

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 16, 2009**

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

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

Open Session

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. at the Loring School. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Israel Loring PTO Welcome (Robin Cavanaugh and Lisa Armour)

PTO Co-chair Robin Cavanaugh summarized successes from the 2008-2009 school year, particularly in the area of funding computer technology in the classroom. Similar fundraising activities are planned for this year. The PTO will work with staff and administration to identify needs. She also highlighted newly painted murals, one for each grade, that were commissioned using funds raised by the fifth-grade classes over the last three years. In addition, she noted that the PTO plans to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the school's reopening.

2. The State of the Loring School (Principal Jeffery Dees, Assistant Principal David Jeong)

Principal Jeffery Dees highlighted three goals and challenges for this year: Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), closing the achievement gap, and continuous improvement. He highlighted the significant improvements in MCAS performance in ELA and math for both the special education (SPED) population and the school as a whole. He identified modifications in SPED service delivery to include more within-classroom assistance, school-wide writing prompt activities, and in-school and after-school ELA and math preparation as factors contributing to improvements.

Mr. Dees identified three areas of focus for closing the achievement gap: enhanced grade-level teamwork and an improved teacher evaluation process, enhanced school climate, including acknowledging and celebrating teacher and student accomplishments, enhanced parent involvement and school-home communications.

The school improvement plan, which is not yet completed, outlines three areas of focus for continuous improvement: academic and curriculum, social/emotional, and communication. Of note, there will be a renewed emphasis on open response writing and continued efforts directed at K-2 literacy. Mr. Dees also cited a commitment to the Investigations math curriculum. He reported that there is a SPED educator for each grade level and reiterated that most SPED instruction now occurs within the classroom. Results from last year's bullying survey have inspired a commitment to reinvigorate the use of Open Circle in each classroom and build an "acts of kindness" program consistent with the school's core values.

Rich Robison remarked on the significant improvements in MCAS performance, particularly for the SPED cohort. He suggested that the administration document its preparation procedures to better track their relationship with performance over time.

The Committee asked about impacts of full-day kindergarten. Principal Dees noted that the program is running smoothly. Staff from Tufts University will be working with our staff on kindergarten literacy. He cited the lack of classroom aids as a continuing need, stating that they would be used where needed on a building level, rather than a grade or classroom level.

The Committee thanked and congratulated Principal Dees on a successful school year.

3. Approve the Professional Teaching Staff (PTS) Evaluation Pilot

At its last Regular Session, Superintendent Brackett outlined a revised process for evaluating PTS teachers. The SEA ratified the process last week. Dr. Brackett recommends that the Committee do the same. He provided more detail on the evaluation process for the pilot itself. It will involve an analysis of time savings, if any, as well as a survey of improvements in teacher performance to be done over the two-year pilot period. Dr. Brackett reported that Kim Marshall, whose work in education forms the basis for the pilot, is scheduled to meet with staff in October to develop elements of the mini observations.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Rich Robison, to approve the pilot process for evaluation and supervision of professional status teachers for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. The vote was 4-0 in favor.

4. Approve the Final FY09 Budget

Mary Will presented the entries and final transfers made to close the FY09 books. Mid-year and subsequent cuts at the state level and revenue shortfalls at the local level required the District to implement cost-saving measures and identify line-item transfers to offset negative balances. An ending balance of \$16K was transferred to the Town. She identified one benefit of last Spring's budget uncertainties: fourth quarter circuit breaker money came in too late for use in FY09 and will be applied to FY10 and two months of Case Collaborative tuition will be applied to FY10 as well.

VOTED: On a motion by Michele MacDonald, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the line-item transfers and final FY09 budget as presented. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

5. School Committee Report

Superintendent's Evaluation

Rich Robison briefly outlined the evaluation process and reported that all ratings were in the satisfactory or outstanding range. Dr. Brackett will continue to address the need for increased communication with District families.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald to approve the 2008-2009 Superintendent evaluation. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

6. Open Forum

No comments.

7. Superintendent's Report

(a) Flu update

Dr. Brackett reported that SPS and L-S have been meeting with health agencies and that the districts will conduct a coordinated voluntary vaccination program for both seasonal flu and H1N1. The seasonal flu vaccine is expected to be available in early October; the H1N1 vaccine will be available in late October or early November. Communications to parents will be made this week, allowing a short response period to gauge interest and permit the districts to respond adequately to the need.

(b) WOWW Research Project

Assistant Superintendent Bob Milley outlined the Working on What Works project, which is a strength-based intervention currently being surveyed on a national scale. Members of the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work, including Sudbury parent Susan Tohn, are working with SPS second-grade teachers at Haynes, Loring, and Noyes. SPS is the first elementary school district to be involved with the project. The premise is to reward classroom behaviors that contribute to a positive climate. The program will run from October through December 2009.

(c) Donation

The family of the late William Sparks, a former principal at the Loring School, donated artwork that Principal Sparks received upon his retirement. The framed work depicts scenes from Sudbury's history.

(d) Bill Schedule

A bill schedule was presented.

(e) Personnel Actions

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

8. Minutes—Regular Session, September 2, 2009

VOTED: On a motion by Michele MacDonald, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2009 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

9. Communications

As outlined in the Communications Packet.

10. Members' Forum

Susan Iuliano announced that the October 7 Regular Session will be held at the Noyes School.

11. Executive Session

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Rich Robison, to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss negotiations with the ESPAS unit, to return to Open Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. The time was 10:00 p.m.

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

12. Return to Open Session

The Committee returned to Open Session at 10:25 p.m.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the ESPAS Unit. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

13. Executive Session

Moved to adjourn into Executive Session, for the purpose of discussing contract terms and conditions with the superintendent.

14. Return to Open Session

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to extend the superintendent's contract, 1 year, to now terminate on June 30, 2012. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Rich Robison, to provide the superintendent the same health benefit options provided other school employees and to increase the salary portion of his contract by 3% to \$157,343. The \$21,000 annuity will remain unchanged. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 11:01 p.m.

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary