

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday, May 27, 2009**

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

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

Open Session

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

1. Budget

(a) Current Status of the FY09 Budget

Mary Will reported on the FY09 projected and actual budget expenses. As of May, the District's part of the deficit created by state 9c cuts and lower than projected local receipts is approximately \$217K. The District recently learned that Chapter 70 funds will be cut by \$459,355, which will leave the projected year-end balance under \$100,000. FY11 stimulus funds are expected to be used to offset the Chapter 70 cuts. The district will identify costs associated with transportation and special education to be charged against the stimulus grant. The District was required to apply for a grant, submitted last week, in order to qualify to utilize the stimulus funds. The State anticipates making funds available by June 30; the District, with Town approval, will close accounting for FY09 in September, rather than July.

(b) Current Status of the State Budget

Dr. Brackett presented an update of the FY10 State budget proposals as they relate to the SPS and L-S budgets. The Senate version provides the third state budget version; the state budget is currently in the hands of a six-person conference committee. There is a possibility that the budget will not be settled until after June 30. Dr. Brackett noted that the Town's non-override budget was based on the Governor's budget; if the Senate's version passes, Chapter 70 will be reduced by another \$87K. In total, the Senate version reduces aid to SPS and the Town by \$248K. The net impact for the Town, including LS, is a \$221K shortfall on the non-override budget. Federal stimulus money is targeted to cover the Chapter 70 shortfall.

(c) Health Insurance Reserve Account

A health benefit reserve account within the Town's benefit account has been proposed as a way to reallocate savings that might result from the bargaining process. The Finance Committee voted to support establishing the account, but expressed concern that the public be informed of the results of bargaining that lead to the use of the reserve account. Various strategies to achieve this were discussed. The Committee agreed to issue a statement after the contract negotiations are complete to clarify the results of the negotiations and the use of the reserve funds.

2. School Committee Report

None.

4. Open Forum

None.

5. Superintendent's Report

(a) Flu Update

Superintendent Brackett reported that the number of student absences at Curtis has steadily declined after peaking on May 18 at 123. Some of the elementary schools are reporting less significant increases in student absences. The "seven-day rule" (students with flu-like symptoms must stay out of school for at least 7 days) is largely being observed. The current thinking on school closure is that it is not an effective mechanism for stopping the spread of the virus.

A letter from the Department of Public Health is posted on the District website.

(b) Donations

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the donation of technology equipment (total expenses of \$61,500) by the Loring PTO: one laptop cart, 18 desktop computers, 13 Active Expressions, costs to cover the transition of two ActivBoards from the computer room to classrooms. The

vote was 4–0 in favor.

(c) Bill Schedule
A bill schedule was presented.

(d) Personnel Actions
As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

6. Minutes

VOTED: On a motion by Michele MacDonald, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2009 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2009 Regular Session, as amended. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

7. Communications

As presented in the Communications Packet. In addition, Susan Iuliano reported on the following communications:

- E-mail exchange with State Representative Tom Conroy responding to his inquiries about the Municipal Relief Report’s conclusions that there are no unfunded educational mandates.
- Susan Iuliano responded to a parent who is concerned that transportation fees are not being reduced. It was explained that costs continue to increase and that transportation fees do not currently cover the full costs of the service; fee reductions would require reallocating resources from other areas. The parent suggested allowing installment payments, which is currently in place on an informal basis. This option will be available in the future.

➤ An updated copy of the Committee’s recommendations to the Board of Selectmen’s goals was provided.

8. Members’ Forum

Michele MacDonald commented that two additional faculty positions at L-S will be maintained, in addition to two faculty positions that were previously identified. This reduces the cuts to teaching FTE’s to five; however, the total cuts to FTE’s remains at nine.

Mary Mahoney reported that the Softball Bonanza is this Friday, with a rain date of June 3. She also noted that another bargaining session is scheduled for June 4, but that she has been unsuccessful in obtaining information from the Town. Rich Robison and Susan Iuliano have also made requests to the Town for information. The Town is still preparing materials.

9. Executive Session

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Rich Robison, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining strategy, not to return to Open Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. The time was 9:25 p.m.

- Yes Susan Iuliano
- Yes Rich Robison
- Yes Jane Santinelli
- Yes Michele MacDonald

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary

