

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 24, 2013
Fairbank Senior Center**

Present: Dr. Rich Robison, Ellen Winer Joachim, Lucie St. George, Scott Nassa

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

Open Session

Rich Robison called the Open Session to order at 7:30 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Recognitions

Dr. Wilson mentioned that she enjoyed spending time with staff, students and parents at the schools and at the various schools' Open Houses over the past few weeks. She is impressed with the enthusiasm and hard work of teachers and students alike. She reported that the school Open Houses have been well attended.

2. Food Service Report (Scott Berry, Whitson's District Manager; Linda St. Hilaire, Whitson's SPS Manager)

Mary Will welcomed and introduced Scott Berry, Whitson's District Manager, and Linda St. Hilaire, Whitson's SPS Manager, to the meeting. Mr. Berry stated that he was excited for another school year at SPS. Although presented with some challenges last year, he reported that the lessons learned would benefit the food service for this school year. According to Mr. Berry, meal counts have increased and he attributed this to a more customized menu for students while still staying within the FDA guidelines. Whitson's has added Boar's Head deli meats and sandwiches made to order at Curtis, which students are enjoying.

Ms. St. Hilaire mentioned the fact that fresh local fruits, such as peaches and apples, are available to students when available. The Curtis Middle School lunch lines were a bit slow at the beginning of the school year but have now quickened. Milk and hot entree meal counts have increased. Ms. St. Hilaire reported that parents can view the daily menus and also obtain the nutritional information associated with each meal. A new option for students is the New Life Foods line, which are gluten-free foods for children with certain food allergies. Mr. Nassa stated that he was impressed with Whitson's

ability to fix and address the food services challenges from last year. Mr. Berry mentioned that his monthly meetings with Mary Will and Annalisa Michielli, Food Services Program Director, have contributed to a stronger working relationship and to improved food service for the students.

3. Preliminary Report for MCAS 2013 (Dr. Wilson, Superintendent)

Dr. Curtis reported that the initial MCAS 2013 report results arrived at the end of last week. Dr. Wilson stated that she would present an overview of the SPS MCAS results and thanked Dr. Curtis for gathering and analyzing data for her presentation. This data will further be analyzed by administrators, principals and teachers in the future to assess student progress. Dr. Wilson reminded the committee that SPS is in the first year of a multi-year Common Core curriculum implementation across the district. Dr. Wilson noted that while some of the MCAS questions this spring were aligned to the Common Core, others were not.. Dr. Wilson stated that MCAS scores are only one record of student achievement.

Dr. Wilson emphasized that analyzing MCAS results is a complex process. She also mentioned that Sudbury is anticipating new state assessments (PARCC) that will assess math and ELA achievement.

Dr. Wilson presented MCAS data, including the accountability levels of the 5 Sudbury schools. Four of the five schools were listed as Level 2 in the State's 5-step accountability system, with one (Josiah Haynes) reported as Level 1. She presented PPI rankings for the school system and for each individual school. She then presented areas where SPS cohorts' performance was in the top 5% of state rankings based on students scoring Proficient plus Advanced and congratulated SPS educators on the performance. Dr. Wilson then presented growth (SGP) data that showed potential areas of concern and need for deeper analysis. She concluded with data about the performance of cohorts over time, indicating that there were both areas of strength and questions for further analysis in the data.

Scott Nassa expressed his concern about a drop in Sudbury school results based on the year over year numbers which he compiled from the Department of Education website. In addition Scott Nassa also compiled a comparison of year over year rankings released by Boston.com. Scott Nassa was very concerned that Dr. Wilson's presentation featured the positive Boston.com rankings but did not include any of the rankings that showed a drastic year over year drop. Dr. Wilson reassured the committee that tonight was an overview of the scores, but a more extensive analysis of SPS scores will happen in the near future. A deeper analysis of MCAS data will enable administrators, principals and teachers to reevaluate and refocus on specific areas of instruction across the district.

4. Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students (First Reading)

Ms. Joachim realized that the Technology Acceptable Use Policy needed to be updated. Currently the district has a great deal of technology utilized by students daily. Ms. Joachim proceeded to read the updated Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Students to the SC. Mr. Nassa asked if there was a policy in place if a student brought a computer home and it was damaged. Dr. Curtis mentioned that certain schools with a 1:1 laptop program do offer insurance programs to parents. Since SPS is piloting a 1:1 program this year with a small group of students, the administration didn't want to impose any costs on participating families. A care and use policy regarding Chromebooks was handed out to parents and students at the 1:1 Pilot parent orientation. Mr. Nassa inquired about cyberbullying incidents and if this type of behavior is something that needed to be added to the Technology Policy. Ms. Joachim stated that cyberbullying is already addressed in the district's Anti-Bullying Policy, which applies to the use of technology. Mr. Nassa also inquired whether we need our technology policy to reference technology that students may bring into the schools on their own and use such as iPhones, iPads, etc.

5. Science Club

Mary Will reported that both Nixon and Haynes Principals requested to start science clubs in their schools. The Assistant Superintendent, Director of Business and Finance and two members of the SEA met to discuss the proposal for the science clubs and to determine the amount of stipend for teachers. The first year would be a pilot program and the teachers leading the science clubs would receive the student activity fees (\$50 per attendee) as payment. If the pilot program is successful and the School Committee gives final approval for the elementary science clubs, the stipend for future years would be 3 units of extra duty compensation at the amount stated in the contract.

VOTED: On a motion by Rich Robison, seconded by Lucie St. George, to approve the proposal for the pilot science clubs in the elementary schools. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

6. Appoint Capital Finance Working Group Representative

The Town has requested that a SPS School Committee representative participate in their Capital Finance Working group. This group will generate, evaluate and report on strategies and options, both short and long term, for ensuring adequate funding for the capital projects and to protect the Town's investment in its capital assets. Rich Robison recommended that Dr. Wilson be a member of this group as well. The SC members requested a schedule and meeting times for this group. SPS School Committee members should express their interest in participating to Rich Robison.

7. Appoint Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Working Group Representative

The Town has requested that a SPS School Committee representative participate in

their OPEB Working group. This committee would generate, evaluate and report on the strategies and options, both short and long term, for dealing with the unfunded OPEB liabilities facing the Town of Sudbury/SPS and the L-S Regional High School. Rich Robison recommended that Dr. Wilson participate in this group. SPS School Committee members should express their interest in participating to Rich Robison.

8. School Committee Report

A. Liaison/Subcommittee Reports

Lucie St. George and Scott Nassa attended the SEPAC meeting on September 16th. They were impressed with the enthusiasm of the SEPAC members. Lucie St. George reported that the SEPAC Board has been working on a survey that they hope to distribute.

Sewer System: The Board of Selectmen are pursuing linking a sewer to the new Marlborough plant. Curtis Middle School field would not be impacted if they go this route. It would be cost-effective to link to the Marlborough facility. There is a mid-October meeting planned regarding this topic.

The Policy Manual requires updating. Lucie St. George and Ellen Winer Joachim will review the first section of the existing manual in the following weeks and incorporate necessary changes using other school district technology policies as a reference. Dr. Wilson recommended they also refer to the MASC template for these policy updates.

9. Open Forum

Elena Reiner has two children attending Haynes School. She addressed the MCAS scores and is concerned primarily about the math scores in the district. She encouraged SPS to thoroughly analyze the MCAS data. Math scores seem to indicate that there are weaknesses in student math scores across the district. She stated that there have been no changes in the last two years with math instruction in the schools.

Joanne Topham, Concord Road, mentioned that she is a supporter of the Flex Grouping for math instruction at Noyes School. She inquired about how Title I schools in Sudbury are determined. Dr. Wilson explained that Title I funding is based on the percentage of students from low-income households within a particular school. Ms. Topham also added that at Noyes she is concerned about the time students spend in the lunch lines. For example, children who arrive in the cafeteria at 12:30 sometimes don't get out of the lunch line until 12:55. Kids are forced to eat quickly since lunch ends at 1:00. She feels the lunch lines move too slowly.

10. Superintendent's Report

(a) Report

Dr. Wilson announced that the first Superintendent Chat will take place on October 17th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's Conference Room at 40 Fairbank Road. Parent feedback indicated an interest in topic-based chats, which will be incorporated this year. Dr. Wilson will be sending out topic surveys to parents in the future.

This year, all the superintendent presentations from SC Meetings will be posted on the SPS website.

Dr. Wilson informed the SC that last year SPS provided parents with electronic report cards. These report cards were not easy to save or print for parents. Due to these printing issues, the final report card of the year will be sent home as a hard copy.

(b) Bill Schedule
Payroll.

(c) Personnel Actions
None.

11. Communications

Homeschooling

Requests for homeschooling are directed to Superintendent Wilson's attention. Dr. Curtis reviews parent homeschooling plans, which should contain an outline of the curriculum and assessments used to teach children. Dr. Curtis follows up with a letter of approval to families wishing to homeschool their children. This year, SPS has 3 families participating in homeschooling.

12. Minutes - Regular Session Minutes

VOTED: On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 3–0 in favor. Lucie St. George abstained.

VOTED: On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Ellen Joachim to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

13. Members' Forum

Betsy Joseph thanked the Sudbury School Committee for their continued hard work.

Dr. Curtis mentioned that on Wednesday, September 25th, the district's first ILAP focused on the Common Core initiatives would take place. There will be 27 working groups, facilitated by SPS teachers, focused on the implementation of the Common Core and other initiatives to align curriculum and assessment.

Dr. Curtis informed the SC members that he had met with Virginia Blake, the L-S Curriculum Coordinator and Mary Sterling, the Assistant Superintendent in Lincoln, to discuss the new math standards related to the Common Core.

14. Executive Session - None.

15. Adjourn

VOTED: On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Lucie St. George, to adjourn the September 24, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. The time was time 9:35 p.m.

Yes Rich Robison
Yes Ellen Winer Joachim
Yes Lucie St. George
Yes Scott Nassa

Submitted by Heather Hennessey