

Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Present: Susan Iuliano, Chairperson, Jane Santinelli, Vice Chairperson
Rich Robison, Jeff Beeler, Michele MacDonald

Also Present: Dr. John Brackett, Superintendent, Robert Milley, Assistant Superintendent, Mary Will, Director of Business & Finance, David Jurewicz, SEA (until 10:35)

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

1. Open Forum I

Susan Iuliano summarized an email from Abby Ward, Old Lancaster Road, who suggested focusing the Gifts and Donations policy on considerations of impact on learning and relationship to goals described in School Improvement Plans, rather than emphasizing dollar limits to classify level of review. She also suggested that the Committee increase its follow-up on corporate donations.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

2. Bill Schedule

A bill schedule was presented.

3. Approval of School Committee Liaisons, Subcommittees and Delegates

The Committee agreed by consensus to the assignments made at the April 30 Regular Session. A formal vote was postponed pending assessment of the labels used to describe the assignments.

4. Decision on School Choice

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Jeff Beeler, to decline participation in school choice. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

5. Approve Preschool Tuition for FY09

Mary Will provided an update on tuition-increase scenarios. Linda Karpeichik, Director of Early Childhood Education, described the mandated enrollment and ratio requirements for the Integrated Preschool, as well as trends for both tuition and special education students. She also provided her assessment of factors affecting enrollment and expressed confidence in maintaining appropriate enrollment ratios, even with a tuition increase at the recommended level.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Jeff Beeler, to approve an increase in the Integrated Preschool tuition of 10% per year for three years, to be followed by a reassessment. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

6. Approve Revised Donation Policy 2.4

Section 2.4.2, Item 5 was reorganized and a dollar level of \$3,000 was recommended. The Committee determined it unnecessary to formalize a requirement to be informed of donations exceeding \$500 in value.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Rich Robison, to approve the Gifts and Donations policy as revised. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

7. Length of School Committee Meetings

The Committee considered how best to increase the efficiency of its meetings. The order and complexity of agenda items, as well as the number of “action” vs. “discussion” items will be considered. By consensus, the Committee agreed to start meetings promptly when a quorum is reached, target a three-hour duration, and include one open forum only, at the start of the meeting. At the discretion of the Chair, the Committee will take comments from the public at other times during its proceedings.

8. Donations

None.

9. Recognition

None.

10. Bus and Instrumental Music Revolving Funds – Limit Increases

Mary Will requested limit increases on these revolving funds in order to cover the expenses of the programs. The requested limits are within the DOR limits.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to increase the limit on the Bus Revolving Fund from \$300,000 to \$350,000 for FY08. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to increase the limit on the Instrumental Music Revolving Fund from \$50,000 to \$75,000 for FY08. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

11. Discussion of the Reorganization/Redistricting Process

Superintendent Brackett presented a revised outline of the scope and process of a reorganization/redistricting effort, based on preliminary discussion during the April 30, 2008 Regular Session. He described a two-phase approach: Phase I would be a short-term, staff-driven study to develop a redistricting plan that could, if adopted, be implemented in FY10. It would involve the general public via a series of forums before a

recommendation to the School Committee. Phase II would be a longer term, more complex effort to study reorganization, which could be implemented for FY11 at the earliest.

The Committee agreed that an evaluation of redistricting could begin immediately. The Committee discussed questions about whether the educational and financial gains arising from reorganization would be significant enough to embrace this facet at this time and about how the process for exploring these options would work with possible redistricting in the near future. It was agreed that a short-term internal examination of the possible benefits of reorganization would be completed before deciding whether to assign a committee to further explore possible reorganization options. Dr. Brackett will present a third iteration of the outline at the next Regular Session.

12. FY09 District Goals and Strategies
The Committee agreed to defer the discussion.

13. Open Forum II

Lauren Hochberg, Camperdown Lane, made several comments, including the following:

§ Opined that it is competition for full-day programs, not the economy that is responsible for vacancies in the Integrated Preschool.

§ Provided alternative wording to Section 2.4.2 item 5 of the Gift and Donation policy.

§ Suggested that meeting efficiency could be increased if matters of adherence to bylaws or policies were reviewed prior to meetings.

§ Suggested the Committee look into utilizing a nonprofit organization to study redistricting/reorganization.

§ Expressed a desire to be able to contribute comments during meetings if only one open forum occurs at the start of the session.

14. Communications

None.

15. Minutes – Regular Session April 2 and Special Sessions April 5, 7, 12

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2008 Regular Session. The vote was 3-0 in favor; Rich Robison and Michele MacDonald abstained.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the minutes of the April 5, 2008 Special Session as amended. The vote was 4-0 in favor; Michele MacDonald abstained.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Jeff Beeler, to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2008 Special Session. The vote was 4-0 in favor; Michele MacDonald abstained.

VOTED: On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2008 Special Session. The vote was 4-0 in favor; Jeff Beeler abstained.

16. Personnel Actions

As described in the Personnel packet.

17. Members Forum

Susan Iuliano asked those Members whose children attend SPS to sign a disclosure statement concerning school fees, to be filed with the Town Clerk, in accordance with state law.

Michele MacDonald asked about putting draft (policy) documents on the web. The consensus was against this idea.

Jeff Beeler encouraged Members to submit their superintendent's evaluations and encouraged Dr. Brackett to submit his self-evaluation.

Bob Milley noted that the ActivBoard Institute that the District is hosting will culminate with a series of teacher-led workshops at Loring on May 8.

The Committee provided feedback to Sheila Cusolito on the content of the meeting minutes. Members expressed a desire for greater brevity, with a focus on providing a more general summary of discussions.

Rich Robison commented that the state budget is in "bad" shape this year and will likely be worse next year.

Jane Santinelli commented on current publicity of Paul Reville's (chairman of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education) recommendations regarding teacher compensation.

On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Jane Santinelli, the Committee voted to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 5-0 in favor. The time was 11:10 p.m.

Yes Susan Iuliano
Yes Jane Santinelli
Yes Rich Robison
Yes Jeff Beeler
Yes Michele MacDonald

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary