

Sudbury Public Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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

Location - Senior Center
40 Fairbank Road
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
Amie Abdal-Khabir - Sudbury Education Association (SEA) representative
Mary Will - Director of Business and Finance

Agenda

1. Recognitions
2. OPEN FORUM
3. Instructional Technology Update (Michael O'Brien, Director of Technology; Susan Harari, School Library Media Specialist (Loring Elementary School); Betsy Grams, Curriculum Specialist for Wellness; Joan Scott, School Library Media Specialist (Curtis Middle School); and Paula Moore, Computer Teacher (Curtis Middle School)
4. Superintendent Evaluation
5. MA Teaching, Learning, and Leading Survey (TELL)
6. FY 15 Budget Update/Town Meeting Planning
 - a. Warrant Article 19 – School Parking Lots
 - b. Warrant Article 25 – Solar Stabilization Fund
7. Coordinated Program Review – English Learner Education
8. School Committee Report
 - a. Liaison/Subcommittee Reports
9. OPEN FORUM
10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
 - a. Report
 - b. Bill Schedule
 - c. Personnel Actions
11. Communications
12. Minutes – Regular Sessions Minutes
13. Member's Forum
14. Executive Session
15. Adjourn

Agenda

1. Recognitions

Superintendent Wilson acknowledged Officer Ronald "Rocky" Conrado for his years of service to the Town and Sudbury Public Schools. Dr. Wilson noted Officer Rocky's dedication to the D.A.R.E program and his caring nature towards the students. The work he has done has a long lasting impact on

our students. With much gratitude and appreciation Dr. Wilson presented a golden apple with a dedication of appreciation to Officer Rocky.

Officer Rocky spoke on how he felt fortunate to have the full support of the police department and the schools. Over the years many officers covered for him while he was in the schools. He gave a special thank you to all the fifth grade teachers. He will miss working with the students and will be back to visit.

2. OPEN FORUM - No members of the community addressed the School Committee at this time.

3. Instructional Technology Update - Internet Safety Presentation will be posted on-line. Michael O'Brien, Director of Technology; Susan Harari, School Library Media Specialist (Loring Elementary School); Betsy Grams, Curriculum Specialist for Wellness; Joan Scott, School Library Media Specialist (Curtis Middle School); and Paula Moore, Computer Teacher (Curtis Middle School)

Privacy, Procedures, and Programs

Legal Foundations of Student Privacy

- Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) – COPPA limits the ability of commercial companies in the collection of personal information from children under thirteen. With parent permission schools can use and share student information for education purposes.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – FERPA protects the privacy of student records and gives parents the right to view the records. Parents may request directory information remain private.
- Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) – CIPA requires participating schools to filter the internet and provide internet-safety education.

The Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) is a resource for educational videos and implementation of programs for internet safety education.

Sudbury Schools Technology Safety Measures

- New username convention - The new naming scheme does not use the student's first and last name. The username is written in a way that if a teacher or a collaborating classmate views the username, the school person will recognize the name. Someone who is not familiar with the student's name will not recognize the name from the new username.
- Sudburystudents.org - This website is used as a centralized station for teachers to provide recommended websites and other resources.
- Parent Handbook Enhancements – The handbook has been updated to emphasize proper use of technology. There is a family and student sign-off portion that focuses on proper use of technology and emphasizes why proper use is important.
- Home and School Technology Use – The 1:1 initiative highlights the need for protocols that are followed at school and home with school devices. The 1:1 initiative gives students access to class related information at all times.
- Personnel Protocols – Personnel are being provided information and professional development on internet safety, student information privacy guidelines, and best practices on using devices in the classroom.
- The schools' internet connections are filtered and the District will provide the same filtering for at-home use of the school issued 1:1 devices.

Questions

Bob Armour asked what are the minimum lines of safety for our students and schools? What is the strategy on how the schools handle technology? Mr. Armour suggested having a summary of the strategies at another time.

