

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday January 18, 2012
Ephraim Curtis Middle School**

Present: Jeff Beeler, Chairman; Susan Iuliano, Vice Chairperson
Dr. Rich Robison, Lisa Gutch, Ellen Winer Joachim

Also Present: Dr. Anne Wilson, Superintendent; Dr. Judy Malone Neville, Assistant Superintendent;
Mary Will, Business and Finance Director; Betsy Joseph, SEA

Open Session

Jeff Beeler called the Open Session to order at 7:33 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

2. Curtis CPO Welcome

Principal Steven Lambert introduced CPO Co-Chairs, Christina Granahan, Marybeth Madigan, and Carrie Lucchese. Ms. Granahan reported on a successful March Madness fundraiser that allowed for the purchase of a laptop cart for Grade 8 and an ActivBoard for the library. The CPO also sponsored the One Book One School summer reading project, a fall social, a cookie sampler, and a faculty luncheon. Ms. Granahan commented that the CPO is assessing its role: as school budgets become more constrained, the parent organization has made adjustments from simply parent volunteer activities to a focus on marketing and fundraising. She noted that it is becoming more difficult to engage volunteers as well as to make requests for donations. She lauded the efforts of CPO Co-Treasurers Jamie Vandervelden and Denise Garzone. Under their leadership, Curtis is benefiting from proceeds on purchases through Amazon.com. The treasurers have also worked to streamline fundraising that occurs through the theater troupe and the music program. Additionally, the treasurers worked with the Attorney General's office on an audit.

Marybeth Madigan praised Principal Lambert for welcoming parent volunteers at Curtis. Carrie Lucchese added that the Curtis community is very invested in our children's education. Special praise was offered for Mr. Lamoureux, who donates proceeds from the ballroom dance program to Curtis. This year, Mr. Lamoureux requested the purchase and installation of outdoor lights so that students wait for their rides in a well-lit area.

The Committee thanked the CPO for all of its efforts. Jeff Beeler commented that parent organizations at each school have noted the difficulty in recruiting volunteers. He noted that the Committee is grateful for the CPO's support of the District in meeting core needs.

1. Update on Green Repair Project

Jeff Beeler provided an overview of the Noyes Green Repair project, which required, among other aspects, a time-sensitive submission of a statement of interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), a Special Town Meeting and Special Election, and a narrow window for repairs to be completed following design-phase work and the bidding and award of contracts. Once funding was obtained, the Permanent Building Committee, under the leadership of Mike Melnick, oversaw the project. The MSBA provided 35.42% of the approved, eligible costs of the project as part of the stimulus-related MSBA program.

Mr. Melnick distributed copies of the initial project schedule that was presented at the Special Town Meeting last January. He stated that former Superintendent, John Brackett, worked with Jeff Beeler to prepare both the SOI and the presentation for the Special Town Meeting. Mr.

Melnick reported that the roofing was completed in July. The boilers were installed in August and commissioned in mid-October. Given the desire to execute the work when school was not in session, a consistent concern was the long lead time required to fabricate the windows. A tight delivery window just weeks before the start of school required installation after hours for those windows installed once the school year had commenced. Hurricane-related power loss at the window fabrication site and flooding at the screen fabrication site contributed to small delays. Mr. Melnick praised the Noyes staff and administrators for making accommodations for work to be completed once school started.

Mr. Melnick reported that the initial project budget was \$2.6 Million. The actual total project costs were \$2,309,358, with \$733,677 coming from the MSBA and the remainder from the Town. Funds from the MSBA, below budget bids due to Sudbury being one of the first communities to go out to bid under the Green Repair program and incentives from National Grid, resulted in savings to the Town of in excess of \$1 Million as compared to the initial projected total cost for the project.

Mr. Melnick commented on an additional challenge to the 1950's flat-roof design: risks with the weight of snow and the effects of drifting. Repairs to address related structural concerns occurred over the Christmas break.

Jeff Beeler thanked Mr. Melnick for his service to the project, which was completed (almost) within the intentionally aggressive schedule at an extraordinary pace of 11 months and well under budget.

6. MSBA SOI for Nixon Roof Repair

Mr. Beeler reported that Mr. Melnick recently informed the Committee of a new opportunity for funding through the MSBA. An SOI was prepared for roof repairs at Nixon. He noted that it required emergency meetings of both the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee. He noted that an additional Committee vote related to this matter was warranted.

Motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Susan Iulano. Having convened in an Open Meeting on January 18th, 2012 in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, move to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated January 11, 2012 for the General John Nixon School located at 472 Concord Road, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future:

Priority #5 - Replacement, renovation, or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility. The project at Nixon Elementary includes replacement of a failed portion of the roof which leaks and lacks sufficient insulation as well as repairs of the roof over classrooms and the gymnasium constructed in 1994; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to authorize the School Committee Chairman and Superintendent to execute any necessary documents related to the MSBA SOI for roof repair at Nixon School. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

7. Approval of Warrant Article Submission

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve submission of a Bookmark Article regarding Nixon Roof Repair – MSBA Project, text as follows. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

ROOF REPLACEMENT AND REPAIR – NIXON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MSBA PROGRAM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to be expended under the direction of the Permanent Building Committee/School Building Committee for the purpose of the repair/replacement of a portion of the roof, and all expenses connected therewith, at the General John Nixon Elementary School, 472 Concord Road, which project would materially extend the useful life of the school and preserve an asset that otherwise is capable of supporting the required educational program. The Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) grant program is a non-entitlement, discretionary program based on need, as determined by the MSBA, and any project costs the Town incurs in excess of any grant approved by and received from the MSBA shall be the sole responsibility of the Town. Any grant that Sudbury may receive from the MSBA for the Project shall not exceed the lesser of (1) percent (TBD) of eligible approved project costs, as determined by the MSBA, or (2) the total maximum grant amount determined by the MSBA.

Submitted by the School Committee, Sudbury Public Schools. (Two-thirds vote required)

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve submission of a Bookmark Article jointly with the Board of Selectmen regarding Town and school roofs, text as follows. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

TOWN AND SCHOOL ROOFS

To see what sum the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, or appropriate from available funds, to be expended under the direction of the Permanent Building Committee for the purpose of constructing, reconstructing, or making extraordinary repairs to the roofs or portions thereof at the following buildings: Nixon School, Fairbank Community Center/Pool complex, Highway Department, and Curtis Middle School, Loring and Haynes Elementary Schools and all expenses therewith including professional and engineering, the preparation of plans, specifications and bidding documents, supervision of work and borrowing costs; and to determine whether said sum shall be raised by borrowing or otherwise; or act on anything relative thereto.

Submitted by the Board of Selectmen and Sudbury School Committee.

3. Curtis State of the School

Principal Stephen Lambert started by introducing members of the School Improvement Council, some of whom were in attendance. He commented on the enrollment figures for this year and those projected for next year. Total enrollment is expected to remain constant; however, with the large incoming eighth grade, administrators are considering increasing the number of homerooms from 46 to 47.

Principal Lambert also noted that administrators are exploring options for scheduling. A committee was formed to work with consultants from IMG/iPASS (the student information system used at SPS.).

Curtis staff numbers 104.2 FTE, with eight new members this year. Curtis is very invested in meeting and exceeding educational goals, recognizing effort and achievement, and building community. To that end, efforts are focused on closing the achievement gap and utilizing

research-based assessments. The GRADE assessments are in place for Grade 6; Grade 7 will be added next year and Grade 8, the following year.

The focus of professional development and two upcoming ILAP days is Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which is a research-based framework for designing curriculum based on the neuroscience of learning.

Grade 7 House Administrator, Peter Fardig, noted that the use of data coaches is part of a District-wide initiative. He indicated that the phased-in GRADE exam will serve as a common assessment for all classes at each grade level. Additionally, Curtis will incorporate the new Common Core standards for ELA and mathematics and new science and technology standards.

Principal Lambert reported that co-teaching between math teachers and special educators is continuing in order to facilitate meeting AYP.

Grade 8 House Administrator, Elizabeth Greer, reported on initiatives designed to recognize effort and achievement. Student peer recognition has been incorporated into the structure of the PAWS, Positive Actions Within our School, program.

Principal Lambert announced the winners of the recent Geography Bee: AnnaMelora St. George, Grade 6; Gabe Longtine, Grade 7; and Jacob Fisher, Grade 8, who was the overall winner. Mr. Fisher recently took a written test to qualify for the state finals.

Mr. Lambert also reported that citizenship awards, based on teacher nominations, are given each trimester. Those awarded in June will involve peer nominations. He announced that student Ingrid Hjerpe served as the Curtis Ambassador for Governor Patrick's Project 351, which recognizes youth leaders. Ms. Hjerpe was invited to the State House and also visited a food pantry. Curtis will once again present the Beverly Hollis award to a deserving teacher. Last year's recipient was Barbara Ryan.

Grade 6 House Administrator, Angela Menke, spoke on school culture, where efforts are focused on building community between and among students, staff, and parents. Staff recently attended an MSAA-sponsored conference on community building. Curtis plans to explore incorporating an advisory program at the school. Ms. Menke reported that staff are sharing best practices at each faculty meeting. Additionally, staff social events have been planned, as well as school-related events such as next week's Dancing With The Staff.

