

Sudbury School Committee (SSC)  
Meeting Minutes  
School Committee Meeting  
April 29, 2019  
Goodnow Library Community Room

**Members Present:**

Lisa Kouchakdjian, Chair  
Margaret Helon, Vice Chair  
Christine Hogan  
Silvia Nerssessian  
Richard Tinsley

**Also Present:**

Brad Crozier, Superintendent of Schools  
Kimberly Swain, Assistant Superintendent of schools  
Donald Sawyer, Director of Business and Finance  
Ben DeMott, SEA Representative

**Regular Session Meeting**

Ms. Kouchakdjian opened the meeting at 7:10 PM.

1. **Special Matters**

a. **Legislative Forum (State Senators Mike Barrett and James Eldridge, State Representative Carmine Gentile)**

i. **Brief Remarks by Legislators**

Representative Gentile noted that this is an exciting time as the State Legislature is considering modifications to the 1993 Education Reform Act. The aim is to create legislation which will be beneficial to all districts in Massachusetts, with additional resources to more economically challenged districts. Senator Eldridge spoke about the recent passage of the Senate budget; the State Senate is seeking to focus on four main issues in this budget: providing more funding to address district healthcare costs; increase support for low income families; supplement ELL costs; and address Special Education costs. Senator Eldridge discussed the Promise Act, which he hopes will be approved by the State Senate by the end of this summer.

ii. **Public School Funding and Mandates**

1. **Changes to the Funding Formula/Impacts to SPS**

Senator Eldridge discussed the Special Education circuit breaker, an an additional source of funding from the State to assist with the costs for severe Special Education needs. Senator Barrett noted that along with the increase in enrollments, diagnoses in learning disorders and autism are also increasing. Senator Barrett discussed putting \$350,000 for special education transportation into the formula. Representative Gentile noted that the annual

increase to public school funding could depend on revenue; during budget discussions the House briefly looked at increasing the capital gains tax. Senator Barrett believes we will be paying carbon taxes as part of our financial landscape, and noted the number of clean energy jobs are increasing.

2. Innovation Grants to Support SPS

Representative Gentile noted that the House budget includes \$2 million for grants to Support Healthy Alliances, \$1 million for a Civics Education Program Grant, and \$75,000 for a Healthy Relationships Grant; Ms. Hogan discussed opportunities to improve the Model United Nations programs and the thriving program at LS and continuation for many students into college. Superintendent Crozier noted that Sudbury is looking to have their students prepared from an earlier age in project-based learning programs which focus on technology, coding, and real-world problem solving. Representative Gentile noted that he had a bipartisan amendment on the House Budget for STEM but it did not move forward. Many schools are partnering with community colleges to allow students to take college courses while still in high school.

Ms. Swain discussed global citizenship and expanding language offerings, as well as the challenge of expanding after school programs to our Boston students due to the transportation issues. Extended school days was discussed, as well as the METCO bus transportation pilot program, the number of cars that were counted at school drop-off, and ways to make the transportation system more efficient. Senator Barrett noted that the Concord Public Schools bought a non-polluting electric school bus, adding that legislators want to see more such investments to reduce carbon emissions. It was noted that one bus takes upwards of 60 cars off the road.

3. Proactive Funding for Student Physical Safety at the Building Level and Support for Students with Emotional disorders

School Committee Members explained their desire to be proactive in terms of maximizing the safety of all students. SPS currently employs one resource officer for five schools, creating a police presence that can also be helpful for relationship building. Representative Gentile noted that the Governor included \$508,000 for Safe and Supportive Schools in the budget, and a \$30 million School Safe Trust Fund. The increase in diagnosed cases of anxiety was also discussed; School Committee Members hope that Legislators will support funding for programs that address social and emotional well-being.

4. What our Legislators Need from the School Committee

Senator Barrett noted that providing numbers and data through the 2020 census and other means is important for making the case for the Legislators to be able to advocate for Sudbury; data can also be sent in quarterly communications.

b. School Choice Public Hearing

School Committee Members reviewed the background information on School Choice. Ms. Kouchakdjian read aloud a statement explaining the Committee's position on School Choice, and noted that in past years the Committee voted to decline participation.

c. School Choice Vote for FY20

Motion: Ms. Nerssessian made a motion to decline participation in the School Choice Program for the 2019-2020 school year. Ms. Helon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

2. Open Forum - None.

3. Educational Matters

a. District Reports

i. SEA Report - Ben DeMott reported that since Curtis Middle School's opening in 1999, every student has created a tile in 7th grade representing his or her individual personality. There are 6,331 tiles on display across the walls of middle school's second floor.

27 students attended the Anti-Defamation League Youth Conference in Boston; in total, 1,500 students from 82 schools engaged in discussions promoting a climate of safety and inclusion for all.

ii. Business and Finance Director's Report - Mr. Sawyer reported that notices went out for bus registration for next year using a slightly different format this year than in previous years. The deadline for return of these registration forms is May 21st, 2019, after which the Business Department will begin creating the bus routes for next year. Mr. Sawyer explained that once TransFinder comes back with their report to show deficiencies, those will be brought to the School Committee and applied to next year.

iii. Assistant Superintendent's Report - Ms. Swain updated the School Committee on the 4 Energy Project, and noted they moved to the end of phase one with a field trip to Curtis to work on blade design; she thanked the 8th grade students for being wonderful mentors to the 4th grade students. Ms. Swain reported that they have started the Leadership Experiential Educational Problem Solving component, during which she was able to train with staff at Hale Reservation. Ms. Swain acknowledged the generosity of the Sudbury Education Resource Fund (SERF), noting that in the most recent granting cycle, educators were awarded approximately \$38,000 in grants.

iv. Superintendent's Report - Mr. Crozier provided School Committee Members with updated enrollment numbers as of April 23rd; only one elementary class is at the maximum size recommended by School Committee Guidelines, meaning all other sections are below. Over the last month there have been two new preschool students enrolled. SPS is on track for what was put in the budget; numbers are strong and trending close to projected levels.

Mr. Crozier and Ms. Swain discussed Make Space for Learning, an initiative aimed at converting elementary computer labs to technology-based learning studios. They are hoping to receive additional support from the various PTO organizations. The professional development phase will introduce more contemporary teaching methods based on a two year learning plan. A number of courses will run, such as coding and Google infused classrooms, and are co-sponsored by Worcester State University. Nine educators have become Google Certified Educators this year.

#### 4. Business and Policy Matters

a. Medication Delegation Application

School Committee Members reviewed a delegation application which will allow the School Nurse to train other staff members, the continuation of a practice already in place.

Motion: Ms. Helon made a motion to allow the School Committee Chair, Lisa Kouchakdjian, to sign the Medication Delegation Application. Ms. Nerssessian seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

b. Appointment of Members to Master Plan Steering Committee

School Committee Members agreed to postpone consideration of this appointment until its May 6, 2019 meeting.

c. Appointment of Members to Relocation of Administrative Offices Subcommittee

Motion: Ms. Helon made a motion that she and Ms. Nerssessian be appointed to the Relocation of Administrative Offices Subcommittee. Mr. Tinsley seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

d. Appointment of Members to Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Committee

School Committee Members agreed to postpone consideration of this appointment until its May 6, 2019 meeting.

e. Liaison Reports

Ms. Hogan reported that the Curtis Music Trip for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band, Orchestra and Chorus to the Worldstrides Music Festival in Washington was a great success with all three groups earning gold, a testament to the skill and dedication of the students and teachers. Ms. Hogan thanked the students,

chaperones and staff, as well as the organizers who worked hard to make it financially accessible to all students and noted the price per student was \$685.

Ms. Hogan reported that the School Start Time Subcommittee met on April 12th and came up with scenarios to send to Transfinder; Mr. Sawyer sent the scenarios to Transfinder per the contract, with a response due back at the end of this month. Ms. Hogan reported that Officer Hutchinson counted cars dropping students off at Curtis to get a better understanding of how many students are being driven to school. The count was 280 cars out of 950 students.

Ms. Hogan thanked Mr. Tinsley for his three years of service to the students, staff and community of Sudbury; she enjoyed working with him.

Ms. Helon discussed three events held by SEPAC: a workshop to support students affected by trauma; a workshop on psychological and neuropsychological rapport; and an open house at the Sudbury Police Station.

Ms. Helon reported that as part of the DESE review process, the DESE survey is open through this week, all families and staff are encouraged to provide feedback.

Ms. Helon noted that the Unified Games will be held Friday at Bowditch Field in Framingham, and that students with Special Needs will be participating.

The SEPAC Board meetings will be held during May and June, with elections being held during the June meeting. More information will be coming soon.

f. Future Agenda Items

Ms. Kouchakdjian noted that they will be honoring Richard Tinsley for his tenure on the School Committee at the June 3rd meeting; Mr. Tinsley will also participate in the Superintendent's Review.

Ms. Kouchakdjian would like to have Dorothy Presser assist the Committee as they review their protocols, and she is available to attend the meeting on June 3rd.

g. Minutes - Regular Session Minutes

3/18/2019

The School Committee Members reviewed the section of the minutes regarding the discussion on the Relocation of SPS Administration Space; amendments were made to the minutes.

Motion: Ms. Nerssessian made a motion to approve the Sudbury School Committee meeting minutes of March 18, 2019. Ms. Helon seconded the motion. Additional amendments were made.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

4/1/2019

Motion: Ms. Nerssessian made a motion to approve the Sudbury School Committee meeting minutes of April 1, 2019. Ms. Helon seconded the motion.

A grammatical edit was made.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Kouchakdjian thanked the Goodnow Library and community members.

Motion: Ms. Nerssessian made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Helon seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0. Motion carries.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted.

Laura Clifford

**Sudbury School Committee**  
**Documents Reviewed during the 4/29/2019 meeting**

1. Evening with our Legislators Agenda
2. School Choice Vote for FY20 Background Information
3. Medication Delegation Application Background Information
4. Appointment of Members to Master Plan Steering Committee Background Information
5. Appointment of Members to Relocation of Administrative Offices Subcommittee Background Information
6. Appointment of Members to Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Committee Background Information and Save the Date Workshop email
7. Make Space for Learning Document
8. Minutes - Regular Session, March 18, 2019 and April 1, 2019