

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 13, 2010**

Present: Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jeff Beeler, Vice Chairman;
Dr. Rich Robison, Jane Santinelli, Michele MacDonald (7:51 p.m.)

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

Open Session

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m. at the Curtis Middle School. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Curtis Parent Organization (CPO) Welcome

Wendy Heye, CPO Co-Chair, welcomed the Committee and provided a brief overview of CPO activities. She highlighted that the main fundraiser, a direct appeal, had exceeded the \$18K budget goal. Donations total \$21.5K with a 25% response rate. The CPO continues its efforts to engage parents. For the first time, the CPO will sponsor an adult social event and fundraiser. The hope is to combine revenue from this event with direct appeal funds to complete the acquisition of ActivBoards.

2. Curtis State of the School Report

Principal Stephen Lambert introduced the three grade-level administrators, Kelly Campbell (8), Kevin Kay (7), and Angela Menke (6) and thanked the CPO for its support. He noted that Curtis is committed to respecting the creative, social and emotional development of its students, as well as their academic development. The core values of respect, responsibility, and learning have been broadened to include an appreciation of diversity.

Kelly Campbell outlined the functions of the grade-level administrators and addressed the concept of looping both administrators and guidance counselors. In her view, the advantages of looping outweigh the disadvantages. Primary among the advantages is the relationship developed with students and their families over three years. The need for familiarity with the curriculum for each grade poses some challenges; however, it also offers an overview of the middle school experience.

The Committee was interested to understand how looping affects supervision and evaluation of teachers. Ms. Campbell explained that these functions are not tied to grade level, but to area of expertise.

Angela Menke outlined some of the programming aimed at easing the transition to middle school. New last year was a scavenger hunt for the incoming class, held just prior to the start of school. The goal was to have the students become familiar with both the building and some of its processes in a relaxed and fun manner. Of 350 students, 185 participated and the program was very well received.

Principal Lambert provided highlights of new curriculum endeavors, as well as efforts to achieve AYP (adequate yearly progress) for the special education cohort in math. Among the new curriculum endeavors is enrichment programming in math and science, a commitment to outdoor education at all grade levels in science, receipt of a grant in teaching American History that allows teachers to both take and teach courses to enhance the curriculum, a writer's workshop for Spanish students, and the trip to Quebec for students of French. Other initiatives include enhanced programming in physical education and the performing and fine arts. New safety initiatives include a violence prevention unit in Health classes, a No Name Calling week, and a presentation on cyber safety.

Kevin Kay provided an overview of the cultural enrichment programming. He is establishing a committee consisting of parents, teachers, and students to review programs and develop curriculum ties. Three programs were scheduled for this year, tying into curriculum in American History, ELA and the acknowledgement of diversity and global awareness.

Curtis has also incorporated the Instructional Support Team (IST) model, which provides a mechanism to consider alternative interventions for at-risk students. Curtis maintains an array of after-school activity options, and continually refines its community-building efforts.

Principal Lambert cited the following challenges: space constraints, the need for infrastructure to support new technology, the need for increased emphasis on study skill development, AYP considerations, and the negative impact of the lack of late buses and Grade 8 art courses.

Rich Robison commended Principal Lambert for integrating diversity appreciation at Curtis. He also inquired about the process of orienting parents to special education service delivery. Principal Lambert noted that parents are engaged in conversations regarding every initiative and the school continually seeks parent support of individual students so that students are not overwhelmed with options for additional support.

Dr. Robison also inquired about changes that were made to handle AYP shortcomings in math several years ago and the present. Mr. Lambert stated that AYP was previously handled by pairing math teachers with special educators, but that success was variable. His hope is that an upcoming course offered by EDC will bridge this gap, noting that successful teaming requires significant development. Twenty-seven math and special education teachers will participate in the three-day course.

The Committee was impressed with the extent of curriculum integration across the grades, the attention given to the desire for Grade 8 art, and the breadth of new curriculum initiatives. Principal Lambert credited the administrative team for his successful first year.

3. FY11 Budget

The fixed-growth budget will be presented to the Finance Committee on January 21. This budget was developed based primarily on actual costs and salary figures and would require an override. Revenues remain unknown; however, State revenue is projected to be down by 10%. Without an override, this would result in 0% growth. Superintendent Brackett presented summaries of 0% and 1% non override budgets. A 0% budget would require more than \$1 million in cuts, corresponding to 17 FTE's. The significance of such cuts is magnified by the recent negotiation efforts, which resulted in more than \$1 million in savings. A 1% budget corresponds to a shortfall of more than \$700K, corresponding to 12 FTE's. The \$182K in federal stimulus funds received for this year is not accounted for in either scenario.

Dr. Brackett asked the Committee to consider what might be cut to meet the anticipated financial shortfall. He also suggested the possibility of increasing revenue through mechanisms such as offset enhancements or increasing facility use or student activity fees. Mary Will reported that she is gathering information about contracted services from food service vendors. The Town and District continue to explore the possibility of facility consolidation.

The Budget Working Group will convene to define a non override budget target and to discuss if an override will be considered. The District will be in a better position to define its budget when the governor's budget is established. There is consensus at the State level on a revenue growth rate of 3%. This is higher than last year, but does not account for the loss of stimulus funds.

Superintendent Brackett reported that the G4 met and identified 14 areas, including food services, to examine for possible collaboration or consolidation; however, cost savings are projected to fall far short of \$1 million.

Mary Will reported that of the several projects submitted to the Capital Improvement Planning Committee, the rooftop HVAC installation at Nixon was accepted.

4. School Committee Report

Susan Iuliano outlined a recent SJC ruling concerning the superintendent evaluation process utilized by the Wayland School Committee. There is some confusion surrounding the implications of the ruling, which touches on both open meeting and public records laws. Guidances by MASC and other groups are expected to be published in February. The Committee agreed to retain its evaluation tool, but defer defining the process and timeline until March.

5. Open Forum

No comments.

6. Superintendent's Report

(a) Donations

Dr. Brackett informed the Committee that he accepted with appreciation a 35-gallon aquarium and stand, complete with frogs, donated by Daniel Hall to Michal Mueller's middle school science classroom.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to accept with thanks, one ActivBoard for the Haynes music room from the Haynes Organization of Parents. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

(b) Recognitions

None.

(c) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

- (d) Personnel Actions
None.

7. Minutes—Regular Session, December 9, 2009

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2009 Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

8. Communications

As outlined in the Communications Packet.

9. Members' Forum

Dr. Mealey read the following statement on behalf of the SEA:

The SEA is committed to maintaining the staffing at 100% for the next school year. We believe that any cuts to our current level of services would create a serious erosion in the quality of education for the children of Sudbury.

Jeff Beeler reported that the solar grant funds were received. He advised that Mike Melnick, Co-Chair of the Permanent Building Committee, will be coordinating with Mary Will regarding this project. As a courtesy, Mike Melnick also asked that the Committee be informed that all of the town's and school's roofs are scheduled to be assessed by the PBC, rather than just the two school roofs previously designated.

Dr. Brackett asked the Committee to reassess the process of completing and presenting the State of the School reports.

Dr. Robison asked about the need to go on record to clarify the information presented at last night's Special Session regarding redistricting. Superintendent Brackett will prepare a list of FAQ's with the Committee's input.

Jeff Beeler asked about the possibility of including a presentation of a non override budget to clarify concerns about class size and redistricting. Redistricting does not significantly affect class size; class size is a function of the budget. The consensus of the Committee is that the issues should be kept separate, but that as a point of confusion, it must somehow be addressed.

11. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:42 p.m.

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

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary