

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, December 18, 2013  
Fairbank Senior Center**

**Present:** Dr. Richard Robison, Ellen Winer Joachim, Lucie St. George

**Also Present:** Dr. Anne Wilson, Superintendent; Dr. Todd Curtis, Assistant Superintendent;  
Mary Will, Director of Business & 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**

Facilities Supervisor Joe Kupczewski was recognized for his tireless commitment to ensuring school safety following snowstorms.

**2. Discussion of School Committee Agenda Planning**

Ellen Winer Joachim stated that there was a suggestion to move Open Forum to an earlier slot in order to facilitate public participation. Ms. Joachim stated that she favors such a change, but that an Open Forum later on the agenda should be retained as well. Dr. Robison commented that previously, there were two opportunities for the public to participate in Open Forum.

Ms. Joachim noted that when there are presentations on the agenda, the Committee will need to be mindful of the time and may need to keep the initial Open Forum to ten minutes because the presenters are typically District staff who will need to be back in the District early the following morning. She also suggested introducing a sign-up sheet to ensure that all those who wish to speak have an opportunity to do so. The Committee also discussed giving the Chair the authority to allow additional opportunities for the public to address the Committee during the meetings.

Lucie St. George suggested developing participation guidelines that could be printed on the reverse of the agenda. She and Ellen Joachim have researched formats used in other districts. They will present their findings for input at a subsequent meeting.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Ellen Winer Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to add an Open Forum of up to ten minutes to the beginning of the School Committee Meeting. The vote was 3–0 in favor.

**3. School and District Report Cards 2013**

Superintendent Wilson presented an overview of the DESE Report Cards, all of which are posted on the SPS and individual school websites and which are based on MCAS performance data. Dr. Wilson explained that the District is a Level 2 district: although it is making overall progress in narrowing performance gaps, in some instances, the District is not narrowing the gap for its high needs cohort. Superintendent Wilson outlined some of the data categories included in the reports: a school percentile ranking, which ranks relative to schools with similar grade spans; achievement over time data; and growth scores, which allow for a comparison to schools with similar performance scores in the prior year.

Other data categories include total enrollment, percentage of high needs students, teacher quality, average class size, student-teacher ratio, attendance, and discipline.

Lucie St. George asked in regard to the growth comparisons if one of the reasons we do not show a large degree of growth is that we are already performing at a high level. Dr. Wilson responded that high performance is a factor, but that the scores are relative to the current performance of schools performing similarly high in the preceding year. Depending on the current-year performance of those schools, a small change in performance could lead to a large change in growth score.

Rich Robison commented that the important point is that all results presented are within range, with no outliers or dramatic shifts that represent red flags. He also noted that SPS is performing significantly above the State averages.

#### **4. Preliminary FY15 Budget Projections – Non-Override Budget**

Superintendent Wilson recalled the FY15 roll-up budget, which keeps staffing and all other budgeted lines the same as in FY14. This budget would result in a deficit of \$544,838. Director of Business and Finance Mary Will presented the changes to the roll-up budget that resulted in the non-override budget. Enrollment projections were utilized to determine staffing, as was maintaining classroom sizes. At this time, this would result in a reduction of costs equivalent to one elementary and four middle school teachers. An additional cost savings will result from having paid off an early retirement incentive that cost the District approximately \$14K per year. An added expense will be incurred to cover the District's portion of the salary for a secretary for the shared facilities director; however, the number is \$5K lower than Ms. Will anticipated. Significant cost savings will result from the Town having changed both electric and gas providers. In total, approximately \$60K in savings is expected. Finally, the structure of the tuition payments to CASE will be modified, coupled with a decrease in the number of participating students. The cost savings is expected to be approximately \$180K. Accommodating students with in-District programs saves about \$200K. These factors also resulted in the decision to remove a special education budget increase that historically stood at 7%. The net result is a reduction of \$786,667 from the initial roll-up budget.

Superintendent Wilson presented the items that are included in the non-override budget as a result of the savings. These include a 0.5 FTE co-teacher at the middle school, a 1.0 FTE middle school technology integration specialist and 1.0 FTE middle school technician, and one grade level of the 1:1 technology, which would be an annual recurring cost. The total for these expenditures is \$241,828. Needs that were not included are the 1.0 FTE assistant principal, 1.0 FTE math coach, 3.34 FTE lunchroom monitors, and the second grade level of 1:1 technology. These expenditures total \$313,661.

Dr. Wilson outlined the current enrollment data and anticipated number of classroom sections that resulted in the reduction in classroom sections. Lynn Connor emphasized the value of the lunchroom monitors in providing time for teachers to meet as a PLC or undertake other professional activities that otherwise must occur in time away from the classroom.

Mary Will summarized the non-override budget. The salary line is increased over FY14, while expenses are down by about \$200K. After adjustments to offsets and with a benefits increase of 5%, the overall budget increase is at 2.5%. Assumptions include no new growth or changes in Chapter 70.

Dr. Wilson highlighted three key areas for the SPS budget going forward: to Re-Build from previous cuts, Respond to student needs, initiatives and mandates, and to Innovate to allow for opportunities for staff to respond to a wide range of student needs.

#### **5. School Committee Report**

Budget Subcommittee Report: Rich Robison reported that the FinCom liaisons to the School Committee, Joan Carlton and Susan Berry, presented the results of their interviews at the FinCom meeting Monday night. Dr. Robison praised the two for their presentation. The FinCom was interested in the number of FTE's added in the last year, as well as in the

enrollment figures and some details of add-backs, such as the lunchroom assistants. With respect to lunchroom assistants, Lucie St. George remarked on the ‘win-win’ of providing more time on learning, while allowing teachers to prepare to serve a wider range of student needs. The budget hearing is scheduled for February 4.

Sewer Commission Liaison Report: Rich Robison reported on the potential option for Sudbury to tie into the treatment facility that Marlborough plans to construct near the Sudbury line. The Selectmen and Town Manager have met with the Mayor of Marlborough. Feasibility must be determined, in part through a DEP assessment. The cost-savings of the tie-in versus constructing a separate facility in town are significant. If the plan moves forward, it is anticipated that planning documents would be ready around the time of ATM 2015.

Permanent Building Committee, School Building Committee, Energy Committee and Planning Board Liaison Report: Dr. Robison reported on the PBC’s assessment of the feasibility of renovating Town Hall as part of a plan to relocate the Town offices there. The plan also includes the possibility of the SPS Central Office moving to the Flynn Building and creating additional recreation space at Fairbank. A connection to the current Town Hall building is being balanced against the lower cost of replacing the building compared with repairing it. The Selectmen will be determining next steps. Dr. Robison mentioned reiterating the request that the Fairbank roof be fixed.

Capital Planning Liaison Report: Mary Will reported that the Town is working on a plan to use free cash, a stabilization fund, and long-term debt to fund capital projects across all cost centers. She noted that the process is moving quickly under Chuck Woodard’s leadership, despite the significant task of reviewing all of the Town’s needs. The SPS projects include parking lots, sidewalks, telephone systems, Chromebooks, and replacing exterior doors at Curtis.

Lincoln-Sudbury RHS Liaison Report: Ellen Joachim reported on the ongoing effort to enhance communication and collaboration with LS on issues of mutual interest. She and Rich Robison have been meeting regularly with the LS School Committee Chair and Vice Chair and recently discussed student transitions from Curtis to LS. The chairs and vice chairs will meet again in early January.

SEPAC Liaison Report: Rich Robison received a request from SEPAC to be added to the agenda in the early part of 2014 to report on the results of a parent survey. Superintendent Wilson commented on the high response rate and added that SEPAC President Paula Moyer is working with Student Services Director Debbie Dixon to analyze the survey results.

## **6. Open Forum**

No comments.

## **7. Superintendent’s Report**

### **(a) Donations**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Lucie St. George, seconded by Ellen Winer Joachim, to accept with appreciation a donation \$50,000 from the Jack and Mae Rosenberg Charitable Trust to be applied for the ongoing benefit of the Aspirations Program. The vote was 3-0 in favor.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Lucie St. George, seconded by Ellen Winer Joachim to accept with thanks an annual donation of \$50 from Leuders Environmental, Inc. The vote was 3-0 in favor.

### **(b) Bill Schedule**

A Bill Schedule was presented.

### **(c) Personnel Actions**

As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

## **8. Communications**

Rich Robison reported receiving a letter from a student at Curtis Middle School regarding the length of the month of March and the lack of holidays during that month. She proposed instituting a Women's Day and adding a day to the end of school year to compensate. Dr. Robison will draft a response to the letter, which was written as part of a persuasive letter assignment.

## **9. Minutes**

Tabled.

## **10. Members' Forum**

Lynn Connor, representing the SEA, reported on the well-attended SEA Holiday Party held last week at Lavender. Loring teachers Diane Irvine and Celeste Morin were recognized for their 25 years of service.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Curtis encouraged everyone to visit [sudburylearning.com](http://sudburylearning.com), where he recently posted feedback on the 1:1 technology. Students and parents agree on what works within the program. With respect to homework, students reported being more consistent in completing assignments, as well as in understanding the homework. The Committee agreed on the importance of conveying the value and range of uses of such technology.

Lucie St. George commented on the many musical events in the last few weeks. Today the Curtis Middle School Select Chorus, Orchestra, and Band performed at the State House to a large and welcoming audience, including State Representative Tom Conroy. Last week, the music groups performed at Curtis and the Select Chorus participated at the LS winter choral event.

Dr. Wilson commented on the successful dismissal yesterday despite inclement weather, with all students reported home by 4:40 p.m. She commended both Joe K. and the DPW for their efforts.

## **11. Executive Session**

Not needed.

## **12. Adjourn**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Ellen Winer Joachim, seconded by Lucie St. George, to adjourn the December 18, 2013 Regular Session. The vote was 3–0 in favor. The time was 8:55 p.m.

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

Recorded by Karen Walsh  
Submitted by Sheila Cusolito