discussion on vaping.

Ms. Wong reported that LS may participate in a student exchange for Mandarin and/or Asian Studies students with Cheng Du #7 High School which already participates in an exchange program with Beaver Country Day School. LS has an opportunity to become a partner in Beaver Country Day's program. In February, LS may host 5 students from Cheng Du #7. More details will be forthcoming for this program which would require approval from the LS School Committee.

Director of Finance and Operations Report

Peter Rowe reviewed the First Quarter Report with the school committee members. While there will be a \$143,000 deficit in salaries due to additional staff hired for LS Academy, Mr. Rowe reminded the committee members that the deficit will be eliminated when \$300,000 is transferred from the Excess and Deficiency account once it is certified. The three largest non-salary accounts are the regular transportation service, employee insurances and out of district tuitions. The regular transportation service is on budget. LS is over budget in the out of district placements. Employee insurances are projected to come in slightly under budget by about \$60,000 – particularly in the segment for Retired Employee Non-Medicare. Out of District costs have been significantly reduced as a result of students attending LS Academy.

Peter Rowe reviewed the capital requests for the coming year: replacement of chain link fence surrounding the turf fields; replacement of pick-up truck for facilities department; 15-passenger van for athletic program; an aerial lift. The capital requests will be presented to the Lincoln Capital Planning Committee and the Sudbury Capital improvements Advisory Committee (CIAC).

The Lincoln Finance Committee has communicated that the guidance for building the FY21 Budget is a 2.5% increase, exclusive of OPEB and insurances. A similar 2.5% increase is anticipated from the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Peter Rowe next addressed the Budget Calendar for FY21. In prior years, the budget hearing and vote were held on the same date. There is a question whether this is an appropriate timing. Consequently, Mr. Rowe has submitted additional dates for the budget timeline. Discussion ensued regarding proposed dates.

Information and Discussion

Ms. Joachim recommended that the Superintendent/Principal Evaluation be completed by November 12th. Individual member evaluations should be completed within the next week. The evaluation is extraordinarily late and committee members need to address this matter as soon as possible. Ms. Miller urged fellow members to complete their evaluations and added that she would be out of the country during the November 12 meeting. Cara Endyke Doran noted that she would not be able to attend the November 12 meeting.

Action Items

Vouchers were signed.

Mr. Rowe requested an extension of the regular school bus contract which is entered into with Sudbury Public Schools. From a cost standpoint, continuing the contract with our current vendor is most cost effective for the next two years.

Vote: Ellen Joachim requested a motion to accept an extension to the regular school bus contract for two years. Kevin Matthews moved that Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School exercise the option to extend the remaining two years contract for FY2021 and FY2022 with First Student at a 3% increase per year. Patty Mostue seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All were in favor except Candace Miller who opposed the motion.

Mr. Rowe reported that a re-bid of health insurance is underway. The new bid will be submitted by November 19th. Under the Minuteman Agreement, we have to give notice to withdraw by December 1, 2019.

Mr. Rowe notified the committee members that Kevin Rossley, Director of Facilities, has been awarded a grant for energy efficient lighting.

School Lunch Program revolving account will be undergoing administrative review this year.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for October 1, 2019, were approved via a motion put forward by Kevin Matthews. Candace Miller seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All were in favor.

The minutes for October 15th will be approved at the next school committee meeting.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment of Open Meeting

The open meeting was adjourned at 9:35pm. The School Committee adjourned to Executive Session not to return to Open Session.

Executive Session

Patty Mostue moved to enter Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation because to do so in public session would be detrimental to the District's position as declared by the Chair not to return to open session. Cara Endyke-Doran seconded the motion.

By roll call vote: Ellen Joachim, Cara Endyke-Doran, Carole Kasper, Kevin Matthews, Candace Miller, and Patty Mostue.

Respectfully submitted,
Francy Zingale