

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Wednesday April 6, 2011**

**Present:** Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jeff Beeler, Vice Chairman;  
Dr. Rich Robison, Michele MacDonald, Lisa Gutch

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

**Open Session**

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

**1. Data Management Initiative**

Assistant Superintendent Bob Milley reported on efforts to develop strategies for utilizing data to inform instruction. The State's data warehouse has proved inadequate for even simple reports; the District's efforts will focus on real-time analysis and reporting that the State's system does not address. The District engaged a consulting firm, TECedge, and with the firm's assistance, formed a data specialist team, established a charter, and developed an action plan. A select group will meet to determine which types of reports to develop first.

The District also makes use of the IPass system and had a half-day meeting with executives from its vendor, IMG. Although IMG is not a data analysis or reporting firm, there are other areas of strength that might provide a benefit to the District. Among these are training for administrators, scheduling, and data collection and distribution.

The Committee asked about sustainability over time, report development, the leadership transition plan, and the role of TECedge in the process moving forward. Mr. Milley stated that TECedge will continue to work with SPS into the start of the next fiscal year, with a focus on developing the District's self-sufficiency.

**2. FY12 Budget and Budget Process**

Susan Iuliano outlined upcoming dates related to the budget process. The Committee will likely meet during the week of April vacation in order to include information from the bids on the food service RFP, which are due April 15. The FinCom is scheduled to meet on April 25 and the Board of Selectmen on April 26. Rich Robison noted that the House budget will be debated over the next week, with the Senate's proposal expected in May or June.

Superintendent Brackett presented an alternative way of thinking about a non-override budget, developed with input from the 20/20 Committee.

The non-override budget submitted for the Warrant in December represented a \$370K deficit over the roll-up budget. Among the elements to be considered, some of which were not initially included, are the food service contract (\$100K), circuit breaker funding at 56% (\$165K), facility fees (\$60K), insurance adjustments (\$38K), and retirement adjustments (\$25K). These approximations, including an assumption of no change in revenue from the initial Chapter 70 projections and flat local receipts, in total would offset the \$370K deficit.

The Committee recognized the continued benefit to the District from collective bargaining agreements, as well as the Town's agreement to allow SPS to retain the fiscal benefit from reducing its benefits costs. In addition, savings have resulted from fewer employees and from special education costs that shifted to LS.

The above assumptions would allow the District to maintain its current staffing level, add back the Curtis house administrator, hire a 0.5 FTE assistant principal for Haynes, and hire a shared facilities manager. The assumptions would not permit the District to address other of its identified critical needs, including elementary math support, Grade 8 art, increased number of teacher assistants, custodial coverage, counseling support, and curriculum leaders in ELA and social studies.

Jeff Beeler noted that the percent change over FY11 is 1.87%, as opposed to the just under 4.5% increase projected at the time the collective bargaining agreement was negotiated. He asked the Committee to consider how best to present its message while also assisting LS in getting support for its budget if it appears that meeting the critical needs of SPS is balanced against the prospect of LS losing core teachers. Rich Robison commented that perhaps the allocation formula was not intended to be hard and fast.

**3. Transportation Fees: Town Warrant Article**

Susan Iuliano reported that the transportation fee Article is in the Warrant. She circulated an amended draft and asked the Committee to consider if it will move forward with the Article or indefinitely postpone. Ms. Iuliano has conferred with DESE and suggested the Committee consider requesting an advisory opinion. In prior years, the District's legal counsel had opined that the District would likely lose a legal challenge if it charged fees to all riders.

The Committee agreed that if it will move forward at Town Meeting, it should have some idea about the fee structure. Mary Will stated that transportation fees currently do not cover costs. She will work out cost scenarios for the Committee's consideration. Additionally, the Committee will refine its goals in terms of balancing equity against operating budget considerations and continue the discussion at the next Regular Session.

**4. Shared Facilities Manager**

Tabled.

**5. Appoint Food Service Contract Award Committee**

Mary Will stated that the RFP was distributed two weeks ago and that four strong companies attended a pre-bid meeting. The District benefited from input from two parents, Jill Levine Bradford, an attorney, and Kim Prendergast, a dietician. The deadline for receipt of proposals is April 15.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Rich Robison, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to appoint Jeff Beeler, Lisa Gutch, Kim Prendergast, Jill Bradford, Rita Skog, John Brackett, and Mary Will as members of the Award Committee for the Food Service Contract. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**6. School Committee Report**

No comments.

**7. Open Forum**

No Comments.

**8. Superintendent's Report**

(a) Donations  
None.

(b) Recognitions

Superintendent Brackett reported that a Curtis Destination Imagination team qualified at

the state level to attend the global competition in Tennessee.

(c) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

(d) Personnel Actions

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

**9. Minutes—March 9, 2011 Special Session**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2011 Special Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

**10. Communications**

Jeff Beeler reported that Town Manager Maureen Valente received notice from the Massachusetts SBA that the estimated maximum grant approved for the Noyes Green Repair project is \$876,673, which represents 35.42% of eligible, approved costs. Although this differs from the possible maximum by about \$40,000, the proposed work is expected to be carried out in full. All three projects are currently out for bid.

**11. Members' Forum**

Superintendent Brackett commented on the Haynes power outage, which will result in having to make up the school day. The District is leaning toward extending the school year for Haynes to Thursday, June 23. Parents and staff will be consulted before the decision is finalized.

Dr. Brackett also reported on the two successful showings of *Race to Nowhere*. He noted that Rich Robison served as a moderator for the first showing and encouraged all to continue the dialogue.

Bob Mealey announced that the Softball Bonanza fundraiser will be held on May 20.

**12. Adjourn**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Rich Robison, to adjourn the Regular Session and move to Executive Session to discuss strategy for negotiation with nonunion personnel, as discussion in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the School Committee, not to return to Open Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:22 p.m.

Yes Susan Iuliano

Yes Jeff Beeler

Yes Rich Robison

Yes Michele MacDonald

Yes Lisa Gutch

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary