

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Wednesday March 21, 2012  
Fairbank Senior Center**

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

**Also Present:** Dr. Judy Malone Neville, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Will, Director of Business and Finance; Lynn Connor, SEA

**Open Session**

Jeff Beeler called the Open Session to order at 7:40 p.m. He announced that Superintendent Wilson was called away on a personal matter. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

**1. Update of FY13 Budget**

Director of Business and Finance Mary Will reported that all budgets were submitted to Town Hall for the Warrant. Subsequent to the submission, the premiums for benefits came in lower than anticipated; the line item for the benefits reserve fund will be adjusted at Town Meeting. The shortfall of approximately \$250,000 will be adjusted as a function of the benefits savings. Ms. Will emphasized that the budget does not include any increases in the salary schedule; it does include salary adjustments due to step changes.

Susan Iuliano provided an outline of the budget process moving forward to Town Meeting. LS faces a shortfall that was discussed with the Finance Committee on March 19. There are some funds available from various sources that could be utilized to fill some of the gap. An additional aspect of the shortfall arose from the large increase in out-of-district placements. LS has applied to a state "extraordinary relief" fund that is part of the circuit breaker in order to fund this special education shortfall. It is not clear how the approximately \$5 Million in funds will be distributed to the 40 districts that applied for relief. Ms. Iuliano reported that the Finance Committee plans to wait for information from the state, which will push to the budget process very close to Town Meeting. The Finance Committee also discussed reallocation if LS continues to experience a significant need. The disincentive to SPS and Town employees should reallocation occur was noted.

Lisa Gutch asked if funds that remain in LS's postage meter account must be certified by the State before being available for use from the Excess and Deficiency Fund. Susan Iuliano clarified that the Department of Revenue certifies the amount in this fund in a process that spans multiple years. This results in some funds being unavailable until a subsequent year.

**2. SPS Cafeteria Management Update**

Mary Will characterized this year as a rocky start for Chartwells and SPS. She outlined some of the pros and cons experienced, including not getting the on-site manager interviewed during the RFP process and the need to change the District Manager mid-year. The difficulties with management compounded the challenges with a relatively inexperienced staff. Only two of the 15 former SPS food service employees returned under Chartwells, although all were offered the opportunity. Training of new employees is now complete.

The appeal of the food also suffered: the lunch count is lower over previous years by 100 meals per month across the District. Additionally, there have been issues with delivery of

the meals ordered and with meal quality. The recent incident at Nixon involving undercooked chicken was another setback.

The contract proposed a return of \$30,000 in the first year, which won't be realized; in fact, overall costs will put the program at a deficit of \$50,000. Chartwells will honor the contract, which means the District will not realize a loss. According to Ms. Will, Chartwells has made efforts to listen and meet the expectations of the District. The company recently rehired the former Nixon manager, a highly regarded employee.

Ms. Will recommends that the Committee approve going out to bid on a food service contract again this year. She acknowledged that there are drawbacks to issuing a new RFP, but offered that the District can use what was learned this year to develop it. She stated that she would not bar Chartwells from applying. The Committee has discussed the possibility of jointly bidding with LS in order to realize a cost savings; however, LS is satisfied with its food service and does not plan to go out to bid this year. Ms. Will assured that there will be opportunities to jointly bid in a subsequent year.

**VOTED:** On a motion Susan Iuliano, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the recommendation to issue an RFP for a cafeteria management company for FY13. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

**3. FY13 Lunch Price Increase**

Tabled.

**4. Dissolution of Education Collaborative For Greater Boston**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Rich Robison, that the Sudbury School Committee vote to dissolve ECGB, Inc. by June 30, 2012 or as soon as legally possible thereafter, and further that our representatives for EDCO and ECGB, Inc. be authorized to take all necessary steps to transfer all programs, contracts and available assets, including the Seefurth Fund, from ECGB, Inc. to EDCO by the close of the fiscal year on June 30, 2012, or as soon as legally possible thereafter. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

**5. School Committee Report**

**(a) Communications/Public Relations**

Lisa Gutch reported on the two pre-Kindergarten parent coffees that were held last Wednesday. A total of twenty people attended. Ms. Gutch proposed providing information to families a year or two in advance of their having children in the school system, including establishing an information center for such families on the District website.

Ms. Gutch also announced that the School Committee coffee will occur on May 5 at 9:00 a.m. at the Grange.

**6. Open Forum**

No comments.

**7. Superintendent's Report**

**(a) Bill Schedule**

A Bill Schedule was presented.

**(b) Personnel Actions**

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

## 8. Minutes

**VOTED:** On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Susan Iuliano, to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2012 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

## 9. Members' Forum

Judy Malone Neville reported on the Bridges culminating event, which occurred today at the Senior Center. The program underwent revisions this year. Additionally, a film was produced about the program.

Lisa Gutch attended anti-bullying expert Stan Davis' presentation last week on raising resilient children. She noted the commentary around Dr. Carol Dweck's work related to a fixed vs. a growth mindset in thinking about ways to build resilience in children rather than use labels to describe them or their behaviors. The District has been working closely with Stan Davis on anti-bullying initiatives, including a full-day workshop for staff last year. Mr. Davis will speak at LS on March 28.

Rich Robison reported attending a Sudbury Special Education Parent Advisory Council meeting recently. The award-winning documentary, *Including Samuel*, was shown, followed by a Q&A with Dr. Joseph Petner, the former Principal of the Haggerty Elementary School in Cambridge, featured in the film. He recommended that the District explore the possibility of engaging Dr. Petner to work with staff.

Dr. Robison also recently attended a statewide Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) meeting. The goal of this initiative is to examine curriculum and instruction practices to ensure accessibility to all students via mechanisms such as enhanced instruction and data collection. Dr. Robison suggested this might also present a professional development opportunity.

Dr. Robison reported that there has been no change in the state budget situation. The House budget will likely be announced at the beginning of April. He noted that it was May last year before the DESE determined the distribution of the special education relief funds.

Negotiations are ongoing, with a current focus on the language of the contract. Finally, Dr. Robison asked Members to provide their input for the Superintendent's evaluation.

Sheila Cusolito asked for clarification surrounding the relief funds available from the state.

## 10. 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 4–0 in favor. The time was 8:25 p.m.

Yes     Jeff Beeler  
Yes     Susan Iuliano  
Yes     Rich Robison  
Yes     Lisa Gutch

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary