

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Special Work Session
Thursday, April 2, 2009**

Present: Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jane Santinelli, Vice Chairperson; Rich Robison, Jeff Beeler, Michele MacDonald

Also Present: Dr. John Brackett, Superintendent; Robert Milley, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Will, Director of Business and Finance; Mary Mahoney, SEA; Laura Powers, videotaping the meeting.

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Discussion and Comment on BRTF Preliminary Report

The Committee reviewed a draft document, Public Comment on the Preliminary BRTF Report. Susan Iuliano summarized the status of the BTRF report that resulted from the merging of two preliminary reports, one each from the Revenue and Expense Subcommittees. It was indicated that a Final Report might not be produced. R. Robison clarified that the status of the recommendations in the report is uncertain as they have not yet been accepted by any group. He questioned the benefit of responding with much specificity to a draft set of recommendations when no decision has been made as to which of those recommendations might be acted upon.

BRTF Recommendation 1, Consolidate Administration of LS and SPS, was discussed. There is ongoing confusion as to what “consolidation” meant in the recommendation, as there are numerous models for such. Various configurations were reviewed. It was agreed that the issues within this recommendation should go to a Working Group for more analysis. The subsequent analysis should examine both educational and financial consequences of the various options.

Functions. In looking at consolidation possibilities, the group should also consider job descriptions and re-allocation of time. A comparison involving existing consolidation structures in the region was reviewed. Variations in job functions, time allocations, and other factors make accurate cost analysis very difficult. As these comparisons generally indicate that SPS has a more efficient configuration than those explored, deeper analysis is obviously called for.

The Committee questioned a connection between structural cost analysis and student performance measures. A more refined financial analysis might also be necessary to explore efficiencies in special education costs.

BRTF Recommendation 3, Regionalize LS & K-12, was reviewed. The Committee expressed that those models which behave like K – 12 districts are more likely to bring educational benefits and achieve cost savings. There is information that grant opportunities from the State to encourage implementation of regionalization have been eliminated in recent 9C cuts.

BRTF Recommendation 1, METCO, was briefly discussed. Because METCO expenses come fully from grant money, changes in METCO staffing cannot be counted in any projected budgetary savings related to administrative consolidation.

BRTF Recommendations involving Collective Bargaining were not discussed because negotiations are currently in process. Included were recommendations regarding health insurance. In addition, the Committee discussed issues raised by the BRTF recommendations that were outside the scope of collective bargaining or the BRTF charge.

The **BRTF Recommendation regarding Full-day Kindergarten** was not reviewed in depth because the FDK initiative has been implemented. The Committee notes that the FDK initiative can’t legally, nor within policy, be used as a revenue generating measure.

BRTF Revenue Report: The Committee expressed that they hoped the Selectmen would also pursue recommendations on the revenue side to complement expense-related recommendations. A small executive summary type paragraph may be developed for each area of recommendation in the School Committee’s final response.

2. Preparation for Town Meeting, April 6

It was shared that the Finance Committee will likely recommend that consideration of budget related articles be postponed to May 11th. This is because budgets are still subject to significant adjustments, the State budget is not yet finalized, and rules surrounding the use of federal stimulus dollars are not fully understood. There are still FY09 uncertainties. Local revenue receipts are lower than expected and the State may once again reduce the 4th quarter state aid amounts.

Dr. Brackett shared slides that he might use at Town Meeting, if called upon. Included are

- Budget Summary Scenarios
- FY10 Non-Override Budget Summary
- Tentative Budget Balancing Plan
- Summary Impact Non-Override Budget

- Full-Day Kindergarten

R. Robison suggested that the Committee be prepared to discuss stimulus funding at Town Meeting, both amounts and process.

Jane Santinelli moved that the Committee adjourn to Executive Session, not to return to regular session, for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining strategy. Seconded by Jeff Beeler. Voted 5 – 0 at 10:00 p.m.

Yes Susan Iuliano
Yes Rich Robison
Yes Jane Santinelli
Yes Jeff Beeler
Yes Michele MacDonald

The Committee adjourned from Executive Session at 11:05 p.m.

Recorded by Robert Milley, Assistant Superintendent
Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary