

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday February 27, 2013
Fairbank Senior Center**

Present: Dr. Rich Robison, Lisa Gutch (8:30 p.m.), Ellen Winer Joachim, Lucie St. George, Bob Armour

Also Present: Dr. Anne Wilson, Superintendent; Dr. Todd Curtis, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Will, Director of Business and Finance; Lynn Connor, SEA

Open Session

Rich Robison called the Open Session to order at 7:32 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Recognitions

Superintendent Wilson congratulated the seven Curtis students who received a total of ten Scholastic Art Awards. Silver and Gold Key winners will have their work displayed at the Massachusetts State Transportation Building in Boston from February 11 through April 19. The following Grade 7 students were honored: Jake Frissora (Honorable Mention, mixed media); Emma Hauck (Honorable Mention, mixed media), Brandon Waddill (Gold Key, mixed media). Grade 8 students honored were: Rohini Guin (Gold Key, painting; Honorable Mention, painting), Jess Orofino (Honorable Mention, painting), Shelley Liu (Silver Key, painting), Maddison Manente (Gold Key, painting; Silver Key, painting; Honorable Mention, painting). Eleven other students also represented Curtis at the Scholastic Art Awards: Peter Lindblom, Hannah Brodsky, Izzy Ross, Bitsy Hamilton, Bailey Prince, Ashley Thomas, Alexa Babick, Brianna Supple, Rachel Wiesler, Lauren Kim, and Megan Wei.

Dr. Wilson also praised Joe Kupczewski, Jim Kelly, the DPW, and the Sudbury PD for their efforts to get the schools ready to open during the recent snowstorms. Dr. Wilson acknowledged the very effective communication between all parties and has renewed appreciation for the challenges the snow brings.

2. Education Collaborative (EDCO) Overview (Colleen Dolan, Executive Director)

The District is one of twenty member districts of the Education Collaborative. Colleen Dolan, who assumed the role of EDCO Executive Director last August, expressed pride in EDCO's work and optimism in its program improvement efforts. Last year's changes in legislation changed the structure of EDCO; however, its programming remained intact. EDCO's Board of Directors consists of one member from each district, either the Superintendent or a School Committee representative. An Advisory Council to the Board includes one non-voting member from each district. Superintendent Wilson represents SPS on the Board; Lucie St. George is the District's Advisory Council member. Another change brought on by the legislation is that the Board of Directors must approve all hires and expenditures and make all decisions on behalf of EDCO rather than the member districts.

Ms. Dolan outlined the programming available through EDCO, which includes several special education programs, as well as contract programs. One contract program represents a partnership with the Federation for Children with Special Needs, of which Rich Robison is Executive Director. The Seefurth Education Center is the professional development arm of EDCO, and the program in which SPS predominantly participates. By contract, teachers must also participate in

the Empowering Multiracial Initiatives curriculum, which EDCO also offers. Other offerings include new School Committee member orientation, leadership roundtables, and the Educator Leadership Institute, which offers teachers graduate level work toward administrative licensing.

Ms. Dolan reported that the District's basic assessment is \$15,289. Enrollments are added to that basic assessment. Ms. Dolan presented a cost comparison of daily program rates for EDCO and private placements and emphasized the cost efficiency and diversity benefits of EDCO placements. She also noted that PD and workshop opportunities are offered at low or no cost.

Ms. Dolan reported that a Collaborative Commission, on which Rich Robison serves, is assessing the role of the state's 30 Collaboratives in taking on tasks and initiatives mandated by DESE. She expressed a readiness and willingness of Collaboratives to serve in this way. Ms. Dolan remarked on the challenge associated with assessing the need for six Collaboratives in the Greater Boston area: Collaboratives cannot be merged; one Collaborative would have to be dissolved and its programs absorbed by the other.

Bob Armour asked Ms. Dolan where she thinks Sudbury is getting the most value from EDCO and where the District could get more. Ms. Dolan responded that like most districts, Sudbury makes heavy use of PD programs and the leadership roundtables. She stated that the special education programs don't seem to have been a priority at EDCO, but that changes are planned to make these a more desirable option. In addition, the assessment program requires additional staff to create a more rigorous assessment. EDCO would like to hire a transition specialist as well. She noted that EDCO does not want to duplicate the programs offered by other Collaboratives in the area, and that the Collaboratives work together to identify their areas of expertise and minimize inefficiencies and duplications.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Curtis commented that he includes EDCO's PD in the District's effort to utilize internal expertise because teachers interact with others from peer districts. Lucie St. George echoed his comments regarding the roundtables. Lynn Connor remarked that the lower costs for PD through EDCO have made it possible for her to attend more than she might otherwise. She also favors the 'make and take' approach, where she's been able to bring a manipulative back to her classroom.

Chairman Rich Robison noted that the District utilizes CASE Collaborative for special education as well as transportation and Accept for additional programs because it is most cost-effective to make use of services through a membership arrangement. He noted that the Commission's report will be out in April and that the legislature will likely want to maximize efficiency and avoid program duplication.

Dr. Robison asked Ms. Dolan to explain the status of EDCO employees. Ms. Dolan replied that the Collaborative is similar to a school district in its use of public dollars. Teachers belong to the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System and the Board of Directors approves all expenditures. Although in some ways the Collaborative functions in a manner similar to a 501c3 nonprofit and have an option to raise private funds, its governance is aligned more as a municipality than a nonprofit or other private entity. Employees of some Collaboratives are unionized. Program fees are collected after services are provided.

3. FY13 Budget Update

Superintendent Wilson reported that there is no new information that changes the budgets approved by the Committee and presented to the FinCom. She noted that the GIC will set its rates in March and open enrollment will occur in April. When those numbers are known, benefits costs and savings will be better defined.

4. Odyssey Trip Approval

Mary Will outlined fee increases that are necessary to cover the costs associated with Odyssey.

VOTED: On a motion by Ellen Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to approve the Odyssey 13 trip as presented. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

5. Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Report

Dr. Wilson provided an update on progress made to date on her four main objectives. Because of the phase-in of the new teacher evaluation system, the mid-cycle report is late relative to the final report, which will be given in April. In future years the mid-cycle report will occur by December on goals approved in June. Dr. Wilson's goals are (1) to reduce proficiency gaps, particularly in math, which includes implementing Common Core standards; (2) to increase communication with parents; (3) to implement the new educator evaluation; and (4) to ensure that budget preparation occurs in a timely manner. She asked the Committee for feedback on the body of evidence made available to them so that she can make adjustments for the final presentation in April. Dr. Wilson offered a particular concern around parent communications and the low attendance at some Superintendent drop-ins. She plans to survey the parent community to better understand how to encourage participation.

Bob Armour asked if there's a good baseline against which to assess improvements in student learning. Dr. Wilson stated that at present, MCAS is the only consistent measure available; however, the Professional Learning Communities and Data Teams are able to mine the results for specific issues.

Mr. Armour also commented that efforts around communication seem to be making a positive difference. Ellen Joachim added that despite poor turnout, she believes it matters to parents that the opportunity to speak with the Superintendent is there.

6. Appointment of School Committee Representative to the Permanent Building Committee

VOTED: On a motion by Bob Armour, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to accept the resignation of Thomas Scarlata as the appointee of the Sudbury Public Schools to the Permanent Building Committee, effective November 16, 2012, and to appoint John M. Porter to serve as the Schools appointee to the Permanent Building Committee for the unexpired term ending May 31, 2014.

The vote was 5–0 in favor.

7. School Committee Report

Liaison/Subcommittee Reports

Lisa Gutch reported that the FinCom is reviewing and voting on some 30 articles for Town Meeting and that Chairman Rao agreed to let the School Committee know when FinCom deliberates on articles affecting the cost centers.

Ms. Gutch also reported on a meeting held last Wednesday for the Nixon roof project. Attendees included the owner's project manager and designer, as well as members of the PBC. Some design decisions were made. In addition, the instructions to bidders were clarified. The target date for construction to begin is June 25, with a completion date of August 16. Ms. Gutch praised PBC members Elaine Jones, Bill Braun, and Mike Melnick, as well as Combined Facilities Director Jim Kelly.

Finally, Ms. Gutch reported that the LS teacher's contract has been ratified. Chairman Robison circulated the press release to the Committee.

Ellen Joachim reported that a meeting with the Marlborough DPW was scheduled for today to explore the option of tying into their waste treatment facility for the Route 20 business district. This appears to be the only alternative to an in-town sewer system. Rich Robison added that if Marlborough proves to be an unworkable option, the School Committee will be urged to take a

formal position on the use of the Curtis property for the leaching field. He confirmed that construction would result in the loss of the ball fields for one season.

Dr. Robison also reported that Park and Recreation representatives would like to meet with the Committee.

Bob Armour stated that the Fairbank Task Force recommended to the Board of Selectmen that a study be conducted on future opportunities for the community center. The Task Force also prioritized assessing interim repair work, with the hope that some work can be started as early as this summer.

Lucie St. George reported on meeting with Superintendent Wilson and Lisa Gutch as part of the work of the Committee's communications work. The first taping of an as-yet untitled cable program will occur on March 18. Ms. St. George will interview Superintendent Wilson in the first installation.

Ms. St. George also reported meeting with METCO Director Janine Dailey, who will present to the Committee on March 13. She also commented on her attendance today at an EDCO roundtable on building long-term relationships between school committees and superintendents.

Mr. Armour added that he will try to attend a MASC meeting in Framingham tomorrow evening.

8. Open Forum

Sonya Stevens, Dutton Road, reported that the recent Superintendent's chat was not listed on the website, which might account for the low attendance.

9. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wilson reported that she and Dr. Curtis attended a Curtis Clover Team African American biography fair today. She remarked on students' ability to highlight the positive character traits of the individuals they studied.

Dr. Wilson also announced that the Coordinated Program Review was completed before vacation and that the two evaluators were very complimentary at the exit interview. The report will be available in May or June. Superintendent Wilson praised Debbie Dixon and her team for overseeing the Review and providing the necessary documentation to the evaluators.

(a) Security Update

Superintendent Wilson thanked Mary Will for getting the bid out for the new security system. Johnson Controls was awarded the contract with a bid of \$53K, which covers the purchase and installation of cameras and buzzers, including three monitors and two doors at each school. If all materials are available, installation should be completed by the end of March. Additional front office time was added into the 'level staff plus' budget to accommodate the new security measures.

Dr. Wilson stated that the District is purchasing a printer and software in order to implement the staff identification system.

With regard to the recent instance of serving undercooked chicken, Dr. Wilson praised Whitson's for its response, which includes enhanced supervision in all kitchens and transmission of temperature logs to the Business Office. Routine, but unscheduled, spot checks will also be implemented and all staff participated in retraining.

(b) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

(d) Personnel Actions

As presented in the Personnel Packet.

10. Minutes

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Lucie St. George, to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2013 Regular Session. The vote 4–0 in favor. Bob Armour abstained.

11. Members' Forum

Lucie St. George announced the upcoming Curtis musical production of *Willy Wonka Jr.*, which will run Thursday March 14 through Sunday March 17. A special dress rehearsal performance for seniors will occur on Tuesday, March 12.

Mary Will reported that the three cost centers will provide the Board of Selectmen with priorities for capital expenditures based on needs identified by the Strategic Planning Committee over the last several years.

Rich Robison stated that Governor Patrick's budget emphasizes transportation and education. There is concern that the legislature is lukewarm to increasing the income tax and decreasing the sales tax. The House will debate its budget on March 14. The status of the federal budget creates uncertainty in both direct funding and federal funding that the state passes on to municipalities.

Bob Armour asked to have the annual agenda reviewed at an upcoming meeting. He also asked about the Committee's priorities in the remaining three months. Rich Robison offered that the budget and the Superintendent evaluation are priorities at this time.

Lisa Gutch commented that she's following the Board of Selectmen's discussion on having a 'state of the Town' forum once or twice a year, which passed as a non-binding resolution last year at Town Meeting. She also announced that a legislative forum will occur on March 5 at 7 p.m. at LS and that the League of Women Voters Candidates' Night will be March 7 at 7:15 p.m. at the Goodnow Library.

Todd Curtis echoed Superintendent Wilson's comments on the Grade 6 biography fair, as well as those on the Coordinated Program Review.

Anne Wilson noted that additional audits conducted by the state are upcoming.

12. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Lucie St. George, to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:19 p.m.

Yes	Rich Robison
Yes	Lisa Gutch
Yes	Ellen Winer Joachim
Yes	Bob Armour
Yes	Lucie St. George

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito