

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Wednesday November 6, 2013  
Israel Loring School**

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

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

**Open Session**

Rich Robison called the Open Session to order at 7:36 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

**1. Recognitions**

Superintendent Wilson recognized Loring Grade 5 teacher Brad Jones for initiating, organizing, and supervising yard cleanup for seniors in town. More than 100 fifth-grade students and parents participated. Dr. Wilson also thanked parents Heidi Florin, Julie McKenna, and Lisa Armour, as well as the Grade 5 teachers, for facilitating this example of serving the broader community.

**2. Loring PTO Welcome (Amy Adolfsson and Annis Chwalek)**

Co-Chair Amy Adolfsson thanked the Committee for its support, leadership, and guidance. She called Loring an ‘outstanding environment’ and remarked on the more than 100 volunteers who helped with the recent Spaghetti Supper and Spooky House event. This year, the PTO is focused on providing literacy support to ensure consistent delivery. The group has funded the purchase of iPads for ‘just right reading’ and group listening, as well as mentor texts and texts for small-group differentiated instruction. The annual auction raised funds for an indoor rock climbing wall and playground equipment.

**3. Loring State of the School Presentation (Stephen Wiltshire, Principal; Sara Zawadzka, Assistant Principal)**

Principal Wiltshire expressed thanks to the teachers, staff, and parents in attendance. He commented on the school theme, Together Everyone Achieves More, TEAM, which exemplifies the depth and breadth of the leadership team across the Loring community. Mr. Wiltshire emphasized that Loring is a student-centered community and shares the District strategic objective to ensure all students have access to high quality, research-based, differentiated content and high quality instructional practices in a safe environment.

Mr. Wiltshire spoke on the school goal of enhancing student performance on the math MCAS. He presented data that show that Grades 4 and 5 student growth returned to 2010 and 2011 levels following a dip in 2012. Principal Wiltshire believes the improvement is due at least in part to factors such as the development of team SMART goals, common assessments, and data analysis. The SGP for the high-needs subgroup shows a similar pattern; however, there remains a significant gap in SGP between this subgroup and the non high-needs subgroup. Loring is also focused on increasing student achievement in math, reflected in the percentage of students who score Proficient or above on the MCAS. Christine Grigsby, Loring’s Math Coach, is leading this collaborative effort, which additionally includes providing PLC leadership opportunities and a focus on defining best practices in rigor, coherence, and routines.

Similar to the mathematics results, a gap exists between the ELA SGP of high-needs students and that of their peers. In addition to a focus on closing this gap and increasing student achievement

through an action plan similar to that for math, Loring is beginning the alignment of its ELA curriculum across grades.

Loring is also focused on entering kindergarten students who require more direct literacy support, as well as on family literacy support. The social and emotional health of students is also a focus, as it is at the District level. The school is building a technology team to create SMART goals around enhancing the use of instructional technology.

Mr. Wiltshire highlighted school connectedness data that show a 60–70% response that things get better when an adult is told about a problem. He stated that it is important for kids to feel heard and for immediate action to be taken. He characterized misbehaviors as teachable moments and opportunities for relationship-building.

Principal Wiltshire returned to the topic of team goals in math, introducing Christine Grigsby, who formerly taught fourth and fifth grade at Loring, and is now the full-time Math Coach. A primary focus is on meeting the District goal of matching the standards to the Common Core. Loring fourth graders had a strong performance on the open response portion of MCAS, which is a continuing SMART goal. Math journals have been incorporated this year as a way to enhance math thinking.

Literacy Specialist Melissa Sarno reported on collaborating with the District for the second year of introducing genre study units. In addition to aligning with the Common Core, this aligns the curriculum in a spiraling manner across grades, with increasing depth each year. Ms. Sarno spoke about the broadened range of literature, student immersion, and the increased opportunities for differentiated instruction.

The Daily 5 is a research-based authentic reading practices framework introduced this year. The components, read to self; read to someone; listen to reading; work on writing; and word work, will be introduced through a PD workshop Ms. Sarno is developing with Haynes Literacy Specialist Josh Baumer. The focus is on bringing coherence through differentiated instruction.

Former Grade 4 teacher and current Assistant Principal Sara Zawadzskas stated how impressed she is with the parent involvement at Loring, highlighting the array of creative enrichment programs and social action projects specific to each grade, in addition to PTO-sponsored community-building events.

#### School Committee Comments

Chairman Rich Robison remarked on Loring's impressive ability to assign its teachers to new leadership roles. Bob Armour commented on the well-rounded approach of improving the SGP and enhancing social competency and leadership within a fun environment. He asked what might change the persistent gap in SGP between high-needs students and their peers. Mr. Wiltshire noted that the gap persists across the state and country and highlighted efforts at differentiated instruction, common assessments, and flexible grouping in math. He also commented on the power of collaboration and the value of a full-time math coach in creating coherence.

Scott Nassa remarked on Mr. Wiltshire's persistence and the opportunities that come with bringing new people on staff. He noted his sense that the team mentality operates from top to bottom through all teachers and staff.

Rich Robison asked what the Committee can do to support Loring. Principal Wiltshire responded that continuing to provide resources, including personnel, is critical. Todd Curtis emphasized that results of some efforts will not be realized for several years. He also commented on the willingness of Loring teachers to try new initiatives.

#### **4. Loring Project/Donation Approvals**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Lucie St. George, to accept with gratitude the donation of a Magna Wall with mats, including installation costs, from the Loring PTO, in the amount of \$10,775.00. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to accept with gratitude the donation of various Wish List items, from the Loring PTO, in the amount of \$11,891.00. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

#### **5. Mathematics Program Update (Maggie McGinty, Curriculum Coordinator)**

Superintendent Wilson introduced Math Curriculum Coordinator Maggie McGinty, who is in her second year in this role. Ms. McGinty reintroduced Loring Math Coach Christine Grigsby and Haynes/Nixon Math Coach Kathy Lizotte. Noyes is served by full-time Math Coach Stephanie Rousseau. This is the second year of the CORE theme: Coherence, Differentiation, Reflection & Rigor, and Excitement.

Ms. Grigsby emphasized that the Coaches are there to lighten the load of teachers by providing materials and ideas to introduce coherence and grade-to-grade and school-to-school consistency. Coaches are facilitating the implementation of universal tools such as the math journals in K–5 and common math routines and assessments. Ms. McGinty and the math coaches created a math coaching website, with a continually growing database of resources for teachers.

Kathy Lizotte introduced the goal of allowing each student to learn something new or in greater depth each day. Video excerpts of both teacher and student comments highlighted the progress. Ms. Lizotte also compared the Common Core’s topic depth to the previous focus on breadth. In addition to helping teachers understand the changes in the curriculum, Coaches are helping in aligning the curriculum.

The Coaches stressed their role in supporting and empowering teachers to try new things that might otherwise be overwhelming, ranging from content to new classroom practices. In addition, Coaches are able to share PD with those teachers who do not attend particular workshops.

##### **School Committee Comments**

Scott Nassa asked for an opinion on flexible grouping in math. Maggie McGinty responded that it is one of the many great differentiation strategies utilized in the District.

Bob Armour asked about the model at the middle school. Ms. McGinty stated that she usually leads the PD efforts at Curtis and serves as the Coach. She noted that there is more opportunity to focus than there is for the elementary teachers.

Lucie St. George asked how the current Grade 8 teachers and students are faring. Ms. McGinty replied that some gap-filling and back-tracking is occurring because the current class isn’t getting two years’ transition to the Common Core.

#### **6. School Committee Report**

Scott Nassa attended a SEPAC meeting on Monday, at which a parent survey was finalized. A recent 50/50 raffle raised \$260. Scott Nassa also attended the Wellness Committee meeting earlier in the day.

Ellen Joachim attended a District Wellness Committee meeting today, as did Scott Nassa. She noted that the committee comprises stakeholders with a wide range of expertise and perspective. This year, one area of focus will be on physical activity. Ms. Joachim also reported that the Policy Subcommittee met last week to continue reviewing the Policy Manual.

Bob Armour reported that the Capital Finance Working Group will hold its first meeting next week.

Lucie St. George attended an EDCO roundtable today that was facilitated by psychologist Rob Evans. Challenges for school committee members were discussed.

**7. Open Forum**

No comments.

**8. Superintendent's Report**

(a) Report

Superintendent Wilson reported that the PTO presentations have begun. She has planned two presentations for each PTO, one focused on the budget and the second on school safety. She stated that staff and Central Office personnel are receiving training on some new safety procedures and that she is excited about the enhanced connection between the District and the Sudbury PD.

A Superintendent Chat is scheduled for November 19 at 7:30 a.m. There is no set topic for this Chat. Dr. Wilson will circulate a survey to parents on future Chat topics.

(b) Bill Schedule

A Bill Schedule was presented.

**13. Minutes**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Lucie St. George, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to approve the minutes of the September 24, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor. Bob Armour abstained.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

**14. Members' Forum**

Loring teacher Audrey Swennes expressed appreciation for the chance to see her school shine tonight. She also remarked on the many opportunities for District-wide collaboration.

Todd Curtis reported on a 25% response rate to the second parent feedback request on the 1:1 Pilot. A network update was also recently circulated. The update focused on a new system to route all student electronic devices through the District's filter. Dr. Curtis provided the link to these communications: [learninginsudbury.com](http://learninginsudbury.com).

Scott Nassa reported that the MASC conference started today.

Dr. Wilson highlighted that tonight's math presentation demonstrated how the use of manipulatives enhances learning through a strong connection to an algorithm. Dr. Curtis noted that the staff continually search for the best, with the particular manipulative used tonight originating in the UK.

Lucie St. George added to her earlier comments on the EDCO roundtable, stating that the discussion focused on how to best utilize meeting time.

**12. Executive Session**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Scott Nassa, seconded by Lucie St. George, to adjourn to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to negotiations with union and non-union employees, as discussion in Open Meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating 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

Rich Robison

Yes	Ellen Winer Joachim
Yes	Bob Armour
Yes	Lucie St. George
Yes	Scott Nassa

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito