

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday April 24, 2013
Fairbank Senior Center**

Present: Dr. Rich Robison, Ellen Winer Joachim, Bob Armour, Lucie St. George

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

Open Session

Rich Robison called the Open Session to order at 7:34 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Announcements

On behalf of the SPS community, Superintendent Wilson expressed condolences to the family of Tabitha Feldberg, who passed away on April 15. Tabitha was a seventh grader at Curtis with two siblings at LS. A memorial service will be held on Sunday at 11:00 a.m. at the Duckett Funeral Home. Dr. Wilson also expressed compassion and sympathy for the Marathon bombing victims and families. She noted that crisis support teams are in place to help maintain school routines. She commended the school counselors, teachers, and administrators for their efforts during this difficult time.

2. Mathematics Common Core Implementation Update (Math Curriculum Coordinator Maggie McGinty, K–5 Math Coaches Stephanie Rousseau and Carolyn Royce)

Maggie McGinty introduced the fundamental tenets of the math curriculum, which she named ‘CORE’ (Coherence, differentiatIOn, Rigor, Excitement). She cited building consistency between classrooms, grades, and schools as a primary focus of coherence. By way of example, the Committee and administrators participated in a game that can be modified and utilized at other grades levels. In terms of differentiation, the focus is on using data to drive instruction and providing built-in tools and materials to allow ‘on-the-spot’ differentiation. The Common Core, with its content and practice standards, was cited as the primary mechanism of ensuring rigor, which primarily takes the form of richer problems. Excitement transcends all topics and activities, particularly as opportunities for collaboration are supported and expanded.

Bob Armour asked about opportunities to measure the effectiveness of these efforts on student performance to supplement the use of MCAS results. Assistant Superintendent Todd Curtis characterized this year as a pilot year, noting that at least two years’ data is necessary to define a trend. He added that teachers are excited with the diagnostic information they’re getting, including through the use of i-Ready adaptive assessments.

Rich Robison commented on the transition from MCAS to the PARCC assessment in the [redacted] and expressed interest in observing the impact of current Grade 6 and 7 activities on those students’ high school experience. Ms. McGinty and both coaches remarked on the high level of enthusiasm

for implementing the Common Core. Ms. St. George asked if this level of success would have been possible without the math coaches. According to Superintendent Wilson, in addition to alleviating anxiety surrounding the Common

Core implementation, coaches have absorbed the burden of delving into both content and resources to provide teachers with a coherent and consistent math curriculum.

3. Superintendent Evaluation

Chairman Rich Robison presented an overview of the evaluation process, which involved shortened timelines between the formative and summative evaluations in this first year of implementation. Ellen Joachim, who oversaw the process in partnership with Lisa Gutch, compiled each Member's evaluation into the summative report. She remarked at the significant alignment of the individual reports, with no significant disparate results. The Committee expressed appreciation to Dr. Wilson for providing a binder of evidence supporting the attainment of her goals, which related to the implementation of statewide standards. Dr. Wilson was praised for her focus on students and for promoting positive learning environments. The Committee expressed appreciation for her efforts, including those designed to foster a professional culture, enhance communications, and engage families. Bob Armour suggested a focus on continued improvement and professional development, particularly in those areas where outcomes will not be known for another year or more.

VOTED: On a motion by Ellen Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to accept the summative report of Superintendent Wilson's evaluation. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

4. FY13 Budget to Actual

Director of Business and Finance Mary Will circulated the budget projections for the rest of year. She commented that things have stayed on course this year and that there's an opportunity to fund some technology improvements and purchases, as well as replace the telephone system at Curtis and the switch gear system at Noyes. She is also surveying teachers for their end-of-year needs and once again plans to pre-purchase SPED tuitions.

Bob Armour asked if any maintenance was put off in order to purchase the security system. Ms. Will stated that all needed maintenance was performed. She also noted areas where she encumbered funds, as well as her expectation that the circuit breaker will offset the significant SPED expense line.

Ms. Will stated that at its meeting on May 6, she will ask the Committee to increase the music revolving fund from \$75K to \$100K for this year, given the size of the program.

5. Approval of Contracts for Director of Business and Finance and Director of Student Services

VOTED: On a motion by Ellen Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to reappoint Mary Will as the Director of Business and Finance effective July 1, 2013 and to

authorize the chairperson of the Committee to execute this employment contract with Mary Will. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Ellen Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to reappoint Debbie Dixson as the Director of Student Services effective July 1, 2013 and to authorize the chairperson of the Committee to execute this employment contract with

Debbie Dixon. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

7. School Committee Report

Ellen Joachim reported that there was no discussion of the House Ways and Means budget at the recent FinCom meeting. She also stated that Jim Rao will step down from the FinCom following Town Meeting.

Rich Robison reported that the education portion of the state budget was debated the other night and that the House Ways and Means budget funds education initiatives at a significantly lower rate than the Governor’s proposal. An amendment to the METCO budget did pass. Dr. Robison noted that Park and Recreation representatives were unable to attend this evening, as originally planned.

Bob Armour thanked the Committee on behalf of the Fairbank Task Force for its support of both Warrant articles. Private funds are being pursued to offset anticipated costs of the study outlined in the first article, funding for which is otherwise limited to \$10K by Capital Improvement Planning Committee requirements.

Lucie St. George reported that SEPAC is holding a fundraiser at Twisted on Saturday between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Mary Will stated that a special gift account was established for SEPAC. Ms. St. George also reported that the Communications Subcommittee successfully interviewed its second candidate, Todd Curtis. She is working on providing a link on the SPS website to sudburytv.org, where the tapings can be viewed.

8. Open Forum

No comment.

9. Superintendent’s Report

(a) Recognitions

Superintendent Wilson read from a letter from Fitchburg Public Schools Superintendent Andre Ravenelle, thanking the District and the Curtis community service group for a donation of more than 6,000 books. Curtis students worked in conjunction with the Sudbury Angels to collect the books. Dr. Wilson called it an example of our students reaching beyond borders to assist others.

Dr. Wilson praised Loring Grade 1 teacher Dawn McNair, who was invited to participate in the DESE campaign to videotape amazing educators to lead and inspire others. The tape will air in June. Ms. McNair was previously honored as a Massachusetts Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Wilson also announced her attendance today at the Haynes Grade 5 Science Festival, which involved eight stations ranging from genetics to rocks and minerals. She praised both parents and teachers for facilitating. She also thanked the PD Council and Curriculum Coordinators for facilitating the District ILAP today.

(b) Donations

VOTED: On a motion by Bob Armour, seconded by Lucie St. George, to accept with thanks a \$50 gift card from the Landmark School. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

(c) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

(d) Personnel Actions

As outlined in the Personnel Packet. Dr. Wilson clarified that the teacher resignation was voluntary, resulting from a spouse’s relocation. Recently retired teacher Mary Taylor will fill in for the remainder of the school year.

10. Minutes

Tabled.

11. Members’ Forum

Angela Spirito announced that the Softball Bonanza is scheduled for Friday, May 17 at 5:00 p.m. The rain date is June 11 at 5:00 p.m. The event will take place at Curtis.

Todd Curtis spoke about today’s final District-wide PD day. A 35-minute video was created when 28 teachers agreed to be taped with their response to a query about their perceptions of how Common Core implementation is going. The video provided the entire professional community with an opportunity to learn other’s thoughts on what’s gone well and what can be improved. The most common two comments were praise for the opportunities to work together across the District and the power of starting the PD learning process with a question, rather than an answer. Rich Robison suggested thinking about ways to promote this to other districts.

Ellen Joachim invited Members to consider assisting with email communications summarizing the Committee’s meetings.

Anne Wilson distributed the DARE graduation ceremony schedule and asked Members to let her know their availability to attend and speak.

Bob Armour stated his pride in seeing how SPS responded to last week’s tragedies, noting that the care the SPS teams have shown makes a significant difference.

Lucie St. George announced that she is a chaperone for the Curtis music trip to Washington, DC. Departure is scheduled for 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, with a return on Sunday. Students will participate in a music festival competition on Friday, enjoy a moonlight tour of monuments Friday evening, and travel to Six Flags on Saturday. The awards ceremony for the music festival will occur at Six Flags on Saturday evening.

Mary Will reported that the security system is installed and that some training with administrative assistants has occurred. The system will go live next week. Dr. Wilson will distribute an announcement by email. She praised Ms. Will for her efforts on this project.

11. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Bob Armour, seconded by Lucie St. George, to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. The time was 9:49 p.m.

- Yes Rich Robison
- Yes Ellen Winer Joachim

- Yes Bob Armour
- Yes Lucie St. George

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito