

Sudbury School Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
August 24, 2020  
Virtual Meeting

**Members Present:**

Lisa Kouchakdjian, Chair  
Silvia Nerssessian, Vice Chair  
Maggie Helon  
Meredith Gerson  
Sarah Troiano, Member-Elect

**Members Absent:**

Christine Hogan

**Also Present:**

Brad Crozier, Superintendent  
Don Sawyer, Director of Business and Finance  
Kim Swain, Assistant Superintendent  
Melissa Morabito, SEA President

**Regular Session Meeting**

Chair Lisa Kouchakdjian opened the meeting at 6:02 PM.

1. Executive Session

- a. Lisa Kouchakdjian motioned to enter Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations with union personnel, as to do so in open session would be detrimental to the District; and to review and approve Executive Session Minutes; and to return, Silvia Nerssessian seconded.

- i. ROLL CALL VOTE

- 1. Meredith Gerson: Aye
    - 2. Maggie Helon: Aye
    - 3. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
    - 4. Silvia Nerssessian: Aye

- a. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

2. Special Matters

- a. COVID-19 Response Update

- i. Superintendent Crozier reported to the committee that the district's large PPE order has been delivered, and it consists of masks, gloves, gowns, and face shields, amongst others items. Plexiglass dividers have also

been delivered for use in transaction spaces and for small group therapies.

- ii. Bill Barletta, Combined Facilities Director, spoke to the committee regarding the recent BLW HVAC report. There were no critical failures or deficiencies and the systems are all well-maintained and in good shape. The equipment was verified as being in place and having undergone preventative maintenance three times per year, which is more than average. The schools are considered safe to occupy. Some general recommendations were offered, including filter types, fresh air circulation, and non-traditional space usage.
- iii. Committee questions centered on filtration in specific spaces, MERV 13 usage and plexiglass setup for access.
- iv. Superintendent Crozier discussed cohort creation and detailed the challenges around cohort creation.
- v. Committee questions centered on parent responses regarding cohorts, pickup/dropoff procedure information, and potential for parent training and support.

## 2. Public Comment

- a. None

## 3. Educational Matters

### a. District Reports

#### i. SEA Report

- 1. SEA President Melissa Morabito read a statement to the Committee from the SEA regarding the start of school.

#### ii. Business and Finance Director's Report

- 1. Business and Finance Director Don Sawyer informed the Committee that the Business Office is currently engaged with closing FY20, opening FY21, helping staff members with retirement paperwork, and meeting all the necessary grant and other submission deadlines.
- 2. Mr. Sawyer also spoke to the Committee about HVAC budget modeling that is occurring in light of the report conclusions delivered by Bill Barletta.
- 3. Mr. Sawyer updated the Committee on the FY21 budget, stating that SPS is still using the "1/12th budgeting" model employed by the Town. Information on the state of teacher summer pays was also provided.
- 4. Mr. Sawyer informed the Committee that bus routes cannot be finalized before cohorts are established. Once that is done, the Business Department will communicate with families to determine if their children will be riding the bus.

5. Questions from the Committee focused on when the first round of budget reporting will be available; and if a forecast has been completed on the budgetary effects of increased HVAC usage.
    - iii. Assistant Superintendent's Report
      1. Assistant Superintendent Kim Swain updated the Committee on when cohort placements will be released and how the information will be communicated.
      2. Ms. Swain also recognized the launch of the district's redesigned SEL website.
      3. Ms. Swain reported that the district's 7th and 8th grade math teachers have been accepted into a pilot of the Desmos Math curriculum. Over 1,500 teams applied, and SPS was one of 50 selected. This curriculum is aligned with the frameworks and designed to work with technology, meaning it will accommodate the in-person, hybrid, and remote learning models.
    - iv. Superintendent's Report
      1. Superintendent Brad Crozier informed the Committee that almost the entire SALT team participated in a book group examining the book *White Fragility*. This relates to his professional practice goal on supporting and developing antiracist practices and policies within the district.
      2. Superintendent Crozier also updated the Committee on his preparations for Fall Town Meeting. This included participating in a virtual walkthrough of the Fairbanks Building and working with the Town on his budget presentation.
      3. Superintendent Crozier also shared that the district was awarded a supplemental technology grant by the State in the amount of \$38,267.00. This grant will support students who may not have the financial resources to have internet or devices at home.
  4. Business and Policy Matters
    - a. School Committee Goals
      - i. The Committee reviewed and discussed the first draft of its potential goals for the 2020-2021 school year.
        1. The first goal is related to policy, and would see the Committee agree to update and maintain the District Policy Manual. The Committee agreed to rely on the Policy Subcommittee to begin work toward this goal.
        2. The second goal is related to equity, and would have the Committee focusing its efforts on two areas: gender and race equity, and cultural proficiency. Proposed action steps included prioritizing District Policies using an equity lens, discussing the establishment of a Subcommittee on Equity, and collaborating with the Superintendent on achieving his goals on equity. The

Committee will also review and approve an equity statement drafted by the Administration on or before October 1, 2020; this timeline was agreed to by Superintendent Crozier. Discussion also included adding a timeline to when an equity audit may be conducted, possibly during the 2021-2022 school year; deleting the second action step related to establishing an equity subcommittee; the possibility of appointing a Committee member to the district's existing working group on equity; and adding an action step for the Committee to support community partnerships and professional learning for the town.

3. The third goal is related to student achievement and would commit the Committee to working to maximize student achievement by assessing and monitoring the academic success of SPS. Proposed action steps included assessing areas of strength, as well as growth opportunities; collaborating with the Administration to determine the criteria for assessing student achievement; and reviewing data on student growth and academic performance, then comparing it to like data from other districts. Discussion on this goal focused on what kind of data the Committee should be committing itself to analyze; and whether the Committee should be comparing the data to that of other districts and if so, to what end.
4. The fourth and final goal is related to communications, and would commit the Committee to expanding and maximizing its communication with the Sudbury Public School community and broader Town of Sudbury community. Proposed actions steps included continuing publication of the "At-A-Glance" newsletter; collaborating with the Administration to ensure the accuracy of the School Committee's portion of the SPS website; conducting public forums whenever necessary; and appointing liaisons to different boards and committees in Sudbury. Discussion focused on the necessity of the goal; the possibility of holding office hours; the need to set sustainable communications strategies and expectations; how a communications goal can be used to mitigate community frustration; the importance of maintaining the Committee's distance from operations decisions and information; and adding an action step regarding responding to information brought by the public to the Committee.

b. Transportation Fees Considerations

- i. Business and Finance Director Don Sawyer led the Committee in a discussion of transportation fee considerations for the coming school year. Mr. Sawyer reviewed the fleet size, the number of runs per day it will make, how costs are shared with Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School, and the FY21 contract rate. The total contracted annual expense for the

coming school year is \$1,091,978.00. This total is funded partially by the district budget and partially by a fee imposed on those students who are not legally entitled to a seat on the bus, but elect to take one anyway. Due to the fact that registrations were done prior to the implementation of the hybrid schedule, and thus based upon the presumption of students attending school five days per week instead of two, Mr. Sawyer suggested that the Committee may consider offering partial refunds.

- ii. Questions from the Committee centered on whether the contracted annual total is impacted by the fact that bus runs will not be made on Wednesdays; if Mr. Sawyer's analysis operates off the assumption that the district remains in hybrid all year; what effect would resuming full-time in-person learning have on the projections; whether the current bus fleet is large enough to accommodate all registrants; how the district would handle families who switch from remote to hybrid mid-year; and if the district should develop contingency plans for full remote and full in-person scenarios.
- iii. Mr. Sawyer's communication will cover: the total cost of the service, along with an explanation that no reduction will be offered unless SPS enters a full remote learning model; information detailing that, in the event of a full remote model being enacted, a refund will be calculated based on the number of days buses did not run; and a statement indicating that anyone who cancels their bus registration at the beginning of the year will only be able to re-register later as space allows.

c. Liaison Reports

- i. Lisa Kouchakdjian informed the Committee that the Joint Statement the Committee previously approved has been signed by all parties and is now ready to be shared with the community.

d. Future Agenda Items

- i. School Committee Reorganization, Recognition of School Committee Member Christine Hogan

e. Minutes

- i. The School Committee reviewed and revised minutes from the July 23, 2020 meeting.
  - 1. Silvia Nerssessionian motioned to approve the meeting minutes from July 23, 2020, as presented, Maggie Helon seconded.
    - a. ROLL CALL VOTE
      - i. Meredith Gerson: Aye
      - ii. Maggie Helon: Aye
      - iii. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
      - iv. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye

**1. VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

Adjournment

- f. Silvia Nerssessionian motioned to adjourn at 9:54 PM., Meredith Gerson seconded.

i. ROLL CALL VOTE

1. Meredith Gerson: Aye
2. Maggie Helon: Aye
3. Lisa Kouchakdjian: Aye
4. Silvia Nerssessionian: Aye

a. **VOTE: 4-0.** Motion carries.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Justin Dulak

**Documents Reviewed During the August 24, 2020 School Committee Meeting**

1. 1st Draft, 8/24/20, Sudbury School Committee 2020-2021 SMART Goals
2. FY21 Bus Fees Memo
3. Sudbury School Committee Meeting Minutes, July 23, 2020 DRAFT