Principal Lambert displayed slides summarizing data on school connectedness, stressors, bullying, and school climate. These were excerpted from the Wellness presentation of the Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey. He announced that a substance use prevention workshop for staff is planned. The facilitator will also provide a workshop for Grade 8 students. Elizabeth Greer reported that both adults and kids made similar statements regarding risk behaviors. To be consistent with the elementary schools, Curtis developed a behavior chart using the same categories and colors. She noted that anti-bullying expert, Stan Davis, will utilize the Curtis behavior chart as a model for other communities.

Within the context of a school-connectedness survey, a total of 52 students self-identified as not having an adult at school that they could turn to with a problem. These students have been provided with silent mentors, a program now in its third year. Mr. Lambert also reported that one Grade 8 team conducted a survey related to hours of sleep and homework. Homework was cited as a major stress by 78% of the students surveyed, with 53% of the students on the team reporting going to sleep at 11:00 or later and 42% reporting doing three or more hours of homework each night. Eighty-one percent of students reported a bed-time of 10:00; reading, listening to music, watching TV, and "lying there" were some of the activities listed for those who reported a gap between bed-time and the time they fell asleep. Forty-nine percent of those students surveyed reported having 4–5 days with activities after school.

The same team had students keep a homework log. The median time per subject ranged from 14 minutes for science to 26 minutes for history, with a total median time of 100 minutes. The discrepancy between reports of homework time and logged homework time was noted. Principal Lambert reported that the newly incorporated homework relief program has been well received by families.

Mr. Lambert outlined the extracurricular activities offered through the school. In addition to sports, he noted that 40% of students are involved with the music programs. A student-initiated new club, Model UN, has 38 participants. Students are also active partners in the METCO program, having made a trip to Franklin Park in October and looking forward to participating in ice skating on Frog Pond in February. Mr. Lambert also mentioned the upcoming Dancing With The Staff event, which includes 20 groups, 32 staff participants, and 100 student participants. This year's musical is *Honk*, which will run March 15–18.

Questions From The Committee:

Susan Iuliano thanked Curtis administrators for inspiring a culture of connectedness. She called the feedback on stress and homework helpful and asked for more information on developing an advisory program. Angela Menke noted that data suggests that advisory programs are one of the best ways to build community but noted that proper implementation is crucial to success of such programs. Curtis has assigned a committee to explore this option.

Jeff Beeler also thanked the administrators for their informative presentation, both in terms of what is working well and in terms of opportunities for improvement. He noted in particular that 12% of students failed to indicate on a survey that they felt safe at school. He noted his view that students will not learn as well when they feel unsafe. He appreciates the efforts to bring that number down.

Lisa Gutch added her thanks for looking into scheduling options. In response to her query about the impact of having a third house administrator, Principal Lambert stated that it allows appropriate and adequate focus that was not always possible last year. While acknowledging the challenge of having two new administrators among the three, Mr. Lambert reported that having three administrators has allowed him to be more visible and has made the evaluation process much easier.

Rich Robison acknowledged the efforts to continue with the co-teaching model between general education math teachers and special educators. He emphasized the value of AYP in identifying and calling attention to such performance gaps.

Rich Robison asked Principal Lambert what keeps him awake and what the Committee can do to make things better. Mr. Lambert replied that this is a large school, numbering over 1,000 students and 104.2 staff. He wants both staff and students to arrive and leave each day in a happy mood. He thanked the Committee for the addition of a third house administrator and requested that the Committee keep in mind the desire to add another homeroom. Angela Menke added that it helps to know that the Committee continues to appreciate the efforts of the Curtis community.

2. Update of the FY13 Budget

Superintendent Anne Wilson reported no adjustments to the previously voted budget, which involves a shortfall of \$248,290, with some budget elements still outstanding. Kindergarten registration stands at 202, 175 for full-day and 27 for half-day. Forty-eight expected registrations are outstanding.

Dr. Wilson noted that the Committee will be required to vote on a non-override budget. For illustrative purposes, she presented such a budget that equates the \$248K shortfall with 5 FTE's. The staffing levels shown reflected the budget voted at the last meeting: a 1.0 FTE increase at the middle school in Unified Arts and a 1.0 general FTE at the elementary level.

Jeff Beeler asked about the timeline for rectifying scheduling issues at Curtis as it relates to adequate preparation for Town Meeting concerning the issue of staffing within the projected budget. The timelines are not expected to overlap, with scheduling information expected well in advance of Town Meeting.

Mary Will reported on the need to vote on two Revolving Funds for inclusion in the Warrant.

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve the continuation of the District's Instrumental Music Revolving Fund at the current limit of \$75,000, as outlined. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the continuation of the District's Bus Revolving Fund at an increased limit of \$450,000, as outlined. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Susan Iuliano suggested the Committee vote to authorize the School Committee Chairman and Superintendent to make changes to the Warrant Article related to the Nixon roof repair project.

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to authorize the School Committee Chairman and Superintendent to make any necessary changes to the Warrant Article related to the MSBA SOI for roof repairs at Nixon School. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

5. Initial Discussion of FY13 Calendar

Superintendent Wilson circulated a draft calendar that generally aligns with the proposed calendar for L-S and includes a pre-Labor Day start of August 28. School would dismiss on June 21, or June 14 if no snow days are used. Dr. Wilson indicated that no major projects are planned that might compromise the calendar. She also indicated that the District is trying to coordinate with both L-S and Lincoln on professional development days.

8. School Committee Report

(a) Shared Facilities Department/Manager

Jeff Beeler reported that the Board of Selectmen had unanimously voted the previous night to approve and enter into the Memorandum of Agreement with the School Committee to form a shared facilities Department. He noted that efforts to bring this matter forward had been extensive and expressed his appreciation for the tireless and effective efforts of Susan Iuliano in bringing this process to fruition.

The Committee was provided a copy of the MOA that was approved by the Selectmen. Susan Iuliano described the MOA as a transitional agreement that will incorporate elements over time and includes multiple assessment points. The MOA was designed to ensure that both the Town and the District maintain responsibility for their respective buildings, as well as exercise appropriate authority and oversight for those buildings.

Shared staffing includes only the manager and a part-time assistant; each cost center will budget for the shared staff separately. The Committee discussed the initial scope of duties envisioned, which entail high-level assessment and planning. Rich Robison commented that a steering or advisory committee might be necessary to ensure that the manager is not consumed by day-to-day responsibilities. At this time, the Superintendent and Town Manager plan to serve in this capacity. Jeff Beeler added that very direct communication between the Superintendent and Town Manager and between the Chairmen of the School Committee and Board of Selectmen was required to get to this point and noted his expectation that continued direct communication will be necessary to maintain the approved vision for the department and manager.

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to approve and enter into the MOA as presented. The Vote was 5–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to authorize Jeff Beeler to sign on behalf of the School Committee the MOA for a shared facilities department and manager. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

(b) Communications/Public Relations

Lisa Gutch announced that it is time to schedule the next Pre-K Parent Coffee, which she proposed take place during the second week of March. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to hold a separate, more general coffee, in addition to this second Pre-K coffee. Ms. Gutch will circulate proposed dates to the Committee.

9. Open Forum

No comments.

10. Superintendent's Report

(a) Donations

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to accept with thanks a donation of a laptop cart, including 13 laptops, and one LCD projector with a total value of \$14,983, from the Haynes Organization of Parents. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to accept with thanks a donation of one Kindle and \$100 in Amazon gift cards received from Loring families as a gift to Brad Jones' Grade 5 classroom. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

(b) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

(c) Personnel Actions

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

Additionally, Superintendent Wilson announced that she is recommending Todd Curtis for the position of Assistant Superintendent. She outlined the process involved with identifying appropriate candidates and thanked those involved in the hiring process. Mr. Curtis is currently a Principal in Shrewsbury and a doctoral candidate at Boston College. He has specific expertise in special education. Jeff Beeler, while noting that the hiring decision was properly Dr. Wilson's, recommended holding off on the Committee's vote to approve the recommendation until the next Regular Session, which Mr. Curtis will attend, so that the Committee can welcome him to the District at the same time.

11. Minutes

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve the minutes of the January 4, 2012 Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2012 Emergency Meeting as amended. The vote was 3–0 in favor. Ellen Joachim and Rich Robison abstained.

12. Members' Forum

Sheila Cusolito sought clarification on some of this evening's agenda items.

Judy Malone Neville highlighted some of the activities of the January 13 PD day, which comprised 19 workshops. She thanked Curtis staff for hosting.

Rich Robison suggested a discussion at some point to clarify the relationship between the PTO's, the District/schools and the School Committee. Dr. Wilson will follow up with the Curtis CPO regarding their recent audit.

Dr. Robison also reported that the Governor's budget is expected on January 25. Three areas of concern have been identified: an expected shortfall of \$1.1 Billion, a leftover deficit from FY12, and reduced tax revenues, all of which combine with the continued rise in program costs.

Jeff Beeler announced that the Superintendent evaluation process will be discussed at the next Regular Session.

13. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with union personnel, as discussion in Open Meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, not to return to Open Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:08 p.m.

Yes Jeff Beeler
Yes Susan Iuliano
Yes Rich Robison
Yes Lisa Gutch
Yes Ellen Winer Joachim

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary