

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday, October 7, 2009**

Present: Susan Iuliano, Chairperson;
Rich Robison, Jane Santinelli, Jeff Beeler, Michele MacDonald (7:50 p.m.)

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

Open Session

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. at the Noyes School. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Peter Noyes PTO Welcome (Andrea Wang)

PTO Co-chair Andrea Wang summarized successes from the 2008-2009 school year. She noted that more than half of the PTO budget goes toward enrichment programs. A successful spring auction raised enough funds to purchase laptops for Grades K–2, two laser printers, ActivExpressions, and curriculum materials. PTO savings were used to purchase two ActivBoards, one for a new third-grade classroom and one for the library. The PTO is phasing out its gift-wrap fundraiser and will focus on its popular family and adult events.

2. The State of Noyes School (Principal Annette Doyle, Assistant Principal Kristin Moffat)

At the Committee's request, Principal Annette Doyle described three areas most affected by budget constraints: lack of Genesis assistants for grade one requires that 1.5 regular education assistants be deployed to first grade when not otherwise needed; a literacy support staff of two (1.0 specialist, 1.0 tutor) that accommodates the at-risk student population but not all students identified with some risk based on assessment data; an inability to offer math enrichment or support. Discussion ensued regarding the best way to distribute literacy specialist support to the four elementary schools. A single specialist at each school is considered by the Administration as the minimum level of support. The large student population at Noyes and Loring is served with literacy support at the same level as schools with a much lower enrollment. Discussion occurred about whether it would make sense to redeploy resources from smaller, higher-performing schools to larger schools with demonstrated need. Given the need for one such specialist at each school, there does not currently exist the resources to redeploy without causing issues elsewhere. A discussion occurred about whether redistricting would be one way to move students to schools with a greater level of relative resources. Ms. Doyle offered that some consideration of assessment data (demonstrated need) as well as raw school population is needed.

Principal Doyle and Assistant Principal Moffat additionally highlighted a new scheduling method for instrumental and general music in Grades 4 and 5, the MCAS successes of Noyes students, and opportunities for teacher and student leadership. Full-day kindergarten is running smoothly.

In addition to the need to evaluate district-wide resource allocation based on the large body of data collected, particularly in Grades K-3, Principal Doyle expressed a concern that a classroom size of 26 Grade 4 students does not continue for a third consecutive year next year.

3. Accepting Special Education Tuition Students

Not discussed.

4. MCAS Report

Assistant Superintendent Bob Milley presented data summarizing SPS MCAS results compared with the state and between the District's schools. Each school achieved some notable successes and Sudbury continues to compare well with other high-performing districts. Increased differentiated instruction and implementation of a strengthened math curriculum have contributed to moving more students into the advanced or above-proficient category. Areas of concern are performance on Grade 3 reading and Grade 8 math, and science performance in Grades 5 and 8. Jeff Beeler, while noting the generally high level of performance on the MCAS throughout the District, specifically raised the apparent performance gap in grade 3 Loring English scores (which appears this year to be in step with Noyes) in relation to the need for additional supports to get at this problem. While it is agreed that additional supports might provide benefits for those in need, lack of resources remains a problem in addressing this issue. Moreover, once additional analysis of data is completed from the MCAS and other sources in January and February, the Administration will be in a better position to address this issue. Science results are thought to be test dependant rather than related to curriculum deficiencies. Again, the Committee discussed the need to use MCAS data to address

District resource allocation over time, in conjunction with Response to Intervention, which is characterized as “dipstick” testing that allows for immediate action.

Superintendent Brackett reported that a new metric, referred to as the Student Growth Percentile (SGP), will be unveiled at the end of this month. Specifically, the SGP will describe the change in individual student performance over time, compared to academic peers.

5. School Committee Report

None.

6. Open Forum

Lisa Gutch, Silver Hill Road, asked for a follow-up on enrollment projections vs. actuals that the Committee discussed in September. Dr. Brackett reported that the move in / move out ratio is down. A primary contributing factor is the increase in the number of students who enrolled in private school, particularly in Grades 5 and 6. Housing vacancies in town are also high at present.

7. Superintendent’s Report

(a) Flu update

Dr. Brackett reported that the first vaccination clinic is on October 9 for children in Grades pre-K–3. The District received 500 doses of seasonal flu vaccine. The H1N1 vaccine has not been received yet and will be given to L-S students first. In both cases, the District recommends vaccination through a pediatrician if possible because of the limited number of doses available through the District.

(b) Donations

Dr. Brackett reported the donation of two ActivBoards and related laptops and accessories from the Noyes PTO. The donation does not require a vote of the Committee.

(c) Bill Schedule

A bill schedule was presented.

(d) Personnel Actions

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

8. Minutes—Regular Session, September 16, 2009

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2009 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. Jeff Beeler abstained.

9. Communications

None.

10. Members’ Forum

Susan Iuliano reported that the Budget Working Group and the Finance Committee met to reevaluate both the budget process and the budget hearing schedule. Historically, budget discussions begin at a time when very little revenue information is available. The Committee received questions from the Finance Committee regarding collective bargaining. Responses have been drafted.

Jeff Beeler reported that the Energy Committee is continuing efforts regarding solar arrays. The Committee will present to the Board of Selectmen on October 20 and plans to submit an application for state funds.

Mary Will announced that the FY10 Circuit Breaker was announced. It is at 40%, vs. the 72% level of FY09. In addition, she noted that the District is actively participating in the capital improvement program, with eight different projects under review.

Bob Mealey noted that the SEA annual golf tournament is scheduled for October 8. Proceeds fund scholarships for L-S seniors. He also thanked Dr. Brackett on behalf of the SEA for engaging Kim Marshall for a seminar; his work forms the basis of the professional teaching staff evaluation process currently being piloted.

Rich Robison noted that state revenue predictions for the next few fiscal years are increasingly dire.

11. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to adjourn to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:55 p.m.

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

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary