

Sudbury Public Schools (SPS)
School Committee Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2016 @ 7:00 PM @ Loring Elementary School

Open Session

Vice Chair Ellen Winer Joachim opened the session at 7:00 PM. Sudbury Cable TV is broadcasting live.

Members Present: Lucie St. George (Chair) (arrived late), Ellen Winer Joachim (Vice Chair), Lisa Kouchakdjian, Richard Tinsley, Christine Hogan

Also Present: Anne Wilson, Superintendent of Schools; Susan Rothermich, Manager of Business and Finance; Justin Dulak, Recording Secretary; Audrey Swennes, SEA Representative

I. Budget Hearing

- A. Prior to the start of the Budget Hearing, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** advised the Committee that she filed two disclosures with the Town Clerk's office, as it pertains to her ability to discuss budget.
- B. **Superintendent Anne Wilson** and Manager of Business and Finance Susan Rothermich presented on the proposed budget for fiscal year 2018. Highlights from the presentation ([which may be found here](#)) include:
 - 1. Budget drivers were enrollment (salaries and benefits), Special Education, and Innovation and Enhancements
 - 2. A proposed budget of \$41,956,581, with a deficit of \$4,007,071.
 - 3. A number of cost saving and budget balancing strategies were implemented within this budget, including using utility costs savings to balance maintenance overages; the creation of in-district programs to save on out-of-district placement and transportation; a moratorium on new technology purchases; and changing the Loring start time to 8:55 AM, which includes combining middle school and high school bus schedules.
 - 4. **Christine Hogan** questioned Loring start time change: this was the first she saw of it and we have a subcommittee appointed by the SPSC, the School Start Time Committee, which is looking into all school start times and due to present to SPSC at the end of March. Ms. Hogan expressed her concern with regard to the lack of communication with that Committee.
- C. Community questions centered on:
 - 1. The nature, and cost, of the benefits program offered by SPS to its staff
 - 2. How the Committee will balance reducing technology costs and staffing costs.
 - 3. The Loring start time

- D. Following the presentation, the Committee advised Dr. Wilson and Ms. Rothermich on how it would like to see the budget brought down to the 2.25% increase recommended by the Town of Sudbury.
 - E. At 8:05 PM, Chair Lucie St. George moved to the Open Regular Session
-

Open Regular Session

I. Vote to Designate Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School as Preferred Vocational Technical High School for Sudbury

- A. The Committee considered whether to designate Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School as the preferred vocational technical high school for Sudbury students interested in a vocational education. Middle School Counselor Ivar Henningson and Selectman Len Simon explained to the Committee the advantages presented by Assabet Valley.
 - 1. **Lisa Kouchakdjian** motioned to designate Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School as the preferred vocational technical high school for Sudbury, **Christine Hogan** seconded.
 - a) **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carried.

II. Loring State of the School Presentation

- A. Principal Scott Johnson and Assistant Principal Sara Harvey presented to the School Committee on the State of the Israel Loring Elementary School. Highlights from the presentation ([which may be found here](#)) include:
 - 1. The staff and students build a sense of community by engaging in events such as the Community Celebration, highlighting the Core Values (“Best Effort”, “Caring”, “Responsibility”, “Respect”), and taking part in Social Action Projects.
 - 2. Laura Hoff and Jen Morrissey Greer provided the Committee with an update on the latest developments from the Loring PTO. Operating on a \$60,000 budget, the PTO is focusing on improving students’ recess, reducing demands on volunteers at family events, integrating METCO students into the Loring community, and innovating the annual auction fundraiser.
 - 3. The change to a block schedule throughout the school has created additional learning opportunities for students by aligning the subject being taught across grade-level classrooms.
 - 4. Loring is enhancing social-emotional learning by requiring classroom teachers to craft SEL-specific goals at the outset of the school year. Also complementing these goals is a monthly consultation with Stan Davis, DESSA screenings and lessons/supports, and the District Tiered System of

Support Team. Teacher Audrey Swennes explained the value of Open Circle to the Committee.

5. Anticipated challenges ahead for Loring include continuing to innovate and improve social-emotional learning.

III. Open Forum

- A. Erika Illiano inquired about the benefits program offered by SPS to its employees and the costs surrounding it.
- B. Maia Proujansky Bell inquired about the School Committee's budgeting process, and how the community may access the proposed budget. Superintendent Anne Wilson explained that multiple public forums are held over the course of several months as the budget is developed, and that the budget presentations may be found on the School Committee's [presentations website](#).

IV. Sudbury Education Association Report

- A. SEA Representative Audrey Swennes explained to the Committee some of the various forms enrichment can take within the classroom, and some of the benefits from those lessons. Ms. Swennes also noted that educator Barry Cain will be honored for twenty-five years in education at the annual Holiday and Bowl Ceremony.
- B. **Chair Lucie St. George** called for a five-minute break at 9:51 PM.

V. Class Size Subcommittee Recommendation

- A. **Chair Lucie St. George** called the meeting back to order at 9:56 PM
- B. **Richard Tinsley** explained to the Committee the class size recommendations made by the Class Size Subcommittee, and how those recommendation were devised. The Committee proceeded to debate the value of small class sizes against the value of attracting and retaining experienced educators, as well as the best way to ensure class size parity across each of SPS's elementary schools.
- C. The Committee agreed to postpone further discussion about the recommendations to a later meeting.

VI. Open Forum Protocols Discussion

- A. The Committee agreed to have **Lisa Kouchakdjian** and **Ellen Winer Joachim** develop a policy proposal in a Policy Subcommittee meeting.

VII. Acceptance of Aspirations Donation

- A. Superintendent Anne Wilson presented to the Committee a \$50,000 donation from the Jack and Mae Rosenberg Charitable Trust , to benefit the Aspirations program. Dr. Wilson recommended the Committee accept the donation.
 1. **Christine Hogan** motioned to accept the donation, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** seconded.
 - a) **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carried.

VIII. School Committee Communications

A. Highlights

1. **Christine Hogan** motioned to accept the Highlights as presented, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** seconded.

a) **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carried.

IX. School Committee Reports [Liaison/Subcommittee Reports]

- A. **Richard Tinsley** reported to the Committee that at the latest meeting of the Fairbank Task Force, the SPS Central Offices were removed from any new building that is to be constructed.
- B. **Christine Hogan** reported to the Committee on the latest efforts of the School Start Time Committee. Ms. Hogan explained that the Committee is planning a forum with sleep expert Judy Owens on January 12 at 7 PM in the Curtis Middle School Auditorium. The School Committee proceeded to discuss what level of involvement Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School would have in the sleep forum and any possible start time changes.
- C. **Lisa Kouchakdjian** explained to the Committee that there will be a Capital Funding meeting tomorrow morning. Ms. Kouchakdjian also described what transpired at the most recent SEPAC meeting.

X. Open Forum

- A. James LaPointe addressed the Committee regarding 51A filings by SPS staff.

XI. Assistant Superintendent's Report

- A. None

XII. Superintendent's Report

- A. Superintendent Anne Wilson recognized the staff, administration, and parents that have participated in the Strategic Planning forums. There will be another opportunity to participate on December 14. Parents should come at 4:30 PM, and other community members at 7:30 PM. Other dates may be added in the near future.
- B. Dr. Wilson described the Strategic Planning process to the Committee. Forums have already been held with Central Office administrators, the full SALT group, and Middle School Staff members. Forums with elementary school staff members will be held this coming week.

XIII. Minutes-Regular Session Minutes

- A. September 21, 2016

1. **Lisa Kouchakdjian** motioned accept the Minutes from September 21 as edited, **Ellen Winer Joachim** seconded.

a) **Vote: 4-0.** Motioned carried. **Richard Tinsley** abstained.

- B. October 5, 2016

1. **Christine** motioned to accept the Minutes from October 5 as edited, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** seconded.

a) **Vote: 4-0.** Motion carried. **Chair Lucie St. George** abstained.

C. October 19, 2016

1. **Christine Hogan** motioned, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** seconded.

a) **Vote: 4-0.** Motion carried. **Chair Lucie St. George** abstained.

XIV. Members' Forum

- A. **Christine Hogan** asked about going into Executive Session to discuss email sent to SPSC and aprent who came forward as specific staff mentioned.
- B. During further discussion about how the Committee would like to proceed with the budget, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** recommended the Committee plan an additional meeting on the topic prior to the scheduled December 19th meeting. The Committee agreed to hold another meeting on Tuesday, December 13 at 7:30 PM in the Superintendent's Conference Room at 40 Fairbank Road.

XV. Future Agenda Item Discussion

- A. Jim Kelly and SPS Office Plans, Walker Report update, State of the School presentations

XVI. Executive Session

XVII. Adjournment

- A. **Ellen Winer Joachim** motioned to adjourn, **Lisa Kouchakdjian** seconded.
 - 1. **Vote: 5-0.** Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:33 PM.