Technology Curriculum

Digital Citizenship focuses on respect and protection of one's identity, ethical issues, copyright, bullying, protecting one's privacy and respecting other's privacy, digital footprint and digital footprint repercussions. The exploration of the concept of digital citizenship begins in the elementary grades. Digital Citizenship based curriculum teaches students about their on-line and off-line identity, place in the on-line and off-line community, and technology property concepts. The digital citizenship concepts presented through the library are re-inforced by classroom teachers and parents.

- Identity –Students explore their identity as an individual in general and the individual self on-line. Students explore what is appropriate to share on-line about their identity and what is appropriate to remain private about their identity.
- Community – Students learn which sites are appropriate and which sites can be dangerous and unsafe. Students role-play, use models, and create scenarios to learn about safe and unsafe on-line communities.
- Property – Students learn about citing traditional sources and on-line sources. Students develop an understanding of original work, academic resources, and re-posted information.

Teachers developed a test to track student progress in their understanding of being a good digital citizen. The results showed better understanding by many of the students. The test will be updated and modified next year in order to assess progress better.

Curriculum

- Kindergarten – 5th Grade: The curriculum used in SPS for bullying & cyberbullying prevention was developed by Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC).
- 3rd – 5th Grade: An internet safety glog (interactive on-line poster) is sent home for families to go through together. A certificate of completion can be printed out when the family has gone through the glog. The adults and the children can sign-off on the glog and send the signed contract into school.
- 6th Grade Health Mini Unit: The mini unit focuses on bullying and cyberbullying prevention. There are student surveys and follow-up assemblies on digital citizenship. The survey results show that the middle schoolers are aware of safe on-line behaviors and understand what cyberbullying is. What is unclear is if the knowledge and awareness translates to their everyday use of devices.

Next Steps

With the 1:1 initiative there is a need to enhance digital literacy and citizenship. The computer and library teachers met once a week since November to focus on ways to develop digital literacy and citizenship in students. Digital Literacy is the ability to access digital information (internet, databases, etc) in order to find information needed, evaluate the digital information, and cite resources appropriately in order to avoid plagiarism and copyright information. Moving forward a defined curriculum is needed. In the future a plan will be developed on who will deliver instruction and provide additional professional development. There will be 1:1 parent orientations in the fall for the middle school.

Questions

Ellen Winer Joachim asked about protocols regarding posting classroom videos, pictures, works, etc. Mr. O'Brien noted the parent handbook has a section on posting that a parent must sign-off on in order for the schools to be able to post student work. Ms. Winer Joachim asked who has access to classroom websites? Mr. O'Brien noted that a website can be shared with only the classroom students or can be open access as in the case of a homework page.

Scott Nassa asked what is the policy on teachers posting pictures of students on their personal websites? Assistant Superintendent Curtis responded that there is not a policy in place particular to teachers posting student pictures on personal websites. Lucie St. George noted this is a gray area because there are teachers who have children in the schools and post pictures of their children and friends. Asst. Superintendent Curtis noted the need to update the teacher's policy for acceptable use.

4. Superintendent Evaluation

Rich Robison spoke on the evaluation process. The draft evaluation is reviewed in public session and voted on. There was a range of responses with consistency of about 80-85%.

Step 1: Assess Progress Toward Goals

Professional Practice Goals – Significant Progress

Student Learning Goals – Significant Progress

District Improvement Goals - Met

Step 2: Assess Performance on Standards

Standard I: Instructional Leadership – Proficient

Standard II: Management and Operations - Proficient

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement - Proficient

Standard IV: Professional Culture - Proficient

Mr. Robison read the comment section of the evaluation, set forth below.

- Dr. Wilson is a strong superintendent and her work is exemplary on a number of elements. She is primarily focused on students and student learning. She expects that *all* students will learn and grow each year. She expects teachers to differentiate instruction to ensure that all students are being given appropriate challenge and support. At the core of every decision is the best interest of all students. She identified the achievement gap as an area of focus early in her tenure in Sudbury and committed herself to reducing that gap. She has worked to increase the use of technology in the district to enhance student learning – under her leadership, the District piloted a 1:1 technology program, which will be expanded to two grade levels next year, and has increased the use of technology in kindergarten classrooms.
- Dr. Wilson has markedly improved the professional development program, aligning it with District goals and ensuring that sessions are practical and valuable; according to staff surveys, this improvement has been noticed and appreciated. She has worked to implement the new educator evaluation system in a way that is consistent across schools, provides meaningful and constructive feedback, and is not overly burdensome for teachers. Dr. Wilson has increased the curriculum leadership and coaching in the district to ensure a smooth transition to the Common Core and abundant resources for teachers. She has responded to teachers' concerns about time by looking for ways to increase collaboration time within the school day such as adding lunchroom assistants. She has worked hard to build a strong foundation through careful planning and implementation as well as by strengthening the SPS culture around professional development and district-wide collaboration

- The direct impact on student learning of all of these efforts remains somewhat unclear given the significant changes made over the past 2 years and the incomplete and inconsistent picture the District's MCAS scores represent. On the one hand, every school in the district ranks over the 90% percentile in comparison to statewide results. At the same time, the district subgroups continue to demonstrate that a significant performance gap still exists. Building and sharing a more complete, yet simple picture of where we are succeeding and failing to meet expectations will be critical to better understanding and alignment among all SPS stakeholders, as well as sustaining investment in our schools.
- Dr. Wilson is a highly knowledgeable, skilled and a committed educator who with her leadership team has conceived and implemented many positive changes in our district over the past 3 years. The school committee looks forward to working with Anne, the SPS staff, parents and the broader community to ensure high student achievement, that the District meet the needs of every child and that Sudbury Public schools remain an unassailable asset to the community.

Discussion of Evaluation Report

Bob Armour led discussion on the remaining parts of the evaluation.

Standards

Standard I: Instructional Leadership

The range for this standard was proficient to exemplary. Is the Committee set at proficient or is discussion needed to rate exemplary? The Committee concludes to rate proficient.

Standard II: Management and Operations

Scott Nassa asked are we able to add to the notes on this standard? Mr. Armour and Mr. Robison noted the goal of compiling the individual Committee evaluations into the draft evaluation report was to come to a consensus. Some comments in individual evaluations were not included in the summative evaluation. If there is something a Committee member would like to include, then we can discuss it now. Mr. Nassa noted during an executive session the Committee went in to discuss one topic and ended up discussing a different topic. Mr. Robison disagreed with Mr. Nassa. Ellen Winer Joachim and Lucie St. George noted an occurrence such as this does not bear on the evaluation of Superintendent Wilson. Mr. Nassa also noted Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) meetings occurred at people's homes and not in a public setting. Mr. Nassa noted the home meetings are not acceptable, and someone has to take responsibility for the actions. Ms. St. George and Ms. Winer Joachim responded the responsibility is not the Superintendent's, it is the responsibility of the organization because it is a separate organization. Mr. Armour noted the meeting issues are not part of the Superintendent's evaluation.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement

The rating was proficient by the Committee members. There were some areas that were rated needs improvement, but overall the members rated proficient.

Standard IV: Professional Culture

The range for this standard was proficient to exemplary. Is the Committee set at proficient or is discussion needed to rate exemplary? Mr. Robison leaned towards exemplary, but is satisfied with the proficient rating. The Committee concludes to rate proficient.

Goals

There was a wider divergence of goal ratings.

Ms. Winer Joachim, Ms. St. George, and Mr. Armour recalled there was a range last year, also. The rubric is unclear and leads to interpretation differences. Mr. Robison noted the better the Committee can understand the evaluation questions, the better the Committee can measure the goals.

Mr. Armour noted we do not have the MCAS results until September that relate to the student learning goals. He asked are we able to align the evaluation calendar with the data in order to have more complete information on the students? Ms. Winer Joachim noted the evaluation is done before the end of the school year, so we do not have a true, whole year evaluation. When we create goals for next year, we can consider stating the progress expected as of April 1. Mr. Robison asked is the goal dependent on MCAS scores or is it dependent on day-to-day successes in student learning? It is difficult to decide how the goal measures up to the data and the actual student experience. Ms. St. George recognized the need to have many ways to assess student's progress. Mr. Armour said the ratings for the district improvement goals were relatively consistent. It is clear that a lot was accomplished around the common core.

Mr. Armour asked for any additional comments before the vote.

Mr. Nassa asked about the content of the initial comments of the evaluation report. He would like to make note that the SEPAC survey was a District wide survey and should be included in the initial statement. The survey was telling and he wants to go on record as saying SEPAC should be included. Mr. Robison responded the results of the survey along with teacher, parent, and other surveys should be reviewed and the information should be used for goal setting purposes. Ms. St. George noted the SEPAC survey was relatively positive.

MOTION and VOTE: Ellen Winer Joachim made a motion to accept the superintendent evaluation as written. Scott Nassa seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

5. MA Teaching, Learning, and Leading Survey (TELL) - Report will be placed on a future agenda.

6. FY 15 Budget Update/Town Meeting Planning

Jim Kelly - Director of Facilities for the Town of Sudbury

a. Warrant Article 19 – School Parking Lots

The Nixon and Curtis School parking lots and sidewalks are in need of repair. Some areas can be repaired and other areas are deteriorated to such a degree that replacement is necessary. There are drainage issues and areas that do not meet ADA regulations. At one of the parking lots out-of-service utility poles were removed providing additional parking.

Scott Nassa asked about the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) visit to Nixon to look at the roof. Mr. Kelly stated the MSBA visit did occur, and MSBA will make their decision at a later time.

b. Warrant Article 25 – Solar Stabilization Fund

Mr. Kelly spoke on the Solar Stabilization Fund. The Stabilization Fund is based on the revenue generated by the Solar PV. The revenue from selling the energy from Solar PV would be placed in a fund to be used for capital energy improvements. The Solar Stabilization Fund would create an annual mechanism to fund projects that are capital energy improvements. Mr. Kelly recognized the work Energy Committee Chairman Bill Braun put forth on the Solar PV project. In order for the Solar Stabilization Fund to be established, it must go through Town Meeting.

Discussion

Ellen Winer Joachim asked if we do not move towards the fund, then can we keep the money and allocate it ourselves? Mary Will responded when the energy project was developed the Stabilization Fund was considered to be an option for the savings. Ms. Winer Joachim noted there is not a way to save money now. If we do not use funds, they are lost. The Stabilization Fund gives us a way to save money. Rich Robison noted that often money in the operating budget for energy projects is lost to other projects and projects are held off until the situation is in drastic need. The Stabilization Fund would enable us to go forward with many projects that would not occur with the current system.

Scott Nassa noted having a savings plan is a good idea, but he is concerned about the fund only being available to energy improvements. Mr. Kelly responded all funds come from solar energy. Establishing the Solar Stabilization Fund is an opportunity to use the financial benefits from the solar energy on more energy projects. Establishing the fund will give capital energy improvements continuous funding. Bob Armour sees the pros and cons of a dedicated fund. He would like to see a general stabilization fund, so that each year the funds can be allocated as needed. Ms. Will noted that the Town has a rainy day fund that has flexibility in how the funds are used. Mr. Nassa asked is it possible for the Stabilization Fund to be modified to include any facilities projects? Mr. Kelly answered no. The money has to be used for the purpose of the Stabilization Fund. Lucie St. George noted that many of the facility projects fall under the energy improvement purpose of the fund.

Mr. Nassa asked how is the money allotted to Town and Sudbury Schools projects? Mr. Kelly responded that most of the projects identified are in the schools because the school buildings are generally larger than the town buildings and there are more areas for potential energy improvements. Ms. Will noted the revenue generated from Solar PV is not revenue generated by Sudbury Schools. The money generated will go to Sudbury schools and Town energy improvement projects. Mr. Robison noted the possible involvement of the Finance Committee. FinCom could reduce our operating budget by the Stabilization Fund amount. Mr. Kelly responded noting the money has to be specifically for energy projects. Mr. Kelly does not know if FinCom can access the fund.

Mr. Nassa asked what happens when a certain energy project is voted down by Town Meeting? Mr. Kelly said that is an issue as it is now when energy projects go to Town Meeting.

Mr. Armour asked have the science classes been able to incorporate the Solar PV project into their studies or have a fieldtrip to the Solar PV site? Mr. Kelly said he would like to have AMERESCO come in and talk to the students about the project. Solar.myenergypro.com has data and graphs about the Sudbury Landfill energy collected from the Solar PV.

Lucie St. George asked does the Town have to approve the money each year to be transferred to the Stabilization Fund?

Ms. Winer Joachim asked are we able to review the fund each year and move away from it if needed? The answers to these questions are unknown at this time.

The Committee decided to make a vote on Article 25 once more information is known.

7. Coordinated Program Review – English Language Learner

Assistant Superintendent Curtis presented on the review and corrective action plan (CAP).

The Coordinated Program Review (CPR) is part of the Massachusetts Department of Education accountability system. The CPR team members visited last school year. Two criteria were reviewed as partially implemented and one criterion was reviewed as not implemented.

Criterion ELE 16, Equitable Facilities – The review team noted at Curtis Middle School ELE students were taught in the library while other students were in the library. Sudbury Public Schools no longer

teaches the ELE students in the library. Documentation to Massachusetts DOE has been sent with updates on teaching space. There will be a follow up visit by DOE.

Criterion ELE 17, Program Evaluation – SPS did not have a clear institutional, standard procedure to evaluate student achievement. There is now a written report specifying program evaluation.

Criterion ELE 5, Program Placement and Structure – The review team noted the number of hours of instruction is insufficient. SPS has a small number of students who need instruction. In order to meet the number of hours of instruction for the students over the different schools, it would be necessary to increase our English Language Learner (ELL) teaching staff considerably. The students do very well with the instruction provided. SPS added an ELL tutor. The tutor enables SPS to double the instructional time for many of the students and enables the ELL teacher to have time to coordinate learning with core teachers.

Rich Robison and Bob Armour asked about being in compliance.

Assistant Superintendent Curtis answered hiring the one ELL tutor will not place us in compliance. We would need to hire three ELL teachers to be in compliance. SPS frames the ELL program on student improvement and not on the number of ELL educators. World-Class Instructional Design Assessment English Language Development standards (WIDA) are new English language development guidelines. We are required to implement WIDA. As noted in WIDA implementation guidelines, implementation is a multi-year process. SPS has a multi-year implementation plan which includes increased professional development, participation in the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) courses by a group of SPS teachers, and continuous collaboration between ELL personnel and core teachers.

MOTION and VOTE: Scott Nassa made a motion to sign-off on the CAP. Lucie St. George seconded the motion. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

8. School Committee Report – Liaison/Subcommittee Reports

Lucie St. George and Ellen Winer Joachim will be meeting with Director of Human Resources Kathy Doyle-Arena to discuss adding a new fingerprinting policy.

Scott Nassa asked if the health benefit savings money is not placed with the SPS, where does it go. Bob Armour responded he thinks it goes back to free cash.

Mr. Nassa wants to make sure the Committee is not putting itself in a situation with the money. There is a long-standing agreement surrounding the health benefit savings money, but snow/ice money was given to the Town. Lucie St. George responded the snow/ice money was used to clear the roads and sidewalks near the schools in order to keep the schools open. Bob Armour also noted the money was used for school purposes.

9. OPEN FORUM - No members of the community addressed the School Committee at this time.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Wilson spoke on professional development. The professional development celebration today was a culminating event for all the efforts of the past year. There was great enthusiasm, creativity, and innovation throughout the year by educators in professional development. There has been a great increase in employee satisfaction towards professional development. Assistant Superintendent Curtis has consistently been working on improving professional development throughout the Sudbury Public Schools.

Assistant Superintendent Search – We are in the process of interviewing candidates for the Assistant Superintendent position. Many of the candidates have been impressed with the appropriate use of technology with our 1:1 program.

The Goldin Foundation for Excellence in Education recognized Amie Abdal-Khabir of Nixon School for making outstanding contributions in her classroom, school and community. Ms. Abdal-Khabir is one of only six educators to be recognized this year. Many SPS members attended the Goldin Foundation reception in support of Ms. Abdal-Khabir. Congratulations and thank you to Ms. Abdal-Khabir for her dedication to teaching.

11. Communications

The School Committee discussed and re-revised the email to the Sudbury Public Schools community concerning the health benefit savings from the employees joining the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission.

Final Reading Version of Letter provided by Scott Nassa

Subject Line: Sudbury Public Schools FY 2015 Budget Update for Town Meeting

Dear Parents and Community Members,

At our regularly scheduled meeting of Wednesday March 12, 2014 the Sudbury Public School Committee unanimously voted to decrease the health insurance budget and increase the FY 2015 operating budget by \$128,711 due to projected savings in the cost of benefits. This savings is a result of Sudbury Public School employees joining the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission (GIC) in FY 2013, which resulted in significant healthcare savings for the Town of Sudbury. Based on a standing agreement with Sudbury Public School's employees of reinvesting any and all money saved as a result of the switch to the GIC, the School Committee voted unanimously so that the savings of roughly \$129,000 may be used to add an additional teacher to address class size as needed as well as an additional math coach in one of our elementary schools.

At its March 17, 2014 meeting the Sudbury Finance Committee (Fincom) voted to reduce the FY 2015 Sudbury Public School appropriation by \$128,711, which resulted in a reduction to the overall Sudbury Public School budget.

As parents and Sudbury's citizen legislators we wanted to make you are aware of this situation and ask for you to attend Town Meeting beginning on Monday May 5th at 7:30 PM to have your voice heard. It is the School Committee's intention to propose an amendment to the Fincom's approved budget, which will allow us to restore our FY 2015 budget and honor our agreement to reinvest healthcare savings to benefit our schools.

Thank you for your support.

The Sudbury Public School Committee

MOTION and VOTE: Bob Armour made a motion to approve the final reading, version of the letter. Ellen Winer Joachim seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

12. Minutes – Regular Sessions Minutes

Scott Nassa asked if it is required for the Committee to approve the minutes before the end of the term. Committee can approve the minutes with four members. The target date for the review of the March 26, April 9, and April 30 meeting minutes is at the next regular open session Committee meeting.

13. Member's Forum

Assistant Superintendent Todd Curtis reported on this year's PD, ILAP celebration. Forty-nine teachers were videotaped for an end of year PD movie, which was up from last year's twenty-eight teachers. The movie showcased the accomplishments of many teachers over the past year.

Scott Nassa recognized Rich Robison and thanked him for his many years of dedicated service to the Sudbury Public Schools.

14. Executive Session

MOTION and VOTE: Scott Nassa made a motion to adjourn to executive session. Lucie St. George seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor. The time was 10:52 PM.

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

15. Adjourn

Meeting Documents

Agenda

Instructional Technology Update Presentation Slides

MA Teaching, Learning, and Leading Survey (TELL) Results and Presentation Slides

Warrant Article 19 and 25 Presentation Slides

Sudbury Final Report English Language Education (ELE) 2013 and CAP 2014 ELE Draft

Personnel Actions through April 23, 2014

Recorded by Emily Cullen