

Sudbury Public Schools
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Regular Session Meeting
Wednesday April 9, 2014
7:30 PM

Location - Senior Center
40 Fairbank RD
Sudbury, MA 01776

Open Session

Chair Rich Robison called the Open Session to order at 7:35 PM. SudburyTV taped the meeting.

Members Present: Dr. Richard J. Robison - Chair, Ms. Ellen Winer Joachim - Vice Chair, Ms. Lucie St. George, Mr. Bob Armour, Mr. Scott Nassa

Also Present: Dr. Anne Wilson - Superintendent of Schools
Todd Curtis - Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Nicole Lamoureux - Sudbury Education Association (SEA) representative
Mary Will - Director of Business and Finance

Agenda - Revised

1. Recognitions
2. Open Forum
3. Superintendent Evaluation Rubric
4. Approval of FY15 District Calendar
5. FY15 Budget Update
6. School Committee Workshop Planning
7. School Committee Report
 - a. Liaison/Subcommittee Reports
 - b. Email Communications
8. Open Forum
9. Superintendent's Report
 - a. Report
 - b. Bill Schedule
 - c. Personnel Actions
10. Communications
11. Minutes – Regular Session Minutes
12. Member's Forum
13. Executive Session
14. Adjourn

1. Recognitions

Superintendent Wilson and the Sudbury School Committee recognized Sheila Cusolito's years of dedication as the recording secretary for the School Committee. A cake was presented in Sheila's honor. Chair Richard Robison spoke on the importance of the work by Ms. Cusolito for the Committee and her role. Ms. St. George admired how well Ms. Cusolito captured the essence of what occurs at Committee Meetings.

Ms. Cusolito spoke on how thankful she was to have the opportunity to learn from the Sudbury School Committee members. Over the years there have been different members, but she was impressed by how all the members work together for the betterment of our schools.

2. Open Forum

Bob Stein, Thompson Drive

Mr. Stein stated the president of the teacher's union sent an email. The email is considered a public email and not a private email. It was erroneous to say the email was private.

Mary Mahoney, Grindstone Lane

Ms. Mahoney presented her evaluation notebook binders. The binders were large, two to three inch binders full of documentation to be turned in for her evaluation. Many teachers have taken the time to compile all the information required for their evaluations. The time that goes into the evaluation notebooks should be spent on the teaching process. Ms. Mahoney would like to see the teachers have more of a role in deciding which standards are focused on in the evaluation process. Ms. Mahoney also commented on the teachers and staff's money that was saved from their benefit package and taken away from the schools. The teachers and staff should have input on what is done with the money if the money comes back to the schools.

Bob Armour noted there is value in evaluating teachers and staff, but this evaluation can become cumbersome. Mr. Armour suggests having a discussion on what parts of the evaluation process are valuable and what parts are not necessary.

Scott Nassa asked if this process is a state requirement and when can a discussion on the evaluation process be held?

Dr. Wilson responded it is a state requirement. Teachers evaluated last year under the new educator evaluation system were surveyed last year about the process and based on results of that survey, changes were made for the current school year. Teachers will be surveyed again in order to continuously improve on the process. Dr. Wilson indicated that the survey would be conducted in June.

Ms. Winer Joachim suggested having the discussion after the teacher evaluations and surveys are done, so that the Committee will have access to the survey information in their discussion.

Rich Robison noted the decision on the standards in which evaluation is based is a collaborative process between SEA and the schools.

3. Superintendent Evaluation Rubric

Christine McGrath, Director of Operations, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents

Dorothy Presser, Field Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees

Rich Robison noted this is the second year the Committee has used the new evaluation process. Sudbury Public Schools is a Race to the Top district and therefore implemented the new evaluation before the required statewide implementation of 2014.

Dorothy Presser presented a PowerPoint presentation: Evaluating the Superintendent

This new process of evaluating licensed educators came out of the legislature and is mandated statewide. The new system is a way to link goals throughout the year to the evaluation process. There is a required, standard format with adaptable components to meet each district's evaluation needs. The key components of the evaluation are a five-step cycle, two-part tool, and multi-part rating system.

Five Step Cycle includes a self-assessment; analysis, goal setting and plan development; implementation of the plan; formative assessment/evaluation; and summative assessment. The general time-line for this cyclic process is goal setting and plan development over the summer, implementation is most of the school year, formative assessment/evaluation is partway through the year, and the summative evaluation is towards the end of the year. The knowledge gained from the summative evaluation is used as a tool for the next year's self-assessment and goals.

Two-Part Evaluation Tool: Goals and Standards & Indicators

SMART Goals stands for Specific and strategic, Measurable, Action-oriented, Rigorous, realistic, and result focused, Timed and tracked. The goal areas are professional practice, student learning, and district improvement. Standards and Indicators are provided as a rubric by the Massachusetts Department of Education. The superintendent rubric can be found on the Mass DESE website: http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/model/PartIII_AppxA.pdf.

Multi-Part Rating System

The goals, standards and indicators, and the overall rating have rating systems. The goals are rated as did not meet, some progress, significant progress, met, or exceeded. The overall rating and standards are rated as unsatisfactory, needs improvement, proficient, or exemplary.

Discussion

Bob Armour noted the evaluation process does a good job of linking goals to standards. He asked how could evidence that the Committee observes separately from the evaluation documentation of a superintendent be incorporated in the evaluation process? Mr. Armour also noted that we have last year's evaluation information that helps the Committee and the Superintendent assess how we are moving forward. This is a new evaluation process, and we can make it work for the Sudbury Public Schools. Ms. Presser stated that observed evidence or evidence from other sources could be written in the comments section of the evaluation.

Scott Nassa noted that the evaluation system is similar to a self-evaluation where a person makes one's own goals and gives evidence that the goals the person has chosen have been met. The evaluation system is set up in a way that if the results are not presented in documentation form, then the goals have not been met. The system does not take into account if a child is enjoying the class or is the teacher a good communicator with parents. The evaluation process does not measure results. It focuses on execution. The system is laborious and does not give a true evaluation of a teacher or administrator. Mr. Nassa sees the value of evaluation, but is concerned with this new evaluation process.

Rich Robison and Ellen Winer Joachim noted the Committee and the Superintendent decided on the goals at the beginning of the process. Ms. Winer Joachim noted goals are the focus of the process, because together the District, Superintendent, and the School Committee decided on the goals in order to move the District forward.

Scott Nassa stated that more discussion by the Committee is needed pertaining to the Superintendent's goals. Also, how do we incorporate parent survey information and teacher input in the evaluation goals? Bob Amour stated that as we collect more information from more parents and teachers we would be able to incorporate the information under goals. He commented on last year's process where for some of the goals there were differences amongst the members on ratings. In the evaluation process can there be discussion on different opinions in order to decide ratings? Another discussion meeting before the individual evaluations are handed in may be helpful.

Ellen Winer Joachim stated last year there were differences in opinions on some indicators, but the Committee rated based on the majority opinion.

Rich Robison noted the Committee is on the summative evaluation portion of the five-step cycle. As a new committee member comes in the new member will be able to be a part of the decision making of the goals for next year.

Ms. Presser provided the website for a webinar on the evaluation process. The webinar focuses on a fictitious school going through the superintendent, five-step cycle evaluation process. The webinar is provided the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (<http://masc.org/field-services/workshop-descriptions/webinars>).

Target time-line for the summative evaluation - The School Committee members will complete their individual evaluations in the upcoming week. Rich Robison and Bob Amour will compile the evaluations

into the summative evaluation. The summative evaluation will be presented, discussed, and voted on by the full Committee at the next public meeting.

4. Approval of FY15 District Calendar

Superintendent Wilson stated that the FY15 calendar takes into account the Lincoln-Sudbury High School calendar. The school administrators had input on the calendar.

MOTION and VOTE: Scott Nassa made a motion to approve the FY15 District Calendar. Lucie St. George seconded the motion. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

Ms. St. George suggested placing the School Committee meetings on the calendar, and Dr. Wilson agreed to add School Committee meeting dates to the calendar.

5. FY15 Budget Update

There is no additional information at this point, because there have not been meetings pertaining to the budget.

Comments from the School Committee on the FY15 Budget

Bob Amour asked if there will be a Town Meeting or a Finance Committee meeting where further discussion can be done on restoring the money to the schools and the Nixon and Curtis parking lots? Scott Nassa asked if there is an opportunity to sit with the Finance Committee and have a discussion. Mr. Amour suggested Chair Robison ask the Finance Committee chair for a discussion, and the Chair agreed.

Lucie St. George asked if the vote is final, and Mr. Amour responded that the vote is final.

6. School Committee Workshop Planning

Bob Amour would like to discuss how the Committee will transition with a new member coming in, effective evaluation practices of the Superintendent, the budget, and increasing time for discussion on topics.

Rich Robison noted that Jim Kelly, Director of Facilities, has asked for School Committee representation at the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee meeting being held April 16, the date of the workshop. All committee members will try to attend the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee meeting. The Committee will talk about the process of evaluating the Superintendent, but will not discuss individual's actual evaluations.

7. School Committee Report

Liaison/Subcommittee Reports

Bob Armour, Fairbank Community Center Study Task Force – Four options were proposed for the Fairbank Community Center. The options were similar, and Mr. Armour hopes more options that differ will be proposed. There is a proposal to repair the roof, but not replace it at this time. In response to a question from Rich Robison, Mr. Armour noted that the administrative offices might not be a part of the community center. It is not clear who will make the decision on where the offices will be located.

Lucie St. George – Last week there were two pre-kindergarten coffees open to parents to learn about the District. Many of the parents who attended have already enrolled their children in kindergarten. The coffee is an opportunity for parents of preschoolers or parents new to the community to learn about our schools.

Ellen Winer Joachim suggested advertising it more to preschools and parents of very young children in order to help parents learn about the District and how the School Committee works.

Mr. Armour talked about half day and full day kindergarten.

Rich Robison commented on how pre-kindergarten teachers feel left out of the K-12 system. The pre-k teachers said many people see pre-k as childcare and not education for children. Early education is a major component of a successful education. Mr. Robison is resigning from the sewer committee.

Email Communications - Discussion on protected versus confidential email

Rich Robison noted that the email that was brought up at the last School Committee Meeting was not confidential but is protected. We cannot take action towards/against the email. Mr. Robison said he was wrong about the email being confidential.

Scott Nassa noted emails are never private, and we should apologize for the email.

Ellen Winer Joachim noted whether the email is protected or confidential we cannot take action.

Mr. Nassa asked for a copy of the email to be placed in the meeting minutes.

The email in its entirety will be added to the meeting minutes of the previous meeting minutes or this meeting's minutes.

Emails provided by Scott Nassa.

From: Rich Robison <rrobison@fcsn.org>

Date: Fri, Mar 21, 2014 at 10:44 AM

Subject: [school_committee] RE: FW: info

To: Scott Nassa <scott_nassa@sudbury.k12.ma.us>, School Committee <school-committee@sudbury.k12.ma.us>, Anne Wilson <anne_wilson@sudbury.k12.ma.us>, "robert_mealey@sudbury.k12.ma.us" <robert_mealey@sudbury.k12.ma.us>

Cc: "fincom@sudbury.ma.us" <fincom@sudbury.ma.us>

Scott, I think there are two potential opportunities on the agenda to discuss the Fin Com matter: committee liaison reports and budget update. Dr. Robert Mealey is the President of SEA (I assume this is your Dr. Miley reference). Just as a reminder, the SEA role at our meetings is to observe our business, they are under no obligation to speak. I do not know who is scheduled to attend for the SEA. I will include Dr. Mealey on this email so that he is aware of your concern. Thanks for sharing your concern. Rich

From: Scott Nassa [mailto:scott_nassa@sudbury.k12.ma.us]

Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2014 6:02 PM

To: School Committee; Anne Wilson

Cc: Rich Robison; fincom@sudbury.ma.us

Subject: Fwd: FW: info

Hi Everyone,

I just wanted to share the below e-mail for which I have received numerous times already today from a number of people in town (as well as from my wife). Unfortunately just about every one of these people were very much turned off and disappointed that an employee of the district initiated the message, for which a couple very concerning statements are made. A teacher in town, which also references possible support from the entire SEA, sent the e-mail. In the spirit of confidentiality, I will obviously not disclose this employee's name here or anywhere publicly but am more than willing to disclose the name privately to Anne. I have also removed this employee's name and e-mail address from the e-mail below.

As a result of this e-mail, I have the following question:

Did the SEA endorse this e-mail in any way or was the e-mail sent on behalf of the teacher on his/her own? Either way I have a problem with it for two reasons.

1. Please note the line "4 other members seized the opportunity to push through some proposals that changes the way budgets are formulated." These "4 other members" are officials appointed by the Town Moderator whom is elected by the people of Sudbury. While we may not always agree with other's opinions or the way they vote, we should never make an accusation for which we have no concrete proof. For our SEA or an employee of SPS to make such a slanderous accusation reflects very poorly on this district. Again disagreement and debate of a vote taken is OK and comes with the territory of being an elected or appointed official. The insinuation that there was any malice on the part of these members without a burden of proof is absolutely unacceptable.

2. This person whether speaking on their own behalf or behalf of the SEA also states that certain votes took place because "2 members of the board were out of town". Once again I am concerned that an SPS employee would send a message to any member of the public insinuating that there may have been a different result had these two other people been in town and present at the meetings. Since when is it OK for SPS employees to send e-mails to parents and other citizens suggesting that a vote would have occurred a particular way had 2 people been in attendance who happened to be out of town? Do they have a crystal ball that has informed them exactly how a vote would have taken place? Insinuating that the two absent members would have voted a particular way is not fair to either of those members.

Rich I am formally requesting that we discuss this e-mail at our upcoming meeting on Wednesday. I would also like to confirm if Dr. Miley will be in attendance at that meeting. If this teacher is speaking on behalf of the SEA I would like for Dr. Miley as the SEA President to explain the rational behind these two comments. If this teacher spoke on behalf of the SEA without their consent I would like to hear DR. Miley's thoughts on that as well.

Either way this is a terrible reflection on SPS as a district. Since when is it OK for an SPS employee, whether on their own or in conjunction with the SEA, to make false accusations against appointed officials in town (or anyone else for the matter) or insinuate as to how others would have voted had they been in attendance? In addition if this teacher did act on their own and not in conjunction with the SEA, my fear is that such actions may be associated with every other teacher in the district, which would be an absolute shame to our amazing employees.

I speaking only as a member of this committee and not on behalf of or conjunction with the entire committee would like to personally apologize to the 4 members slandered as well as the 2 members who were spoken for. I personally expect more from our district's employees and hope that false accusations such as the above mentioned never happen again.

Rich please let me know if we can add this to the meeting agenda on Wednesday. Seeing that this e-mail was sent to an unknown number of people, I would like to add to our discussion the possibility of issuing a district wide apology. I think it's only fair that all of our employees are publicly exonerated from the actions of one. After all what type of an example does slander set for the children whom we all represent?

Scott Nassa

From: scott nassa <scottnassa@hotmail.com>

Date: Thu, Mar 20, 2014 at 5:39 PM

Subject: FW: info

To: "scott_nassa@sudbury.k12.ma.us" <scott_nassa@sudbury.k12.ma.us>

To: scottnassa@hotmail.com
Subject: FW: info
Date: Thu, 20 Mar 2014 15:16:59 +0000

Just got this from a school teacher in the SPS system. Did you know anything about this?
On Monday evening there was some disturbing budget news from the FinCom. While 2 members of the board were out of town, 4 other members seized the opportunity to push through some proposals that changes the way budgets are formulated. In doing so, they dissolved a long standing understanding with the School Committee that any proposed benefit costs that were not used by a cost center would be rolled into that cost center's operating budget. In our case this year that represents a decrease of \$128,711.

In the past we have been able to use these funds to help subsidize pay increases; essentially trading health benefit costs for pay increases at the bargaining table. The funds this year have been allocated to hire a Math Coach so that each elementary school would have a full tie coach. In addition the funds were to be used for an additional 1.0 FTE. to help alleviate any class size issues that presented themselves in the Fall.

There is a Board of Selectman meeting on Tuesday evening that any residents who would like to share their concerns regarding the FinCom budget actions on Monday (3/17) may want to attend and participate during public comment. I encourage any staff who live in Sudbury to participate in this meeting.

Here is what the The FinCom voted:

- a.) to reduce our FY15 Budget by \$128,711 (due to a decrease in projected benefits costs) meaning that we will be unable to increase our Match Coach time (to provide 1.0 at each elementary school) and we will not have an additional 1.0 FTE to address any class size issues that may arise. This reduction was recommended after FinCom provided us with parameters for building the budget to include a 2.5% increase over FY14. The elimination of the \$128,711 results in a 2.16% increase vs. 2.5%.
- b.) not to support the CIAC recommendations to repair/replace parking lots at Curtis and Nixon and curbs at Nixon. These are safety issues that were vetted and recommended by SPS and the Capital Advisory Committee.

The SEA will also be addressing the issue with the BOS and the FinCom.

8. Open Forum

Mary Mahoney, Grindstone Lane

Sudbury won the Civics Bee held in Weston. The trophy is at Curtis Middle School. Ms. Mahoney is the coach. The team is made up of middle school students, high school students, and adults .

Bob Stein, Thompson Drive

SudburyTV has Finance Committee meetings available on-line for review.

9. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Wilson has attended D.A.R.E. graduations with Police Officer Rocky Conrado at the elementary schools. The student D.A.R.E. essays are impressive, and the program highlights the support of parents, teachers, staff, and the community for our students. Dr. Wilson also recognized Officer Rocky in his last year as the D.A.R.E officer.

MSBA, Massachusetts School Building Authority, is scheduled for a visit to the Nixon School about the roof. Joe Kupczewski, Jim Kelly, and Mike Melnick will be part of the site visit. This is the first step in being considered as a MSBA project.

NSTA, National Science Teachers Association, conference was held in Boston. Many teachers attended, and SPS teachers presented at the conference.

The assistant superintendent search continues with interviews. The interview team includes Abby Salon-Haynes, Elizabeth Eddy-Loring, Eileen Levoy-Noyes; Melissa Morabito-Nixon, Tom Rawson and Ben DeMott-Curtis, Betsy Grams, Michael O'Brien, Stephen Lambert, Stephen Wiltshire, Lucie St. George, and Kathy Doyle-Arena.

Bill Schedule

Personnel Actions – as outlined in packet.

10. Communications

11. Minutes – Regular Session Minutes

The meeting minutes from the March 26 meeting are not up for approval at this time.

12. Member's Forum

Emily Cullen welcomes comments on how the Committee would like the meeting minutes set-up.

Lucie St. George - The concert at Curtis Middle was a great success, and Ellen Winer Joachim noted the middle school students will play for the elementary schools.

Bob Armour - A boy scout will interview Mr. Armour about his role as a member of the School Committee. Mr. Armour recognized Rich Robison's dedicated service to the School Committee.

Scott Nassa - Many parents have not received the survey email. Mr. Nassa suggested another email be sent out to ensure that parents have access to the survey. The School Committee should have input on the survey questions in the future.

Dr. Wilson - The basis of the survey was developed by the National Center for School Leadership. The District modified the survey pertaining to the use of school tutors and/or private tutors and modified the grade range from k-12 to k-8. The National Center for School Leadership survey is a cost effective choice. We will evaluate the survey and see if the survey provides the information we are trying to capture. We will send out a survey reminder to parents to ensure access to the survey.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Curtis reported that thirteen teachers went to the NSTA conference.

Teachers Tom Rawson and Christine Carosella presented the topic Collaborative Editing of Student Work Online in Science and English Language Arts and the topic Writing Using Claims, Evidence, and Reasoning in Science and English Language Arts. Michael O'Brien along with Mr. Curtis presented Six Steps to a Successful 1:1 Pilot at the Leading Future Learning conference at Holy Cross.

13. Executive Session

The Executive Session is held in order to discuss strategy with respect to contract negotiations with non-union personnel as to do so in an Open Meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the School Committee.

MOTION and VOTE: Rich Robison made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session. Scott Nassa seconded the motion. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 9:32 PM.

Yes Rich Robison

Yes Ellen Winer Joachim

Yes Bob Armour

Yes Lucie St. George

Yes Scott Nassa

14. Adjourn

Meeting Documents

Revised Agenda

Evaluating the Superintendent

Superintendent Evaluation Information and Rubric

FY15 District Calendar

Personnel Actions through April 4, 2014

Recorded by Emily Cullen